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LIGHTS AND SHADOWS

OF

CHRISTIAN LIFE. 1

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DESIGNED FOR THE

Instruction of the Young.

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cc  
BY WILLIAM CRAIG BROWNLEE, D. D.

OF THE COLLEGIATE REFORMED DUTCH CHURCH, NEW-YORK.

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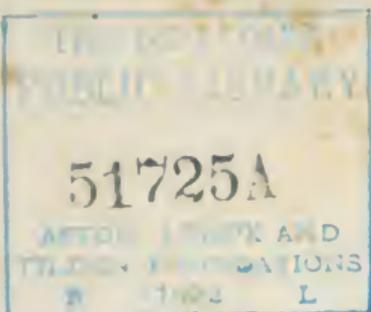
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LIGHT'S

AND

SHADOWS OF CHRISTIAN LIFE

BY WILLIAM C. BROWNLEE D.D.



The author of "The Christian's Guide to the Kingdom of Heaven" and "The Christian's Guide to the Kingdom of Hell" is the author of this work.

NEW-YORK

John S. Taylor.

1837.

TO  
**GEORGE DOUGLAS, ESQ.**  
OF  
**DOUGLAS FARM;**

THIS VOLUME IS DEDICATED,  
WITH THE GREATEST RESPECT AND AFFECTION,

BY HIS

VERY DEVOTED FRIEND AND FELLOW CHRISTIAN,

W. C. BROWNLEE.

1922

MAY

TRANSFER FROM C. B.

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THE GENERAL;  
OR, THE UTTER IMBECILITY OF  
MODERN INFIDELITY.

## TO THE YOUTH.

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THE romance of history, and of real life, my dear young friends, is often found to be more remarkable, and even more thrilling, than the romance of fiction. And this romance, of real life, we discover in the career of the christian, as well as in that of the civil, or military adventurer. And there can be no possible reason, why the individuals in the life of the first, should not excite as much interest as those of either of the last two.

On the contrary, one should suppose, that the romantic trials of the christians would excite more attention than those of the hero of mere fiction, in any walk of human life.

The dignity of his character; the purity of his morals; the glory of his new birth; his adoption to the heirship of heaven; the honours of his associates; and the splendid inheritance secured to him, in the ever-enduring kingdom, are such, that if we measure character by the standard of truth and honour, sanctioned in the court of heaven, there will be found no name on the rolls of earthly fame, lofty enough to be named in competition with him. And, then, such is the interest thrown around his struggles through life; his victorious efforts to emerge out of the deep sorrows and mental agonies, which sweep away ordinary men: his encounters with principalities and powers, marshalled under the god of this world; and his triumphant career over the whole field of conflict, up to his throne in the skies,—that he is placed in the vantage ground of an immeasurable superiority to every earthly adventurer. Compared to the trials, and victories of such a character, what are the adventures of the tortuous hero of a political party; or of the unprincipled heir-apparent to a noble house, or to a royal throne? Compared to him, what is the marble hero, who has covered himself with

military glory on a thousand fields; and who "wades through slaughter to a throne!"—Who envies him? His bloody laurels fade fast away. All that remains of Alexander the Great, is a small quantity of black dust adhering to the interior of his splendid *soros*, now an article of exhibition to the vulgar eye, in the British Museum of London. And honest history proclaims him the chief of brigands; and a blood-thirsty plunderer of nations, on a most extensive scale!

There are two distinct careers set before men on the arena of human existence. The one is run on the field of time: and this is common to all men. The other is the brilliant career of pure beings on the field of heaven's glory. The first is transitory, and is speedily closed, for ever: the last is commensurate with eternity. The first is run amid the painful inconveniencies, and bickerings, and violence of every diversified character that waxes and wanes amid the shadows of human life: the other is joyfully run by the side of angels, and saints, and the innumerable company of pure intellectual beings, distributed over the countless worlds that career in space, around the throne of the presiding DEITY!

Surely, then, in the eyes of every pure and immortal being, the christian, struggling on through this mortal career, to his glorious heirship in heaven, is an object of more intense interest, and of far loftier admiration, than is the proudest hero that ever trod the path of human glory.

But, after all, there is no disputing about matters of taste. Men have been found, who have gloried in their shame. Some men receive more pleasure in vain conversation; and from the pages of ribaldry; than in the company, and refinement of beauty, and virtue. Some would not surrender the pleasure of a single speculation, and the prospect of adding a mite of dust to his sordid heap,—to all the pure pleasures of philosophy, and the pure joys of religion. There are men, bearing God's image of humanity, who deem themselves very honourably employed in doling out dust, and gravely weighing time, and the vanities of the earth in the balance against nothing less than their own immortal souls; and all that is fascinating, and all that is divine in the hopes of eternity! There are men who take more plea-

sure in the comico-tragic ravings of a buffoon and his associates, —proscribed outlaws though they be, from the virtuous part of the community,—than in the highest intellectual displays in the senate, at the bar, or in the sacred desk! 'There are others, again, so devoid of taste in the sublime and beautiful in morals, that they revel in bliss over the hero of a silly fiction: and turn with disgust from sober history; from the tale of real suffering; and the lofty pages of philosophy; and even the most holy and affecting messages of God's redeeming love! There are those who feel quite transported with the inspirations of an ale-house oracle: and the incoherent ravings of the vulgar sceptic; while the lofty moral conceptions of a Dugald Stewart; and the spiritual eloquence of a Dwight, a Mason, a Chalmers, and a Thomson, are in their estimation, unindurable dullness and stupidity!

These phenomena in the moral world, extraordinary as they are, have yet ceased to excite surprise. But, they cease to excite surprise, for the same reason, that idolatry and infanticide cease to excite surprise in heathen lands. They are every-day occurrences, and every body ceases to wonder at them!

The real cause of these phenomena is found in the aversion of the cold unconverted mind, to the doctrines, and practices of religion. It is the fruit of sheer prejudice against whatever savours of vital godliness! And the same prejudice that moves them to give the grave preference to the gaudy bagatelle over the intellectual displays of the theologian, will as readily constrain them to prefer Bolingbroke's absurdities to Isaac Barrow's lofty eloquence: and the disjointed sophisms, and crudities of Paine, to the luminous arguments of Chalmers: and even Houston's disgusting ravings of sin and death, to Boston's spiritual and intellectual **FOURFOLD STATE**; and the immortal epic of Bunyan's **PILGRIM'S PROGRESS**!

They betray, in fact, a want of sound taste, as much as an aversion to religious sentiment. And just for that same reason which now impels them in their career of folly, would they prefer the odes of the poet laureat to Pollok's **COURSE OF TIME**; or Barlow's muse to Shakspeare's soul of fire; or

Cumberland's Calvary to Milton's PARADISE LOST! Yes, and Symmes' wild theory, to Sir Isaac Newton's PRINCIPIA!

I beg for my humble pages, what all writers on moral and religious subjects do claim, and what, in fact, the historian and artist do claim for themselves. Let me be judged by my own PEERS. No man who is ignorant of sculpture, of painting, or of history is allowed to pronounce dogmatically on artists and historians. We claim the same privilege: we appeal to our peers: we ask our award from the christian of taste and of liberal feeling; not of those who have no love to the gospel, nor taste for practical religion; nor sympathy for suffering piety!

“Laudari a laudatis verum decus est.”

I profess to write for our young people. In the place of those light and immoral works, which the press inflicts on good taste, and religion, and morals, I am anxious to attempt the substitution of something which may, perhaps, captivate the attention of the young; and by God's grace, minister some lessons of instruction to the tender mind. The motive I can never cease to glory in: and the christian community will give me credit for *this*, at least, as they decide on the execution of my plan.

Believing, as I do, that short and touching narratives, drawn from real life, exhibiting the joys and sorrows, THE LIGHTS AND SHADOWS OF CHRISTIAN LIFE, can be made as pleasing to our young people, (whose taste is not yet vitiated) as the tales of the struggles of politicians: the adventures of rakes and tyrants; and the bloody raids of the heartless warrior,—I have ventured to lay the following collection before our youth, as my first mite of contribution to the materiel of this mode of instruction. And I accept the honour of being associated in somewhat similar labours, with Professor Wilson, and the distinguished authoress of MODERN ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

We shall not contest the superiority of talent displayed in the novels of ‘the men of the world.’ The genius, eloquence, and poetry of Scott, Byron, Bulwer, and their kindred spirits, are above all praise: they are magnificent. Yet each general rule has its exceptions. We have some on our side, to match

them. Which of even these men have written any thing which will outlive Cowper; or Pollok's COURSE OF TIME; or Bunyan's PILGRIM'S PROGRESS; or Milton's PARADISE LOST? Besides, the fire of their genius has generally wasted itself on the decorations of ambition, intrigues, crimes, and the nameless little things of this little world! We yield them all their laurels. We venture no rivalship to their superior genius; and the splendour of their execution. But, before the christian critic, we put in a prouder claim; and demand a verdict in our favour. And truly, if the plea of charity, and benevolence, and salvation, be superior to the plea of mere literary amusement and pleasure, we shall obtain the verdict we demand.—We claim the vast superiority in point of moral and spiritual influence on the minds of our youth. They delineate for time; we paint for eternity! They charm, and amuse the gay and thoughtless with the things of earth: we seek to woo souls for heaven! They seek honours, lasting only as the earth; we labour to bring youth to immortal glory! The field of their display, is the world, heaving and convulsed with the turbulent passions of fallen and degraded man; we come “to Mount Zion, the city of the living God; the Heavenly Jerusalem; and to an innumerable company of angels; to the general assembly and church of the first born; and to God the judge of all; and to the spirits of just men made perfect; and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant!” Who then can refuse us our high award?

I have only to add, that some of the following pieces have been already published in an abridged form. They are, now, in this new edition of them, enlarged and corrected.

W. C. B.

NEW-YORK, Sep. 17, 1836.

THE GENERAL :  
AND MODERN INFIDELITY.

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PART I.

“ I HAVE been, I fear, too scrupulous on this affair, my child,” said the pastor to a beautiful young woman, who was leaning on his arm, as they entered the arbour, and sat down under a wide-spreading vine ; “ I ought really to have introduced this all-important subject to your father, before this time. Our love to immortal souls ought to urge us forward with intense ardour in the effort to reclaim those who are very dear to us. But, alas ! such have been the associates of the General, your father, that he”——

“ Is just even now in a condition—pardon my interruption, beloved Pastor—to have the subject introduced,” said the lady with eagerness. “ Ah ! Sir, when death comes into a family, and strikes down those who have stood by our side, and mingled with us in the sweet communion of life, then it is that temporal things lose their importance, and their hold on our hearts, and eternal things assume an interest awfully intense. Since the hour my mother was laid in the grave, by the side of my brother and sister, the purposes of my father’s heart have, indeed, been shaken. The last look, and the dying request of that saint can never be forgotten by him. In the still hour of midnight, when giving vent to the sorrows of his heart in prayer, I have heard him breathe out the words of her last request, when he thought no ear heard him, but the ear of the Most High.”

“Has he bent his knee in prayer, then?” cried the Pastor. “Then, my sweet child, I have hope of him. The rock is smitten. Surely the soul of the prodigal is now returning to his Father’s house.”

“Lose no time, then, I pray you,” replied Mary. “Urge him to come to the dear Saviour. Having, as I humbly hope, experienced the preciousness of the Saviour, oh, how I long to see my father sharing the inestimable boon of his grace!”

“Yes, my dear; after the night of sorrow, dark and mournful, the holy light of hope, and the balmy influence of religion, come over the soul of man like the joy of life from the dead. Seest thou, Mary, that winding dale?” continued the Pastor to the charming girl, as tears fell fast from her long eye-lashes; and he pointed to a rich and enchanting view of hill, valley, and meadow, through which the Passaic slowly meanders; “How charming, and fresh, and smiling it looks under our eye! For the thunder shower has passed away; and the sun has just looked from behind the dark cloud, and from his bright glory has poured down a flood of rich and mellow beams on the sparkling landscape. So, my sweet child, to the disconsolate soul of thy father will come the holy influence of divine grace. It will chase away from his soul the distressing darkness of infidelity.”

“Providence has sent him hither,” said Mary—“See, Pastor, he approaches.”

At this moment the General entered. He was in earnest conversation with a young Cadet from West Point, an interesting youth, who was only some twelvemonths old in the Christian life, but full of enlightened zeal. They were followed by two blooming young men, the sons of the General, and Mary’s brothers, together with a thick, stout built man, red faced, and noisy in his discourse—a disciple of Paine, in doctrine and *practice*. The General threw a reproving

glance on this noisy and rude polemic ; and, beckoning him to be seated, saluted the Pastor, and placed himself by the side of his daughter.

After some general conversation the General said, “ Gentlemen, I am now prepared to hear you out. And I will search your arguments.” He added, as he cast his eyes mournfully over his two sons, “ In the hour of sweet health, and amid the scenes of revelry, one may laugh loud ; ay, and scoff too. But, in the hour of need, a miserable comforter will ye find the cold dogmas, and the colder heart of the infidel. I found them so, my children. But, I pray thee, go on, Harry—with your leave, good Pastor, and yours, sweet Mary, who can put in a word to help him, if you should find three too much against the young Cadet. Now, without wasting a word on a preface, just begin, I pray thee, where we left off when we dismounted.”

Henry begged the General to remember, that he had only stood on his defence. He had volunteered to meet the ‘ *trite objections*’ which infidels bring against the Holy Bible.

“ Well, then,” said the General, “ what have you to say in reference to the common objection of infidels, that *Human Reason* is a guide sufficient to lead all men to happiness ? The goodness of Deity, they say, would prompt him to give a general rule—and such only is reason—to guide all men. Hence, to deny its sufficiency is to impeach the Divine goodness.”

“ This,” replied the Cadet, “ is substantially Lord Herbert’s theory. It is, I beg leave to say, unbefitting the modesty of a subject of the divine government. It offers to prescribe to him ; it sits in judgment on him ; it assigns him the rule he ought to bestow on his subjects. But apart from this, what is reason, that it should be able to make the necessary discoveries on the subject of our return to allegiance ? How can I tell whether God will accept my penitence, were

I even deeply penitent? Is there a heaven? Is there a hell? How shall I reach the one—how shall I escape the other? Let reason pronounce; let reason determine. It cannot. No created intelligence can come forward and satisfy me. Who can find out God, and his infinite mind and will? But, hark ye, companions; to be left in ignorance, or even in *doubt*, on these things, is to be left without the first elements of religion, and to be involved in the endless mazes of despair. Hence we can never have either an abiding peace, or the joy of hope. In our folly we may give ourselves up to infidelity: what have we in return, but the misery of despair? “Oh, my son!” said the mother of David Hume to him, on her death-bed, ‘restore to my soul that peace of which you robbed me.’ Besides, were reason the guide assigned us by heaven, it would utter a clear and harmonious voice. Now, I appeal to facts. Point to that lucid and harmonious system on the pages of antiquity, or on the pages of the most intelligent Deist, who has had the benefit of the light and knowledge which the Bible has diffused over the face of society—why, Sir, even from the lowest of them to the highest of them, even from Paine up to Herbert, there is no unity in their system; they approximate to harmony but in one single point, and that is, a malignant hatred of the Holy Bible!”

“Paine has been very successful, however, in exposing the *weakness, and defects of the Bible*,” said Charles, willing to pass from this topic.

“Paine has nothing original,” said the Cadet. “He has selected the sentiments of his predecessors, and has simply the merit of clothing them in vulgarity, in order to adapt them to the illiterate and profane mob. And for the strength of his arguments, take a specimen. The books of Moses, says he, could not have been written by Moses; for the writer always uses, instead of the *first*, the *third* person. ‘The

Lord spake unto Moses.' 'And Moses said unto the Lord.' Now, every scholar knows that this form of avoiding the use of the first person, and of egotism, is a very ancient and a much admired practice. And had Paine fortunately advanced only beyond the threshold of literature, he would have known that several authentic and beautiful writers besides Moses, have used it; such as Josephus, and Xenophon, and Julius Cæsar.

"Moreover, in his criticisms on the writings of Moses, he asserts that there are in them, several strong marks of their having been written at a later date than that of Moses. But, unfortunately for his theory, it has been demonstrated, that all these objections of infidels are derived, not from a critical examination of the Hebrew text, but from *our translation entirely*.<sup>\*</sup> From the statement in Numbers, 12: 3, 'Moses was very meek, above all the men which were on the face of the earth,' he ventures to assert that 'either Moses did not write these books, or he was a vain and arrogant coxcomb.' Did Paine look into the meaning of the word rendered *meek*? If he had, he would not have betrayed this folly. It has been thus rendered: 'Moses was depressed, or afflicted, above all the men of that land.' And were we even to preserve our translation, it is truth that is stated. As a true recorder, Moses told his *virtues*, and his *faults*.

"Besides, the cruelty of Moses and of Joshua, in exterminating the Canaanites, has been a stereotype objection of Paine and his disciples; and it has even been called an argument to show that these worthies did not hold their commission from God. But these Hebrews were only the instruments of Heaven's will. And it surely was at the election of the Almighty to choose men, or the terrible elements of

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\* Horne's Introd. vol. i. ch. 2. § 1.

nature, to accomplish his will. God had condemned these nations for capital crimes. He had given a respite for four hundred years, and more. They repented not. 'Their cup was now full.' And these *moral* agents of his will did no more than would the *natural* agents of his will, the raging elements, have done, had he commanded them. They did, in truth, no more to the Canaanites, than does our sheriff, who executes the condemned murderer, when delivered over to him by the judge!"

"But there have been *alterations* and *corruptions* discovered in the Bible. Hence the various readings and forgeries."

"Have you spoken this advisedly, on this matter, Charles? Have you diligently satisfied your mind by studying the authors in reply?"

"I have it from the best of our scholars, Henry."

"The best of your scholars should have known the truth, and stated it. The Bible has not been altered in one sentence, nor corrupted. Nor is there one forgery within its pure pages. Why, Charles, the thing is impossible. Hast thou read Lardner, or Jones, or Alexander, or Horne, or Ranken, or Haldane, on the sacred Canon? Thou hast no idea, I tell thee, of the mass of evidence against this vile suspicion of corruption, and forgery. Hear me briefly on this. These alledged forgeries could not have been perpetrated on the Canon, in the lifetime of the sacred writers, without detection. Nor could it have been done in after-times. The *autographs* were deposited with the church; and copies of the Bible were extensively multiplied. They were preserved with devout care. The Jews had even the words and letters numbered. The Jews have watched the Christians, and the Christians the Jews, lest they might corrupt the sacred books. The churches of the East watched the churches of the West, with the same jealous care. If a

hundred churches, or even a whole nation, could have been induced, by persuasion or fraud, to corrupt the word of God, other nations and churches would have soon detected it. Just suppose the experiment made to corrupt the instrument of our national Independence. Is it practicable to alter, or corrupt one single sentence in it? Could a whole state do it? Could the whole people of the United States do it? No, were it even possible to corrupt all the copies on this side of the Atlantic, the copies in Europe would rise up against us! In reference to the various readings, take Mills' 30,000 as a specimen. And what hast thou in them against the perfection of the sacred text? They amount to about as much importance as if I spelled my name, like Shakespeare, three or four different ways. They do not alter the sense of one single doctrine, or one single idea. And as to forgeries, all the books which were presented to the church without the fullest evidence of their inspiration, were promptly rejected. And we perceive, in the slow, and sure process which the church of God resorted to in ancient times, when an inspired book was presented to her, how cautiously she proceeded. When a book, claiming the honours of inspiration, was offered, it was brought forward by the author, who was well known to the public, and, who, by miracles, and by predictions, publicly accomplished, had given full proof of his commission from God. It was deposited in his *autograph*, or under his signature; and thence made public to the different churches; and finally, copies, taken from that, were multiplied throughout the Christian world. And when all these tracts were collected, and formed into the CANON of Scripture, it was just as impossible to falsify one article, or to add to, or diminish from it, as it was to falsify, or corrupt the statute laws of the land! In a word, Charles, all these criticisms and objections of Paine, and his coadjutors, are

only as the gnawings of the sea-worm on the copper-bottomed vessel.

“ Why, Charles, had they even established their small batteries of criticism, and levelled at our *translations* all their force, how far would all that go to the overturning of the original word of God, or the splendid system of CHRISTIANITY? Just about as far, I tell thee, as would the detection of a few errors in a *translation* of our laws, or in the instrument of Independence, go to overturn our national government, and our civil liberties !”

“ But the Bible has been charged,” said Charles, “ and I partly believe it, with originating all the *errors*, and *spiritual troubles*, and *wars*, which have convulsed the world.”

“ Ay!” cried Farmer Rose, with boisterous merriment, “ the cross has been the banner under which madmen assembled, to glut the earth with blood.”

“ This is Chubb’s objection, and the burden of Voltaire’s sarcasm,” replied the Cadet. “ But it is a fallacy unworthy of a man, and a scholar. It is a specimen of the silly and vulgar error of reasoning against a thing, from the abuse which bad men have made of that thing. The whole of Voltaire’s sarcasms, and that pitiful scoff which you uttered, Farmer Rose, quoted out of a *thing* written by Houston, which I cannot pollute my lips by naming, have no better foundation. They pour out their abuse, I may not call them reasonings, against the Holy Bible; not from the system taught on its pure pages, but from the revolting abuses which wicked men have made of it, to accomplish their own sinful objects. For the errors and heresies in the world, the unsubdued pride and ambition of ungodly men—not the Holy Bible—originated them. And have not, I pray thee, the best of even our civil laws, and all philosophy, and all the branches of practical science, been prostituted also to unworthy ends? Yet who but a madman would, for this reason,

denounce them, and put them under the ban of the community? Ah! Charles, thou hast been greatly led astray. Search the Bible for thyself; study its pure doctrines. It teaches no errors, no heresies; it breathes no war spirit. Hadst thou known God's holy word, thou wouldst have seen it revealed, as in a sunbeam of heaven's demonstration, that it is not Christianity that causes errors, but the *want* of Christianity! That it is not Christianity that created wars and troubles, but the *want* of Christianity! That it was not the cross of CHRIST that originated the bloody crusades, but the *cross of Anti-Christ, the man of sin!* It was most ungenerous and impious in Carlile, and in thee, Farmer Rose, to charge on our BLESSED REDEEMER, the crimes of *Anti-Christ!*"

Hence one main branch of scepticism is sustained by sophistry. All the Hume, and Voltaire school argue against pure Christianity, from the errors and impostures of those who have corrupted Christianity,—such as papists,—the fatal enemies of sound principles, free inquiry, and all that is Christian, according to the Bible!

By the main argument of sceptics, there is no true medicine, no honest physician. Why? because certain quacks have made themselves, and their *nostrums* ridiculous! Such is one of the main props of scepticism! By their mode of argument you can overthrow all that is good, and useful, and holy, in every department of science and religion! Such is sceptic logic! It puts Aristotle, and all pagan antiquity, to the blush for the honour of human nature!

"I applaud thee for that," cried Charles. "Henry has spoken truth. No decent infidel could hold such language; and no scholar can. I fear our deism is carrying us into downright atheism! Carlile and Owen are certainly going to ruin the whole concern!"

"But Hume," cried Arthur, who was alarmed at this un-

expected concession, “ has annihilated the whole pillar of your temple. He has torn away the prop of your *miracles*. *He has proved that no miracle can take place.*”

“ And truly, Arthur,” said the Pastor, with a smile, “ he has done more. If he has proved any thing, he has shown that no miracle can be proved, even though it were wrought by the Almighty! That is to say, Arthur, the much boasted argument of Hume is rather a silly *sophism*, clothed in a show of profundity withal. Campbell and Douglas, if I mistake not, made even Hume himself penetrate the veil which he himself had thrown over it. Give me your attention, and we shall see whether we cannot also see through this imposing *sophism*. ‘ A miracle,’ says Hume, ‘ is a violation of the laws of nature. And as a firm and unaltered experience has established those laws, the proof against a miracle, from the very nature of the fact, is as entire as any argument from experience can possibly be imagined,’ &c. I will not stop to correct Hume, by showing that a miracle is not ‘ a *violation* of the laws of nature,’ but a *suspending*<sup>d</sup> of them, by their Almighty Author; and that ‘ human experience’ has not established, and cannot establish, ‘ the laws of nature.’ This is done by God. ‘ Human experience’ establishes only our confidence in them. I shall sum up Hume’s famous argument thus. By unvaried and constant observation, we have had a long, universal, and uninterrupted experience, that no events have happened in violation of the laws of nature. Hence, we have a full proof that this uniform course has not been broken in upon, *nor will be*, by any particular exceptions. But the observation of truth, depending upon human testimony, and constantly following it, is by no means universal and uninterrupted; and, therefore, it does not amount to a full proof that it either has followed, or will follow, in any particular instance. And hence the proof arising from

human testimony can never equal the proof that is deduced against a miracle, from uninterrupted experience.\*

“ Now, the *first* error of Hume here, is this : he overlooks the plain truth, that confidence in human testimony is as much a law of our nature, as is confidence in our senses. It may have been according to the unbroken testimony of experience, for ages, that heavy meteoric stones cannot fall, and fall hot, from the air. But every man knows, by human testimony, that such have frequently fallen from the air. *According to Hume's boasted argument, no man can believe this fact of natural philosophy!*†

We must, therefore, candidly set it down as one of the prominent attributes of modern scepticism, that it puts itself in an attitude of desperate opposition, as much to natural science, and sound philosophy, as it does to true Christianity! Verily, I envy not its novel way of reaping its laurels, and of ruining men's souls!

“ But, *secondly*, I beg you to observe that Hume's first proposition, in his famous argument, is actually *a begging of the question in dispute*. ‘ By uninterrupted experience,’ says he, ‘ no events have happened by which the laws of nature have been violated.’ He lays it down, you perceive, as a proposition taken for granted, that *no miracle has been wrought*. And yet we possess the authentic testimony of the whole nation of the Jews, and also the testimony of myriads of Christians, that miracles have been wrought before their eyes!

“ Hence the amount of Hume's famous argument, by which, if we are to believe himself, he has annihilated the Christian faith, is reduced to this simple, and harmless rea-

\* See Hume's *Essays on Miracles* : and Leland's *View*, &c. i. 385.

† See Dr. Ranken's *Theology*, p. 341.

soning in a circle, ‘*No such events as miracles, have ever happened, because no such events have happened!*’\*

It is impossible not to see that there is here, a fair and legitimate specimen of a vigorous mind uttering what he himself did not comprehend, and therefore, did not, himself, believe. He is a capital specimen of a modern philosopher succeeding marvellously *in darkening counsel, by words absolutely without knowledge!* How easy a thing it is to be a great man in the ranks of sceptics!

“ And, I pray you, observe how he argues, in his *second* proposition, against the force of human testimony, because it is not ‘universal and uninterrupted.’ Moses repeatedly told the youth of the Hebrews, that their fathers walked through the Red Sea on dry land. And in confirmation of this, he appealed to the testimony of their fathers. Now, how could Hume apply his proposition to such a testimony as this? The truth is, human testimony, given by a sufficient number of witnesses, is fully equal to the evidence of our senses. And, in opposition to the absurd assertion of Hume, it is not necessary to the form, and existence of human testimony, that it should be, like human experience, universal and uninterrupted. As it is given respecting a certain fact, which, it may be, has never happened before, and which may never happen again, is it not very absurd in Hume, and utterly unworthy of such a philosophical mind as his, to suppose that human testimony should be *universal and uninterrupted?* ”

“ Now, Hume’s premises being, as we have seen, illogical and radically defective, all his conclusions fall, of course, to the ground. This, my friends, is, in honest truth, the whole amount of Hume’s boasted argument.”

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\* Campbell’s Essay on Miracles ; and Leland, i. Let. 20.

“ I thank you, venerable Sir,” cried the General, “ for that plain exposition. I have myself been puzzled by Hume, I confess. But I have discovered that it was owing more to the formidable influence of his name, and his pomp of philosophical sincerity, and solemn affectation of profoundness, and conscious impudence that he *must* infallibly be right, rather than to any force in his imposing sophism! There never was a point more laboured than this, by Hume. He put forth all his powers to establish it. He has exhausted all his ingenuity, and cunning, and eloquence, on it. To an inexperienced mind it seems, at first sight, unassailable; to a young Christian, appalling. But Campbell and Douglass have faithfully stripped off the covering of it, and it now stands forth in all its weakness, imposture, and sophistry! I have heard it said that this exposure threw Hume into a terrible gust of passion; and that he vented it by a volley of curses. But he sent word, finally, to Campbell, that ‘ *he never replied to any opponent!*’ This was the most prudent course, his friends must admit, for a vanquished giant!

“ But, I pray you, worthy Sir,” continued the General, “ how did the Deists of the eighteenth century, previous to Hume, manage their objections against miracles?”

“ They did it thus,” replied the Pastor. “ ‘ We can have no evidence of a miracle,’ said they, ‘ because we have no knowledge of the extent of the power of nature. *That which is called a miracle,*’ continued they, ‘ *may be only an effort of nature.*’ Now, by seizing on Hume’s weapon, the Christian can turn its edge and force against the enemy thus: By uninterrupted experience we know the laws of nature. For instance, fire will devour men. But if I see two men thrown into the fiery furnace, and they walk about, and thence come out without even the smell of fire being upon them, I know it is a miracle, and no effort of nature.”\*

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\* Leslie on Deism..

The Cadet broke the long silence that ensued on the close of this argument, by asking Charles how he got over the argument in behalf of Christianity, adduced from the *fulfilment of prophecy?*

“ Admitting the existence of miracles, and also of prophecy,” said Charles, hesitatingly, “ how can they prove the divine origin of your doctrines? How can they, moreover, prove that these tracts, or books, which make up the Bible, were written by the men whose names they bear?”

“ I am sorry, Charles, replied the Cadet, “ to see you, who ought to have better discernment, fall into the vulgar error of infidels on this point. You have not stated our argument as we state it. You misrepresent it. Prophecy and miracles, when exhibited before the church and the public, did establish, we say, the fact of the divine commission of the apostles and prophets. But these men, whose commission from heaven was thus authenticated, did teach these doctrines, did write these books, and did publicly deliver them to the keeping of the church, under their signature, and in their *autograph*. Miracles and prophecies were, then, the seal which Heaven set to these doctrines, and the *inspiration* of these books ; while their *authenticity* is proved by the testimony of the church, which did receive them out of the hands of the apostles. Hume himself was aware of this : he knew that the admission of miracles would establish all this : hence he laboured as he did, to overthrow the foundation of this testimony. Now, with this explanation,” continued the Cadet, “ I renew my question : How can the infidel get over this argument? No man can, by any degree of sagacity, predict. No man can, by his own power, work a miracle. The prophet who works a miracle, must be admitted to bear an authentic commission from Heaven ; and if sent of Heaven, then his doctrines and his books are divine ; and we must receive them, under the penalty of disobedience against the Almighty ! How, then, can you get over it ?”

“Get over it, say you,” cried Farmer Rose, who did not feel the difficulty which had confounded Charles, because he could not think deeply enough to feel it; “why, just by telling you, Harry, a very plain story: them there *fortune-tellers* told the story after the event had come to pass. Eh! I have hit him, Charles?”

“Farmer,” said the General, very gravely, “have you studied prophecy by the aid of extensive reading in history and chronology, and after a diligent critical examination of the peculiar language of prophecy?”

“No, no, General; I takes it from my own betters. Paine and the old veteran Carlile is good authority enough for me.”

“Even so, Farmer, you think by proxy, like nine-tenths of all your sect. But your proxy was a poor dictator of a bull, or a canon of faith. Carlile has overdone the business: he drew the bow till it broke. No man, who has any lingering remains of conscience, or any self-respect, can read his horrible blasphemies! Paine, again, was a weak and vain man: he was no more capable of reviewing the prophecies, in the light of history and chronology, than he was of writing a Hewrew criticism on Moses, or a Greek commentary on Homer. He hastened to teach, before he had studied the first elements of Bible criticism. But hark ye, Farmer; there are in the Bible, predictions given forth by Moses nearly 3,300 years ago; there are others which were recorded about 2,000 years ago, which are now, this day, being fulfilled before our eyes. Look over the history of the Jews, and consider their present condition; then turn thee to Deuteronomy, chapter 28. Then look thou into Newton on the Prophecies for other specimens. What canst thou say to that?—It has shut my lips—and overwhelmed my objections. I was struck dumb!—What sayst thou?—Thou art silent! This, I trust, is a proof of returning wisdom

I would advise every infidel to be silent on the subject, who has never dived deeper than any of all their writers. Their manifest folly and weakness rivetted my first convictions on the subject. Their shallowness and absurdities convinced me that they knew nothing of the matter."

"But," cried Arthur, beating a retreat from this position, "It is all *priestcraft!* *The people are priest-ridden; and the press is priest-ridden!* The priests find it their interest to propagate the imposition. They feed, and revel on 'the surplus industry of the people!' And so it has been among the nations in all ages. Pardon me, Pastor; I always except you!"

"I do pardon thee, my poor child! Yet let me tell thee, thou couldst not be an infidel without this *stereotype* objection, and grotesque whining about priests. I pardon thee, Arthur, and cheerfully; for I deem it an honour to be shot at, in this war against Heaven. Every officer is mainly aimed at by the foemen in the hour of battle. A proof this is, that they regard the influence of the ministry with as much fear as hatred! Besides, were the '*ministers*' of the Reformed Churches as bad as the '*priests*' of the darkest age, thou couldst draw thence no objection, or argument against the HOLY BIBLE."

"It is not priestcraft, Arthur," cried the Cadet. "Place not such an excess of honour to the credit of the ministry, cousin. Are deists aware of the tendency of this declamation of theirs? The priests, say you, sustain the Bible! The priests, say you, sustain Christianity! The priests uproot the religious system of the oldest nations, and deepest rooted habits and prejudices! The priests draw after their imposture, the nations of Asia, and Europe, and America, and Africa! Verily, the infidels shout them hosannas! They overwhelm them with honours; they give them the credit of achieving what no class of men in all antiquity, ever could do, or have

done! They exhibit them as marvellous miracle workers! No, no, Arthur; the priests never did this. Besides, it is the Bible that sustains the office of the ministry; not the ministry, the Bible. It is not priestcraft, Arthur. Free thyself from cant. It is the people, the nations of the earth, the countless millions of Christians, who, after deep, holy, and indelible convictions, and faith from God's grace, have sustained, and cheered the ministry. The people's faith has welcomed them as the messengers of heaven. They call them to their work. They refuse—and what noble and generous man would not refuse—to accept their services gratuitously? And all the sums voluntarily expended on their teachers they declare *to be fully paid back to the nation, in that order, and peace, and harmony, and moral beauty, and strength, lent to the magistrate's hands—the result of the labours of God's servants in the church!*"

Let us, then, I pray thee, Arthur, hear no more of this cant. Besides, cousin, no conspiracy of men, were it even of a whole nation, could have invented the office of the ministry, and palmed it upon the people. It was given by Heaven, with the gift of the Bible; and in the Bible, it is instituted. Test this, I pray thee, by an experiment. Is it practicable for a combination of men to invent a new office in our General Government—a  *censor-general* , for instance, of all the governors of the states—and palm him on the belief and support of the nation? No, no, Arthur; this talk about priestcraft is as absurd and silly, as that would be in a maniac's lips, who asserted that the office of Governor of the state, and Senator, was altogether invented by a combination of designing Governors and Senators; and the constitution and laws relative to the government and these officers, are altogether  *governor-craft* , and  *senator-craft* , imposing upon a weak and insulted people, "to eat up their surplus industry!"

"Well, be that as it may," continued Arthur, "I am per-

suaded that the *civil power in the nation has all along sustained Christianity*. If the strong arm of magistracy had withdrawn its protection, it had vanished, before this, from the earth."

"Art thou a citizen of the United States, Arthur?" said the Cadet with warmth: "and speakest thou after this sort? Such folly as that, befitted the lips of Voltaire, and the infidels of Europe, where the spirit of Anti-Christ, pervading the civil establishments of religion, has given a currency to this incorrect opinion. Infidels there have not seen what we all love to see here—namely, CHRISTIANITY WITHOUT A UNION TO CIVIL POWER. Besides, Arthur, thy knowledge of ancient history ought to have convinced thee, that the purest times of the church, and of Christian doctrine were those which preceded the Emperor Constantine the Great, when, as yet, this union of church and state was not known; and that Christianity has suffered and groaned, ever since his time, from this unnatural conjunction! And now, Arthur, borrow no more from European infidels' objections. Wouldst thou reason against our fair Republic from the corruptions of European monarchy? Look on Christianity as it exists, and flourishes in thy own happy land! The experiment has been made, and the fact is gloriously manifest, that Christianity never flourishes more than when SHE HAS NO CONNECTION WITH THE STATE—NO ESTABLISHMENT FROM CIVIL POWERS. She adopts the motto of the merchants of Holland, 'LAISSEZ-NOUS FAIRE,'—'ONLY LET US ALONE!' This is the only favour she asks of the state.

"But you must admit, Henry," cried Arthur, after another long silence, "that there is a *want of clearness, nay, an obscurity, and ambiguity about the Bible*, which bear the strong impression of human frailty. Had it been from God, it would have been so luminous that it would have been impossible for man to misunderstand it: it would have flashed conviction on

every soul.”—As Arthur uttered this, he turned slyly round, and whispered in the ear of Farmer Rose.—“This morsel I borrowed from the Roman catholic priests!”

“You are indiscreet, Arthur, in urging this objection. If it operate against the luminous pages of the Bible, its force must annihilate all the systems which human reason, with all its imperfections and contradictions, has framed! But let that pass. I ask thee, Arthur, are the works and laws of nature not from God? Are they clear and luminous to the human mind? The works of Divine Providence—are they perfectly comprehended by thee? Now follow up thy objection, and thou wilt impugn all the laws of the land, all philosophy, all science, all history! The causes of obscurity, and the painful diversity of opinions on the holy doctrines of the Bible, are to be sought for, Arthur, just among the same causes of these differences in law, and in science: I mean, the weakness and depravity of human nature. God made the Bible plain and clear; and to the enlightened mind it is plain and clear. Man’s dark soul possesses not the powers of vision. Of what profit are the brightest beams of the sun to him that is born blind?”

“Well, but I believe,” said the Farmer, “we had better let all religion alone. We know nothing about what we do not see. Our senses are the only inlet of knowledge.”

“Then thou wouldst banish all human testimony, and take away all history, and reduce man’s sources of knowledge into nearly as narrow a circle as the intercourse *between two oysters in the bed of the sea*. I know whence thou borrowest this *epicurean* nonsense! But, thou knowest as well as I do, that no decent person in America, or Europe, now names the Houstons, and the Owens, and the ghostly maniac, Fanny Wright, but with immeasurable abhorrence!

“Well, now, that is a fair hit. Yet now,” cried the Farmer, rallying himself, “your system, Henry, betrays absurdi-

ties in this point : I mean that of ‘*mysteries*’—‘*revealed mysteries*!’ Now, if the Bible were a revelation from God, the moment the thing is revealed, it would cease to be a ‘*mystery*!’”

“Farmer! I am sorry you have not yet learned—neither have those of your sect—to distinguish between the *fact* of a thing which is revealed, and the *manner* of its existence, or its *essence*. It is the last of these two that is a mystery; and it neither is, nor can be, revealed to us. For instance, GOD IS ONE. The *fact* of this is revealed. But God’s nature, essence, or manner of existence, is a mystery I cannot penetrate. My soul is united to my body. The *fact* of this union is disclosed to me by reason, and experience. The *manner* of my soul’s existence in matter, and its operating on the body, is a *mystery* which no man can disclose. This affords us a striking exhibition of the tendency of infidel objections against the Bible. Their arguments against its tendency go to annihilate all human testimony; and their objections against the *mysteries* of Christianity, operate as much against our belief in the *mysteries* of nature, of Providence, and human science! It thus becomes manifest, that no man can set himself to reason, after the manner of infidels, against Christianity, without making himself absurd, and ridiculous in all departments of science!”

“But the infidels, as you call them,” cried Arthur, “have had ground of serious objections against the peculiar doctrines of the Bible; such as universal depravity, man’s redemption by a substitute.”

“My dear cousin,” cried the Cadet, “hadst thou read with candour the books of Christians, thou wouldst have seen every one of these peculiar doctrines defended, nay, demonstrated, by arguments the most triumphant and conclusive, and in a style of eloquence equal, in my view, to that of the best of the ancient orators. They bring in to their aid not only the demonstrations of the testimony of God in the Bible, but the

testimony of God in his works of nature, to illustrate the doctrine and fact of man's fall.\* Even the discoveries of Geology lend their aid to the fact. And, for man's redemption by Christ Jesus, it does present the most affecting exhibition of God's paternal love, and infinite tenderness to our species!

But, Arthur, I do here enter my protest against the introduction of such discussions by infidels. Their minds are not prepared for such discussions. Wouldst thou put a youngster, who has been approaching the threshold of science, into the very temple, and holy of holies? Wouldst thou place the deepest lore of mathematicians before a tyro, who has not acquired the knowledge of figures? It is this indiscretion, on the part of Christians, that has suffered infidels to discuss the holiest doctrines of revelation, before they had settled with them, the subject of inspiration. Hence the profaneness and blasphemies which these men have uttered. They discuss these doctrines, while they assume the fact *that they are not inspired, but are merely human inventions!* I insist on it, beloved Pastor, that the question between the infidel and the Christian, is simply this: the proof of the divine origin, and revelation of the Bible. And I insist on it, that in no case ought we to allow them to digress from the point. Besides, God has given us ample evidence of the divine inspiration of his word. We sit in judgment on this evidence. This we are allowed to do—this we ought to do. But, most assuredly, it does not befit mortal man to sit in judgment on God; to name plans befitting him in his government of man; to pronounce to him what doctrines he should reveal; whether he should save man, or how he should do it. Even Bolingbroke, and the deists of a higher order in knowledge, have fully agreed with us in maintaining this.† Let us then

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\* See the Appendix to this book; Note A.

† Bol. Works, vol. v: 279; Lel. View, ii: 434.

thoroughly test the evidence of Holy Writ; and if we find it such, that no man can reject it without doing violence to all testimony, and to reason itself, then are we bound to receive, and to believe all the doctrines in that book, because they are evidently from God. ‘To believe before all these trials of evidence, or to doubt after them, is alike unreasonable.’ ‘Reason has exercised her whole prerogative then, and thence delivers us over to faith,’ says your own Bolingbroke. Proceed, Arthur, if you have any other objections.”

“Some of our learned writers,” replied the young man, “have detected a contradiction between Moses, and the accounts of the Egyptians. They are of greater antiquity than your Moses will allow them.”

“I refer you, for a solution of these and similar difficulties, to Stillingfleet’s *Origines Sacrae*. It is the painful lot of Christians, that we cannot prevail on our friends, who are entangled in infidel difficulties, to read the books which we offer them, and which brush away all those cobweb-nets spread for the young and unwary. We shall afterward speak of the relative value of these fabulous accounts, in contrast with the testimony of Moses.”

“But, Henry, is it not marvellous,” continued Arthur, “that the great Sesostris, who must have been Moses’ contemporary in Egypt, is nowhere mentioned by Moses? How was it possible that he, and Moses at the head of the Hebrews, did not come into contact with each other?”

“This is a specimen,” said the Pastor, interrupting the reply of Henry, “of the infidel objections derived from *history*. But late discoveries have been adding to the strength of evidence in behalf of the authenticity and inspiration of the Bible. For instance, Arthur, it can no longer be asked by your sect, on what could Moses write the Pentateuch? And how could Hilkiah, in the reign of Josiah, a thousand years after Moses, find the *autograph* of Moses in the house of

God? 2 Kings, 22 : 8, 10. For, Arthur, late discoveries have placed in the libraries of Europe, writings on the leaves of the *papyrus*, actually as ancient as the days of Sesostris, and of Moses !”

“ And no longer can this old and plausible objection you have quoted, Arthur, be put against the writings of Moses, namely: ‘ It is known that Sesostris the Great, King of Egypt, carried his arms into three quarters of the globe ; and in entering Asia, Palestine and the Hebrews lay in his way— yet does the Bible nowhere mention him.’ Our Answer is now simple and easy. Champollion’s discoveries have fixed the date of Sesostris’ accession to the throne in the year before Christ 1473 ; and the best writers fix the departure of the Hebrews out of Egypt in the year before Christ 1475, or two years earlier : consequently, *the Hebrews were in the desert of Arabia during the first eighteen years of Sesostris ;* and hence, Arthur, they could not come into contact with him.”\*

“ Arthur was surprised, and confounded at this discovery, and observed, that ‘ really, he believed, he was but a mere novice in the study of the testimony adduced by Christians.’

The pastor entered into a minute detail with him, and pointed out some specimens of this testimony ; and concluded by assuring him, that if he, or any other candid deist, would only look at the extent, and mass of evidence, as well as the force of the Christian’s testimonies, he would be even more surprised, and more confounded still !

“ But it has been objected,” said Charles, “ that no one can have the evidence of a divine revelation in his mind but he only to whom God actually gives it. An *extraordinary*

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\* See the article, in the *Arch. du Christianisme*, on Cellellier’s Authen. and Divinity of the O. Test. ; and Coquerel’s Letter on the Hieroglyphic System of Champollion.

*revelation* has an *extraordinary evidence* ; and who can have that but the prophet himself?"

"That is Herbert's objection, Charles," cried the Cadet ; "and dost thou not see that it goes to overthrow all human testimony? Had I lived when Paul lived, I could have believed his word, that he saw Christ alive, on his way to Damascus, just as firmly as I could have believed my own senses. Had I lived sixty years after him, I could have believed the testimony of the forty thousand witnesses who had it from Paul, just as firmly as I could have believed my own senses. And thus I could carry down the testimony, clear and forcible, even to our day!"

"I am satisfied!" said Charles, with considerable agitation ; and a deep silence succeeded.

"But the infidels of our times," said Arthur in a subdued tone, "have drawn plausible objections from the discoveries of modern *Astronomy*. The system of Christianity, they say, is not consistent with the magnitude of the universe. Paine boasted a triumph in this!"

"Yes, Arthur, and before he gained a victory. Christianity represents the Deity saving his fallen children, while he sustains the spotless purity of justice, and puts down rebellion and crime in this humble province of his vast empire, even in the very spot of his empire, where his subjects perpetrated them. And while this wonderful redemption is going on, under the love and power of the Son of God, all angels and all worlds are represented by Christianity, as sharing deeply in the interesting work, and are in sympathy and love, bending over us, their brethren, and anticipating our arrival in glory with the most intense delight. Read Dr. Chalmers' *Astronomical Sermons*, I pray thee : they will fully satisfy thee on this point. One word more on the astronomical objections. The deist used to boast that it was merely an eclipse that occurred at Christ's death. The science of as-

tronomy shows that the moon was then at full, and that no eclipse of the sun can happen at such a time. And for the vagaries of the Chinese astronomers, quoted by the French infidel Bailey, who mentions a remarkable conjunction of the sun and moon 5,000 years before Christ's birth, that is, 1,000 before the world was made, and also an eclipse of the sun, 14,000 years before it—let me simply observe, that the science of astronomy can calculate conjunctions, or eclipses backward and forward, over time, to any extent. But the calculation carried back 14,000 years, can no more prove *that the world then existed*, than the calculation carried millions of years forward, can prove *that the world shall then exist!*"

"I feel myself trespassing," cried Arthur; "but pardon me one observation more. *Geology* is the favourite source of infidel objections at this time. Volney, and certain writers after him, have exhausted all the suggestions of this science, to show that the world could not have been made at so late a period as that fixed by the Mosaic account."

"Even geology, Arthur, has thus far, in its partial progress,—for we have scarcely attained the first rude elements of it—lent us its aid decisively. I refer thee to Watson's Apology (addressed to Gibbon) for an exposure of Brydon's infidel objections; and to George Buggs' late admirable work, entitled '*Scriptural Geology*,' in reply to Professor Buckland and others, and especially to Dick's *Christian Philosopher*," chap. 4.

Here, at the risk of repeating a few ideas, as I am anxious to meet the enemy, on their own newly assumed position,—I shall throw together a few observations, to which, I know, Arthur, thou wilt lend a candid attention. And, I trust, we shall see reason to exclaim, as did Wellington, when, in the Peninsular war, his aid-du-camp announced to him that the French had come out, and assumed a certain new position in front of him,—“*Then are they ruined, on that new position.*”

When sceptics have been vanquished,—as they invariably have been, whenever they came out in a tangible form,—they have usually retreated to another position. They have lately, particularly in Europe, resorted to the science of geology for objections to the Bible. And never has a finer illustration been given of the truth of the lines of Pope than that given by the affectation of sceptics on this matter.

“ A little learning is a dangerous thing ;  
 Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring.”

Two things have usually been the characteristic of the popular infidel objectors : viz. singular credulity, and an affectation of *superiority in literature*. Of late the enemies of Divine Revelation have shown these traits pre-eminently in the objections which have been urged from the science of geology. They would persuade those not acquainted with the details of that science, that the internal phenomena of the earth exhibit proofs that the world is some thousands of years older than what the history of Moses makes it. Some have attempted to count the different layers of earth deposited by the annual inundations of the Nile, and thus prove that the world is older than 6,000 years. But most material errors have been detected in counting these layers. Volney, in his survey of the Falls of Niagara, is confident that the world is much older than the Mosaic Chronology makes it. But then, he has made a capital mistake as to the time which water takes to wash away rocks and earth. In fact, it is a pleasing circumstance that, in proportion as true science advances, her valuable discoveries throw a constantly growing light over these branches of the *external evidence* of Revelation. A valuable one has been lately added. Let me briefly detail its history.

The Canon Recupero, a dignitary of the Roman Church, had been engaged in writing the history of Mount Etna. He

had discovered a stratum of lava, which, he *supposed*, had flowed from that mountain, in the second Punic war: that is, about 2,000 years ago. This stratum, he says, is not yet covered with soil sufficient to bear olives and vines.

He gravely infers from these premises, that it requires two thousand years to convert a stratum of lava into fertile soil.

Now, he goes on with all the gravity of a *Romish* scholar to state, that in sinking a pit at *Jaci*, near Mount Etna, marks of seven distinct lavas, one under the other, were discovered; the surfaces of which are parallel, and most of them covered with a thick bed of rich earth.

Hence the terrific conclusion, that the lowest of these strata of lava must have flowed from the mountain 14,000 years ago! And, hence, the world must be at least 14,000 years old! And, hence, Moses and inspiration are overwhelmed by the mighty discovery of the popish canon! Brydon, in his *Tour in Sicily*, is much delighted in laying hold of this infidel discovery of the Roman prelate. He details it with much triumph. Even the Abbe Recuperero, he says, "could not, in conscience, make his mountain as young as Moses makes the world." Believers in inspiration declare that the Bible makes the world not yet quite 6,000 years old; but the Abbe and geologers, say the sceptics, make it, by its discoveries, at least, 14,000 years old!

The Christian scholars, among the most conspicuous of whom was Bishop Watson, who met this new and bold positions, replied thus:—1. The Abbe has not proved that this stratum of his, was that which was poured out in the second Punic war. He only *conjectures* this. 2. Neither the Abbe, nor any other naturalist, can accurately determine the time in which a soil of rich earth can be formed on a stratum of lava. It is pure conjecture in the above bold conclusion of Recuperero.

On the contrary, that 2,000 years are not required to pro-

duce a rich soil, we have a complete and overwhelming evidence in a historical case exactly parallel. The lava of Mount Vesuvius, and of Mount Etna, from their other perfect resemblances, in all other points, will require the same length of time to mellow them into a soil fit for vegetation; or, if there be any material difference, it cannot be greater than what subsists between different lavas of the same mountain.

This position will be admitted by every scholar,

Now, the eruption which destroyed Herculaneum and Pompeii, happened in A. D. 79; consequently, it is about seventeen hundred and fifty years ago. "But we are informed," continued Bishop Watson, "by unquestionable authority, that the matter which covers the town of Herculaneum, is not the produce of *one* eruption only. There are evident marks that the matter of *six* eruptions has taken its course over that which lies immediately above the town. And these strata are either of lava, or burned matter, *with veins of good soil between them.*" This number of years divided by six, the number of eruptions, gives some 292 years for forming a good soil. Here are facts opposed to the Canon's *theory* of facts, based on premises which he has not proved, but conjectured!

Thus stood the state of the case for about thirty years. *Sed magna est veritas, atque prævalebít.* Dr. Daubeny, of Oxford, England, like a true scholar, began his examination of the Abbe Recupero's theory, by beginning at the foundation. He did not accept the Abbe's statement, like those who believe by proxy. He went over into Italy, and examined the facts with his own acute eyes, before he ventured to put forth a single remark. I give the rest in the words of his publisher.

"Dr. Daubeny having visited the spot, in his elaborate researches into volcanic phenomena, found that the aforesaid

alleged ‘beds of vegetable mould,’ the product of long and slow decomposition, were, in truth, neither more, nor less, than beds of *ferruginous tuff*, formed probably at the very same time as the lava itself. There is not the slightest evidence that decomposition had taken place in any one layer between the dates of the successive eruptions; for which, therefore, the shortest interval would suffice. It was a remarkable circumstance, as Dr. Daubeny observes in his lectures, that the alleged fact should have been known and commented upon for thirty years, without any person thinking it worth while to inquire whether it was well founded. So easily are sceptical objections thrown out; so readily are they entertained; and so little care is taken to confute them.”

Thus the image reared by the infidel Abbe tumbled into dust; and even its semblance has disappeared, amid the laughter and ridicule of all literary men. And the victory displays the triumph of Revelation, led on in the triumphant car of fair science.

The Abbe’s bishop, too indolent and too illiterate, met the ecclesiastic with the threat of the inquisition. “*Take care,*” said he with a threat, “that you do not make your mountains older than Moses’ world!” But the Protestant Doctor, guided by the light of science, dived into the mystery, tore off the veil of false and blundering philosophers, and demonstrated to the wondering world, the lovely science of Geology ministering, as a hand-maid, to Divine Revelation!\*

The two young men raised their eyes to the General, and remained silent.

“Well,” cried the Farmer, “I don’t even know the mean-

\* See an admirable work entitled, *The Evidence and Authority of Divine Revelation*, by Robert Haldane, Esq., published a few years ago in Edinburgh, vol. ii. p. 122—125. Second edition.

ing of your *Astronomy*, and your *Geology*: and them there sorts of things. But this I know, that had the Bible been given by God for man's good, it certainly had been given *equally and impartially to all men!* No partialities, my masters, can be exercised by Heaven, I reckon!"

"Farmer Rose," replied the Cadet, with great mildness, "are God's gifts thus given *universally* to all? Are not your life, as a man, and your immortal being, God's good gifts to you, sir?"

"Unquestionably, my lad!"

"And a soul and immortal existence to me, and to the General there, and to all of us here, and to all men?"

"Undoubtedly, my knowing one!"

"But, I pray thee, has God given this invaluable gift to your horses and oxen, and to the tribes of different animals?"

"Why, no, verily; but what of that, youngster?"

"Why, Farmer, just this; inasmuch as God has not given souls, and immortality to the dumb beasts, also, therefore this peculiar gift to man comes not from God—for, Farmer, had it been from God, it had been given, *without partiality*, to all his creatures!"

"Well! but—how is that? Howsomever, had I Paine here, I could answer you."

"Farmer," cried the General, "you are about some thirty years behind the advancement of religious knowledge. As for Paine, he has been annihilated by our late writers; and then none but Owen's people ever think of looking at the vulgarity, and blasphemies of Carlile. Have you examined the deistical writers of the eighteenth century?"

"I have not."

"Have you read the replies to them?"

"Never have seen, nor heard of them."

"Have you looked into Leland, Dr. Jamieson, Ogden,

Boudinot, Watson's Apology in reply to T. Paine—any of our *thousand and one* replies—such as Horne, or Haldane?"

"Never heard of them, that I can recollect of, General."

"Then I tell thee—for I feel myself competent—I also was as deep as thou now art in the apostacy. But His grace—Oh blessed, blessed be the holy name of my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!—His grace did bring me out of the horrible pit, and from the miry clay! Every objection of that bad-hearted man, Paine, and of all his predecessors, has been triumphantly answered, and utterly annihilated; and no *honest* man can repeat them, or even allude to them, so long as he has not resuscitated them, which he never can. It would be the attempt of a discomfited enemy at setting his slain men upon their lifeless limbs! Ah, Farmer, I received much instruction from studying the *philosophy* of Paine's character, and the *philosophy* of his dying hour. You knew his bad morals. We all knew his super-human malice against the LORD JESUS CHRIST, and his blessed Gospel! He hated HIM while living: he shrieked out, most piteously, the name of Christ, and called upon him with horror, in his dying moments! To me this showed the worth of Paine's sincerity, and the strength of his belief in his own principles. His conscience gave way under the horrible burden laid on it; and all men heard the crash of his ruinous fall!"

"There has been a change in the mode of attack on us of late," said the Pastor; "but, my dear General, I would not have noticed it now, had not an allusion been made to the name of the lion of the day in London, whose book, and other tracts, are now diligently circulated among the ignorant class of the community. Shaftesbury, you know, led the way in making '*wit the test of truth.*' Carlile, and his coadjutors here, have made the experiment of *sarcasm*. They employ not argument; they have been foiled at all points in hat. But they need not argument now, it would seem: it is

not their object so much to convince the understanding, as to corrupt the heart. Hence, to efface all serious impressions, to banish all veneration for religion, they imitate the example of the mob which places a fool's cap on the head of the pure and venerable Christian, and then shout their vulgar scoffs to bring them into contempt! They mingle the serious with the burlesque; they mix the detail of our Saviour's doctrines with the daring and profane taunt; and the solemn narrative of our BLESSED SAVIOUR'S life and sorrows with their satanic scoffs and blasphemies. This is the whole point and force of the latest work from the infidel press, which cost the publisher two years imprisonment in London, and a ruinous fine; and which has been circulated with some industry in our own country. Now, observe, I pray you, my young friends, how easily I could, after the manner of these infidels, turn this same weapon of theirs against all that is useful, and sacred in the land! By sarcasms and scoffs, I could overturn the youth's belief in all history, sacred and profane. I could, with ease, turn all morals, and virtue, and even common decency, into ridicule! I could hold up to bitter contempt and scorn the tears, and labours, and agonies of the patriot and martyr! I could, on the same infidel principle, convert the immortal WASHINGTON, and his compatriots, into downright ridicule! And I could, moreover, obtain an audience on a London alehouse bench, or in a New-York grog-shop, to be listeners and applauders, just as respectable, and just as earnest, as those who are *inspired* to applaud our unhappy sceptics of the present day. Nay, I could convert into ridicule the most holy and awful things which claim our veneration—even death, even judgment, even eternity! The attitude, therefore, which the assailants of Christianity now assume, is that of the *'madman who casteth firebrands, arrows, and death; and saith the while, am I not in sport?'*"

“ I pray you, Pastor, what may be the real source of man’s opposition to the Holy Bible? We have seen it, and I have felt it,” continued the General, “ that there is no great force in their objections; and truly, reason does not sustain them.”

“ The true sources of all the opposition, I humbly conceive, after a long attention to this subject,” said the Pastor, “ are reducible to *three*. *First*: the purity of God’s doctrines, and the strictness of the Divine precepts, can never be viewed by immoral beings with any other feelings than antipathy and hatred. Bad men hate the Christian religion, for the same reason that the criminal hates, and curses the laws of the land. Did the Bible bear the usual mark of the works and contrivances of man—were it as accommodating to human folly, and vices as our philosophical systems, or as licentious as the Koran, our deists, and even our atheists, would bow the knee and sing their *hosannas* to it. *Secondly*: The Bible was, a great part of it, written in a remote age; it alludes to facts, customs, and manners of remote antiquity; and it is composed—I mean the Old Testament—in a peculiar language, which deists never think of studying. They graduate their theories, and their criticisms by the standard of modern things, and times; and thence very gravely bring their accusations, and sentence against that which they have not known, nor even studied! *Thirdly*: The deep mysteries, and the consequent difficulties growing out of these, before the impatient and untrained mind of man, may be mentioned as another cause. Now, such is the nature of the subjects revealed, and such is the limited mind of man, that, if there were no difficulties, and no mysteries, I could not believe that it came from the infinite and divine Mind. Yet, such is the pride and impatience of the ‘*philosophic mind*,’ that it permits itself to be guilty of doing that against the Holy Bible and Christianity, which, if it perpetrated even

against the common branches of moral and physical science, would cause its expulsion, by the voice of every honest scholar, from the temple of science. I have seen the *tyro* raise difficulties, and urge objections in the common departments of physical science, which the professor, of even the best tact, could not satisfactorily solve. And can a man be deemed sane, who rejects the plain, urgent, and touching overtures of redeeming love, and brings on his soul the tremendous guilt of despising and rejecting the Son of God, the Saviour of the world, because there are, in the communication from Heaven, certain difficulties, and mysteries which present themselves to his finite and feeble intellect, and which necessarily spring up out of a subject the most lofty and sublime that can be presented to man? Locke, Boyle, Newton, and intellects of similar mould, deemed these mysteries and difficulties *no mean proofs of the heavenly origin of the Bible!* Beware, my friends, of betraying the surest evidence of shallow minds, by persisting in these objections."

"The Bible has given existence," cried Farmer Rose, "to amazing superstitions, and idolatries; witness Spain, Italy, and South America. I have heard sailors who visited these lands, tell all about them!"

"Yes! Farmer," cried the Cadet, "but you stop short in your story. You might as honestly have said that the Bible has originated all the superstition and idolatry of New-Zealand, of China, and ancient Rome, and Greece. Like your capable teachers, Voltaire, and Hume, and Gibbon, you mistake the Romish canons, for Bible doctrines: you confound Popery with pure and holy Christianity. The present religion of Spain, Portugal, Austria, and Italy, is, in its rites and ceremonies, genuine paganism perpetuated! Here, take this little book, and study it. It is *Dr. Middleton's letter from Rome*. It is a republication by the New-York Protestant association. Study it with care, I pray thee.

The farmer next stammered out something about the Bible giving rise to *witch and ghost stories*. "It deals much in these incredible stories," said he.

"I am prepared to meet your leaders on this point," said the Cadet, "as soon as you can present your objections in a tangible shape."

The farmer made no reply.\*

"Farmer Rose," said Mary, with great tenderness, "have you read the Bible, since you speak so much against it!"

"Why, now—read it, did you say? Well, I cannot say I have read it!"

"Do you possess a copy of it, Farmer?"

"Why, Miss, that is to say, I believe my wife has some of it!"

"You have a family—your dear children are immortal beings—do you know what the Bible is, or what its holy contents are? If you are resolved to cast away *your own* soul, will nothing less satisfy you than the sacrifice of *them* to Moloch?"

The Farmer was here seized with a fit of coughing, and hastily withdrew for a few minutes from the company.

"A most fit disciple of Thomas Paine, art thou, Jack Rose!" cried the General, as the Farmer returned, and resumed his chair. "I had not given thee all the credit due thee for being so supple a believer as thou art—*by proxy!* Your master boasted, I think, that he wrote his book without consulting the Bible; *for, in truth, he said he had not one!* You and he must quote by *revelation*, I presume—as Herbert, the father of English deists, actually published his book against Revelation, in consequence of *his getting a revelation and a signal from Heaven to do it!*†"

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\* See Appendix ; note B.

† See this curious fact in Herbert's book, and in Leland's View, &c. vol; I. p. 25, &c.

“Ah, Farmer, Farmer,” continued the General, assuming an earnest look, and the tears rolling in large drops over his cheeks; “I too was seduced into deism by this same man’s book. But I never was convinced by its arguments. I only felt a strong wish that the system were true. My ardent wishes—and I nursed them in proportion as I was troubled by a distressed and unsubdued conscience—my ardent wishes magnified these shallow objections into arguments. I easily professed to yield to what I earnestly wished to be true; because it was out of self-defence, against my conscience, that I wished them true! Paine’s scoffs, and raillery at divine things, therefore, did more mischief to me than did Hume. When the corrupted heart wants a pillow to sleep on, it does not take time to wait on the slow poisoning of the intellect by the frigid arguments of Hume.\* Paine’s scoffs, and Voltaire’s unholy gibes, and Carlile’s blasphemy, were opiates to my conscience, and my heart.

“Deism is not founded on reason, or evidence. Sceptics cannot prove a negative. Here they, and Unitarians, are in the same inextricable dilemma. They cannot disprove Divine Revelation, and our Lord’s supreme deity. Have they searched all records for the evidence, throughout heaven and earth? If they cannot find the evidence here in the Bible, or this province of God’s empire; have they traversed all worlds? Have they consulted the register of eternity? Have they visited God the Father on his throne for testimony? Have they conversed face to face with the Lord Jesus Christ on his throne? Have they mingled with angels and saints in glory, and heard their discoursings, and the evidence they can throw on their doubts? Have they spent a million or two of ages, in visiting all beings and things, where the fullest evidence may yet, even by their own admission, be found—while they choose with heaven-daring assurance to

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\* See Appendix, note C.

reject that kind, and portion of testimony which God has selected, and set before them? Have they not? Then they have not completed the testimony in their theory: they cannot, therefore, have any thing like unshaken faith in their own systems. The sceptic must, like the unitarian, remain in doubt—utter doubt; and therefore, without any of the consolations of faith, until all these researches, in all worlds, and in heaven, and in hell, can be thoroughly made? And hence, as honest men, they cannot consistently teach and promulge their systems, without the charge of imposture: that is to say, of teaching a thing of which they had, by no means, examined the evidence completely. And to be for ever in doubt, is to be for ever in painful suspense on a matter of infinite importance. And this must approach, in some degree, in this world, to the pains and torments of perdition!

“No, no,” added he, after a pause; “deism is not founded on argument. It brings no convictions, no faith; it brings no love to God; it cherishes no pure morals. It is the desperate resort of a corrupted heart. Rochester observed, after his conversion from it—and I can set my seal to the truth—that ‘A WICKED LIFE IS THE ONLY ENEMY TO THE BIBLE! Ah, beloved Pastor, my troubled heart has learned what that means in the book of God:—‘IF ANY MAN WILL DO HIS WILL, HE SHALL KNOW OF THE DOCTRINE, WHETHER IT BE OF GOD, OR WHETHER I SPEAK OF MYSELF.’ But dinner waits. Come, my sweet Mary! let me kiss away that tear that sparkles on thy cheek: it is a tear of joy, my love. Thou hast now a *father* to lean upon. An infidel can never be such a tender father, or an affectionate husband, as a Christian can! Lead we the way, my dear, to the dining-room, to prove thy hospitalities, in honour of our house.”

## PART II.

AN OUTLINE OF THE EVIDENCE OF THE AUTHENTICITY OF  
THE SCRIPTURES.

The solution of the objections had shut the lips of the young men ; and the solemn appeal of the General had brought tears into their eyes. When they had finished their repast, they resumed their seats under the vine.

“ I shall be the first,” said the Farmer, “ now that we have tested the General’s hospitality, to invite the Pastor to redeem his promise, given some time ago, or rather to make good his threatening, that he would drive the infidel from his last intrenchment.”

“ Pardon me, Farmer,” replied the Pastor, “ you are like the rest of them : in quoting, you always give *us* credit for a great deal more than we utter. Besides, if the Jews beheld even the miracles of our Lord, and yet remained infidels, shall an humble mortal suppose that his demonstrations can carry faith into your heart ? Ah ! Farmer, nothing but the grace of God can change the human heart. You overlook this, as the necessary consequence of rejecting God’s word. This practical error is as fatal as the rest of your theory. But, as we are happily met under this sweet arbour once more, I will show you, my children, that Christians deal not in declamation ; nay, Farmer, that they possess arguments which constrain ‘ devils to believe and tremble.’ It is no compliment to you, I dare say, if I add, that infidels have not yet reached the condition of these beings.

“ And, first, Farmer, a question or two : Is it impossible with God, think you, to give a revelation of himself ?”

“ Nay, truly he can, if he will, do all things.”

“ It is well answered. Then since he *can*, on supposition

that God intends to pity, and save his sinful children of our species, *can you reconcile with the truth of his paternal goodness, that doctrine of your sect, that he has not given them a revelation of his mind and will?*"

"Permit me to answer that question," said the General, as he saw the Farmer confused, and the young men decline to answer it: "It does truly appear to me, that the man who denies an accredited communication from heaven, brings venturously an accusation against the goodness and love of the Deity. As did Epicurus, so does the infidel represent God as far withdrawn from man and his concerns, and as leaving man and all his immortal interests to the frail and deceptive guide of unassisted reason."

"You will next admit the *necessity* of a revelation from heaven," continued the Pastor. "I shall simply repeat, at present, the truth which all men will admit. *God only can tell us his mind, and will.* Now, unless I know his mind, and will, can I know how to please him? I must either *conjecture* it, and so be in perpetual doubt; or I must *dictate* to him what I should give, and so deny him the homage due to him." The Pastor paused for a reply; but none was given.

"Now, then," continued he, "I pray you, what else is the Holy Bible but just this revelation; which is *possible*, and also *probable*; and so desirable and necessary, that it is the basis of all true religion? Will you then permit me to state the plainest and most forcible proofs of its authenticity?"

"But I wish, first, to place before my young friends, an humbling, and yet instructive difficulty in the way of deism, which must meet every sensible and penetrating mind. The position which the deist assumes in view of the mass of evidence presented by the Christian, throws the whole burden of *proving a negative* over on him. He *must prove*—and yet he *cannot prove*—that there is no heaven. He *must prove*—and yet he *cannot prove*—that there is no hell.

He must prove that Christ is not God ; and yet he cannot. He must prove that he is not the Saviour of men, not the Judge of all ; and yet he cannot. How can he ? Has he searched all records, in all lands ? Missing it here in this humble province of the mighty empire, has he searched all worlds ? Has he penetrated heaven and hell ; and consulted all intelligences ? If he has omitted any item, or even one witness, that item may contain, and that witness may exhibit, the evidence of the Gospel, and the evidence of our Lord's Deity. Now, as a rational being, he can take no practical benefit out of this system, as long as it wants proof. He cannot have faith without proof. Without faith he can have no repose to his mind and conscience. He is in fearful and eternal suspense—the suspense of an immortal being, between the hope of happiness, and the terrors of the second death ! Every shrewd mind must see this. Every infidel does see it—*sooner or later*. The pleasures and pursuits of time prevent the mind from taking a calm and honest view of this. When these are removed, the soul, recovering its elasticity, and the conscience, too its terrible powers, from that crushing load laid on it, discovers, feels, and acknowledges it, with a horrible demonstration ! Witness the death-bed scene of infidels ! Witness the last hours of Voltaire, Paine, and a host of others of the self-sacrificed.

“ Now, I have wondered, my dear General, how it could happen, that an infidel, having thus his hands so full at home, should ever think of venturing abroad to gain proselytes ! But leaving this, I go on.

“ The Bible is *genuine* ; that is, its parts were written by those men whose names it bears. It is *authentic* ; that is, it contains facts as they really happened.

“ FIRST. Now let us see whether the *external* evidence offered by the Christian on this all-important matter, does not amount to a demonstration.

“ 1. The matters of fact in the history of Moses being es-

tablished, these being miraculous, do establish the divine commission of Moses. Now let us select the following facts: The plagues of Egypt; the departure of Israel, and his passage through the Red Sea; the august appearance of God on Mount Sinai; the feeding of the people with manna; the death of Korah and his associates.

“Now I bring these to the test of Leslie’s first two rules, which I showed you the other day, Arthur, out of his ‘Short Way with the Deist.’ *First.* These facts were exhibited before the Hebrews, and they had the evidence of their senses to confirm them. *Secondly.* They were done in the most public manner, before the nation. Now Moses wrote his books during the lifetime of these witnesses. He tells them, that what he recorded they saw and heard. He records the fact, that they walked through the Red Sea on dryland; and he appeals to the evidence of their senses. Now, on the supposition that they had not been eye-witnesses of these facts; that is, on supposition that they had not taken place, could Moses ever have gained a whole nation’s belief? Could he have gained even one single disciple?

“But this is not all. There existed before the eyes of all the generations after Moses, an evidence of these miraculous facts, that is, an evidence of his divine commission; and an evidence it was, as strong as was the evidence of the senses which those had, who lived in the days of Moses. And I resort to *Leslie’s* other two famous rules of evidence. *Thirdly.* There were national monuments erected, and certain outward actions instituted, to commemorate these miraculous events. And, *fourthly,* [these monuments, and institutions were founded at the time when these events took place, and among the men who witnessed them.

“Moses, for instance, came forward before the Hebrew nation with his books of the law in his hand, and said to them, as he delivered to them the ceremonial and municipal

laws, The Lord destroyed the first-born of Egypt, and miraculously spared you—and this passover commemorates it for ever. You were delivered out of Egypt, and walked through the Red Sea—and this seventh-day Sabbath commemorates it. Deut. 5 : 15. God feeds you on manna—and this pot of manna which I put into the ark, shall commemorate this to remote generations. Korah rebelled against the Lord—this rod of Aaron placed in the tabernacle, budding and bearing almonds, and these 250 brazen censers which belonged to these rebels, and which I have caused to be nailed on the altar of burnt-offering, and which your eyes behold as often as you draw near with your sacrifices, do commemorate the event of Korah's death, whom you saw swallowed up by the earth. The Lord gave you the law, in the awful demonstrations of his majesty present on Mount Sinai—and this feast of Pentecost shall be kept, to commemorate what you *saw* and what you *heard* at that time.

“ And the nation received them ; the nation kept them, in commemoration of these events : they cling to them to this day. Now if these men in Moses' days, had not been eye and ear witnesses of these miraculous events, could Moses have gained one proselyte ? How complete the demonstration, then, when he gained a national belief, and a national reception of these !

“ Let us now suppose it to be asserted by any one, that the books bearing the name of Moses, were written and presented, that is to say, *forged* by a person some time after the death of Moses. If so, then the impostor was so successful, that he gained over the whole nation of the Hebrews to believe, and receive these books. But these national monuments, festivals, and even the municipal and civil laws, as well as the religious laws in these books, were, from the nation's testimony, in existence from the days of Moses. Consequently, this supposed forger must have wrought an extra-

ordinary miracle. In inducing the Hebrew nation to receive these forged books, he succeeded in persuading them that these books (now on this supposition seen for the first time) had been received by that people from their fathers; that they had been instructed in them from their infancy; that they had all been circumcised, and had practised this rite in consequence of the command enjoined on them in this law, just now seen by them, for the first time; and that they had obeyed the national laws, and all the peculiar ceremonies enjoined on them by God's command written down in these books, just invented by the *forged*. All this extravagance is gravely brought forward by the infidel in this supposition.

“ There is just another possible supposition by which he may seek an escape: these national laws and monumental festivals may be supposed to have existed before these books of Moses were fabricated.

“ In this case, the infidel assumes a thing not only incredible, but absurd; namely, that the Hebrews celebrated these public festivals from the earliest times of their national existence, *in memorial of nothing*; while, from father to son, the meaning and design of them were fully made known and interwoven into the very observance of them!

“ To sum up in a word: the books of Moses, with all the rest of the sacred cannon, have been received by the Hebrews, with veneration and faith in all ages of their history; and the chain of evidence contained in the national monuments and festivals, runs parallel with the extent of the nation's existence, up to the time when the miraculous events took place; and no conspiracy of men could have forged them, or imposed them upon the people, without imposing upon the evidence of their senses!

“ 2. Let us examine the New Testament evidence in the same manner. We recur to the rules. *First*, the miracles wrought in evidence must have been palpable to the senses.

*Secondly*, they must have been done publicly. *Thirdly*, public monuments and outward actions must have been instituted to commemorate the doings and sayings of Christ. *Fourthly*, these monuments and actions must have been instituted at the time of these miraculous events.

“ Now apply these rules. The miracles, the death of Christ, and his appearance alive after his death, in the midst of hundreds of witnesses, were entirely such as came within the palpable evidence of the senses. There are no miracles within the system of Mohammed, nor in the pagan world, nor in all the compass of time, that can be adduced as parallel to these. No one of them was, like these of our Lord, palpably evident to the senses. Now mark the point of this argument. The Apostles came forward into the midst of the rulers, and people of Jerusalem—not in a distant and foreign land; and only a few days after Christ’s decease; not a long time after the memory of him and his works was wearing out of mind. They told the people and rulers that he was alive; that they had seen him, and conversed with him; that he had been seen by 500 at one time, ‘ of whom,’ they said ‘ the greater number were alive’ and among them; that Christ had wrought miracles before their own eyes; that they had seen him, and the people had seen him, cure the blind, heal the maimed, raise the dead, and cast out demons; that the sacramental rites of the Holy Supper and of Baptism are the public monuments instituted to commemorate these things; and that the ministry is set apart to the service of God and the church, to keep up the memory of these, for ever. Now, I pray you, if these multitudes, these myriads of Jews, had not possessed the evidence of the senses, and the evidence from the testimony of those who had the evidence of their senses, could it have been possible to have gained a currency to their doctrines, and to their writings in the Bible ?

“ And suppose it possible that one could object, and call

the New Testament, or any of its parts, a forgery of after-times, we should meet it thus :—It is a matter of recorded history, that the Christian churches existed from the time of Christ ; that they embraced within their bosoms millions of the best and most virtuous of men that ever lived ; that these monumental festivals and rites existed in the Church from her origin ; that in these they commemorated Christ, his doings, and his sayings ; that the ministry, and the doctrines, and laws, and institutions of Christianity, are interwoven into the very existence of the Church. How could the New Testament, or any portion of Christianity, be forged, and brought into the Church in aftertimes, unless the forgers could, as in the former case, persuade the Church, and the nations of the earth, that they received those doctrines, and holy rites from their fathers ; that they were taught them from their infancy, and obeyed them as coming from God ; while yet they are found in that book, or those tracts, now for the *first time* (on this supposition) brought forward to their notice ? If the crafty forger could have thus attracted the attention and gained the faith of *all* the churches, and of many nations, and moreover, imposed a forgery on them contrary to the evidence of their senses ; he would certainly have wrought a miracle more difficult to be credited than any miracle ever announced to man !

“ **SECONDLY.** Strong as is the evidence of **MIRACLES**, that of **PROPHECY** is, perhaps, still stronger. It possesses the force of a miracle ; and of one, moreover, lengthened out from age to age, before the eyes of many generations. We have only to read the prophecy ; fix the remote age of the past in which it was uttered ; then fix our eyes on the passing events, giving a literal fulfilment, and, as it were, a living reality, to the thing foretold by the man of God ; and we are ourselves possessed of the evidence of the truth and divinity

of the Bible, strong as is any evidence which a rational being can require, not even excepting the evidence of the senses.

“ For instance, my children, I open this holy book and offer you briefly a specimen, Gen. 16 : 12. Of Ishmael it is written, *that he will be a wild man ; that his hand will be against every man, and every man against him ; and that, nevertheless, he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren.* Study this, now, in the light which history sheds over the national character, and fortunes of the Arabs of the deserts ; and you will perceive the literal fulfilment of this most ancient prophecy, carried over the field of 4,000 years ! What is said of them in prophecy and in history, can be said of no other nation under heaven !

“ Next, I pray thee, Charles, study, in the 28th chapter of Deuteronomy, the denunciations against the Hebrew nation ; examine the minute detail of the terrible calamities which befel them on their apostacy from God. These were foretold and recorded by Moses nearly 3,300 years ago. Then cast thine eyes over the history of the sufferings of that wonderful people ; then over their present condition in the four quarters of the world. All these evils they were to endure, while they should be scattered into all nations under heaven. And all the while they were to remain a *distinct people*, ‘ *not counted among the nations*’ as an integral part of any of them ! Behold the predictions ! Behold the terrible fulfilment up to the very letter ! It presents, from age to age, all the novelty and all the force of a STANDING MIRACLE, before the nations of the earth.

“ But the most prominent of all, perhaps, are those predictions relative to MESSIAH, our LORD. They marked out the spot, and named it, which he was to immortalize by his birth ; they named his family whence he was to spring ; they spoke of his virgin mother ; they fix the precise date of his

decease, (see Daniel, ix.) Moreover, his manner of life, his doctrines, his sorrows, his agonies, the selling of him for 30 shekels, the piercing of his hands and feet, were all detailed on the ancient records. And these records were in public circulation throughout the Hebrew nation *many centuries* before HE appeared. And history, sacred and profane, has faithfully recorded their entire fulfilment!

“ And time would fail me to rehearse the predictions respecting Tyre, and Babylon, and Egypt; and moreover, the destruction of Jerusalem, the dispersion of the Jews, the rapid progress of Christianity, its check by the kingdom of darkness for 1260 years, the rise of the *Eastern*, and the *Western*, and the *Infidel* Antichrists.\* These all are the subjects of prophecy. And the evidence of their accomplishment is just as manifest, so far as it has been evolved by Providence, as is the evidence of their having been delivered, some of them eighteen centuries, and others of them twenty-five centuries ago!



### PART III.

TIME speeds its course; and as it passes, it sweeps all men away. The General now sleeps in the village churchyard; and thou seest his monument of snow-white marble, under a weeping willow, as thou leavest the village of P——, and the ancient church on thy right, and ascendest the hill which overlooks the winding Passaic.

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\* See Bishop Newton on the Prophecies.—Jewett's Christian Researches; Faber, &c. &c.

The Pastor finished his argument one lovely afternoon in autumn, in the chamber of the dying General. He had been raised up on his pillow ; and through the opened casement his eyes rested on the lawn, which was bordered by a deep forest. The woods had assumed that picturesque and most touching aspect, which the sere leaves of every hue display in contrast with the lingering remains of deep green. “ I love the spring,” said the General ; “ my heart beats with joy at its approach ; but the painted groves of autumn, and the rustling of its sere leaves, fill me with deep melancholy.” And he sighed out that instructive sentence of holy writ : *We all do fade as a leaf!*

After the Pastor had finished his discoursings and consolations to the dying, and the youth of the family, who were drowned in tears, the General caused his sons to sit near him, beside Mary. And, after a long and tender look, directed on the faces of his sons, while he gave vent to his feelings in a flood of tears, he whispered to the Pastor to finish his argument on the EVIDENCES OF THE BIBLE.

The Pastor summed up all he had to say in the following words :

“ And, my children, having maturely examined the EXTERNAL EVIDENCE, you ought to renew the INTERNAL EVIDENCE of the Holy Scriptures.

“ 1. This holy volume, you see, is made up of several distinct tracts, written by men of the most various tastes, habits, and stations of life ; and from their condition, and the distant periods of time in which they respectively lived, it was utterly impossible that many of them ever could see, or converse with each other. Yet, here is a book from these different persons, who lived unknown to each other, and scattered over the period of about 1500 years, in which they all utter the same doctrines relative to the Deity and to man ; to time, and eternity. And there is not a contradiction or

even a dissension in sentiment among them, over the whole extent of their pages! Contrast these pages, in this particular, with those of any select number of writers of any country under heaven, and you will perceive the force of this argument for the divine inspiration of the writers of the Holy Bible. The fact itself is incontestably proved by our Biblical critics. And, in the face of this fact, to deny their inspiration from God, is to leave an astonishing effect utterly unaccounted for, and, in fact, without a cause!

“2. The purity and spirituality breathed forth by them, demonstrate that they could have their origin from the Fountain of purity and holiness alone. I entreat you, my children, just to turn your minds on their exhibitions of the unity of God, of the person of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; of the pure perfections of God, particularly DIVINE JUSTICE and DIVINE HOLINESS, ever set before you on the foreground of all their exhibitions of infinite majesty; and of the character of Jesus Christ—a divine model of the moral, beautiful, and sublime; and of the most charming loveliness of religion, as composed of a perfect combination of all the virtues, and all the graces that can adorn man, and beautify an angel; their uncompromising reproofs of vice, and their war of extermination against crime and folly, even to the smallest delinquency. Let your minds be possessed with clear ideas on these points; then tell me what mortal could, without communications from the Deity, ever indite, or even conceive such things! Let the genius of unsanctified literature produce from the works of her sons, spread over a period of 1,500 years, their happiest effort. Just as truly as the effect will bear the moral aspect of the cause, so truly their joint production will be a tissue of folly, and error, and pleadings for vice. We see the fact in bold relief, in the writings of the infidels of the eighteenth century, and in the Koran.

“3. There is a characteristic sublimity on the pages of the Bible, to which no unassisted genius ever could ascend. I allude to the conception, and description of the Deity, the angels, the creation, the Deity’s kingdom of nature, of Providence, (whose supervision and government extend from the minutest insect to the loftiest cherub in glory,) and of redemption. To these I add the conception of the heavenly state, called the kingdom of glory ; the region of despair, or hell ; and, finally, the character of our Lord and Saviour. In point of perfect sublimity in conception, there is nothing on the pages of ancient, or modern sages even to be named in the comparison with these ; and even their description leaves all human composers at an immeasurable distance in the back ground.

“ ‘ *God said, let there be light, and there was light.*’ ‘ *God removeth the mountains, and they know not : he overturneth them in his anger. He shaketh the earth out of her place, and the pillars thereof tremble.*’ ‘ *He measures the waters of the ocean in the hollow of his hand. He weighs the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance.*’ ”

“That passage in Homer,” Arthur observed, “equals those specimens, where he makes his Jupiter *heave the ocean, the land, and the hosts of the skies* ; and that other, in which the ‘ *Thunder clouds the heavens, and blackens half the skies.*’ ”

“As for thy last quotation, Arthur,” replied the Cadet, “I beg leave to observe that Homer has received credit among you for what he never wrote, that being found only in *Pope’s translation*.\* And for the first, it is, indeed, sublime ; but contrast it with the following out of the Revelation : *I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, before whose face the heavens and the earth fled away, and there was found no*

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\* See Homer’s Iliad, close of the 7th book.

place for them. *And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God!* And you and I will be of the number, Arthur!"

"Yes!" replied the general, in a whisper; "and that white throne I soon shall see, and my Judge I shall find my Saviour.—Oh, Lord, how long? Come, Lord Jesus!"

The young men uttered a deep sigh; and the tears rolled over Charles' cheeks, while Mary sobbed aloud.

"I pray thee go on, beloved Pastor," said the General.

4. The pastor went on with the argument taken from the *efficacy* of the Holy Bible. He described the character of the apostles, and primitive ministers of religion; the burden of their messages; the character of their opponents, such as the pagan priesthood and philosophers; and the nature of the violence resorted to, in order to stop the progress of Christianity. "Yet," said he, without human patronage, and in the face of ferocious persecution, in spite of tyranny and superstition, they triumphed. The disciples who crowded around the holy cross, renounced the bloody rites and religion of their fathers; they abandoned their vices and abominations; they became virtuous and holy men. And these disciples were not all from paganism; nor were they all of mean birth or humble rank. In Jerusalem, within a few days after our Lord's ascension, many of the chief priests, and multitudes of all ranks, embraced Christianity. Within perhaps twelve days, first, three thousand; then, five thousand; then, many 'myriads,' that is, 'ten thousands,' crowded around the cross, and bowed in worship to our Lord; and, among the nations, philosophers, and orators, and governors, and generals, and multitudes which could not be numbered, bowed there, in pure devotion. And cast your eyes over the nations, and behold the fields of its triumph, especially since the Reformation, and especially in our happy days of missionary enterprise! To believe that the preaching of the

doctrines of the cross merely—which pronounce human wisdom folly, and its highest pursuits puerility, and its favoured indulgences vices—could attract so many of the learned as well as the unlettered, and effect these marvellous conversions and changes which are exhibited in the moral and spiritual character of the Christian—and effect them, moreover, without the special power of God—is a thing above human credence. The man who can believe this, believes in a miracle without admitting any evidence to sustain it : it is the admission of the mightiest effects—the subjects of historical records themselves—while no adequate cause is assigned to produce them! And, yet, the infidel believes all this : so true is it, as Horne observes, that *deists are much more credulous than what even they themselves represent Christians to be !*

“ 5. Nor may I omit,” continued the Pastor, after a pause, “ to state the argument taken from the miraculous preservation of the Bible, *pure and entire*. No one wonders at the preservation of the volumes of the Greek and Roman writers ; no one thinks of any thing marvellous in it ; for all men, in all nations, who had the power in their hands, vied in honorable strife, and pious care to preserve them ; they were never exposed to the deadly hate and superhuman malice of the men who put forth all their power, and their cunning to destroy the Holy Bible. Antiochus left no means untried to destroy every copy of the Old Testament : his edict made it death for a Jew to possess or conceal a copy. So did Dioclesian, and other Roman emperors, respecting the manuscripts of the whole Bible. Yet it has not only not perished, but it cannot be shown that even one sentence has been lost.\*

“ I hasten to a close. Yet there is one evidence which I cannot entirely omit—internal, I may call it. It is this : A man’s reason may yield to the force of argument, and yet he

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\* See Horne’s Introduction, vol. I. chap. 5, sec. 2.

may not be convinced in his heart. In the vigorous intellect of Satan, there is no scepticism touching this matter; no, Arthur, we have the highest authority for saying it: "The devils also believe and tremble." James i. 19.

"There is instruction in the Holy Bible infinitely touching and divine: and, oh! were not the heart barricaded behind vice and prejudice, how forcibly it would feel this! Here I urge one request; and, as thou lovest thy soul, and reverest thy Maker, oh, Arthur, listen to it. Set before thy heart the august Majesty of the Deity; view, in the light of eternity, the untold worth of thy soul, and the comparative worthlessness of all sublunary objects; keep ever in the foreground of thy meditations, death, judgment, and eternity: and let all this mental effort, and discipline be sanctified by prayer. Then read the Holy Bible; read it with the meek and docile spirit of a child sitting at its Heavenly Father's feet. In that holy page thou wilt see the JUSTICE, and HOLINESS of God standing forward, pre-eminently conspicuous, before thy soul; but, then, they are most sweetly tempered by the presence of divine goodness, and love. There pity finds its way to the wretched bosom; grace to the undeserving; mercy to the perishing! And then, there is the Divine Mediator, ready to save—oh, Arthur, ready to save even *thee!* And there is a suitableness and perfection of grace in this Holy One to meet all thy wants, and to cure all the miseries of thy mind. A penetrating and delightful constraint overpowers the whole soul: a healing efficacy is exerted over the troubled conscience: a sweetly persuasive force takes captive the whole heart, and sends its divine and transforming energies over the entire man. We are won over by the overpowering beauty of God: we see in him a kind, reconciling, Heavenly Father: we see the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God and Son of man, who first loved us, and gave himself for us. We rest not in cold speculation while we read the sacred page: we

yield him more than the coldness of respect and admiration. The hardness of the heart breaks, and is sweetly dissolved into tenderness and affection. We fall down before him, and yield him the divine homage of our hearts and of our lives : we yield ourselves willing captives to the divine power of his word. We *know* it to be from God ; we *feel* it to be divine ; and we cannot be shaken from our faith, and our hopes by the barren speculations of ungodly men. We have a demonstration within the core of our hearts, which earth and hell cannot shake—that God has spoken to us, and touched our hearts.”

This is not all. The desperate recklessness of the sceptic, confirms my faith, and urges me to cling vehemently to the everlasting hope of my soul. Does the sceptic come as a high-minded reformer, with the purest of motives ? Does he come as a friend of the human race, to rid them of an evil, and bestow a divine boon ? Does he come in a spirit of noble and generous benevolence, to give us something far superior to Divine Revelation ?

“No, no : he comes as an armed fiend, spreading ruin and desolation. He would convert our paradise into a howling wilderness ! He would take away my Bible from me—let him produce a better one, and then I shall believe him to be *honest in reforming* us. He would rob me of my peace in believing—let him devise a better way of pardon for a guilty man, and the easing of a guilty conscience, and I shall believe him *to have the bowels of humanity*. He would rob me of the only system, under heaven, which tells me of God and his purposes of love and mercy—let him not incur the charge of folly in attempting to persuade men to his system, by throwing a gloom of blackness and horror over all that is true and lovely, and beautiful and sublime. Can revolting scoffs and blasphemies tempt me away from a Heavenly Father, and a most gracious Saviour, and a Divine Com-

forter? Loved and adored by this soul, can I give them up for an unknown God? He would tempt me from my faith, and my hope, and my joy; and he would have me to mingle in the ignorance, and vices, and despair of the Pagan! He would take away the only thing which can purify, and exalt, and ennoble the human mind; and he would involve me in guilt, degradation, and sorrow! He would rob me of my crown, and my associates in glory, and the joys of the beatific visions of my God; and he would plunge me in the dreariness of a lost hope, and interminable despair! He would drag me down from the dignity of an immortal being, and the companionship of angels, to die the death of 'the beast that perisheth,' and to be lost for ever in annihilation! Into what a state of degradation—and the loss of self-respect, and even reason—must I be sunk, could I yield myself a disciple to such a system!

“And the very existence of the sceptics does actually confirm my faith. Their coming as a blighting moral pestilence, was distinctly foretold by the apostles. Here are the words of the prediction; I select a sentence or two merely. ‘There shall come in the last days, scoffers, walking after their own lusts.’ ‘There shall be false teachers among, privily bringing damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them.’ 2 Peter.—‘Many false prophets are gone out into the world.’ ‘This is that spirit of *antichrist*, whereof ye have heard that it should come.’ ‘He is *antichrist* that denieth the Father and the Son.’ 1 John.

“These are fulfilled before our eyes. And the very existence, and the very scoffing of these multiform antichrists, fill up the measure of the truth of Divine Revelation. Their very existence, is a visible thing standing forward, and proclaiming to all who have ears to hear, that that book must be divine, and that Spirit from God, which holds forth such a prophecy. Had these sceptics, and scoffers not risen up, and invaded us

with their pestiferous influence, my faith had felt a defect in the evidence of Divine Revelation. *The earth has in more instances than one, helped the church!*

“ Oh yes,” added the General, as his pious negro raised him up, and supported him; “ the impiety of your Paine, and the blasphemy of your ‘ *Ecce Homo,*’ and other infidel tracts, may excite my grief and my disgust; but hear me— Was ever an affectionate child’s heart shaken, or its love undermined, by the ribaldry of a heartless foe, poured forth against its father? Can a dutiful child’s heart be allured from its father’s arms, and beloved fireside, by the voice of a stranger calling on it, with mingled chidings and reproaches, to hasten out into the dark night and the pitiless peltings of the storm? Your Herbert and Bolingbroke may utter their reproaches against the Holy Bible, as, in revolting hypocrisy, they bepraise it the while; your Hume, and his disciples of the modern philosophism, may affect deep investigation and disinterestedness in the search of truth, while they play off their ill concealed malice against the Lord Jesus Christ. Was the loyalty of a child’s heart ever persuaded to leave a kind father’s arms, to follow one whose cold repulsive sophistry strikes dead, at one fell blow, even the hope of peace and of heaven? Were the whole influence of deism to pour the enchantment of its eloquence on the ear of a child; or were it, with the vehemence of Rabshakeh, to open on him the floodgates of blasphemy, could it drive him from his holy purpose, or shake his faith in his Heavenly Father? No, no! It might excite a pang of regret, and a tear of sympathy over men rushing madly into an undone eternity; but, oh never could it seduce him from his allegiance, even in thought! Why, listen to me, young men—oh! my children, listen to me. This feeble voice shall bear on your ears its last and dying testimony. Infidels would take away from you the sun, and offer you the glimmerings of the dying lamp; they

beckon you from a palace, to lie down with them in a dungeon ; they seek to seduce you from associations with beings in whose character all that is beautiful, and holy, and divine, is combined, to mingle in dens of wickedness with men without devotion—without religion—without God—without hope. They would demonstrate that to be true which we *know and feel* to be false : they try to woo us over to their folly by the mockery of HIM who is dearer to our hearts than life itself : they tempt us to the barter of supreme felicity, by offering us perishing dust : they tempt us from the side of the Lord Jesus Christ, to mingle with them in the horrid dance of the demons of death : they tempt us away from the expanding gates of immortal glory, to crowd with them into the gulf of perdition ! Oh, my children, ‘ *madness is in their hearts while they live, and after that they go to the dead !*’ Eccl. 9 : 3. Can you be so weak—l will not say, so depraved—as to yield your faith to such a system ? Can the morality of these men entice your hearts, or win your confidence ? Can the prospects they set before you entice you, from the hopes of the Gospel ? Can the beings with whom they invite you to associate, seduce you from the LORD JESUS CHRIST ?”

Overpowered by this exertion, and yielding himself up for a while to his feelings, the General leaned upon his weeping daughter, and sobbed almost to suffocation. But nature was fast sinking. After a long pause, and having taken some cordials from the hands of his weeping sons—rather to gratify them than to refresh himself—he was laid down on his pillow, while he uttered, in a low whisper, as follows :—

“ Oh !—Lord Jesus ! THOU didst find me out, and THOU didst bring me back to thy fold. Oh, holy Shepherd ! look, I implore thee, on these poor wandering lambs—my Charles—my Arthur !—oh save them ;—and bless my Mary. Into thy hands I commend my soul—for thou hast redeemed me—O Lord God of truth.”

He uttered these words with tenderness, and in a faint voice, while all of them crowded around him to catch his last words.

A long and deep silence followed. "He is gone to his rest!" said the Pastor in a soft whisper; and, as it were, by one impulse, all of them fell on their knees around the death-bed of the General. And the Pastor, in a solemn prayer, commended to the holy care of Heaven, the bereaved family, and mingled his tears with theirs.

THE DUEL PREVENTED.

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“ THOU SHALT NOT KILL.”

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## INTRODUCTION.

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SOME ten years have elapsed since the following dialogue was drawn up, at the instance of a beloved friend, whose request was to me a command. Of course I was present and assisted in the dialogue.

Conceive to yourself, gentle reader, a very handsome mansion-house, some twenty miles north of one of the fashionable watering places, in the Ancient Dominion—as Virginia is called—from its being about to become a kingdom, on a certain time, and its offering the crown to the exiled, and wandering Charles II. This mansion stands on a knoll, in a wide valley, embosomed in its ancient and paternal oaks. In front lies a circular enclosure of rich shrubberies, and flowers, around which the coach path sweeps. From this a broad lane leads down to the great western turnpike. This lane is adorned on each side by a row of ancient elms, whose stately boughs form an archway which might form a capital model for some magnificent gothic arches, and ceiling. Here the traveller, panting under a burning summer's sun, finds a delightful shade, as he turns from the dusty turnpike, and as he approaches the mansion-house of Governor D——.

On the right of the house lies the spacious garden,—“a wilderness of sweets and beauties :” on the left is the orchard, well stocked with fruit trees, which yield a continuous succession of delicious fruits, from early April, to the season of the American “Fall,” when autumn lingers under a winter's sun.

The mansion-house is reared in the European style ; two story, with a double row of rooms on each side of the spacious hall ; with appropriate wings at each end : but truly American, by its lofty, two-story piazzas, in front and in rear, supported by massy Corinthian pillars. Here can the fresh breezes be caught at all times, whispering through the surrounding foliage ; and the eye is delighted, at once, with sublime mountain scenery, crowned with its waving forests ; and, at the same time, with the richest and most beautiful landscapes, along the valley, upward and downward, as far as the vision could extend, over highly cultivated fields, and well watered meadows.

We had just arrived from the springs at this delightful retreat. It was a select party, at once elegant and intellectual, which the Governor had drawn around him, in order to enjoy the benefit of a free conversation on a particular subject. And it was the first time that the family had received company, after a melancholy affliction which had befallen them. I need scarcely add, that General H. and the Governor, and his lady were Christians.

## THE DUEL PREVENTED.

“ True honor travels in a strait so narrow,  
Where one but goes abreast ; keep then the path.”—*Shaks.*

“ THERE is nothing like coming together on these matters,” said General H——, as the servant removed the cloth, and set down the wine, with the nuts, and ripe fruit. “ And believe me, Doctor,” continued he to the Pastor who sat next to him,—“ the wise method which we moderns have of coming to distinct explanations, has saved the better half of all our controversies. So is it in reference to our young Hotspurs,—ay ! and our old Hotspurs too. Were they only to come to something like an explicit understanding with each other, befitting men in civilized life, it would prevent these melancholy feuds, and this wanton waste of useful lives. Your Excellency, I am sure, will agree with me on this matter,”—added he, as he bowed to Governor D——.

The Governor sighed, as he expressed his assent, and cast his eyes mournfully on two interesting young men who sat opposite each other, near the foot of the table. “ I pray God, said the Pastor, “ that this expedient may have the effect. It is a sore evil under the sun,—this dueling. It never has produced a single benefit to any one. And sure am I, its evil fruits are bitter as death. Many a sister, and many a mother it has”——

General H—— laid his hand gently on the Pastor’s knee, while his eyes, as it were instinctively, wandered to the head of the table, where sat two lovely females, the wife and

daughter of the Governor,—whose weeds, and awakened grief, indicated their recent, and sore bereavement. The Pastor felt that he had, though undesignedly, given pain : and he broke off abruptly in the middle of his sentence. But this only tended to make the words more emphatic, as it left them sounding in their ears. The Governor covered his face for a moment, with his handkerchief ; and the General himself wiped a tear from his eyes.

“ Why truly,” cried Colonel B——, whose light heart had seldom known sorrow, and who chose to be witty, though his attempt to cheer up, at this moment, was made at the expense of good sense and feeling :—“ There has been, your Reverence, a rather unfortunate piece of business of late. And, my certes ! there’s more coming, if I guess rightly. Our young cousin, and his Excellency’s son, there, who sits opposite to him, brother to-wit, of him who fell in the late duel, have their hair triggers actually ready. The challenge has been given, and accepted. Am I right in my conjecture, Mr. Second ?” added he, as he turned to a young lawyer on his left.

The eyes of the whole company were directed on the two young men, in utter incredulity ; yet, as if eager to be relieved by a denial from their own lips. Serious difficulties, it was well known, had existed between them. But neither of the families had known, before this moment, that matters had proceeded to this appalling extremity.

The young men made no reply. They neither smiled, nor ventured to raise their eyes to each other.

The Colonel attempted to rally their spirits by offering a kind of apology in behalf of dueling ; and by saying something “ of the superabundant steam of our gallant youth being let off safely in this ancient, martial, and truly honourable way.”

“ Sir !” said the Governor, with more grief than warmth,—

“ And why not avail yourself of the reason which Swift’s sarcasm and recklessness assigned in behalf of its beneficial tendency. He would be sorry, he said, to see any laws enacted against dueling, inasmuch as it *rids the world of many a villain!* But, Colonel, in an affair of this kind, is it not unwise to jest? Is it not cruel to lay in the balance, a few personal inconveniences, or even insults, against the honour of the laws of our country, the peace of families, the good order of society, and our everlasting well-being!—Young men!” continued the Governor, as he saw a disposition in the parties to leave the company,—“ I insist on it, that you stay. And now, that we are enjoying the company of the General, I hope we shall not lose the benefit of his enlightened experience on this subject. If you be the advocates of dueling, and have, like young madcaps, a duel before you,—ought you not to be willing to hear, and to know, all that can be said *for* it, and *against* it? Can an honourable and candid man decide on a subject before he hears both sides?”

They bowed respectfully to the Governor; and placing themselves within the circle, around the General, they waited, in silence, the discussion.

“ Young gentlemen!” said the General, with a benignant and smiling air—“ I cannot think so ill of your *hearts*, as to believe for a moment, that you would yield them up to the possession of the murderous desire of malice. And I should insult your *intellects*, did I suppose that you could reason yourselves into a belief that *a duel is necessary in any circumstance*. No man, be he in the civil, military, or naval department of life, needs to fight a duel,—that is to say, if he only knows his duty, and has the good temper, the high honour, and the courtesy of a gentleman. I am an old soldier, and have seen service in Washington’s time, and in the late war too. And I have been brought into contact with the fiercest spirits in the camp, and in the cabinet too. And, thank God,

I can say, I never yet stood in need of the factitious honour of fighting a duel. And I am not alone in this honour, among the ranks of our gallant men.

The fact is this : TRUE HONOUR is very different from the thing, known, and practised under the name of *honour*, by our modern sciolists. I shall not undertake either to define, or describe what they call honour. But I trust, we of the old Washingtonian, and Christian school, can tell you what TRUE HONOUR is. And I shall show you how I am backed by an eloquent man. Be pleased, Colonel, to pass me that volume of Dr. Blair that lies near you," continued the General. "I wish to do myself the pleasure of presenting these young gentlemen a beautiful and correct picture of honour, drawn by that inimitable writer in one of his sermons. Here it is :—

"True honour lies not in any adventitious circumstance of fortune ; not in any single sparkling quality ; but in the whole of what forms a man : we must look to the mind, and the soul :—a mind superior to fear, to selfish interest, and corruption : a mind governed by the principles of uniform rectitude and integrity : the same in adversity, and prosperity ; whom no bribe can seduce, or terror overawe ; neither by pleasure melted into effeminacy ; nor by distress sunk into dejection. Such is the mind characterised by true honour.

"One he is, moreover, who, in no situation of life, is either ashamed, or afraid, to do his duty ; and act his proper part with firmness, and constancy. He is true to his God, whom he worships : and true to the faith, which he professes to believe. He is full of affection to his brethren of mankind ; faithful and true to his friends ; generous to his enemies ; warm with compassion to the unfortunate ; self-denying to little private interests, and pleasures ; but zealous for public interests, and happiness ; magnanimous, without being

proud ; humble, without being mean ; just, without being harsh ; simple in manners, but manly in his feelings. On his word you can entirely rely ; his countenance never deceives you. His professions of kindness are the effusions of his heart. One he is, in short, whom, independent of any views of advantage, you would choose for a superior ; could trust in as a friend ; and could love as a brother."

Such is the man of TRUE HONOUR. And as long as this description must be deemed just and accurate ; as long as causes produce their legitimate and necessary effects ; as long as genuine virtue cannot act in direct opposition to its very nature,—so long will it be morally impossible that *a man of true honour either will, or can, fight a duel!*

" You heard the Colonel, just now, boast of the antiquity of this practice. Let us follow him to its origin. Dueling is a shred and relic of a barbarous age. Were I, young men, to renounce the manners of a polished man, and go back into the woods with the savage ; or did I follow the dress and morals of the Goths and Vandals, you would think me, I dare say, not only ridiculous, but absolutely insane. But frankly I tell you, I should deem myself infinitely more insane did I patronize, or practise this relic of the barbarous nations of northern Europe.

" The origin of the Duel is not to be sought for among the polished and brave Greeks, and Romans. Let us do them justice. Their hands were pure of this evil. The rude and savage inhabitants of Scandinavia, and ancient Germany, were, from time immemorial, in the practice of settling their disputes, by arms, in public. The slow and circuitous processes of courts of justice, were despised by these fiery spirits. On the spot where their differences originated, they drew their blades, '*and proved their innocence*' by the streaming blood of their antagonists. 'From times most remote,' says Tacitus, 'these savage Pagans held it a part of their bloody re-

ligious rites, to make an appeal to heaven, by arms. Their superstition even resorted to the Duel, to discover whether heaven would smile on their arms, in an approaching battle. With some pains they captured one of the enemy's warriors. With him they compelled one of their own select men to fight, in Duel. And in his success, or fall, they divined the issue of the battle.'

“This martial and bloody fanaticism had spread over the northern nations of Pagan Europe,—and by a singular chain of circumstances, the appeal to heaven by arms, was established in the fifth century by Gondebaud, the King of Burgundy, and by other princes. The ancient laws of their realms had, contrary to those of other states, admitted of *negative* evidence in courts. That is to say, the accused were permitted to swear in their own favour: and also to obtain their relations, and their retainers to swear that they were *not guilty!* The abuse of this law, by revolting perjuries, was assigned as the reason which induced these princes to establish the appeal by the single combat. But the superstition of the day gave it popularity. In that dark and barbarous age the profession of arms was deemed the only honourable employment. Bravery, was with them, the greatest of all the virtues. Heaven was their patron of arms. The bravest, therefore, were the favourites of heaven; the brave, being the same as the virtuous. Heaven, they avowed, would not permit the brave to suffer wrong. He would miraculously interfere to vindicate him. To him of course they appealed, by the single combat. He who fell was by the award of heaven, guilty. The victor was approved of God,—and pronounced innocent before men!

“In the days of Gondebaud, this bloody superstition found its way even into all courts, civil and ecclesiastical. In the following ages, the ministers of religion attempted to give a milder direction to the fanatical belief in the miraculous in-

terposition of heaven. But, it is to be lamented, the corruption of religion, in those dark ages, rather augmented, than abated the evil. Hence, while the trials of the ordeal by plunging the hand into boiling water; by grasping red-hot irons in the hand; by walking on burning plough-shares, were practised by monks of the cloister, as well as by laymen—the military spirit, pervading the higher ranks of society, retained and perpetuated the appeal to heaven by single combat.

“It is evident, then, young gentlemen, from historical documents, that the Duel is the relic of the dark and superstitious age. But this is not all. Will you permit me to say, that the modern duel owes its origin to even a refinement of absurdity upon this ancient relic of barbarism. I have just referred to that law. And I venture, young gentlemen, to say, that no man of even refined, I will not say Christian morals, will hazard his reputation by defending it. And this is the modern refinement I allude to. In the duel of the Gothic ages, the parties gave the lie, and the challenge, *always* in the presence of the magistrate. In his presence, always, did they fight. No private duel was authorized by honourable men. Your private duel in those days would have been pronounced wilful murder, by these old barbarians! Besides, the appeal in single combat, was not tolerated by the magistrate, but on the following terms. The crime charged on the accused, must be a *capital crime*; or such a crime as *renders a man infamous*: and, finally, it must be made manifest that *the accusation was incapable of proof, or of refutation in any other way.*\*

“All these preliminaries being carefully settled in the presence of the judge, the parties were led out *publicly* to

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\* Brewster's Encycl. vii. 796. Montesq. Spirit of Laws, B. 28, 14—17.

the combat ; and he who fell was deemed *guilty* : he who was victor, *not guilty*, by the award of Heaven. And it was pronounced so, accordingly, by the magistrate from his judgment seat, with the usual solemnity.

“ Now, you who sustain the duel, do not require the magistrate’s presence. In the Gothic duel, a trial, *by their law*, was held : an execution was made,—life was taken away in the presence, and by the sanction—absurd, indeed, and impious as it was—yet still by the sanction of a tribunal. But you have no trial ; you have no magistrate lending his presence ; you perpetrate the horrid deed in secrecy. Your duel is beyond measure more absurd, and more criminal than that of the Goths. Theirs was murder by an impious, yet recognized law. Yours is murder—deliberate and cool-blooded murder, without even the flimsy cover of a fanatical law to apologize for it !”

Here the General’s son, who had been challenged, lifted his eyes slowly to his antagonist, whose eyes met his, with an expression of deep concern.

“ Besides, gentlemen,” continued the General, “ you retain the bloody *mode* of taking life ; do you retain the solemn appeal to Almighty God ? The duelist of the dark age, made his appeal to the Deity, in full faith that he would make common cause with him, and guide his steel against his antagonist. Where are your vows, and solemn appeal to the miraculous interposition of heaven ? It is a singular circumstance that you reject the only ‘ *religious and legal*’ part of the Gothic duel ; while you retain, in these milder, and Christian times, the only heathenish, and fatal, and revolting part of the barbarous ceremony !

“ Now, I ask you, as men of reflection, and refined habits, to assign, apart from this appeal, the other reason for the custom of the duel. I put it to you, young gentlemen, to say whether you can devise more than one, or other, of these

two views, in which it can be taken. Either, first, it is an appeal to Heaven, and a prayer withal, that God would interpose a miracle to settle a quarrel, and one confessedly, too, of such small consequence that human laws cannot stoop so low as to reach it.—Or, second, it is an ebullition of murderous revenge, which sets at defiance, at once, reason, and the courtesy due to society, and all laws, human and divine ! Frankly, I must avow, there is no other conceivable alternative.

“ Does any one soberly profess that the duel was got up for the trial of courage and strength ? That was the avowed object of the tilt and the tournament, in the martial ages of chivalry. But, in no instance, in our days, has this ever been the avowed object of the duel. It is originated by a quarrel at a card-table ; or in the heat of forensic debate ; or of political discussions. Anger, which, in ordinary cases, spends its violence in words, and sudden vengeance, is not the characteristic of the Duel. We have only to analyze the feelings of the parties, in order to discover this. Malice and revenge of a deep, and rancorous nature, take possession of their hearts—especially of that of the challenger. And under the furious impulse of evil passions, is the duel planned, and executed.

“ The truth is, the question of *courage* is a new consideration which springs up, incidentally, in the progress of arranging the Duel. The idea of *courage* is attached to him who fights, and that of *cowardice* to him who declines, or passes over an affront. But even here the idea is started through the perversion of manners.—That the man, who refuses to shape his morals to the custom of a dark age, absurd in itself, and absolutely fanatical ; and who will hazard ridicule and scorn, rather than do an immoral action—is a coward,—is an assumption, altogether gratuitous, and unwarrantable. Sirs, the charge remains yet to be *seriously* offered against

that man's courage, because he cannot permit himself to retain, in an enlightened and polished age, a foul and revolting remnant of Gothic barbarism; and because he dare not lend his countenance to a notorious breach of the laws of God, and of man! It never has been *seriously* made; it never has been sustained by the show of an argument!"

"Let that be as it may," said the Colonel, with a sarcastic air, "nevertheless, public opinion pronounces him a gallant man who fights; and we cannot, in our souls, separate from his character who declines, the idea of cowardice.—This sentiment pervades the naval and military circles, not only—but the best circles of the community. Even in the drawing-room it finds especial favour! The ladies patronize the duel!"

"And all this, my dear Colonel," said the General calmly, "your own good sense will readily allow, does not prove the evil to be one whit the less dangerous and unnatural. This error in public opinion arises out of the diseased and sickly state of public morals. And the extent, and inveteracy thereof, only tends to show how long the remains of a barbarous, and shocking custom, when once sanctioned by names and authorities, will linger among the men, and women of a refined age. And recollect, Colonel, I pray you, that such errors in public opinion, unnatural and dangerous as they are, are not by any means uncommon in the history of human depravity. The '*Holy Inquisition*,' with all its revolting discipline of fire and torture, has, on a time, been sustained by military and naval men; and by men in the highest walks of life;—ay! and it found favour, also, with the tender sex, and the most polished in the land! I refer you to the history of Spain.—And at this day in the East Indies, the trembling wretch, who lingers and shrinks back, with horror from a fiery death on her husband's funeral pile, to which the horrid law of the Brahmin dooms her, is actually

pronounced a coward and impious, by *public opinion*—yes, by the sanction even of men in the highest caste; ay! and of delicate females too! And because *public opinion* sustains these enormities—because the foremost persons in Hindoo society sustain them, are the virtuous and humane to crouch down, and worship *public opinion*, and load its altars with human victims? Are the funeral piles to smoke forever, with tender and beautiful women, because public opinion applauds it? No, no; the bravest, and fairest in the land should deem themselves honoured, could they enlighten *public opinion*, and correct this revolting evil. And have you, young men, neither philosophy nor courage enough to resist the tyranny of *that public opinion*, which supports the murderous practice of dueling, and of burning Hindoo women?"

"Fairly hit!" cried the Colonel. And he added with great good humour, as he turned toward the two young men—"I profess I have nothing more to say in defence of this same villanous *public opinion*!"

"But, surely," said our young lawyer, alarmed at this retreat of the Colonel, "we have every reason to believe that the duel has been originated, with us, in *the simple impulse of the laws of honour*."

"Sir," said the General—"depend on it, this same *impulse of the laws of honour*, if impartially analyzed, will be found just to be, under another name, the ebullition of sheer and unmanly revenge!"

"You are correct, my dear Sir," said the Pastor; "true honour and courage, I am persuaded, are at war with the principles of the duelist. True courage and honour are inseparably attended by wisdom and correct practical views of duty. Take these elements away from their composition, and they cease, from that moment, to be true courage and honour. That which is too often boasted of, under their sa-

cred names, is utterly destitute of these essential ingredients of virtue. Such courage is little else than inhuman ferocity; and such honour, unmanly weakness! Can the brave and honourable man violate the ties of duty to his friends, to his family, to his country, to God, merely to gratify his own revenge, or allow a madman to murder him to gratify his revenge? No; he is incapable of such wilful delinquency, simply to gratify himself in any private end. He cannot desert the post in which God and his country have placed him. For he would thereby sacrifice every holy and ennobling virtue of the patriot. He cannot break through the obligations of these duties. For he would thereby make himself an object of deep abhorrence. Call you that 'courage, or the impulse of honour,' which constrains a man to desert the post in which God has placed him, at the head of his family, and to leave them unprotected, in the unpitying and insulting world? No! It is the treachery of an unnatural and cowardly being! Call you that 'courage, or the holy impulse of honour,' which prompts a man to cast aside the obligations of duty which he owes to his country? No—it is the recklessness of a traitor! Call you that 'courage, or the sacred impulse of honour,' which impiously hurries a man away from his allegiance to his Maker? No—it is the madness, and despair of an atheist! Will honour hurry a man, who is a husband, into the *unmanly* act of deserting a wife, to whom he has, in the presence of Almighty God, pledged the truth and honour of a man? Will a man of honour recklessly tear asunder the most sacred ties? Is it honour which drives a man to inflict on the companion of his bosom—or on a mother, or a sister's heart, a wound more excruciating than that which the duelist feels, when the steel pierces his own heart? The injury which the duelist inflicts on every individual around the domestic circle, is irreparable. Time cannot cure the wound which it causes in a parent's heart: nor can it soothe the death-pangs of a beloved

companion, when her comforts and happiness are wantonly smitten dead! And what can I say of that cruel robbery of those sweet little beings—his own children—when he wantonly throws away that life in which their happiness, and very existence were wrapt up! When the hour of cool reflection comes, what sentence must every honourable man, and every tender hearted and virtuous woman, pronounce on this unmanliness, and treachery, and cowardice?"

"Ah! call it by what imposing name you please," cried the Governor, as he strove to conceal his agitation. "It is not courage: it cannot be true honour! Did I venture to give it a name, I should call it the daring of a cold-hearted destroyer of life, and happiness—the atrocity of an inhuman monster—but I forbear."

"Assuredly," said the General, "the honourable and gallant man is utterly incapable of staking in private affairs, and on trifles, a life which he knows to be a precious boon of his Maker! He cannot throw that wantonly away which is of inestimable worth to those whom he tenderly loves. He cannot plunder others of happiness and life, to gratify merely a maniac passion for revenge. He cannot rob his country of a valuable life. He cannot sacrifice his loyalty pledged by oath, to his country. He cannot add treachery to perjury; and desert his post in the very face of the world. He cannot, with the mocker, and insulter of holy Heaven, throw back, unasked, into the hands of his Maker, that life which he gave him, for a high and noble destiny. He cannot sacrifice to the idol of *public opinion*, or the tyranny of etiquette, at the expense of his immortal soul. His happiness and his life itself, the brave and honourable man will indeed peril. But then, it is only when the solemn call of the Almighty summons him to the aid of his country's sacred cause, and the holy cause of religion!"

Here a pause ensued, during which the young men, greatly

agitated, whispered to each other, for a few minutes, and wiped away some tears which none of them could conceal.

The General went on. "I ought not to omit another charge against dueling, which every man of honour, in a free country, is bound, I think, to consider. It involves the absurdity of perpetuating, in an enlightened age, the principles of feudal times. It opposes brutal force to free opinion, and moral sentiment. It assumes, in my judgment, that '*might creates right.*' I am charged, for instance, with a crime. I give the lie to my accuser; or I strike him. This puts us on the '*point of honour.*' We appeal, not to the civil law; not to friendly interposition; not to the ordeal of water, or of red hot iron; but to *arms!* My proof of innocence is my appeal to physical force. I happen to be the adroiter swordsman, or the better shot. From these I draw my proofs of innocence, to satisfy the public. I wipe off the charge by physical force, or a fatal bullet!—You must admit this, or admit our former resolution of the motive into a mere ebullition of phrenzied passion! Now, this was the mode pursued by the '*gallant*' Baron, in feudal times. He, too repelled the solemn charges brought against him; he too sustained the laws of courtesy; he too wiped off the disgrace thrown on him. And how? By sallying out, at the head of his vassals, and burning his antagonist's castle, and knocking him on the head, as he fled from the flames! This act of successful and ferocious violence, wiped out his disgraces. And if it did not restore him to the odour and sanctity of his former honour,—but drove him, for a season, from polished society,—it did, at least, strike terror into other accusers; and caused youth, and certain romantic individuals to wonder at his boldness and courage!"

"And if I mistake not," said the Pastor, "we can trace another branch of this same spirit, putting itself forth in another form,—but a form the most mischievous and detest-

able.—Modified by religious intolerance, this very same spirit which opposes brute force to sentiment and argument, has lighted up the horrid fires of the *Inquisition*, and erected the bloody gibbets of persecution. These admitted no friendly explanations. They listened to no persuasion. They resorted to no argument. They employed the violence of physical force. They preserved the ‘purity and the honour’ of their *creed* by *simple force*. They wiped away the stain of the heretic, by *simple force* applied to the body! And now, banished from the cells of the inquisitor, and the conclave of persecutors, by the growth of light, and sweet charity—it has found its way to the guardianship of modern manners: and the purification of the modern honour of modern sciolists! It courts popularity, and wins favour by refuting arguments with the cold steel, and by establishing ‘immaculate honour’ by a well aimed pistol bullet! The assassin is as honourable as they are,—although a great deal less ceremonious!”

“You will admit, however, dear General,” cried the young lawyer, who evidently felt the force of this ridicule, and dreaded it more than argument, “that dueling has contributed greatly to polish the rude manners of former times; and does yet contribute to promote courtesy, and good manners among our young officers; and, indeed in every polished circle. Were it not for the duel, these young and fiery spirits could not be congregated within a camp, or on the quarter-deck with safety, or comfort.—Without it, one would meet continually with rude treatment, and insufferable insults!”

“This is plausible, Sir. But do you not see that your argument is based on the injurious assumption, that these youth and officers are more rude, and untrained, and immoral, than all other men? And, in order to train them, you may argue farther, that ‘one may do evil that good may come?’ If my neighbour is rude, and wants for courtesy and attention, I

shall peril my life, or take his away, in order to mend his manners, and make him a gentleman! Would it not be unspeakably more becoming those who lived in polished and christian times, to substitute, for this revolting Gothic system, some humane and christianlike means? Ah! my dear sir, the diffusion of a moral and religious principle, by the salutary influence of education, and christian discipline, will do more to attain this end which you desire, than the unblest and murderous practice of a thousand duels! Why, my dear Henry, the Greeks and Romans, who were professedly studious of promoting courtesy and politeness, never resorted to the duel; they never needed it. And, what is far more forcible as an example, in proportion as christianity, which breathes brotherly love, kindness, and courtesy, into the human bosom, does pervade civil society, by its regenerating influence, men put on bowels of mercy and compassion. They become polished and courteous. They are incapable of yielding themselves to the rudeness, and violence of vicious men—which, thou sayest, needs the pruning of the Gothic weapon of the duel. Besides, there is no force in thy argument, until thou canst make it appear that the men who practise dueling are *as rude, and savage* as those of olden times; and do, therefore, need the rough and barbarous discipline of Gothic training! Even the mountaineer, who handles his broad axe in trimming the felled oak, never thinks of employing the same coarse weapons in completing the polish of the fine inlaid work of the luxurious sideboard.

“Nor is this all. Art thou aware into what a fearful consequence this favourite argument leads the patrons of dueling? The battle-axe of the Gothic chief clave the head of his offending vassal, on the spot where the crime was avouched. And this summary justice, no doubt, ‘*softened the rough manners*’ of his fellows.—The discipline of knight-errantry did, unquestionably, in its time, ‘*subdue and soften the rude*

*manners*' of the feudal Barons, whose acts of violence threw whole neighbourhoods into the greatest distress. And thou canst not deny that the stiletto of the assassin has kept in check the haughty and overbearing nobles of the old world, and reduced them into '*respectful attentions and courtesy*,' in the circle of the peers! And yet, for any one, or for all of these benefits, wouldst thou ever wish to see revived these barbarous and shocking customs of feudal times, or knight errantry, or horrid assassination? What madness, then, my dear youth, to revive and perpetuate dueling, which all good men class with the worst of these evils of a very barbarous age!"

"I speak the sentiments of military men, when I affirm," cried the Colonel, "that the duel has been the nurse of bravery. It does make fighting men in the army. It is the business of a soldier to fight. And he who declines the duel, is no fighting man. He is utterly defective in spirit and bravery."

"We have replied to a part of this objection, already," said the General, "and have shown the origin of this early and deep-rooted prejudice of a military education. Allow me to add, that it is the *business*, indeed, of a *soldier*, to fight. But, then, it is not at the bidding of his fierce passions, nor in a private affair. It is when his God and his country call him righteously to her defence. It is the business of a soldier to fight,—not in secrecy, in petty personal affairs;—but publicly, in his country's cause. There is an admirable example given of this, by a young officer in the British army. D'Israeli mentions it. The army was on the eve of a great battle. The young officer had no less than some *thirty* challenges in his pocket, which he declined answering until the signal for the storming was being given. He then sent his despatches to each of his antagonists, challenging each, and all of them *to meet him opposite the new made breach*, and let it

be seen whether he, or they would first rush on to the capture ! The rest is easily guessed ; the man who had the *moral* courage to decline a private selfish duel, was the foremost man who mounted the breach,—while each one of the bravadoes lagged far behind !

“ Which, in this case, dear Colonel, was the true *fighting man*? Your duelist, or our gallant non-duelist ! Let us never forget that a soldier, dear Colonel, is a public character, enlisted before the eyes of the world, gallantly to defend the honour, and liberties of his country. The moment you draw him down from the height of this, his proper elevation, and make him brawl in private personal affairs, and shed blood in mutual assassinations, decorated with the name of DUEL, you degrade the gallant soldier into *a cut-throat, and assassin* ! And can such degradation, and deeds of violence, ever elevate the standard of honour, or bravery ? The man who takes away the life of a fellow-being on the high way, can assign as many, and as sensible, and as pressing reasons for the murder, as can the duelist for taking away the life of his antagonist. The one deed is as justifiable as the other.—Now, if the daring deeds of dueling be promotive of bravery—equally so will murder, and robbery. I dare say an army of murderers, and assassins would be very brave, and absolutely irresistible, my dear Colonel !”

“ No, no,” cried the Colonel, “ that won’t do. They would turn their arms as readily against the bowels of their country, as against the enemy. They have no moral principle. It is destroyed utterly. Brute force without honour or morality, would be a terrible engine of destruction. It would spare neither friend nor foe !”

“ That is the very point to which I wish to lead you, my dear Colonel,” said the General. “ Beware, I beseech you, of destroying the moral principle of the army and navy, by expressing your approbation of the practice of killing each

other in private affairs, and thereby adding a fearful auxiliary to the existing evils of war, horrible and revolting as they already are!"

"Yes," cried the Pastor, "the General's argument is irresistible. Dueling tends equally, as murder does, to destroy conscience, and to convert men into reckless bandits: or, its overpowering guilt crushes, and paralyzes the soul, and spirit of a brave man. I refer you to facts. Saw ye ever the down-cast looks, and haggard face of a duelist who has murdered a brother man?—Add to all this, that the crime of bloodshed, be it on the highway, or on the duel ground, brings down Heaven's awful wrath, sooner or later. Surely, then, the crime which would bring Heaven's wrath on our army and navy, never can be blessed as the means of promoting bravery and courage!"

The Colonel made no reply; but turning round, he fastened an earnest look on the young men, while he shook his head at the young lawyer—which was as much as to say, "It won't do." He added, after a moment's pause, "I suspect we embark in this affair of dueling without much reflection on the matter. Certain it is, when we are brought up to the point of argument, we are struck utterly dumb! It would be highly useful to all parties, if our duelists could *reason*, as well as *fight*!"

"Even conceding this supposed influence of dueling, in all its extent," said the Governor, who did not hear the Colonel's last remark, "it must be admitted *that there is, in the single point of its tendency to subvert all law, and social order,* a mighty preponderance in its mischievous influence. And this, the friends and patrons of dueling ought to take into their serious consideration. Those who engage in the duel are, with few exceptions, men of influence in society, by their talents, education, and rank. Now, how can they excuse themselves to God, and their country, in perpetuating this

barbarous custom, which tends necessarily to subvert all law, and all social order. Let me explain myself. A community, unrestrained by law or moral order, must unquestionably be the worst state of things conceivable. Next to this as an evil only less in magnitude, would be a state of anarchy; when the magistracy refuse to execute, or cannot execute the laws: and when an unruly mob, that is, when every man takes it on him to execute them in his own case. Now, I urgently appeal to every sensible and judicious man in the nation, whether the principle of dueling does not necessarily tend to introduce this fatal state of things. The duelist takes into his own hand, the execution of the laws, in his own case; he holds no court; he impanels no jury; he constitutes himself judge in his own cause; he, moreover, constitutes himself judge of his neighbour; tries him without authority, and without the consent of the party; condemns him without a hearing; and without a tear of pity, or concern for his eternal weal, he leads him out, and puts him to death with a shocking degree of insensibility; or, he falls himself a prey, in the diabolical attempt to drag a brother man down the steep of perdition! Now, let every leading man in the community, and every gallant man in the army and navy, say—what would be the necessary result if every other man in the land followed, were it even but occasionally, the example of the duelist? Why I tell you, it would be this;—the legislator, the judiciary, and the executive would be driven from their seats; anarchy would hold her horrid revelry through a nation of bandits, and over one continued field of boundless blood and havoc!”

The Governor cast his eye first on the young lawyer, and then over the whole company; but no one met his appeal. At length, one of them demanded, “whether his excellency would not allow us *to seek reparation for personal injuries?*”

“Young man!” said the Governor, “wisdom cools warm

blood. Hast thou never tasted the sweet luxury of a Christian's revenge, 'of heaping coals of fire on his enemy's head?' Has thy God forgiven thee *ten thousand talents*, and canst thou not then forgive a brother *a hundred pence*? The best challenge ever given, and the most nobly accepted, was that of two eminent persons, who happened to be both Christians. They had quarreled, and parted suddenly, in the bitterness of their wrath. Toward the close of the day, the person who had been grossly insulted, and abused, sent this challenge to his antagonist—*Brother, the sun is almost down!*" Upon this message being delivered to him, he hastened to his offended friend, and with tears in his eyes, made every apology, and asked his forgiveness. *The sun went not down on his wrath!* But, if the personal injury be of a peculiar aggravation, and if it hazard thy usefulness, by destroying thy character—why, then, the law is open. Appeal to thy country's protection. Thy peers' decision will set all right. Canst thou in thy heart prefer the *decision* of the assassin's steel, to the decision of an honest jury?"

"Why, no, your excellency—the damages awarded, if any be awarded, are usually so trifling as even to excite ridicule and derision!"

"Is it then, young man, the object of the 'man of honour,' to gain the offender's money, if he cannot take his life? Is not the decision of his peers, by whom the solemn voice of his country speaks, a far more honourable and substantial testimony of innocence, and of honour, than could any sum of money be, that might be awarded? Be the fine even a thousand times greater than that anticipated, would he be willing to hold *that* to be the *valuation* of his honour?"

"Ah! the truth is," cried the General, with some impatience, "a great mind cannot stoop so low as to notice these trivial injuries, which throw young blood into fermentation. And let an old soldier, and politician too, say this much;—

It is quite possible for a man of an elevated turn of mind, of polished manners, and of a moderate share of courteousness, so to select his company, and so to conduct himself in the world, that these ‘personal injuries,’ and the vulgarity of the terms ‘liar,’ ‘coward,’ ‘villain,’ and all your *Gothic acts of disgrace*, familiar to the duelist’s mind, may never be encountered by him. And if, perchance, he should be so unfortunate as to encounter them—as did one of France’s veteran marshals on a time, when a young officer deliberately insulted him, by spitting in his face—why he would imitate the nobility of that marshal’s self-possession, and coolness, which every body present admired. ‘Young man!’ said the gallant marshal, ‘could I wipe out your blood from my conscience, as easily as I wipe off this from my face, you should not live another hour!’

“Why, I tell you, the man of real courage and gallantry, always encounters these little personal trials and insults, just as the soldier does the little difficulties, and barriers in his way, as he nobly presses onward at the head of his men, to enter first into the breach. He does not see them. He does not feel them. His soul is occupied with the grandeur of the object before him. And, verily, my young friends, it is not by trifles, and little personal affairs, that a man of true greatness, and nobility of soul, can be turned aside from the path of duty, and of glory!”

“And after all,” said the Governor, “there is found in the duel *no reparation of honour*. It is no less unjust, than absurd to suppose so. You ‘repair your honour,’ how? By doing a deed which makes no alteration in the charges, or the opinions of your friends, or foes; no alteration in the public mind touching your character! You ‘repair your honour,’ how? By doing a deed condemned of God, and the laws of the civilized world. You ‘repair your honour,’ how? By doing a deed, that is attended by such a con-

sciousness of guilt, that you hasten from the field of blood, and fly from the face of men, and hide yourselves like the very felon, who has stolen from a state's prison! You 'wipe out from your honour a stain,' peradventure the mere creature of suspicion, how? By doing a deed which stains soul and body in the deep and damning guilt of human blood, which all the waves of ocean cannot wash out! Call you this repairing your honour?"

"But, Sir," said the persevering lawyer, who was too intent on the best mode of defending his position, to take up, without prejudice, the argument of his opponent, "there are *insults*, if not *injuries*, which common law cannot reach. The duel only can reach the disease, and send health into the society of the gallant."

"I am glad withal," said the General, "to hear thee come fairly out, and avow this. Permit me to say, that thou hast just rehearsed the argument, which, more than any other, shows the *enormous injustice* of the duel. The nice points of honour, and the infringements of these, it seems, are not such as common law can reach. Thy man of honour can obtain no redress from this quarter. The law of the land cannot *see* them: it cannot *reach* them. They are too delicate, too minute for the eyes of legislators.—Yet for these minute and intangible offences, the duelist does not content himself with the most moderate degree of punishment. He is *unjust* withal, in not graduating his Gothic punishment to the measure of the offence. He does not satisfy himself with coming into his antagonist's house, and merely distraining his goods! He does not content himself with prescribing how much gold and silver he should abstract, in order to make up a full measure of satisfaction!

"Yes! thou art shocked at this, I see well! This might be cruel enough, and unjust. But, ah! my son," continued the General, grasping his son's hand, with emotion, "this

were rectitude, this were mercy itself and justice, compared to that of the duelist! He comes into the happy family circle: he singles his victim out of the sacred circle of brother, sister, wife, and children. And for an offence, even by his own showing, so slender, that the laws cannot recognize it; he leads him into some secret haunt, where the public eye cannot see him,—and, there, he deliberately kills him; or is killed himself, or, perchance, he kills, and is killed himself, instantly, in carrying his horrid purpose into effect! The laws of Draco were justice and mercy itself compared to this code of modern honour!”

This appeal caused a deep sensation, and a long pause. The Colonel broke silence, by asking the General “how he would dispose of the common, and certainly no weak plea put in,—*That the pain and torment of insulted honour is so intolerable, that life itself becomes a burden?* One might just as well cease to live, as decline a duel in certain circumstances. I declare, General, I have been even so involved.”

The general fixed his dark eye on him for a few moments, and then replied:—“For the sake of true honour, my dear Colonel, it is to be devoutly hoped, that this plea will be abandoned by you, and by every other man of honour, and courage! See you not that it is, in fact, an apology for *cowardice?* The duelist has not the courage to brave a slander, and to look, and to live down malice. He has not the courage to resist the influence of an old and inveterate prejudice in favour of dueling. Though convinced in his judgment, that dueling is a heaven-daring evil, he wants the courage to oppose it, sustained as it is, by that portion of the community which labours under a diseased and sickly state of morals.

“And that ‘pain and torment,’ which is the burden of the duelist’s plea, not thine, I trust, dear Colonel, thou hast more good sense,—pray what is it after all? Let him analyze his

feelings. It is wounded pride ; it is the deep-seated spirit of revenge, lurking in his heart, and inflicting, like the scorpion, mortal pain upon himself.—Thou speakest of the duelist's 'pains and torments.' And what, I pray thee, are they all to these of the thief and the robber ; who have plundered and murdered to satisfy the cravings of nature, or glean a pittance, at the price of his life, for his poor starving children ! The man of courage and honour talks of 'his pains and torments ;' and what are they all, exaggerated as they must be, by a morbid fancy, compared with the agonies of the dying patriot and Christian martyr ? Why, nothing—only as a grain of sand weighed against the mountains ! And would you laud the courage and honour of the patriot and martyr, who could not brook all these 'pains and torments ;' but to shun them, would fly from the path of duty, and glory ! Your man of honour talks of his 'pains and torments,' and he hastens, my dear Colonel, to perpetrate a deed which destroys forever his peace in this world : and which inflicts on him the horrors of a wounded conscience. The visions of blood are within his eyes, in the darkest hour ; and the wailings of his murdered victim are ever pealing on his ear !

'———Thou canst not say I did it,  
Shake not thy gory locks at me !'

And, let me add, were these 'pains and torments,' directed on one solitary heart, it were less. The duelist throws around him, over the whole circle of his own relations ; and over those of his antagonist, a deep gloom of distress, and protracted, and exquisite tortures. Now I put it to you, Colonel, to decide whether it is reconcilable with manly and generous sentiments, and the nice sense of honour, so characteristic of the gallant and brave man, to weigh his own private griefs, against the blasted hopes, and the ruined peace, and the extinguished happiness, and the broken hearts of a

wide extended circle of relations. But the deed of the duelist does all this. And were an imprisoned demon let loose from the chains of eternal night, could he devise, thinkest thou, another deed more accursed, or more diabolical? To spare thyself certain pains, thy disgusting selfishness inflicts an immeasurable weight of pain on thy dearest friends!"

Here the two young men uttered a sudden exclamation, and starting up from their seats, and meeting each other in the circle of their friends, they grasped each other's hands, while their manly faces were bathed in tears. The effect was irresistible. The whole company was deeply affected: even the Colonel himself dashed a tear from his eyes, and smiled.

The General here reminded the pastor that the discussion had hitherto a respect, mainly to the *temporal* evils of the duel. "And surely," said he, "it deserves to be considered how far it is criminal in the eyes of heaven: and what evils follow its victim into another world." At the request of the company, and especially of the two young men, the pastor went on.

It certainly adds to the enormity of the evil of dueling, that the duelist, in his attempt to accomplish an object, in itself not only unworthy, but degrading, stakes his hope of divine forgiveness with the Almighty.

The elements most prominently active in the duelist's character, are, an unforgiving spirit, and uncompromising revenge. We are often told of the cool and deliberate spirit of the duelist. But his is the coolness and deliberation of a spirit looking forth in the deep settled revenge of his heart, and recklessness of consequences, the most appalling in time and in eternity! He sets not up the plea, unavailing as it is, of the murderer,—that he was intoxicated,—that he was carried away by a furious gust of passion, when he struck the murderous blow. No, he gives the challenges; he makes

his last will ; he arranges the mode of combat. This is not all the proof that his burning wrath has settled down into the deep calm of a deliberate revenge ! He prepares for the contest ; he practises with a horrid diligence to attain a fatal precision in the use of the murderous weapon ! He then sallies forth like a demon of destruction, under the goading stimulus of revenge ; and like the destroyer of mankind, he does the utmost that skill, and firmness of nerve can attain,—to kill a human being ! Have the annals of our criminal courts ever exhibited a stronger instance of deliberate crime ?

And notice, I pray you, the position of defiance which the duelist takes up in the very face of the divine administration. “ *The laws of honour,*” as every one knows, are composed by men of pleasure. Hence they tolerate, not only, but welcome into the politest circles, as pleasant companions, the drunkard, the licentious, the adulterer, the gambler, the duelist. And such vices as profaneness, blasphemy, contempt of religion, and divine worship, cruelty to servants, injustice to their tenants, and barbarity to the poor, they pronounce to be utterly venial, and perfectly consistent with “ the code of their laws of honour.” While the overlooking of an injury, and the exercise of patience, and forgiveness, they declare to be unmanly, cowardly, and the unpardonable breaches of these rules !\* The forgiveness of injuries is a duty enjoined on us by Almighty God. It is an essential virtue of Christianity, and is unquestionably one of the loveliest traits in a good man’s character. It is godlike. But the “ laws of honour” denounce it as the weakness of a coward ! Revenge is prohibited under the penalty of the divine displeasure. “ *He shall have judgment without mercy, that showeth no mercy !*” The duelist applauds revenge, and glories in it, as one of the most spirited traits of character ! The Almighty

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\* Payley’s Moral Philosophy.

and Benevolent Being who made us, enjoins on us the unwearied exercise of patience, and forbearance. “*Be pitiful, be courteous, be merciful.*” The duelist spurns this from him, and adopts the Pagan sentiment,—“*that the desire of revenge is the work of a noble mind.*” The spirit of Christianity breathes love, and kindness, and every generous and ennobling sentiment. The spirit of dueling declares that he who resents not his own wrongs, by the sudden and terrible death of the offender, is not fit to live in genteel society! Humility is a lovely ornament of man, who owes all to the divine bounty, and mercy. Dueling is sustained, as it is engendered, by an intolerant pride. Let men say what they choose about “honour,”—*honour*, in the fashionable sense of the word, is nothing else than *pride*, modified and carried out, according to certain laws.\* These shocking principles once adopted, the duelist does carry them out into all their fatal results. He stands forward in the attitude of defiance before his Maker’s face. He dares to throw back, as if in mockery, into the hands of the Almighty, the life which he had bestowed on him for the noblest ends. He robs God of his property, by abstracting, without leave, asked, or given, the life of one, or two, of his moral subjects. He lays violent hands on what is assuredly not his. He makes that disposition of a part of God’s property,—which, were it human property, *would bring him to the gibbet!* God has said, “THOU SHALL NOT KILL.” The duelist, as if in derision of this law of the Eternal, kills with circumstances the most aggravated. He hurries into eternity, a fellow being,—and perhaps himself, at the same instant likewise, without a moment’s space to breathe a prayer for Heaven’s forgiveness. And if Heaven’s unmerited mercy prevent not, he drags him, with himself, into the never-ending pains of perdition!

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\* Brewster.

An Italian, it is said, had, for many years, with an insatiable thirst of vengeance, dogged the man who had done him wrong. Finding him, at last, in a retired path, the armed assassin offered the wretched man his life, on one dreadful condition: that was, that he should *deny, and curse the Most High, and the Saviour Jesus Christ!* And no sooner had the denial, and the curse passed the threshold of his lips, than he received the poniard in his heart. "There!" exclaimed the assassin, "doubly is my revenge satiated! Thou art slain,—and thy soul is damned!!"—"Oh! is not this deed," added the Pastor, in a low tone, and with extreme agitation, "is not this deed enacted over again, in all its atrocity, by the duelist, as often as his bloody hand does the horrid work of death? Yes, if God's sudden grace save not the sinking soul, he does renew the horrid tragedy!"

Here the venerable Governor rose, and advancing towards his son, and the other young man, he pressed a hand of each, and bathed them with parental tears. "Excuse my weakness," he said to his friends, as he cast a mournful eye over his lady, and his daughter. "But a parent's heart feels sorely on this matter,—who has already lost one sweet boy in the duel,—you *speculate*—a parent *feels*. But I was going to say,"—he continued, as he drew them close to his side,—“I was going to say that the amount of guilt, incurred by the duelist, has, perhaps, never been estimated,—certainly never by you, young men. Allow me to make the attempt. I shall leave out of the calculation, the whole influence which a fatal duel must have on the ruined peace of the survivor. I shall omit, also, if you please, the bitterness of the last agony of his expiring antagonist. And," he added this in a deep and hollow tone, "I will not dare to glance at an estimate of the horrors beyond time,—which—O my God—if thy rich and unmerited grace prevent not—are beyond human calculation, or conception!—And I will not throw into the scale any portion of the untold weight of suffering which

it inflicts on the individuals around the circle of his own family, and that of his opponent. I shall look at it, simply as it may be weighed in the scale of human justice,—and as it certainly will be weighed in the scales of Heaven’s unyielding justice. Place you, then, my friends in the one scale any given case of murder. Select, if you please, the most aggravated case that ever was placed on the calendar of any criminal court. There is, in that horrid crime, one act only, of one guilty man. But,” added he with a deep struggle of feelings, and with tears, “in a duel there is found the guilt of murder in each one of the principals. Men, and juries, and magistrates, may call it by any soft name they please,—before God Almighty’s eyes it is *murder!* The duelist had neither human nor divine law authorizing him to take that life. And inasmuch as they came into the field, after hours of cool and deliberate reflection, and much painful preparation, each of them for the sole purpose of taking away a human life, contrary to the laws of God and man, they are guilty before God of *deliberate* murder! Am I not correct? Here, then, are *two murderers* in each duel. Then,—for I have not done yet,—each of the principals presents himself, and dares his antagonist to take his life; each offers wantonly to throw away his own life. Here, therefore, are *two suicides*. And for the seconds,”—and here the piercing eyes of the Governor, fell on the young lawyer,—“the seconds might, as every person knows, very readily, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, prevent the rencontre. In forwarding the quarrel, and leading to the fatal issue,—they are, in the eyes of human and divine laws, involved in the murderous guilt of the principals. On every field of the duel, then, there are there *four murderers, and two suicides!*—Hence, each duel, weighed in the balance of justice, is *sixfold* more injurious,—*sixfold* more guilty,—*sixfold* more atrocious, than is any case of deliberate murder, or assassination, that was ever condemned

in human court! And, oh! most just, and Almighty God! Thou hast pronounced from thy throne the verdict,—“that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him!” What, then, in thy pure eyes, must be the deep and atrocious stain of that man, whose crime is *sixfold* worse than that of the murderer!”

During the whole of his speech, the young men were bathed in tears: and the Governor’s son, who was the challenger, had fallen at his father’s feet, and was grasping his knees; while his mother and sister, kneeling beside him, clung in silent sorrow, around his neck. And as the Governor closed his remarks, both of the young men rose instantaneously, looked into each other’s face for a moment, then, rushing into each other’s arms, each wept on his fellow’s neck, as they sobbed out,—“*Forgive, forgive me the wrongs I have done you!*”

The venerable Pastor approached, and raising his hands, pronounced the benediction of peace on them; and in a brief prayer blessed Almighty God for averting the threatened calamity; and restoring to these dear families the precious boon of harmony, and love among their members. Every one present, wept for joy. Even the Colonel, wiped off some manly tears, as he heartily shook the General’s hand, and observed,—“Verily, dear General, there’s nothing like coming together, in these matters!”

“And would to gracious Heaven,”—said the Governor’s lady,—“that those martial spirits, the amazons of our sex, who cannot only hear of the duel unmoved, but welcome and applaud it,—were made acquainted with its atrocious guilt, and ruinous consequences. I would, verily believe, in charity to them, that it is purely for want of light, and sober reflection on the subject, that one single lovely woman, in these U. States, should be found to approve of it. Oh! did every woman see it,—as a mother, and a wife sees it, when reaping

its bitter fruits; did she see it stript of its false and delusive pretexts, I am morally sure,—she would no more think of lowering her character down to the communion of a duelist, than to that of a murderer, freshly broke loose from a state's prison!"

"Madam," said the General, "there must be a mighty revolution in public opinion before that takes place."

"Unquestionably," said she. "And I agree with those who believe that dueling can be put down—but not by bloody laws, like those enacted of old in Scotland, and by Louis XIV., of France, and by Augustus, in Poland. Men will become martyrs to the absurdest quixotism, as well as to our holy religion. As long as the duel is sustained by the opinions of an influential class in the community, men will trample on the holiest laws, and most terrific edicts. 'Death is not sufficient,' says Mr. Addison, 'to deter men, who make it their glory to despise it. But, if every one who fought a duel, were made to stand in the pillory, it would quickly lessen the number of those men of imaginary honour, and put an end to so horrible a practice.' What are your views of this, my dear General?"

"I have often thought, madam," said he, "that this is the most practicable of all projects conceived by Christian statesmen, and lovers of peace, and social order. Let laws be enacted,—not to draw blood,—but to fix a deep stigma of disgrace upon the duelist. And let the laws be executed to the letter. And, next, let dueling be attacked by the poetry of the minstrel, and the keenest satire of the poet. Let a Cervantes *the second*, seize upon the plentiful materials afforded to him, and hold up the modern quixotism of dueling to the ridicule, and scorn of men, as being, to say the least, equally ridiculous and absurd; equally mischievous and romantic as the old quixotism of knight-errantry. This latter, was, perhaps, as deeply rooted a prejudice, and certainly as popu-

lar a folly in its day, in Spain, as dueling now is with its patrons. Cervantes with his whip of satire, lashed it out of his country, and utterly destroyed it. Oh! for some second Cervantes to deliver our country, and the world, from this more dangerous and revolting species of knight-errantry!

“But, there is another expedient which ought to be resorted to, in order to save those men of high temperament and real honour, who happen to have difficulties. Let our leading men lend their commanding influence to institute courts of honour, before which those men may be brought together in mutual explanation. We have just now, I trust, seen a proof of the practicability of the thing.\*

“And I must not conceal that the teachers, and guardians of our ingenuous youth, have a most solemn and awful account to give, if they do not, throughout the whole course of their studies, labour to convey correct ideas of *true honour*, and point out *false honour*; and demonstrate to them, by many a repeated lesson, that *there is no circumstance in life, in which a gallant, ingenuous, and courteous man ever can find it necessary to resort to the duel!*

“I have only two remarks more to offer on this matter. And the *first* is an appeal to you, ladies. Your influence over that class of men who engage, most generally, in these broils, is almost omnipotent. Now, did that class of the fair sex who give a tone of energy to the pious and benevolent enterprises of the day;—and did that class, especially, of the fair, who move in the higher circles, and lead the fashions of the day; in short, did all classes of the virtuous and beau-

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\* The dispute between the two leaders of the Chancery Bar, of England, Sir C. Wetherell, and Sir B. Sugden, was lately settled in this happy manner, after a challenge was given, and accepted. The three gentlemen, to whom it was referred, gave the award, that Sir C. Wetherell make an apology. It was given, and promptly accepted.

tiful, in a body, set their faces against this shocking and murderous evil, and did they coldly shun the recreant slave of crime, and bid him away from their sweet society, and presence, as one whose hands are stained with human blood ; even as they shun the frail, yet *far less guilty creature of their own sex* :—Oh ! but this execrable evil, this scourge of our best families, would soon be exterminated from the face of civilized society ! And by the honour of a soldier,” continued the General, “ I declare, that as often as I meet a duelist in the company of my wife, and daughters, I shall address them in his presence thus : “ That man has killed a fellow-being in cold blood ! There is blood, ladies, on his hands ; there is blood on his garments ; there is blood on his soul ! His dire revenge, ladies, made yonder once happy female, a desolate widow ! He made her weeping babes, orphans ! He has sent more than one broken heart in sorrow to the grave ! Can you give him your hand, or give him a welcome to the communion of social life !” And tell me, what virtuous woman would not shrink from him, as she heard this ?

“ But I must have done ; and, Reverend Pastor, I appeal, in conclusion, to you. After all, the only efficient remedy for this evil is to be obtained in the reign of enlightened reason, firmly established over the turbulent passions of men ; and, most especially, in the ascendancy of pure religious principle, which fails not to restore enlightened reason to its just and powerful reign. As soon as these pervade the hearts of the sons of men, over the regenerated world, a mighty revolution will go forth over the whole community. And the omnipotence of public opinion will put to silence the advocate of dueling ; and it will banish the practice as a loathsome abomination, tolerated, alas ! too long, by the sickly morals of a very depraved age !

“ There is a saying of one on this matter, which deserves the attention of every one of us, on account of its intrinsic

worth; and also, because it was uttered by one of the most gallant of soldiers, and devoted of Christians. I allude to Colonel Gardner's reply to a duelist who had challenged him. After weighing in his mind the fear of Almighty God; the honour of human laws; the respect due to the decency of social order; and the happiness of those beloved beings, whose life is bound up in our life: and after placing in the scale, opposite to these, the laws of false honour; the influence of sickly and diseased public opinion; the relics of a Gothic barbarism; and the murderous passions of undisciplined minds,—this gallant man did not hesitate a moment, how to act. “I am not afraid to fight, as you very well know: but one thing I own, I am afraid of,—I am afraid to sin against God Almighty!”

Having uttered these words, the General offered his arm to the lady of the Governor, and led her into the drawing-room;—the rest followed—the daughter of the Governor leaning on the arm of that youth whose heart had, that morning, purposed to slay her brother in the projected duel! And never was there greater happiness, nor purer joy, than that which this evening, cheered every soul: except what took place on that day fortnight, at this mansion; when this same daughter, the beautiful and accomplished Miss D——, became the wife of this young man: his former antagonist Mr. D—— officiating with the greatest hilarity, as groomsman: while the General's daughter, whom he was about soon to lead to the altar, was the happy bridesmaid.

THE GENERAL'S WIDOW :

OR

GRACE TRIUMPHING OVER SCEPTICISM.

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A TRUE NARRATIVE.

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“ Brother, we are only half awake : we are, none of us, more than half awake !”—*Legh Richmond.*

## THE GENERAL'S WIDOW.

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IN 1817 I was called, in the providence of God, to leave my academic labours in Queen's College, to take the pastoral care of the Presbyterian Church of Basking Ridge.

I left a sweet and delightful spot, (to which, however, I was recalled about nine years after, upon the re-organization of our Rutgers College,) to take charge of an interesting parochial church. We made a heavy sacrifice, it is true, in regard to temporalities. But my heart was bent on fulfilling the ministry to which our Lord, I trust, had called me. And no temporal consideration is allowed to be weighed by a pastor, in the balance against prospects of usefulness, in the Gospel of Christ.

But there were many charms to invite us to Basking Ridge. It is an old established church; having had a regular succession of eminent *Scots worthies* for their pastors, for nearly one hundred years. Mr. Cross had, in or about 1742, been succeeded by Mr. Lamb. Then came the celebrated Dr. Kennedy, who ministered there for thirty-six years. He was succeeded by Dr. Robert Finlay, who has the honour of first suggesting, and originating the Colonization Society, and who died the worthy president of Georgia University. I had the honour of following this distinguished pastor.

The church, at this place, has been often visited with remarkable outpourings of the spirit, under the ministry of Kennedy, and Finlay. And there is a season which my

good people of Basking Ridge, and I, did witness, which no time can efface from our memory. On that occasion, one hundred and five were admitted, on confession of their faith, at one time, to the Lord's table, and the membership of the church. Our session devoted several weeks to examine these candidates. It was a genuine revival, I believe, of good old John Livingston, of Ancrum's days. And what is remarkable, *thirty-eight* adults, out of the above number, presented themselves for baptism on the Saturday preceding the Communion Sabbath. There was scarcely one dry eye that day, in the crowded assembly in the church.

The church of Basking Ridge is situated in a rich and beautiful valley, with a chain of mountains, sweeping around it in a semicircle. And, for many miles around, all the families of a dense population, with the exception of one or two, belong to that congregation. Among them was the family of General —, one of the first agriculturists of the county, adjacent to our county.

When I entered on my pastoral duties, the General had deceased, being comparatively a young man when he died. His family was still in mourning for the bereavement; and on the Sabbath, his widow, and her beautiful children, in their deep weeds, attracted the respectful notice, and sympathy of all who entered the church. The General and his lady had both descended from a race of intelligent and pious Christians. The Colonel, his father, had been no less noted for the gallant spirit and patriotism of his youth, than for enlightened and fervent piety in his advanced years. And the General's lady was among the best educated and most accomplished women of her native county.

But the General had been one of the unhappy victims of error, who had been seduced from the ways of the God of his fathers, about the time when infidelity, in its most rude and degraded form, with the noted *Thomas Paine* at its

head, made a struggle to gain an ascendancy in many parts of our country. "*The Age of Reason*," had, with him, displaced the HOLY BIBLE, and he drank in those polluted streams, until, being perfectly intoxicated with error, he cast off fear, and restrained prayer, and openly denied the God of his fathers.

It was on a delightful morning in May—I remember it as distinctly as if it had been yesterday—one of the elders of the church came to desire me, as soon as practicable, to visit the General's widow.

"Ah! Sir," said he, as tears filled his eyes, "the poor woman has not long to live, and she knows it not. And, O! Sir, she is ill prepared to die!"

In a short time we were on our way,—he having kindly volunteered to accompany me to her mansion.

Our ride lay through the beautiful farms of the late General Lord Sterling; laid out in square fields of great extent, highly cultivated; with orchards abounding in every variety of fruit trees; particularly of grafted English cherries, of no less than twelve varieties; and luxuriant fields of grain, affording happy promise to the labours of the husbandman. We soon crossed the bridge, over the dark Passaic, and ascended the romantic hill which forms its lofty bank. From its summit, which we soon reached, there is a lovely prospect of ten or twenty miles around. All nature was in the glory of spring: the very air was perfumed with the delicious blossoms, on every side.

"What a happy world this would be," said the elder, "if our souls, purified from sin, did so rejoice in the presence of God, as he makes all things smile around us!"

"Yes, my friend; but it is the sanctified and well regulated mind alone, prepared for the Master's service, which has the capacity of really enjoying his presence in the beauties of nature. That congenial soul sees him in every leaf,

and bud, and beautiful flower ; hears, and adores him in the whisperings of the breeze, the murmuring of the brook, the music of the songsters, as well as in the rushing of the cataract, and the roaring of the mountain storm. He sees him, and adores him in every thing ! The guilty mind is at enmity with God, and by such a one, the presence of God, in the glorious works of his hands, is neither seen, nor appreciated."

" Ah ! Sir," said he, " that was what the good old Colonel would often say to his son, whose widow's mansion we are now approaching. ' I tell thee, boy,' the old Christian would say, ' Infidelity paralyzes the noble powers of man, and renders him blind, and deaf, and dead to the joys of God's presence in the kingdom of nature, as well as of grace. *Age of Reason!* Ha ! ha ! The Age of Folly, of mental degradation, and of little men ! Why, I tell thee, it requires a clear head, and a pure heart to be able to take up the argument of TRUTH. The profane scoffer of the *Paine* school, cannot comprehend the delicacy, and force of divine reasoning on the goodness of God in nature, and his pure, and overpowering love in grace.'

" Another time, when his son was venturing his doubts touching the Gospel, the Colonel exclaimed, ' Doubts, my poor boy ! Seest thou that bright sun pouring down his glorious beams ? Seest thou those brilliant fields, and meadows glowing in their living, and breathing beauty under the present Deity ? All these—ay ! and my own senses, can I sooner doubt, and mistrust, than doubt the love of my God and Redeemer, in the kingdom of his providence, and grace !' "

We were now entering the long avenue which led up to the house, lined, on each side, with rows of cherry-trees, now in all the magnificent beauty of their white, and purple blossoms.

“I am not quite sure,” said I, “whether our visit here will be welcome.”

“I am not sure that it will,” said the elder; “but what then? We must never think of measuring duty by such considerations as those which move the men of the world.”

“You are right,” said I. “But tell me, you often visited the late General, in company with my venerable predecessor, Dr. Finlay: how were you received in your visits to his death-bed?”

“Always courteously,” said he, “but never recognized, I rather think, as Christians. And often has that pastor observed to me, that he never met with a more deeply confirmed infidel. . Sir, I witnessed the last interview: it took place on a Saturday. The minister spent several hours at the death-bed of the General: he saw that the last sands of life were fast falling. He died soon after, and his anxious soul was in an agony to win him over, if such was the will of God.

“But, no argument, no appeal, no prayer, no tears moved him from his infidel principles, or seemed to shake his confidence. Let no man tell me this was the fruit of the infidel’s faith, which, like the reviving and exhilarating hopes and faith of the Christian, in *his* creed, and in *his* Redeemer, was now sustaining the hope, and confidence of his soul. Ah! Sir, I knew the contrary. I was his neighbour. I saw him oftener than did the pastor, and in his last hours, oftener than his infidel associates. I saw him in the midnight hours, and in his unguarded moments. I heard him utter thoughts that came fresh from an unveiled and burning spirit. I saw him—I knew him to be a miserable man; but not more so than any other infidel.

“An infidel die happy! A happy philosophic death! Die as a philosopher dies! Can any rational being believe what the infidel himself does not, and cannot himself believe?”

An immortal spirit leave *its* heaven here, and go away into an unknown, dark, dismal oblivion! Even on its own principles, it cannot die happy, without its firm belief in an incredible miracle—namely; that a great and polished philosophic soul can be perfectly willing, that is happy, to give up all the heaven it has, for a dark, unknown, hated, and horrid oblivion! This is another proof that infidels are not only the *most credulous*, but absolutely the *most duped*, of all the children of men! For the General, he would yield to no argument: he was too proud in spirit: he never had hitherto flinched. But, Ah! on that Saturday I saw him yield. And I witnessed the confession which to this day, is well known over our valley. But it was the mere yielding of parental feeling, before the overwhelming doubts of deism.

“‘Well, General,’ said the minister, as we rose to go; ‘time speeds its course: I must take my leave of you.’ He took him by the hand. ‘Farewell: I shall never see you more, until you and I stand at the judgment-seat of eternal justice! Farewell!’—He paused: the General still kept a hold of his hand. ‘Ere I go, I have one question to ask you—it is the last,’ said the pastor. He paused again; and turning, cast his eyes around the circle of the General’s sons, his daughters, and his weeping wife: the General’s eyes wandered after those of the pastor, over the dear and interesting group. ‘Now, hear me,’ said the minister; ‘my last question is this: Is it your will, now, in your last moments, that these dear and beloved beings should follow the *minister*, or *yourself*?’

“The General looked first at the Pastor, with an earnest eye, as if to penetrate into his soul. He saw that he was in earnest, for the tears rolled in silence over his cheeks. He rapidly glanced at the circle of his dear children, and spouse: he heaved one deep sigh as he clasped his hands on his breast; then resuming his hold of the Pastor’s extended

hand, he said with a solemnity I never heard from the General before—‘ *It is my will that they follow the minister!*’

“ ‘Then let me offer up my last prayer at your death-bed,’ said the minister, as he threw himself on his knees. And, O! sir, he did pour out his soul in such fervent wrestlings as I never witnessed before: all of us wept, except the General. He appeared lost, confounded, and bewildered. He seemed conscious that his creed was untenable. He did seem like one looking out for some fearful, and undefinable, and inconceivable disaster. His reason seemed to reel; but his pride, shall I call it, or his obstinacy, prevented him from humbling himself at the throne of grace. He seemed like one given up of God, and of man! And he died as he had lived, I fear.

And this desperate outbraving of all entreaties, and remonstrances of conscience—this reckless clinging to his shipwrecked hope—and defiance of the justice of God, his Judge, has tended to harden his family in unbelief; and to efface from their memory all the admonitions, and prayers, and tears of the minister.

“But here we are at the door,” added my friend, “and may God give you wisdom, my dear Pastor, to win over to Christ the souls of this desolate family!” “Amen!” said I, in the extreme anxiety of my spirit, as we advanced to the chamber of the General’s widow.

We found her sitting up; but her once beautiful form was wasting away under the disease that was consuming her vitals. She received us with the utmost politeness, and kindness. But we soon discovered that it would be impossible to engage her in devout, or even serious conversation. She contrived to resist every attempt to direct her attention, in good earnest, to the necessary preparation to meet her Judge. And she abruptly put an end to all our suggestions by a remark of this kind,—“that her dear husband died in the be-

lief which she held ; such a good man could not be miserable ! And as for herself, she never could wish to go to a better place than where he was !”

We parted from her with a heavy heart. I had utterly failed to deliver my message ; and at this, and also the second visit, not even the permission was conceded to us, of joining in prayer with her.

As I approached the house on the day of my third visit, I felt my mind exceedingly agitated. Here, thought I, is an interesting immortal being, now very near the verge of eternity, and, alas ! utterly unprepared ; and not only so, but this noble spirit of hers is filled with bitter enmity against the cross of Christ.

I found her alone. She was now confined to her bed ; and the hectic spot on her pale cheek indicated that her days were nearly numbered. She gave me a polite welcome, and thanked me for this token of respect in coming again, so soon. I blessed the Lord for this favourable opportunity, and in secret, implored of him wisdom, and skill to do my duty at this critical moment. A long and painful silence followed. At length she broke it by *asking*, “ Is not God goodness itself—goodness in his very nature ? Am I wrong in believing also, that he has implanted in every soul the unquenchable hope of happiness ? And who will say that infinite goodness will blast the hope which he himself has nursed and ripened in us ?”

This opened a fruitful theme of discussion for, at least an hour. The following dilemma was respectfully placed before her ; “ Madam, how do you know that God is *goodness itself* ? If from the demonstrations of nature, and providence, then from the same evidence do we learn infallibly that he is infinitely just, and awfully severe. You have only to look abroad over the world’s history, and contemplate the tremendous exhibitions of his justice in the endless train of the

terrible scourges which have swept the men of many generations off the earth. Do these prove simply his unmingled goodness? Again, if you seek your proof from the Holy Scriptures, there are we taught that, "He who is good and merciful, will by no means clear the guilty!" And the argument against *universal happiness* was closed, by submitting to her vigorous mind these *two* ideas.

"If you choose to decide the matter by the full and most complete evidence drawn from *Scripture*, then is it obvious that the inspired writer, who uses the same word in Matt. 25: 46, to express the eternity of the wicked man's punishment, and that of the righteous man's glory in Heaven, without giving us any intimation of his using it in an *infinitely different* sense in the same sentence, has decided the point, that the SECOND DEATH of the one party is as enduring, and endless, as is the LIFE of the other party. The objection that "everlasting" is applied to the hills and material things, has no force here. To whatever object it is applied, it always means the *longest possible existence of that object*. Here it is applied to the *immortal* soul, immaterial and ever-enduring. To that, this punishment will cling as long as the soul exists; that is, FOR EVER AND EVER! And hence, in perfect accordance with this, the punishment of the wicked is pronounced by God to be "everlasting," after all forms of temporal duration has ceased, and after eternity has commenced. 2 Thess. 1: 8, 9, 10.

"And, Madam, if you choose to settle the point by *reason*, aided by revelation, then you must admit that God will not confer happiness on sinners, as long as their sin and impenitence continue. But, inasmuch as they die impenitent, and hence descend into eternity full of sin, and still sinning; and inasmuch as neither God, nor themselves, nor any other being will convert them after death, they continue to hate God, and to sin against him just as they did before death. And

as sin goes on in its self-perpetuating virulence, they will rebel against the most Holy One for ever and ever. Hence they keep themselves out of heaven, that is, *they keep themselves in hell*, for ever and ever!

“ Besides, universalists and infidels are usually believers in *free will*, in its unlimited acceptation. I pray you, then, Madam, how can you, or any of them, holding this as an essential article of their creed, pretend to justify God, if he were *to compel* these unconverted men, *against their determination to the contrary*, into a holy Heaven, a place which they have all their life-time abhorred, and which they will as heartily abhor as ever, to all eternity?”

This address I uttered in the mildest terms I could. Her danger excited in me feelings of the intensest earnestness. The effect of these plain and simple truths was visible. There was a solemnity in her words, and in her whole deportment, which I had not witnessed hitherto. O my God, I thank thee that I am not without some hope that the Spirit of the Lord is visiting her in mercy. Pour on her soul, O blessed Spirit, the light of life, and the joy of hope!

The following propositions I put into her hand as I left her:

1. There is no power, or virtue in sinful man, which can *efficiently* lead him to peace with God, and true happiness.

2. To deny a communication from heaven, on the supposition that God has the intention of showing mercy, and favour to us, is actually an impeachment of the divine goodness. The infidel system is cruel! On the face of its very first principle, it brings a solemn impeachment against the divine goodness, and pity!

3. It is our duty faithfully to determine by a close examination, whether it be by argument, or by delusion and depravity, that we are induced to continue in hostility to God our Maker, and to hate the Holy Bible.

4. No man, nor power on earth, can prove what the infidel affirms, namely, that the Bible is *not* a genuine Revelation from Heaven.

5. No man can call Jesus, Lord; or give the Bible the reception of true faith, but by the Holy Ghost.

This visit was closed without prayer, it having been declined by her. She noticed the pain which her refusal caused, and retained my hand for several seconds; and I hurried away to conceal my emotions. Her mind, I knew, was not prepared to have these services *urged*, far less *forced* upon her.

O gracious Master, grant me spiritual skill, wisdom and patience to do thy work aright; deliver me from a furious zeal, without knowledge; free me equally from the spirit of indolence, coldness, and negligence, in my pastoral duty.

As soon as practicable I hastened to renew my visit. I found her in company with her daughters, and two grown up sons. She was fast fading away, like the sere leaves of autumn, or the snow before the April sun.

“Sir,” said she, as by her request I took my seat close to her, “I own myself overcome by those dilemmas which the brief writing you were kind enough to leave me, placed before my mind. ‘*The simple truth of God is overwhelming!*’ That expression of yours, dropped occasionally the other day, I cannot get rid of. Yes, I must even admit—my conscience will not let me equivocate—if *the Bible be true, then Universalism, in which I have taken refuge, is false—ay, utterly false!* This is now my deliberate opinion! Yes, my children, by the civil law the deliberate murderer must die, that is to say, be cut off *for ever* from this life—for *ever* from his family—for *ever* from all earthly happiness. I should insult my reason, and never regain my self-respect, did I conclude otherwise. *If the Bible be true, then am I sure Universalism is false, is false as Satan, and from Satan.*

But then—the Bible—I cannot, I will not, I never can believe it to be a revelation from Heaven. O! I cannot ——”

I made no reply until she was restored perfectly to self-possession. Her fine mind, which knew no guise, here betrayed, without concealment, one of the usual, and very natural feelings of one, who has unhappily been seduced by the impious sophistry of the infidel. In its desperate efforts, the unsettled mind hurries from one false refuge into another, plunging deeper and deeper at each retreat. She had been strong in her confidence in Universalism: the lingering remains of her respect for the Bible were owing to her being taught this sentiment: the delusion had rapidly vanished under the light of reason, conscience, and the plain exhibition of divine truth: and the deep current of hatred, quickened by the disappointment, was directed, in all its force, against the Holy Bible.

I am persuaded that the Universalist, who is brought over to Christianity, does, like the Papist, invariably travel first into sheer infidelity; and from that, if God's grace pities him, he is brought to the pure religion of Jesus. This is a singular phenomenon of the human mind. And it illustrates, at once, two facts: it shows the necessary consequence of Popery, and its half-fledged nestling, Universalism. Every intelligent Papist and Universalist are carried, by their own weight, down to the deeps of infidelity. This is one fact: the other is this; seducers wax worse and worse! No, error remains stationary: it seeks its own level, and finds it soon.

I endeavoured to draw her attention to the NECESSITY of a divine revelation, and exhibited in a plain manner the usual arguments on this point, taken chiefly from *Horne's Introduction*. And I concluded, by illustrating the *second* proposition, which I had submitted to her consideration at a former meeting.

“Do you believe, my dear lady, that God is good?”

“Undoubtedly he is,” she replied. “Do you believe that God intends to be merciful and gracious to us?” “I do believe it.” “Then, my dear Madam, if you admit all this, and yet continue to deny that God has spoken to us one kind word, or one cheering promise, you take away the very basis of this faith; you have thence, no ground of faith, nor of the humblest hope in mercy, or pity, or love from him! In fact, you impeach his goodness and mercy! And that malignant being who goes about to compass the ruin of immortal souls, could alone counsel, and devise such a horrid scheme as that of the unfortunate philosophers who deny the necessity, and the fact of a divine revelation. They affect to believe that God is “all goodness;” even “goodness in the abstract.” And, yet, this same goodness of the Deity is nothing but cruelty to such a degree, that he does not deign to give us one single intimation; one single whisper of hope, or mercy from him! A human parent acting after this fancied manner of the infidel’s god, would be pronounced a cruel monster in every class of the community? I appeal to your own calm and candid reflection on this point. I do think, it is impossible not to see this to be the case!”

She turned her head round on the pillow, and placing her hand on her brow, remained some time in deep meditation.

I ventured to interrupt the long and painful silence. “Ah! dear Madam, who can have persuaded you that our Heavenly Father, who intends to be so merciful and gracious to us, does, nevertheless, never utter one word of peace—never send one ray of light—never make one communication from Heaven to us? Believe it who will, I cannot. None but the heartless infidel can cherish an idea, so melancholy, and so shockingly opposed to divine goodness!”

“I cannot, I do not believe the Bible; it is no revelation

from heaven!" cried she, waving her hand, and turning her face away from me.

Another long and painful silence ensued. I implored in secret, that the Master would give me prudence, and the tongue of the wise who win souls to Christ. Then, as if nothing had fallen from her lips, I begged her permission to review the *fourth* proposition formerly submitted to her. "With your leave, my dear Madam, I shall presently examine the evidence of the Holy Bible, *external* and *internal*; but there is a previous question with you. Are you aware that the infidel school can never prove what they assert, namely, *that the Bible is NOT a revelation from Heaven?*"

This excited her deep attention. I went on. "Have you, or any of all your school, from Celsus down to the humblest writer of the *canaille*, searched this sacred volume itself, critically, historically, in the originals, or, in its various translations? No one who has not done this, has any claim to be heard, or even to be reckoned a sensible believer in the infidel creed. Have your champions searched all the evidence of the Jews, and their venerated writings? Have they searched all the evidence attainable from every Christian in the world? Have you conversed with angels, and collected the evidence that those pure intelligences can communicate? Have you sought out all the evidence attainable from departed spirits, now in Heaven? or from the doomed spirits, now in hell? No. Then your researches after evidence, even after all the labours of thousands of years, can scarcely be said to have yet begun! Now, until this infinity of sources be perfectly examined, no one of you can have faith in the infidel creed! You may imagine a faith, and a peace of mind! You may stifle conscience! But if you only act as reasonable beings, you must ever be in a state of agonizing doubt! Hence there can be no peace, and no joy. You must, in fact, cease to think, or act as rational beings: and

you must drown your noble powers in the perdition of this world's profligacy, before you can cease to feel the agonies of remorse. And even all these are wretched opiates, out of the sleep of which you will, one day, awake to acuter and more horrible agonies!"

Two of her sons (who had unhappily imbibed infidel opinions) had come close up to us, and were listening with deep attention. At the close of the argument, they cast an anxious and searching look on each other, and then on their mother; while her eyes were scrutinizing their looks, as if imploring their aid against these dilemmas. They were agitated, but remained silent. We all remained silent for some time.

"If you discover any defect in this argument, young gentlemen, you will confer a favour on me to name it: but if there be truth in it, O, in the fear of your Maker, I beseech you, resist it not. We can have no interest, either of us, in being deceived in a matter of this solemn importance!"

For the first time, I saw a tear quivering in the mother's eye, and stealing down her faded cheek.

"O my God," said I, in the secret agony of my heart, "break, break in pieces this hard and flinty heart. O, is not thy word as a fire and a hammer!"

I rose to take my leave, not wishing to check this first flowing of emotions from the smiting of the flinty rock. She retained my hand for some moments: there was a mental struggle. "Oh! you will not go away thus—you will surely pray with us!" said she, with a sweet, and imploring look.

"Blessed be the Lord who has heard us, and put this at last into your heart," said I with emotions which I could not overcome. I felt as if a ray of hope had burst through the dark, dark gloom, and beamed on this beloved being, for whom our souls had been in travail. We kneeled down by her bed; and O! I thought I felt the reviving presence of the

Holy Spirit with us in prayer, and believed his power was awakening deep convictions in her for whom our souls were poured out. And yet, when I bethought me of the deceitfulness of the heart, and in a special manner, the fearful malignity of the spirit of deism, I seemed to hope against hope ; while I cried unto God and said, “ Come from the four winds, O Spirit of the Lord, and breathe upon this dying mother and her family !”

At the next visit I was grieved to find her tender impressions gone, or, at least, carefully concealed, And I thought with pain of that message of the Lord—“ Your goodness is as the morning cloud ; and as the early dew, it goeth away !” O my God, slay the enmity of this sin-stricken heart, by the sharp sword which issueth out of thy mouth, even thy living and powerful word !

At this, and the following visit, by her leave, I went over the evidence of the authenticity, and divinity of the Holy Bible. I conducted her active and acute mind over the *historical* evidence. She listened with attention, and eagerness to the testimony of the Christian fathers ; from Augustine back over the early centuries, and up to the apostolical fathers ; while I demonstrated to her that not only all these, but that *heathen* writers also, and *opponents*, such as Celsus, Porphyry, and Julian the Apostate, freely quoted these books called THE BIBLE, as genuine and authentic writings. “ Madam, it is an historical fact, which no well-read man can gainsay, that—*Every ancient antagonist of Christianity admitted these books of the Bible to be written by the men whose names they bear !*

“ The inspired writers possessed the gift of tongues, and the power of working miracles : they healed the blind, the maimed, the lame, and raised the dead. All this was done publicly before the church, and their enemies. And having thus established their divine mission from God, they present-

ed publicly to the church, the books written by them, as the accredited messengers of God. Thus the miraculous powers and gifts did establish the fact of their apostolical commission from God: this was their grand object. And the fact of their being the authors of these books, was established by the living and credible witnesses, even all Christians, in their days, who received these books publicly from their hands, and deposited them in their archives, and transmitted the *autographs* to their children. Now, when these books of the New Testament were written, there were hundreds of thousands of Christians alive: these, with one voice, declared that they saw the apostles work miracles: 'We knew them, and believed most truly that they were sent of God: we know these books to have been given by them, for we received them as a public deposit, and as such, we transmit them to our children.'

"No one book, nor even a single sentence, could be added to these inspired books without speedy detection. This could not happen in *the apostles' lifetime*: they were alive to expose to the church, every attempt at such kind of an imposture. This could not happen *after their decease*; for by this time copies were multiplied, and the holy Scriptures were in every church, in Asia, Europe, and Africa. In fact, dear Madam, it would be as easy, and quite as practicable to add a new chapter, or a new sentence, to the common law of the land, or to a national charter, or abstract from them, as it would have been to palm a new book of holy writ, or even one sentence, on the watchful church of God."

Here we were interrupted; and at her request I closed with prayer; and with many tears she was commended to God, the great and good Shepherd of Israel, who gathers the wandering sheep from "all places whither they have been driven in the cloudy and dark day!"

In a few days my visit was renewed with an interest now

daily increasing. I met her physician, who whispered in my ear to take courage—"She has at length commenced a diligent reading of the Bible: her attendant reads to her as long, and as often as her weakness can sustain it. But it is singular," added he—"she will hear only out of the *Old Testament!*"

After an affectionate salutation from her, with her permission, I proceeded in the examination of the *internal evidence* of the Scriptures. I pressed upon her attention the evidence of their divinity, from the peculiar *sublimity* of their conceptions of God, and his perfections, and their spotless *purity*. "The genius and the wits of Greece, and Rome," I observed, "never, in one thought or conception, attained any thing similar, far less equal to the sublimity of their conceptions of God; and never, in one instance, to any thing resembling their spiritual purity! This is evidently something on the pages of the Bible altogether superhuman. Unassisted human nature would let fall, of necessity, as in fact, we see it invariably does in all matters, and in all human composesures, the stain of its own impurity. Good men, having the fear of God before their eyes in all things, could not practise a deception on the world, and give out their own impostures as from God. And most manifest is it, that no wicked man could have conceived such pure and heavenly doctrines in his mind; far less, by any combination of his associates, have formed a system breathing nothing but spotless purity in morals, and religion. And, then, notice the perfect *harmony* of all the parts. These tracts which compose the volume of the Bible were written, some of them, by kings and princes; some by statesmen; some by peasants and herdsmen; men living over a period of *fifteen hundred years*, who never saw, and never conversed with each other. Such a perfect harmony in views, and in sentiments, on any subject, existing among some *fifty* men, even

in our times, and who had even all seen and conversed with each other, would absolutely be pronounced *a miracle* by even the deist !

Their purity in waging a war of extermination against all sin—even in the secrecy of the heart's emotions, and desires—and their irresistible efficacy in subduing the hearts of the children of men, exhibit the proofs of their divinity. They convert the passionate man, into a lamb ; the avaricious, into benevolent Christians ; the timorous and cowardly, into courageous soldiers of the cross ; so that, at the call of their Lord, they can despise fires and torments. They have converted the lewd, into pure and chaste persons ; the cruel and bloodthirsty, into kind-hearted and courteous Christians ; the unjust, foolish, and notorious offender, they have rendered equitable, prudent, and holy. Nay, so great, says Lactantius, in one word, “ is the force of divine wisdom, that when infused into the heart, it expels, by a single effort, folly, the mother of sin.” And these are *moral miracles* which you and I witness weekly ; as the church has witnessed them in all ages. In the days of the apostles, hundreds of thousands, once vile and debased heathens, but then clothed by the Christian religion, in the robes of righteousness and holiness, stood up as the living witnesses of this irresistible power of the Gospel, and of its moral miracles. And from that period millions, in their successive generations, have borne their testimony, with all the force of a moral demonstration, to the all-powerful influence of the blessed Gospel of Christ. They have done—and done before the eyes of the shrewdest, and most cunning opposers—what no human eloquence, no human reasoning, no human persuasions, no energy of philosophy, no created authority or force, ever could do. They have illumined the darkest minds ; they have subdued and softened the hardest hearts ; they have overcome the most obstinate pagan, and idolater ; and returned them to society,

virtuous, pure, and holy men. They have soothed their mental agony in the dying hour, and led them to rest, and glory in eternity. In a word, that has been done by them, which God only does by his own selected means. Hence the seal of heaven's testimony is set to them, that they are God's most holy truths, used by him, and owned by him before all!"

During this last address, the widow was bathed in tears; and often uttered, in a low and tremulous moan—"O my God!—O my distracted soul! God, pity my weakness! Mercy, O Lord, mercy on me; and heal my blindness, if I am in error!"

Kneeling down, I once more mingled my tears with hers, and offered our fervent supplications to the prayer-hearing God, for his quickening and forgiving grace to this broken-hearted woman. I did feel as if I was now wrestling in hope. "O heavenly Father, dissipate this dark cloud of sorrow: bring in this poor wanderer: receive her to the bosom of thy love. O God, say unto her, in the effectual workings of thy free Spirit, Daughter, thou art loosed from thine infirmities; go in peace. O bring her to the foot of the cross of Christ: there let her be found sitting, clothed, and in her right mind." And yet I could not resist the fearful forebodings which came over my mind as I rode home. O the fatal influence of infidelity; so congenial to corrupt reason; so soothing to the depraved heart; so subservient to the vicious desires and appetites; so potent in its seductions! I dared scarcely indulge a hope. But, O most merciful Father, thy Spirit is able to subdue the most obstinate heart: I present her at the foot of thy throne: O, Holy Ghost, descend in thy all-subduing influences: renew her soul: O pluck the brand from the flames! To thee I commit her, Lord God, my strength and Redeemer!

In a day or two, I renewed my visit; and at her request,

after prayer, I discussed with her the evidence of *miracles and prophecy*. She lent her deep and serious attention to the subject.

I studied to remove her difficulties on miracles, and show her that a miracle is just as susceptible of proof as any other palpable fact, or public event of history. "Christ and his apostles came before the public, and called on all men, in the name of God, to believe the Gospel, and repent of their sins. In evidence of their divine mission, they invited all to bring out their blind, their maimed, the impotent, the dead; and with *a word* they healed them all, *instantaneously*, and called the dead to life in the presence of their foes. And in their appeals to the multitude they said—We have cured all your diseased, and raised your dead, now we demand of you that you receive, and acknowledge us as the accredited messengers of God: we call on you to believe in Christ, who, by miracles, performed by his own unborrowed, underived power, has shown himself to be the Son of God, come down to save this lost world. Believe in our messages from him: believe in these our written testimonies, which we now publicly deliver to you, and leave in the bosom of the church, to be transmitted to posterity.

"And they did so in the very seat of opposition, even in Jerusalem. Within some ten, or twelve days after the descent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost, there were converted to the Christian faith, between thirty and forty thousand, on a moderate calculation, in that city; and no mean men were they. There were among them some of the chief priests, some of the chief men of the nation; men who had been witnesses of all the leading events in our Lord's life, and death; and even those who had taken an active part in his trial, and in putting him to death. These being converted by the Spirit of God, stood up, and publicly declared, that they had seen these miracles, and felt the power of them on

their own bodies, and on those of others before their eyes. To suppose that thousands of the most intelligent, and multitudes of the chief persons in Jerusalem and Judea, should thus be imposed upon, and induced to declare publicly, that they believed what they knew to be false, would, in fact, be the supposition of a miracle greater in its very nature, and surrounded with more difficulties than what any infidel, even of the most extraordinary credulity, would care to encounter. It is, in fact, an assertion by a few men no ways worthy of credit, that some forty thousand people, the most virtuous in Jerusalem, and some of them the foremost men of the nation, had all, without any accountable motive, suddenly conspired to become an army of impostors !”

I paused to give the widow, or her two sons, time to reply. Neither answer nor objection was offered.

The discussion of the evidence drawn from *prophecy* was taken up, and at her request continued at intervals, as she was able to sustain it. We went over the field of prophecy touching the Jews, and other ancient nations, and also those which respect events of a more recent date : we pointed out instances of fulfilment in the New Testament era, and also those now actually being fulfilled, relative to Jews, to Moham-med, and the popish Antichrist. [See Horne's Introduction, Vol. I. chap. iv. sec. 3.]

I had observed more than once, in my intercourse with this family, and, indeed, with all other sceptics whom I had met, that whenever we entered on cool and deliberate argument, on *miracles, prophecy, or historical evidence*, they chose usually to say little, or nothing. It occurred to me that, with few exceptions, infidels are led by prejudice, or a vitiated taste, or a depraved heart, to adopt their theory. And, with few exceptions, they contrive to keep themselves in it by scoffing, or ridicule, and not unfrequently, by rude and boisterous merriment. Argument and investigation seem

out of the question. They fulfill, to the letter, the divine prediction—"there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts;"—"there being many things which they are willingly ignorant of."

I availed myself of an opportunity of drawing the attention of the family to this; and I was speedily convinced that, of all their antipathies, no one is stronger than that against the devoted "*ministry*." This occupied our attention, in a singular discussion, the most of an afternoon.

I asked a question for information—it was this: whether, next to the "*minister*," they did not feel an unconquerable aversion to the peculiar ordinances of the Gospel, namely, *Baptism*, and the *Lord's Supper*? They seemed surprised at the question, but frankly admitted that they did; that they not only *ridiculed* them, as they did the priests, but even *detested* them.

I replied that it would, to me, have been inexplicable, if they had not hated them: and I shall presently show you, my young friends, that this proceeds from a deep principle in the corrupt heart, and is cherished by the master spirit who opposes Christ.

I set out in the discussion, by insisting on the distinction between the true pastor, and the false pretender, the Romish priest: *two* beings as distinct as the lawful magistrate, and the fell despot. And by an appeal to reason, and history, and to the character, and office of the two—the one being *the minister of Christ*, the other, *the priest of antichrist*—I succeeded in removing much of the odium, and, thence, very much of their prejudice. The "*minister*" comes not to lord it over the conscience; not to persecute; not to offer any new *sacrifice* "for the quick and the dead." "Christ, by his one sacrifice, has for ever perfected them that are sanctified." But he comes in the meekness of an unassuming teacher: he relies on no civil authority, no human power: he comes

with no armour, but the armour of truth : he comes with no traditions, and ordinances of man : he appeals to the public documents of Christianity—"to the law and the testimony." Out of these, lying open to every man's inspection, he reasons, and teaches, and urges, not as a lordly tyrant, but as the humble and devout follower of his Divine Master.

"Without pure religion there can be no genuine morality : without sound morality, no society, no government can long exist : without them it necessarily crumbles into pieces, and is swept along in a vortex of anarchism ! There is one nation at least, set up as a lofty beacon on the stormy ocean—I mean France. And she has the beacon before her, in fire and blood.

"And it is impossible that American citizens can forget the infidel efforts made in our own beloved Republic, in the close of the last century, and the beginning of this ; particularly during the raging of the infidel volcano of the French Republic. These efforts were designed to introduce among us, the ferocious atheism of the Voltaire and Paine school, which convulsed France, annihilated true liberty, and filled the land with blood and havoc ! Had these principles succeeded here, our Republic had been a similar prey to anarchy and the reign of terrors. And who stood up in the breach ? What gallant band of Christians fought the battle, with the imported French atheism, and its brazen-faced partisans ? The American Protestant ministers ! They who had stood foremost in the ranks of the whigs of '76, and preached, and prayed, and fought their country's battles,—these, and their no less gallant sons, in the ministry, and in the Christian church, successfully repelled this host of French atheists, and American deists. They saved our Republic by a splendid moral victory !

"Who can forget the labours of Dr. Witherspoon, of Dr.

Dwight, of Dr. Mason, of Dr. Nesbit, of Boudinot, of Dr. Linn, of Dr. Livingston?

“I beg your attention to another historical fact. In proportion, as deism and ‘priestcraft’ have flourished in a country, have liberty, science, and national prosperity languished and died away. In proportion, as Christianity, and the ministry of Christ have flourished, have fair liberty and science, sent forth their choicest blessings over a free and happy people!

“Compare Britain with Spain and Austria: compare our Republic with Mexico and South America. There you read an instructive lesson for all our youth!

“The ministry, apart from the spiritual blessings which they bring to immortal souls, have strong claims on the regard and protection of their country. As persons of distinguished talents, high literary attainments, and correct morals, they possess much individual influence, which they exert for the good of the community. Their official labours have the greatest tendency to promote peace, and good order; to check vice; to cherish virtue; to prevent crime; to foster the genius of civil, and religious liberty. Hence their official labours are a rich national blessing; and the patriot will duly appreciate them.

“I put the question to every man of reflection,—what would be the moral, and political effects produced on society, and the nation, at large, by the degradation of the character and office of the holy ministry, or by their expulsion?

“This question is answered by the solemn voice of history. The moral character of England, under Mary and Elizabeth, when by the one, Protestants were crushed; and by the other, the honest Puritans were oppressed and silenced: and the moral character of Scotland and England, under the misrule of Charles I. and James II. These proclaim the melancholy answer. The bigotry of the court had nearly de-

stroyed the faithful and devout ministers. Ignorance and superstition leading on the horrid train, which they do naturally produce, had established their reign over the mass of the population. They had chained down the genius of liberty, and were preparing the people to bend their willing necks to the worst of slavery,—that over the conscience!

More distinctly, still, can we trace these painful effects, from prominent facts, in the history of France. The sanguinary house of Bourbon had inflicted manifold evils on the true ministry of Christ; while they fostered the infidel priesthood of Antichrist. Charles IX., young in years, but old in crime, struck the first dreadful blow, in the massacre of St. Bartholomew, in 1572. New tyrants added fresh injuries. And at the distance of a hundred years, Louis XIV. let slip the fiends of persecution. By a succession of cruelties, by massacres, and banishment, the body of the faithful and true ministry was destroyed. The rest, a wretched remnant, pining in obscurity, fell, by degrees, a prey to the ignorance, and superstition of the age.

The way was thus gradually paved for the deadly march of deism, and atheism. Led on at last, by Voltaire, and his blood-hounds, this frightful demon filled the nation with its emissaries. These, in their march of moral death, met with feeble opposition. *Truth had fallen in the streets.* The faithful watchmen, who had sounded the alarm, were gone. These singular enthusiasts, like blood-hounds, steady to their purpose of death, did always, in their ignorance and prejudice, confound the Popish superstition, with the Christian religion: and the Popish priest, with the Reformed minister of Christ. Their deep laid conspiracy against Christianity burst forth at the French revolution. And it buried religion, and minister, and priest, and magistrate, and the nation, in blood, and havock, and smouldering ruins!

The man whose scepticism urges him into hostility against

the Bible, and the persecution of the humble ministers of Christ, is, therefore, aiding and abetting the conspiracy against morals, and the liberty, and the government of his country!

Besides, my dear friends, to bring the case home directly to your own hearts, have the ministry ever to your knowledge, in this land, exercised any undue dominion, any of the deceptions of European "priestcraft?" Did they ever usurp any power in the state? Did they ever seek to make the magistrate their inferior, and their tool? Did they ever claim any authority, but that which is spiritual, and with which the Bible invests them: and which the voice of the church accords to them voluntarily? They are supported by the rewards of their labours: true, and so are your magistrates, and all the public servants of the people. The Christian community calls them out to their office, just in the same way as the voice of the people calls out the magistrates, and their public men, into office. The nation would disdain the meanness of accepting any man's services for nothing. The church,—the great Christian community disdains to allow her ministry to go unrewarded for their labours. This is one of the things the infidel "*is wilfully ignorant of.*" Hence their indiscriminate cry of *priestcraft!* For in their disgusting illiberality, and total want of charity, they denounce the honest Reformed pastor along with the ghostly tyrant! They do not discriminate between the honest services of the honourable physician, and the impostures of the quack: between the labours of the upright magistrate, and the bloody raids of the ghostly tyrant! So reckless is the persecution of the infidel and profligate, waged against the ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ!—This produced a deep sensation on the young persons in the family.

"Now, my friends, permit me to conduct you to the main point—and one which you, I presume, have always over-

looked," said I, availing myself of Leslie's four Rules, in his *Short Method with the Deists*.

"We can demonstrate the truth, and the facts of Christ's miracles, resurrection from the dead, and the Gospel system and history, just as easily as you can, by national monuments, demonstrate the fact of our National Declaration of 1776."

I paused. They begged me to proceed. "Let me have your careful attention, then, to our *four Rules*. 1st. The matters of fact commemorated, must be such that *man's senses* can be judges of them. 2nd. These deeds and facts must have been *publicly done*, in the face of men. 3d. Not only must *public monuments* have been set up, but certain *outward actions* performed in memory of these events. 4th. These monuments and outward actions must have been instituted, and must have commenced, *at the time* when the facts took place.

"Now apply these *four Rules* to the Miracles of Moses, and his times, and to the miracles of Jesus Christ, and his times. Let us, in order to be brief, confine ourselves to the last, namely, the miracles of Christ.

"In accordance with the first *two rules*, the miracles of our Lord were palpable to men's senses, and publicly performed before men:—such as the raising of Lazarus from the dead; curing all manner of diseases, instantly, by a word; and finally, his own resurrection from the dead;—they were public, that is to say, before witnesses. Will you admit this?"

They nodded their assent with an interest which convinced me that I was understood. I went on.

"Now, as the national rites of the Jews, and also the dedication of the *Levites* to the office of the priesthood, were the national monuments to perpetuate the knowledge of these facts; even so the gospel ministry, and the holy ordinances of the New Testament, are set up as the grand monuments

to commemorate the Saviour and his works. The same eyes and the same ears that witnessed the miracles of our Lord—and thousands witnessed them—saw these evangelical monuments set up, and their corresponding actions enjoined on their faithful observance. “Do this in remembrance of me.” “Go ye and preach the Gospel to every creature, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”

“And 4th, these monuments were set up at the very date of these facts and miracles. And—like our own national monuments of the *fourth of July*, and our republican magistracy, they have continued to this day, in a regular succession, in memory of these facts and events. And I do aver, that it is just as reasonable to assert that an impostor could persuade twelve millions of people that they keep the *fourth of July* in memory of what *never took place*, or could palm the body of our republican magistrates, on the American republic, under a charter which never existed; as to maintain with the Deist, that the Gospel and its institutions are the inventions of priestcraft!

“The Gospel is as much a law of the Christian churches, as the laws of Moses were to the nation of the Jews. This Gospel declares, on the face of it, that these monuments, and the public office of the ministry, were appointed by Christ; and are to continue in unbroken succession to the end of time.

“Now, let us suppose, as the Deist does, that this Gospel is a fiction; and, of course, *invented*. If *invented* in ancient times, and put forth under the names of the apostles—of course it must have been instantly detected by the living apostles, and their thousands of Christian converts. In this era, then, they cannot date the age of the fiction. If a fiction, then it must have been *invented* in some period or other, after Christ, and after the apostles had departed this life. Now,

mark it well : if invented after them, then, at the time of the invention, there could be no public monuments, no ministry of the Gospel, no baptism, no Lord's supper, on the part of the church—unless (what would be an extraordinary supposition) the cunning impostor in question did actually, by a miracle, *invent* and make all these public monuments ; and moreover, did succeed in persuading all the Christian nations and people to believe that they had actually been observing public rites, and had actually seen the gospel ministry publicly officiating—when, on the Deist's supposition, they did not previous to that moment, actually exist !

“ On the other hand, if the cunning impostor who invented the Gospel, appeared before men simply *with the Gospel as a written record*, unaccompanied by any monuments, and without the clergy as its ministers, to expound and teach ; then that Gospel bore on the face of it the evidence of its own falsehood. It declares on its first pages, that this Gospel ministry, and these holy ordinances did exist, and were celebrated, and used, by corresponding actions, in all times of the Gospel ; and yet these very monuments mentioned and appealed to, by this impostor's Gospel, were never yet seen, and never yet heard of, on the Deist's allegation !

“ But here are monumental actions, and official characters existing, in the successive generations from our Lord's resurrection : no man could palm these on the nations, and Christian churches.—These hold forth the Gospel from Christ ; and their evidence is as irresistible and as decisive in favour of the facts and truths of the Gospel, to say the least, as the national monuments of our *fourth of July*, and our Declaration of independence, and our body of the magistracy, prove, with irresistible demonstration, that we did separate from England, and did establish a Republic in 1776.

“ And hence, in conclusion—this being the grand end of the monumental *actions* and *offices*—it is just as natural that

the Great Adversary of Christ, and his truth, should stimulate into operation all possible hatred and malignity against them, as that he should excite all possible opposition to the divine evidence of his Holy Word. If the children of infidelity and darkness did not persecute the '*priesthood*,' and hate the sacred ordinances of the Gospel, then could the adversary view unmoved, and without opposition, all the grand and palpable evidence of God's Gospel by these monuments. In one word, in proportion as Satan and his emissaries pursue, with unrelenting malignity, the ministry, and the ordinances of Christ, so do they indicate their perception and deep conviction that their existence is an irrefragable evidence of the truth of the miracles, and facts on which the glorious Gospel is immoveably based!"

The attention of the young gentlemen was excited by this to the highest degree. It was evident that they never had seriously examined into the nature, uses, or ends of these evangelical *monuments*. And as they expressed some anxiety to pursue this argument at length, by themselves, I recommended to their careful attention, the original of LESLIE'S SHORT WAY WITH THE DEIST.

The next week, when I renewed my visit, my good friend, who had been with me at the last discussion, whispered in my ear, as we approached the sick chamber—" *Sir, you must shoot lower!*"

I had not a moment to reflect on this hint, nor did I conceive, at the moment, his meaning; in an instant we were by the death-bed of the General's widow.

I found that she had been studying the New Testament, at last. The Holy Bible lay open, on a small round table by her bed side; it was open at the seventeenth chapter of John. She had been weeping over it: several tear-drops still moistened the sacred leaves. Yet, in the course of conversation with her on the state of her mind, I could discover that we

had only shaken her confidence—in no small degree, it is true, in that deceitful system in which she had been seeking repose. This was indeed much, but, alas! there was the same cold and deathlike aversion of the soul to Christ, and, I feared, an utter repugnance to his precious doctrines, and obstinate aversion to the yielding up of her soul, in submission to him.

These six weeks had we been labouring; and yet little progress, apparently, had been made. The words of my good friend occurred to me—“*I must shoot lower.*” Hitherto I had been exhibiting the outworks of the Holy Bible: now for its precious hidden treasures, its peculiar doctrines—the doctrines of the cross. Now we come to close quarters; and may the Holy Spirit direct us. Amen!

At this, and my next interview, I drew her attention to the nature of sin, as viewed in the holy light of God's spotless purity, and impartial justice. I dwelt on its terrible influence on the soul and the heart; its bitter fruits; its appalling guilt, as committed against the Holy One. I endeavoured to bring before her mind its fatal evils, entailed on man in this world; its inconceivable terrors on a dying bed; its fearful retribution in the world to come.

Behold the displays of God's holy indignation against sin; behold his anger against it, in all the evils which infest our world—wars, famine, pestilence, death in every appalling form. It has turned the world into a Golgotha, and it has formed the bottomless pit! O who can conceive, who describe the evil of sin—“the abominable thing which God hates!” And opening the Bible, I repeated certain texts with the solemnity befitting the subject:—“God is jealous, and the Lord revengeth: the Lord revengeth and is furious: the Lord will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies: he is slow to anger, and of great power; and will not at all acquit the wicked.” Upon the

wicked God will rain snares, fire and brimstone, and a horrible tempest ; this shall be the portion of their cup." " They shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and the glory of his power,—when he shall come to be glorified, &c." " I will gather thee into the midst of the furnace, and I will blow on thee in the fury of my wrath, and I will leave thee there, and melt you." Ezek. xxii. 18—22. O then, " can thine heart endure, can thy hands be strong in the day that I shall deal with thee ? I the Lord have spoken it, and I will do it."

O wretched condition of the sinner! God is angry with him every day : he hardeneth his heart against his Maker. He makes his brow brass, and his neck a sinew of iron! He hideth himself in his false refuges ; he flatters himself in his extravagant delusions ; he saith in his heart, there is no God : there is no justice ; there is no punishment ! He wars against conscience, and reason, and God ; until the hatefulness of his iniquity is found out. " And a tempest stealeth him away in the night."

These alarming passages of God's word, and this appeal struck deep into her conscience. She had wept incessantly on her sister's bosom from the time that we had entered on this subject ; now her whole soul seemed to be bowed down under the rod of God : and often she moaned out, " O my God, is there no hope ?"—" God be merciful to me a sinner !"

These touching exclamations led me instantly to the exhibition of the Lord Jesus Christ, and his atonement. I drew her attention to the *necessity* of the atonement: " Without shedding of blood there is no remission. To its *reality*. Having the true and spotless matter of a sacrifice, a holy human nature, he offered up his *one* sacrifice, and " once for all." " He was wounded for our transgressions ; he was bruised for our iniquities ; the chastisement of our peace was

upon him, and by his stripes are we healed." "He hath made him to be a sin offering for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." And, finally, its *perfection*. "The Lord is well pleased for his righteousness' sake: he will magnify the law, and make it honourable." And now, "behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world."

"O my God! I wish——" She paused a long time. "I wish I had known these things—years ago. But now—O! they are hid from mine eyes. I sinned against conscience, and early instruction—I have sinned against the strivings of the Spirit. O how wickedly I strove against Him, and resisted him! Now he has given me up—and there is no hope! *I would not know these things, because I disbelieved the Bible.*"

I now hastened to lay the Gospel call before her wounded and broken heart: while I implored of God wisdom and spiritual skill to guide her, and woo her heart to Christ. The call of the Gospel I set before her, taking care that she should not lose sight of the fearful and just denunciations of the pure law of God. From the top of Sinai I bade her hear the law: "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them!" I pressed it on her conscience, while I implored of the Holy Spirit that she might be "*so kept under the law,*" as to feel her utter helplessness from the deeds of the law; and that she might "*be shut up to the faith,*" hedged in on every side, that being no longer left to go after false refuges, and self-dependence, and legal hopes, she might be "shut up" to the one new and living way, "the faith of Christ," the simple reliance on HIM ALONE!

I made a long pause, for my emotions had overpowered me. I felt as if choked. I could not find utterance for some moments. I thought of the misery of the sinner, and

her guilt. I thought of the infinite purity of DIVINE JUSTICE, with which all sinners do most awfully trifle; I thought of the horrors of perdition, and the worm that never dieth. I thought of this most gracious provision of God's grace by the mediation of his Son. O what misery! O what a remedy! O blinded and most wilful sinners—they will not come unto *him* that they may be saved! O deplorable condition of this interesting woman, so near the grave, and apparently so ill prepared! And in a mental agony I wrestled with God, for her immortal soul. “O Holy Spirit, come, break, subdue, breathe life into the dry bones: breathe on her soul, and she shall live!”

At this moment the Christian brother who had accompanied me, drew near; and taking her by the hand, said—“‘Turn thee, turn thee, why wilt thou die? As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked: wherefore, return ye, and live.’ Does not God even stoop to expostulate with thee? hear his voice: ‘Come now, and let us reason together, said the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow: though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.’” Yes, dear lady, thine iniquities are great—thy transgressions are infinite! I lay no flattering unction to thy troubled conscience: but, glory be to his grace, his mercy is equal to all thy misery; his grace to thy boundless wants. “Christ is able to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by him.”

The widow sobbed aloud; and I could hear her utter in a suppressed moan, “God be merciful to me a sinner! what *shall* I do—what *must* I do, to be saved? I believe the Bible to be from God. Can it lead me to a cure for a broken heart? Is it Jesus Christ?”

“What avails it?” continued the Elder, not hearing what she said, “that thou shouldest reject the Holy Bible, and

urge all the strength of infidel objections against the revelation of Christ? Thine immortal soul is quivering like a sere leaf on the autumnal bough, ready to drop into ruin. O tell me wherewith thou shalt come before thy Lord, or bow thyself before God? Can the most costly offerings be accepted by thy Judge? How canst thou be justified before HIM, who is of purer eyes than to look upon iniquity; who cannot behold it without abhorrence? Can the Judge declare that there is no sin, where thy conscience itself crieth out under the load of thy guilt? Can he who has declared that he will by no means clear the guilty, even now acquit thee without an adequate reparation to law and justice? O may God be merciful to thee a sinner! Deists may prate, and the profane may scoff; but there is a God—there is impartial justice—there is a tremendous bar of judgment! And there is a sentence under which the boldest and stoutest-hearted blasphemer shall quail, as the fiercest demon in eternal darkness has quailed! But O, there is hope for *thee*. Cast away all thy transgressions; there is justification for the chief of sinners!”

“O how!” cried she in a transport; “where, dear Pastor; by what means; by whom? O that I knew Him, I would come even to his feet!”

The Elder's manner was severe, but his heart was all kindness. The evidence of this was manifest, for he was shedding tears while he was uttering these searching words. And then allowance must be made for him: he had lived all his lifetime within a few miles of the General, and the widow's family, and he had long been witness of the virulence, and malignity with which the Holy Bible, and the Christian religion had been treated in this family. And he thought *no convictions too deep, no remorse too pungent, no repentance thorough enough, in such a penitent!*

She laid her hand gently on mine, and in deep distress repeated, "Tell me, O tell me now, where, by *whom* I can be justified from this overwhelming guilt of my soul!"

I hastened to explain the nature of saving faith, and evangelical repentance. I dwelt at some length upon the nature and manner of justification before God, by faith in the atoning blood of Christ. I implored her, in the name of the Most High, to cast herself on the grace and mercy of God in Christ. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." The Gospel offer is clear, full, explicit; so also is the call of mercy. "Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

"Stop," said she, with a look of mingled emotion—"repeat that again."

"Come unto me"—"Whom?" cried she; "what *me*?—who speaks this to me?"

"Christ, the Lamb, the dear Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world." "He bore our sins in his own body on the tree," that such sinners as you and I, may be saved, and never come into the second death. He says this; and his saying is a command. Come then unto him: O seek his Holy Spirit, to illumine thee, and renew thee. Here is the promise."

"What promise?" cried she eagerly.

"I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh." Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26, 27.

"O may I venture?" said she in a low moan. "Hear," said I, "out of his own word the authority binding you, and the reason why you should *venture* instantly: 'Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath

no money, come ye, buy and eat ; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price. Incline your ear and come unto me ; hear, and your soul shall live ; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.' ' Ask, and it shall be given you ; seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.' ' The Spirit and the Bride say, Come : and let him that heareth say, Come ; and let him that is athirst come ; and whosoever will, let him come and take the water of life freely.' ”

“ O my God ! and are *such* promises, are *such* offers made to *such* as me ? Can it possibly be ? ”

“ O yes, to *thee* and the chief of sinners : free is the Gospel offer ; perfect is the atonement ; all-sufficient the blessed Saviour. And you have, as your warrant to come, God's own call. O come unto him : accept him : add not the sin of fresh rebellion to all thy other sins. Believe in him *now*, and thou shalt be saved ! ”

Her face was bathed in tears : she covered her head, and turned herself round into the arms of her sister, who had been all this time supporting her on the bed. A long and deep silence occurred, interrupted only by her low moanings, and sobbings of pain, and agony. The children hastened into her bedroom, as if anticipating her dissolution. Her son Isaac leaned on a sofa opposite her bed, with his eyes fixed with intense interest on us.

The Elder had bent his head down on his knees, and was wrestling for her soul in secret prayer ; and my spirit in indescribable emotions, with some faint beamings of joy, was imploring the outpouring of the Holy Ghost. “ Come, O breath of the Lord, and breathe on this crushed and broken spirit. O leave her not ; let her not return again to folly. Deliver her, O gracious Saviour : bring her up out of the deep waters ! Set her feet upon a rock—*the Rock of ages*.

“Put the new song into her lips! Holy Father, hear her, O hear her, in these secret wrestlings, and agonies of her soul: and let it be seen that she is a vessel of mercy for the Master's glory. Amen!”

The silence was long and distressing, still interrupted by heavy moans, and sighs. Meantime her sister, a mother in Israel, and a ripe Christian, was whispering instructions, and consolations into her ear.

We rose to depart; we were unwilling to interrupt these emotions; and we hoped that these were the labours and travails of the new birth. She pressed my hand, and retained the hold of it for several minutes, without turning round, or uncovering her head.

“My dear Madam, farewell: may God bless you! You are on the borders of Jordan, for you are fast fading away; and now we take our leave. I may never see you in the land of the living any more: pray, what are *now* your hopes, and prospects in the solemn view of eternity?”

I shall never forget the scene that followed. She turned herself slowly round, raised her hands, and clasping them, said, in the most solemn tone, “*I rely upon the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ! O my Redeemer, I take thee—I take thee as my Saviour—now, wholly, only, and for ever!*” She paused; then added, “I have found thee, O my Redeemer! Long, long have I wandered from thee, my Shepherd; thou hast sought me, even me, in these dreadful wanderings. On thy bosom didst thou lay me, and bring me back. Dear Saviour, in thy righteousness alone have I hope, and strength. Rich is the grace that saved a wretch like me!”

She spoke this in a low whisper, yet with great animation; and sunk back on her pillow, and gave way to a flood of tears.

The elder looked first at her, then at me, and then around the circle of the children; and, in an ecstasy of joy, clasping

his hands, and sinking down on his knees, he cried, "Then, dear pastor, let us give solemn thanks: the wanderer that was long lost, is found; and she that was dead, is now alive!"

We all kneeled down by her bed-side, and offered thanks and praises to the Hearer of prayer, who had, in his rich grace, sought out, and brought back the lost sheep, from the places whither she had wandered, in the cloudy and dark day! And we parted from her, "glorifying God in her behalf;" and rejoicing at the consolations of the Spirit which were abounding in her.

I saw her only twice after this happy issue of her sorrows: she continued to rejoice in hope of the glory of God. She seemed to be steadily engaged in meditation, and secret devotion; often repeating, with unusual satisfaction, these gracious words of Christ, which had brought her comfort,— "Come unto me, all ye that labour:" and delighting much in the daily reading of the Holy Bible. And her pious sister, who was by her night and day, told me that she died with the calmness, resignation, and mild joy of a Christian; breathing out her soul into the bosom of the Redeemer; uttering, in a low whisper, "Lord Jesus, receive my parting spirit: thou hast redeemed me, Lord God of truth!"

On the third day, her funeral took place. And, at the suggestions of my friend, the Elder, I gave a detailed account of the form of instruction which we had pursued in our first ten visits, previous to her conversion. And the most of the inhabitants of Long Hill, and that vicinity, are alive this day, who heard the detail with emotions, and tears of joy. For the church rejoiced in the grace, and mercy of her Lord, who had given this signal triumph of his truth, over the fell enemy, that had sent desolation and wo, in former days, into this family.

Another incident which took place in the family of the General's widow, may not be uninteresting to the reader.

In a short time, I do not now exactly remember the number of weeks, after the funeral of the widow, her son Isaac was taken ill with a violent inflammation in the chest, and was also a patient of my friend, Dr. Darcey.

As soon as I learned that he was confined to his chamber, I lost no time in waiting on him. He was an amiable, and accomplished young man. But, as has been already hinted, he was unhappily seduced into deism, by the example of his father. I was shocked to see him. This blooming young man, I saw now posting on, in a hasty consumption, to his grave. In the strength of divine grace, as I trust, I secretly adopted my resolution to pursue the same mode of instruction in his case, as I had in that of his honoured mother, and to lose no opportunity, and spare no pains, to woo him over to the bosom of the good Shepherd. And I did flatter myself—and had I not some reason to do so?—that, with such a solemn instance of awakening, and conversion before his eyes—with such a heart-melting instance of the utter vanity, folly, and impiety of infidel principles, giving way before truth, on a dying bed—and with such a happy death as that of his dear and honoured mother—I should, by the grace of God, win his soul over too.

And I do confess, that I began my labours here, with far more hope than with his mother. And, moreover, I loved him as my own brother. And I often thought of the words and devotedness of St. Paul, and seemed willing to bear all evils, and curses *temporal*, could it be of any avail, for this dear, and most amiable youth. O what a prize! thought I, could we but woo thee over! What a blessing should we present to thy county, to thy native state, and to thy country!

On the Monday of the third week, so far as I remember, after I had seen him in his sickness, I was sitting by his

bedside. He had received all my visits with respect and kindness, but I had not, hitherto, succeeded in drawing one single remark from him on the subject of religion. I had, from the first, often repeated to myself the hint of my friend—"shoot lower." I did deal less in the argumentative, and more in fervent appeals to the heart, and conscience. That day I had commenced doing so. I finished my appeal on the *truth* and *perfection* of our Lord's atonement, and concluded with an entreaty that now he would accept of the offered mercy, and grace of Christ.

And O, if the yearnings of a father's, or a brother's bowels over a beloved being, could make one earnest and intensely eager, then did I feel that intensity of desire. I intreated and implored—O most gracious God, have mercy on this young man. I often repeated that precious invitation of our compassionate Saviour, which had produced such a healing influence on his mother's mind:—"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden," but I was grieved and overwhelmed by the utter indifference which he still manifested. He had all along insisted that he was not dying; that in a few days he should be well: and his busy mind was continually projecting new schemes, and pursuits. He insisted on hearing history, and books of amusement, or of science, read to him. All this he did with an assurance which nothing I said could shake.

"No, no, my dear Israel, do not say so: do lay aside these ill-timed schemes, and all this folly. Even were you to recover, and live yet many years—which may God in mercy grant—what is comparable to an interest in Christ? O Israel, what is a man profited, should he gain the whole world, if he lose his own soul, and be finally a cast away? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? It is, my dear youth, *the one thing needful*—THE ONE THING NEEDFUL. To this I urge, I implore your solemn attention. If you

live without religion in the heart, you spend your life in vain : if you die without religion, “ it had been better for you had you never been born ! ” As his countenance seemed still to indicate the same indifference as ever, I poured into his ear those words of solemn warning, as I took my leave. “ If we sin wilfully, after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin ; but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversary ! ” O hear the entreating voice of the God of mercy, before the hour of repentance has sped its course for ever ! Fare thee well ! ”

I had, thus far, had every facility of conversing with him in confidence. No company interrupted us. At my visits, indeed, I saw none of the family, except his cousin, Miss M——, and the little children. And she was present only a brief space, on one occasion only.

I took my leave of him ; and pressing his hand, which was kindly presented to me, I besought him to take these things into his serious consideration, promising to see him in a short time.

But, alas, my heart bleeds while I record it—this was the last time I saw poor Irael alive. I shortly after received a message conveying the shocking intelligence, that he died in a short time—some said about an hour—after I left him.

He had risen from his bed, and had been placed in his arm-chair, by the aid of his attendant ; and was eating a piece of biscuit ; but finding himself exhausted by the exertion of sitting up, and continuing to find more and more difficulty in breathing, he requested his attendant to lay him on the bed again. And, just as the clothes were being adjusted about him, he flung both his arms suddenly up, and raising his head convulsively from the pillow, he uttered a low and faint cry, and expired in a few moments.

The physical cause was explained to me next day, as I

stood with the doctor beside his remains. On inspection, it was found that the violent inflammation had rendered the whole of the right lobe of the lungs unfit for respiration ; and also the left, with the exception of an inch or two, square. And the exertion of rising, and sitting, requiring more breath than usual, the lungs were incapable of performing their usual functions, and he died as suddenly, as if he had been suffocated by drowning.

On the third day after his death, we assembled to pay the last mournful respect to his remains. All the young men of the parish seemed to be present. And it was a day of great mourning and lamentation, not only in the distressed family, but among all who knew him. For myself, I was utterly unmanned. The universal bursts of grief overwhelmed me. I wept with the weeping family and audience, while I attempted to improve this affecting providence in an address from the words of Moses : “ *O that they were wise ; that they understood this ; that they would consider their latter end !*”

He was laid in his grave, on the left side of his father, the General ; his mother rests on the right, in the churchyard of N. P. And there will they sleep, until the morning of the resurrection day, which will reveal all secrets !

# THE AFFLICTED MOTHER,

A NARRATIVE ;

ILLUSTRATING THE SINGULAR TRIUMPH OF DIVINE GRACE IN  
COMFORTING THE BROKEN-HEARTED.

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It is good for me that I have been afflicted : that I might learn thy  
statutes. PSALM cxix. 71,

## THE AFFLICTED MOTHER.

## CHAPTER I.

IN the spring of the year 1809, I made an excursion into the western parts of Pennsylvania. The relations of my father's house had long, previous to the outbreaking of the Revolutionary war, removed from Chester County, of that State, while it was yet a British province. And after having had their share in the dangers, and privations of the old Indian wars, they finally settled down in the rich and beautiful County of Washington, claimed, at that time, as a part of Virginia. And the small band of Christians which had, in their feebleness, settled here, were blessed, like the family of old Jacob : they had become a numerous people. At several places where I was called to preach, I found many, whom I had never had the pleasure of meeting before this time, who gave me not only the cordial welcome, peculiar to *the Backwoods-men's* hospitality, but also the affectionate salutation of a kinsman of the house of their fathers. And one thing I loved to see : they were church-going people, devoted, with zeal and intelligence, to the church of their fathers—the Presbyterian Church. The withering frosts of infidelity had not yet reached, with its visible fruits of death, the moral beauties of this American Arcadia !

In the families, where I happened to visit, in the western parts of Pennsylvania, Virginia, and in Ohio, as “ the newly

arrived relative," I was delighted to find the solemnity of family worship duly celebrated, and it was kept up by these sons of their fathers, in the ancient and primitive form. It was introduced with a short prayer by the patriarchal head of the family, seated in the circle of his children, his wife, and his friends: a psalm was next decently and devoutly sung, by the whole family circle, including the children, and the domestics: then a chapter of the Bible was read, in a grave and impressive manner, which indicated an understanding, and a deep feeling, under the instructions of the Most High, speaking to them in his word. And the whole was closed with a fervent prayer by the father, while all the members of the family were kneeling around him: expressed, with great simplicity, and with much of the heart-touching language of the holy Scriptures, particularly from the book of the psalms. It melted one into tears, to witness these simple, and unaffected displays of household religion of our *forebears*, among these pious and primitive settlers of the west.

It was here that I first witnessed the mode of preaching *in the woods*. And he who has not seen a Presbyterian Church congregated, on a hot summer day, in the backwoods, under the stately oaks, and fragrant hickories of the west of Pennsylvania, has yet to see a delightful and beautiful sight!

I shall never forget the impression made by the first of those sabbath day's exhibitions. It was on a beautiful hill side, called Mount Pleasant. The first object which arrested my attention, on the spot where we were to worship, was the neat log-house church, peering out from the stately waving grove. It was built in the form of an irregular cross; that is to say, it was a long building, with two aisles projecting from the body of the church, about eight or twelve feet, at the centre. There could not possibly have been any superstitious intention of imitating the figure of the cross, on the part of those who caused the church to be erected. But

there it was ;—a simple and necessary arrangement of the builder ; inasmuch as his timber was not long enough for the entire length of the house. These juttings out, or aisles, were rendered necessary on the same principle on which the angles of our fences are requisite. The pulpit stood in one of these recesses ; and the other was a vestibule, leading to the main entrance. But the day being fine, and now bordering on the beginning of delicious summer, the vast assembly were obliged to adjourn from the church, to their place of worshipping, in the forest, hard by. The church, though large, and pretty compactly seated, could not contain two-thirds of the people already assembled.

It was an imposing spectacle. First there was the great wooden tent, reared permanently, for the minister ; in an arbour of young hickories, which perfumed the air : it was elevated about four feet from the ground, and resting on four massive pillars of oak. It had its door, its open front, and awning, constructed of boards. When the minister stood up to speak, he seemed like one speaking out of an open window. Directly in front of this pulpit, and extending out from it, there was a long oaken plank, neatly planed, resting on pedestals, and a row of benches on each side of it. It was the permanent communion table ; for it remained there, like the tent, in summer and winter. And on all sides of these centre fixtures, there were ranges of benches, extending outwardly, in every respect like the interior of the church. Over our heads, were extended the long bushy branches of the stately oaks, and hickories, affording a delightful leafy cover to the congregation. On all sides of us, was a grove of young sugar maples, and hickories, sending forth from their young leaves, a delicious smell, which scented the murmuring breezes that swept over us ; together with thickets of dogwood, covered with their snowy blossoms. And to close the perspective, a complete cordon of saddled horses, tied to the

branches of the young trees, surrounded the whole congregation, at some distance ; yet so as to be under the occasional glance of their owners, and to be ready, at a moment's preparation, to convey their masters, and mistresses home, when the service of the sabbath had closed.

It was on this spot, that I was introduced, for the first time, to the venerated relative, the narrative of whose painful trials, and singular religious exercises, I am about to relate, and whom I shall call, **THE AFFLICTED MOTHER.**

Her father, who had been among the first settlers of the county, left her a handsome property ; she married young ; and was united in that marriage, to one of the first youths in that settlement ; he was also in easy circumstances, intelligent, and religious. They commenced their career as young Christians ; and with the various gifts of Providence, and the precious gifts of grace, needful to a truly happy life. From the first, was the worship of God celebrated in their family : they sat down together at the table of their divine Lord, at each returning season of the holy communion ; they walked together in the Christian life, blameless in morals, and keeping the commandments of God, in humble reliance on his promised grace. They were as happy as the envied condition of these primitive settlers could make them. And it certainly fell not much short of the happy condition of the famed Arcadians. They had one only child ; the heiress of their estates, and also of their parents' virtues.

She was a singular instance of God's overruling kindness, in preventing the excessive indulgence of too fond young parents from spoiling her. But it is not to be forgotten, that our Covenant God has recorded his promise, and his assurance, that "*if we train up a child in the way wherein he should go, when he is old, he shall not depart from it.*" Both her parents did indeed doat on her,—particularly her mother. And there is no wonder that she did so,—for she lost the

husband of her youth when this, her only child, was some twelve years of age : no wonder was it, that the whole feelings of a warm and affectionate heart should be concentrated on this one dear, and only object of a widowed mother's affections. And this amiable child returned, in full measure, the doatings of a mother's soul.

Young and old have entertained me with touching and artless descriptions of this young woman's character, and appearance : for her melancholy and early fate had stamped on every one's mind, who had seen her, a deep and indelible image of her personal beauty, and many virtues. She had reached the bloom of lovely fifteen: she was tall; finely shaped; her rich golden locks hung down in clustering curls on her neck and bosom : her forehead polished as alabaster, was high and finely modelled; her eyes blue, large and exceedingly expressive. In short, in their narrations, they represented her person as a most beautiful tabernacle reared up, by the exquisite skill and power of God, to contain one of the sweetest, kindest, and most lovely of souls! She was, said they, not only the idol of her mother's heart, but of all who associated with her : the pride of the settlement, and the most beautiful being that entered the church of Buffaloe.

And she had not disappointed the expectations, nor the pains, and labours of parents, and teachers. She had always been of a reflecting and serious turn of mind : her Bible was her companion : she had read it carefully over more than once. She manifested no particular attachment to the usual follies, and vanities of young people. Indeed the aged seemed to applaud her serious, affectionate, and Christian deportment, and her many virtues, in language nearly as warm and glowing, as that of the young people, in their praise of her beauty. While many an aged matron, partly in the usual superstition of the day, and partly on maxims of long experience and observation, touching the usual course of God's

mysterious providence,—would solemnly aver, in their earnest gossipings, that that beautiful young being, Isabella B., was too good to live long, in this evil and corrupting world : she was ripening fast for another world ! “ Soon ripe, soon decay ! ” said they, with solemn, and mysterious anticipations !



## CHAPTER II.

THIS mother had passed through the terrible scene of her conflicts, some considerable time before I made this tour in the West. Some two years after she had lost her husband, she had been wedded to another, and a very worthy man : he was, moreover, an excellent Christian. And, under their combined and affectionate training, young Isabella B. grew up : and she was as much, and as fondly doated on, by her step-father, as she had been by her own father. But,—this mother was childless, when, for the first time, I met with her.

I can never forget the incident which first attracted my attention to her. I did not then know her : it was not until after divine service, on a lovely summer evening, had closed, that I was presented to her, as her nephew and the cousin of that loved and lamented one whom she had lost ; and for whose death she was still in weeds. The incident I am going to allude to, was calculated to convey to a stranger an idea of her not being in perfect possession of her reason. Indeed it was well known to all who were intimate with her, that this afflicted mother was, occasionally, when excited, not entirely mistress of herself. She never was known to smile, much less to laugh, after this sudden and awful blow had laid her last earthly hopes in the dust : and it

was too evident that an unsubduable grief was wasting her vigorous Christian mind. Religious conversation alone, was that to which she would bend her attention: and in the charming exhibitions of the gospel, and animated discoursings on the person, and glory of the ever-blessed Redeemer, our Lord Jesus, she found that which soothed her spirit, and sent the soft and mellowed brightness of a summer's day over the dark winter of her sorrows!

I had, on that Lord's day, discoursed, from these most impressive words of 1 Thess. vi. 16, "For the Lord himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God! And the dead in Christ, shall rise first! Then we which are alive, and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we be ever with the Lord!"

The certainty of the *general* judgment awaiting us all, was the first subject of that day's reflections: I then noticed the *particular* judgment awaiting each one of us at our death; and expatiated on the designs of divine wisdom, in again bringing us all to the bar of God, at the day of universal convocation: it was in order that the sentence of the judge of all, which had been passed on each, and on all the condemned spirits of hell, might be exhibited in all its justice, before the assembled worlds in the full blaze of eternity; that thence, every mouth might be stopped; and all the glory and honour be ascribed to him who is God over all,—by all his angels, and all his redeemed hosts!

There was a propriety, we showed, of our not looking for this final coming of our Lord, to the general judgment, until certain grand events, manifestly predicted, and set before us in the word of God, should receive their fullest accomplishment; even to the letter. And thus, we should arm ourselves against impostors, who terrified the ignorant, and ungodly, by their solemn fanaticism, and predictions relative to

the sudden and near approach of the last day. The gospel, for instance, must be preached to *all nations*: the descendants of God's ancient people, the Jews must, nationally, be gathered into the fold, and put under the sceptre "of David their king:" antichristian, and mohammedan extravagance, idolatry, and delusions, must, in compassion to bleeding humanity, be utterly destroyed, by the breath of Christ's mouth, and by the brightness of his coming: and paganism, and all misbelief overthrown; with all their mental, and outward idolatry, and wickedness. And hence we must not allow ourselves to be moved, as if the day of the Lord was at hand. For no convulsion of the earth, no wandering comet, or other body, can touch us, until every one of his children be brought home: and every prediction consummated. Every predestinated event must come to pass as certainly and infallibly, as the day of judgment itself must come. And here, the sinner and ungodly were solemnly warned, and admonished to beware of imagining, that because the general judgment was far off from them, they might securely go on in sin: for the day of their death, and the hour of their *particular* judgment were nigh at hand! Behold, the Judge standeth even before the door!

We drew the attention of the immense audience to the august spectacle before us all—the Judge on the great white throne: his character illumined by overpowering glory:—omnipotent, omniscient, infinite in justice, ready to render to every man according to his works!

We next held up to view the awfully sublime, and most affecting circumstances of his descent to judgment! Ten thousand times ten thousand of his holy angels, and saints, attending him! what terror! what glory, and divine beauty, and excellence of majesty! Oh! to see him! to welcome him! "The Lord himself"—our own Lord, in human nature. Yes! He—the God incarnate—"shall descend from

Heaven!" He shall cleave these visible Heavens: his lightnings will illumine all the earth! He will come "with the shout" of the victor; and in the last onset against the enemies of God, and his church! He will come at the head of the angels as "the archangel." And with his potent voice, the emblem of his omnipotence and justice, will he summon the dead in their graves, from their slumber of ages! As in Adam all die; and descend to their graves,—so by Christ's power, shall all be made alive in the resurrection of life: even all men who shall have died shall be raised up,—righteous and wicked. "The dead" who fell asleep in the bosom of their blessed Redeemer, and have slept in the grave under his guardian power, shall rise "first." They shall rise before the other arrangements of that great day; or "first," in the order of time; and "first," in point of honour and glory! Then shall the whole congregated host of the species stand up before the throne! There shall be Adam and his youngest children; with all the millions intervening! One vast assembly on the theatre of universal convocation!

The judgment of the righteous, and of the wicked, was minutely and graphically delineated. They shall be ranged on the Judge's right hand, and his left. There, all the wicked shall appear—no veil can conceal—no darkness can cover—no gulph, no cavern, no river, no ocean, can hide them—no powers of death, or hell can seal their ears, or stop them up against the loud call of the Judge—*Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment!* There—there, every crime shall be laid open; there, every secret act of human wickedness,—there every secret murder shall stand disclosed, and manifest, in the overpowering light of eternity! And the sentence of the Judge shall doom every man according to his works. And, then, as rapidly as the thunderbolt pursues the flash, shall the tremendous execution follow the sentence of his lips! "COME, YE BLESSED!"—"DEPART, YE CURSED!"

At the moment that these words were uttered,—“there every secret murder shall stand disclosed, and manifest,”—I perceived a tall, interesting female, dressed in a riding habit, and in deep mourning, who was seated a little to the right of the pulpit, start up; and elevating her hand, she uttered some words in a low moan. The words I did not hear: but I could perceive a burst of the tenderest sympathy pervade the whole of the audience, who saw her. Many wept: a relative instantly approached her, most respectfully, and affectionately; and leaning on him, she retired to a less conspicuous seat: while her affectionate husband followed; sat down beside her, and wept with her in silence!



### CHAPTER III.

THE next day I was escorted by my friend and relative who had conducted her out of the meeting, to her house, to visit her, and her husband. And as we were descending the hill opposite to their beautiful and well cultivated plantation, he entered into a minute detail of the melancholy dispensation of divine providence, and the death of this interesting young woman, her daughter.

“Did you hear the words, cousin, which that lady uttered, yesterday, while you were discoursing of the general judgment? You were embarrassed, I perceived, at the singularity of the interruption.”

“I did not hear her words distinctly enough to understand them. I had heard in the *far east*, an indistinct rumour of this calamity which befell one of our relatives, which you have been alluding to; but I had no conception that the lady who rose up yesterday, during divine service, was the person on whom the hand of the Lord had pressed so sorely: neither

had I any conception of her words having a reference to this calamity.

I have heard that missionaries are liable to such interruptions among a heathen and untutored people ; and I was half tempted, at that moment, to set you down among that number ; although the unaffected and touching exhibitions of the piety of your household, manifestly contradicted it.

I knew a missionary, who, while he was preaching, a few years ago, among a neglected, and benighted people, in the highland isles of Scotland ; and while he was describing the wonderful love of Jesus, our compassionate Redeemer, in coming down from Heaven, in assuming our nature ; in taking on him the form of a servant ; in taking the sinner's place ; in suffering and dying for us on the cross,—was suddenly interrupted by the audience, who clapped their hands, while some of them, weeping with joy, cried out, “ *wonderful news! stop, and repeat that over to us again!*” And he was constrained to repeat it over to them. But, I pray you, what said that lady, yesterday ?”

“ The tenderest part of her wounded spirit was touched : an allusion to the distressing secret which she has sought, so long, and eagerly, to discover, completely overpowered her. As you uttered the words,—“ then shall every secret crime, every secret murder, be revealed, as in the open day ? “ Oh ! then,” she cried, “ my love,” meaning her dear and only child, “ I shall know who did the deed,—I shall know who murd——.” Her words died away ; for she was suffocated by an overwhelming agony of grief.

I begged my cousin to narrate the whole occurrence to me. “ It is now some years,” said he, “ since this melancholy affair happened : and even to this day, her grief is as poignant as ever. Who can conceive the tenderness, and power of a mother's love, for an only child,—and one, too,

so beautiful, so virtuous, so affectionate,—as the young Isabella was! According to the power of her *love*, so is her *grief*. Our poor aunt thinks of her as the all-absorbing subject of memory and heart! She seems to see her: and converse with her. She often longs to depart,—in her grief,—that she may see her lost child, in the presence of her Redeemer: to hold converse; and hear of all the circumstances, and pains, and feelings which crowded on her young soul, when she was taken away, by so cruel a human hand! She longs to be there, where no grief comes: where no tears fall: where no assassin's step surprises: where every pure spirit is full of intellectual and spiritual joy. Pardon me, my own feelings are betraying me. The incidents in this tragedy are these,

“It was the day of the holy Sabbath of Communion, in the neighbouring church of Buffaloe, which lies some four miles behind us, from the spot where we now are. At the usual hour our uncle and aunt set out, on horseback, for the house of God: for they loved to seize every opportunity of communing with God, and his children. And in their calm and peaceful retirement, far from the noise, the follies, and wickedness of great cities, they welcomed these seasons of communion, as marked eras in the history of their Christian joys, and experiences. For a long time, the candle of the Lord had been shining on their heads; the sorrows of former days had fled away, as the dark shadows of the night, before the morning sun. Health and happiness, and many a blessing, temporal and spiritual, had crowned their years; and the young years of their dear child. They went up with joy to the house of God, at the call of the Divine Master, to render him their humble, and affectionate gratitude: and “to keep up,” with the church, “the remembrance of their Lord's death, until he come again.”

“It was concluded that Isabella should, that day, remain at home; for some one must remain. And it was the turn of the servants, that day, to go: and Isabella would not permit them to lose their opportunity of being in the house of God. All this was of God’s ordering: it was his sovereign pleasure. Who could have foreseen that any thing would occur to disturb this orderly and peaceful settlement, where strife and violence had never been known hitherto. How sovereign are the ways of God in the *matter*, as well as the *manner* of our afflictions!

“Our uncle, after riding a little distance, had returned to the house, having forgotten something. Our cousin handed it to him; and told him that every one of the servants had gone,—that she had not consented to retain the company of even old John, as he had expressed a wish to be at the holy communion. And he pronounced his blessing, once more, on his dear child, as she told him, that, though left *alone*, *she was not alone*, for God was with her; and hastened to join his wife, and the company proceeded to the church.

“The exercises were long and tedious that day. I perceived our aunt extremely uneasy, and even agitated. It may have been owing to this. I am not superstitious; and yet, I do not know whether I am correct in supposing that, under the ministration of angels, sent forth to minister to the heirs of salvation, we have sometimes certain presentiments of coming afflictions. Indeed I have witnessed things so much like it, that I do not know that I give a forced, or unnatural interpretation to that text, “the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, when I refer it to that.”

“Be that as it may, I simply state the fact, that while I was mentioning to her husband, her extreme agitation, she came up, and laid her commands on me. ‘I am so suddenly and strangely agitated, that I am unfit to enjoy the holy commu-

nion. Conduct me to my horse. My husband shall remain till communion is over. I cannot permit him or you to be deprived of this privilege. I shall ride slowly home *alone.*' I conducted her accordingly to her horse; saw her fairly on the main road, and returned."

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#### CHAPTER IV.

"WE were not long behind her: for happily we were dismissed sooner than we had anticipated; and we rode fast. Just as we arrived within sight of the house, our uncle, whom I accompanied, called my attention to the singular movements of a female, just come in sight, bare headed, and agitated. We saw her come hastily out of the front door, and screaming aloud, she ran partly across the field, towards the nearest neighbour's house: but before she was half way, she turned suddenly round, and was hastening back to the house. But before she reached that, again she wheeled round, and was hastening towards Mr. Smillie, our neighbour's house. But as soon as she heard the trampling of our horses' feet, she returned, and was running towards the door.

"It is my wife!" cried our uncle, "may our gracious Father in Heaven defend us! what can have happened?" And pushing forward at full gallop, we reached the door, at the same instant with her.

"She was in a state of distraction. She could not speak. Her eyes seemed fixed. She could only utter a groan; and point into the house. And she instantly swooned away. I threw myself from my saddle, and ran in, while our uncle was raising her up in his arms, and asking a thousand unavailing questions.

“What a shocking spectacle I beheld before mine eyes! In the back parlour, lay my lovely cousin, a mangled corpse, on the floor! The carpet was drenched with blood: a bloody axe lay near the door.

“In this position our dear aunt had found her child, after forcing her way in,—all the doors having been fixed: and on the first impulse, she ran towards the neighbour’s house, for assistance: but thinking it a wild dream of her brain,—as she afterwards told us,—she turned, when half way,—saying to herself, it was impossible,—her eyes must have deceived her. But as she again approached the door,—the horrid spectacle arose in all its circumstances, before her memory,—she had not the courage to face it,—but was again hastening back for aid, when she heard the trampling of our horses’ feet. The house had been robbed: money, much of which our uncle had imprudently kept in the house, without concealment, had attracted the robber; who had, no doubt, been watching the house, and had been emboldened to commit the deed, by seeing all go to church, except young Isabella. And it was conjectured by us all, that our cousin had known the robber, and to prevent detection, he had added the atrocious crime of murder, to robbery!

“Every means were resorted to, in order to detect the murderer: but, hitherto, all in vain. It is true, we did strongly suspect one,—the son of a good man,—alas! for it. But there has been no evidence, even circumstantial, to convict him. The whole settlement seemed to turn their eyes on that miserable man, S——, on the melancholy day of the funeral. And from that day, as if from a consciousness of guilt; he became a downcast and wretched being. One incident I may add here, in this afflicting narration. In the course of one of my cousin’s travels in Ohio, he met with S——: they lodged in the same inn. Our cousin is a Christian man, and he would not, as he loves his God, have touch-

ed him with a hand of harm. We all pray that God may forgive the guilty man, and bring him to true repentance. But when they two were alone, our cousin made a sudden trial of the powers of his conscience. S—— knew him well : and put some trifling questions about the discovery of the murder of Isabella B——. He looked S—— in the face,—they were all alone,—and said to him,—“ There is a God whose eyes see you and me ! Sir,—your hand murdered my poor cousin Isabella !” And he laid his hand on his arm as he uttered these words.

“ He uttered not one word. The large drops of agony started on his brow : a cold tremor went over him : he hastened out of the room, to shield himself from the piercing eye of our cousin. Ah ! there is another that sees him. His conscience knew and felt it. It is the terrors of the Almighty that arm a man’s conscience against himself. Never,—never more can peace enter that man’s bosom who has, by violence, shed the blood of a human being !”

“ Until the blood of Jesus Christ,” said I, “ be applied in its divine efficacy to the soul and conscience ! The son of God washed away the stains of even some of his own murderers !”

“ Yes, my dear Sir,” cried my cousin, “ but even then, while God forgives, he takes vengeance on their inventions. David was *pardoned*, but how much peace of mind did he lose ? David *was* pardoned, but did the sword leave his house, while there was one to be visited by it ? “ Who so sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed.” And the solemn reason urged on the consciences of his subjects, by our God, is of a *moral*, and not of a *criminal* nature ; one never to be abolished,—“ *for in the image of God, made He man !*” Murder is a shocking outrage, committed on the *image of God in man !* And for this, will he visit the guilty in the corrodings of conscience, even though he escape the

stroke of human justice ! There is an impressive sentiment of one of the old Greek tragedians on this point :—"Justice with a lame foot, pursues the guilty : but, sooner or later, does she overtake him."

"The day of the funeral came : and the whole population of our settlement seemed to crowd around the house, where this tragedy was enacted. All were anxious to obtain the last sight of poor Isabella. She lay in her shroud, in her coffin, her long yellow ringlets clustering on her neck and bosom, still retained the stains of blood ! Her mild sweet face, seemed to the beholder, as if she was in deep sleep—only it was now robbed of all its freshness, and bloom ! It was cold and pale as the clay ! The aged wept over her—the young sobbed aloud. Her mother was carried away from the coffin, in a state of insensibility."



## CHAPTER V.

As my cousin was closing this painful narrative, we found ourselves approaching the house, where this tragedy had taken place.

We received a cordial and Christian welcome. But there was no smile on the mother's face, though there was the beaming of a kind-hearted benevolence. The only difference between her present grief, and that of the day of the funeral, as my cousin observed, was this : she was now more disposed to talk freely on the painful subject. Indeed, she had gone over nearly the whole of the afflicting detail, in the first half hour of our visit. She even took me by the hand, and led me into the little parlour, and showed me the spot where the poor Isabella lay dead, under the murderer's hand ! Her grief was not tumultuous : it was not a shallow stream, rushing impetuously over the hidden rocks, and dashing its spray

on every side: it was a dark, heavy, deep, moving flood, noiseless, because undivided, within its own deepened channel!

She led the way in the conversation on death. And there was this singular characteristic in her grief, which I could not help noticing, not having seen it in any other case of deep sorrow: she seemed to identify herself with her dear departed child; she spoke of *their* common feelings; *their* pains; *their* dying; *their* comforts "in dying," whatever might be the form of death by which "they might be called, to pass over the dark and troubled waves of Jordan. In fact, as she had been ever accustomed to sympathize with her child, in her joys and happiness, while living, so did she, in her extraordinary grief, seem to sympathize with her in her dying pains, and, in a manner, to die along with her. And it seemed that this extraordinary Christian, in the outgoings of her maternal and Christian love, did not so much seem to anticipate a union, or rather a re-union, in heart and soul, with her departed child, as actually already to have conceived herself in the possession of that union, with her, by a bond that is indissoluble by time, or space!

I directed her attention to the twenty-third psalm. "Oh yes," said she; "though *we* walk through the valley of the shadow of death, *we* shall fear no evil!" "I am aware," continued she, "that death is the king of terrors—especially when he comes in the form of a violent death! Oh! my God, I have mingled in my imaginations with her:—Oh! when the king of terrors came on her young soul, I was not by—there was none to say a word of comfort—none to—but she was not unprepared—blessings, blessings to thy name, O my God! She was not unprepared! I was not by—but Jesus was there, by her."

"Yes, dear Aunt," said I, "it is to the wicked, the impenitent, the unprepared, that death comes as 'the crowned head

over all terrors !' At his approach, all their happiness withers and dies.—Even the last ray of their last hope is extinguished. Their souls are stricken with the pains of the second death. Even in this life, the king of terrors follows them along the whole round of their vicious courses : he sits as an insupportable burden on their breasts, in the midst of their banquetings, and revellings : and when he comes, he comes to lead them out to a horrible execution on the field of eternity ! But it is not so with God's children. They enter into peace, they rest on their beds, each one walking in his uprightness."

"It is true," she said, "but still, even to *us*, he comes armed with terrors. Ah ! my Isabella!—but I did not witness, though I can, in a measure, conceive the terrors around *thee*, when the arm of the assassin——Pardon me : what boots it to recur to that ?—No : my faithful Redeemer, Oh ! help me to cast my eyes on the light side of the pillar and the cloud, in which thou hangest out the tokens of thy presence over us, in our journey through the wilderness. 'Shall I receive good, and shall I not also receive evil, at thy hand ?' I was saying that death is an enemy, with its degree of terrors, even to the Christian : think of the pains it brings : the last agony of soul and body : the parting with friends, and our own flesh and blood : and worst of all, as I take it, as a jailor, or a tyrant, it retains our blood-ransomed bodies, long, long in the dreary captivity of the grave ! But, joy to thee, my Isabella, and to me. It is the *last* enemy, that we need to encounter,—and, 'an enemy,' that shall one day be destroyed. Oh ! it is not the immediate consequences of death, that the Christian fears.—Oh ! no. Can we be afraid to go home, to our bright mansion in the skies ? It is the pains, and the circumstances of death that we fear."

"Most true, indeed, dear Madam ! And it is just in reference to this, that God *commands us not to fear death.*

And, then, you must remember, his word does not merely *bid*, or simply *enjoin*. His word is always *effective* on the souls of his children. The command as certainly brings healing power and influence, as the command of the Redeemer brought them to the man with the withered hand. He makes the ‘enemy still as a stone, until his ransomed pass over!’”

“Blessed be God for the consolation!” This she repeated several times, with great earnestness. “Our compassionate Saviour taught *her* and *me*, to disarm death of its terrors, by taking a firm and believing view of its real nature. And what is death to the believer? It is just the hand of my Redeemer God, taking our frame into pieces; it is his arms receiving our panting, and wearied souls to himself, as they come up out of the waves of Jordan, bathed in the tears of their last agonies! It is his power, laying our bodies in the grave, to undergo a process of purification; and to be ready to start up again into life, at the joyful call of the voice—the powerful and thrilling voice of our blessed Redeemer, at the bright morning of the Resurrection! This is death—this is death, in the eyes of the believer! Can I fear—should I fear the hand of my own blessed Redeemer, when put forth, skilfully, and wisely, taking this poor body of mine to pieces? Can I distrust his love, and immeasurable kindness? Oh! no. It is only when faith is weak, and our vision obscure, that we fear death, with a distressing fear. Well, then, I shall say, ‘When *we* walk through the valley of the shadow of death, *we* shall fear no evil,’ and I shall see her face to face.”

“Yes,” said I. “And as he has taught us daily to say, *thy will be done*, death is only the last trying practical lesson of our obedience. It is his most holy will, that *we should die*. We are bound by every tie of obligation to yield ourselves up in this sacrifice of duty, whether we die ourselves, or suffer the pains of death, in the death of those we love.”

“ You are right ! I thank you,” continued she, “ for that hint : it is a valuable one to me !”

“ This is not all, my dear Madam : our God has ordered all the minutest circumstances attending our death : every sigh is, by him, numbered and determined, and every throbbing pain : ‘ our tears are put into his bottle :’ also the time, the place, whether at home, or abroad : by a sudden, or by a slow death : peacefully on our bed, or by the hand of violence.”

“ Oh ! yes : of that there never has been one doubt in my mind : the time, the place, the incidents,—all these were arranged in *thy* death, my Isabella ! O Lord ! it was thou—thou, who didst order and arrange all in thy holy, wise, and just permissive will, while the wicked *freely* did the deed,”

This she uttered with a long, and lengthened sigh : and added, in a low whisper,—“ I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the Lord’s goodness in the land of the living ! ‘ It is the Lord ! Good is the will of the Lord !’ ” She then added aloud,—“ HE cannot, for HE will not, wrong me or mine ! The eternal and well ordered covenant, stands sure and steadfast. Chastise me he will, as he has done. But what then ? Why then, I know that I am a child of God, a child of the covenant ; for whom the Lord loveth, he chastiseth. But disinherit us,—that will he do never !”

“ Yes, dear madam ; and I am glad to see that he leads you out to see, and ponder over the divine promises of his divine support, and pastoral care ; and, thence, to throw yourself over into the arms of his love, and faithfulness. “ The Lord is my shepherd ; I shall never want.” Along the whole journey of life, we need his grace. And growing experience only urges us to trust his pastoral care to lead us on. But, Oh ! there is, in our existence, a moment, when we need his supporting grace in a manner such as we never needed it before ! It is when our heart and flesh are failing : when the silence, and tears of our relations are telling us that

we are leaving this world : and when our physician has given us over. It is then, that God's supporting grace helps us to cling to the divine promises, and to God's covenant faithfulness, and the supporting power of our blessed Redeemer. Then, we lift our imploring eyes to our God, for the accomplishment of his promise,—“ When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee : and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee : when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned : neither shall the flame kindle upon thee !”

“ Very true, and we have felt it, I trust :” she added, “ and is there not reason to expect, that, in the last agonies of expiring humanity, after some painful hidings of God's face, the Shepherd of Israel vouchsafes some sensible intimations, by the presence of our divine Comforter, of our being reconciled unto God : and an assurance that he rests unchangeably in his love to us : and that, thence, we have nothing to fear : that in due time *the assurance of sense* is vouchsafed, in addition to the assurance of faith : then we may,—then we *can* say, “ We believe and are sure !” “ Thou art with me !” “ Thy rod and thy staff—they do comfort me !” And the truth of all this is exhibited in the recorded experience of the saints ; some of whom have clapped their hands, in their last moments, like Ralph Erskine, and Professor Halyburton, and cried,—“ victory ! victory !”

“ I cannot doubt it,” I replied, “ the compassionate and faithful Saviour seals on the minds of his dying saints, through the Holy Spirit, what he sealed on the dying penitent's spirit on the cross,—“ Verily, to-day shalt thou be with me in paradise !”

“ Oh ! I believe, and am sure,” cried she, “ he seals on their departed spirits the *certainty* of their being with him,—of their being *soon* with him, in the beautiful vision. And the assured belief that they shall be exceedingly filled with the

fulness of her joy, that the briefest space of that ravishing joy, will compensate fully for all the disappointments, and all the pains, and all the sorrows, we have experienced in the weary pilgrimage of life,—ay, and the agonies of our own death, and our dying pains in the death of dear relatives !”

She went on :—“ There, shall we be made consummately happy, in the vision and fruition of those beloved beings, who have been torn from our hearts, by an early and unanticipated death. We shall see them,—and enjoy them on the mountains of felicity ; amid the flood of light, and glory, poured on us, from the throne of God and the Lamb. And we shall have our bodies also, ransomed from the power of the grave. We shall meet in person, there, in the assembly of the holy One. We shall bathe for ever in the pure fountains of perennial bliss ! HE has said it : HE will make it good ! “ I know that my Redeemer liveth ! Worms shall destroy this body : but in *my flesh* shall I see God !” “ O my people, I will open your graves : and I will cause you to come up out of your graves !” “ He will swallow up death in victory : and he will wipe away tears from every eye !” “ All that are in their graves, shall come forth !” “ Christ has risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that sleep.” “ The dead in Christ shall rise first !” These are precious assurances, are they not ? “ Yes truly,” she continued, “ He *will* do all this : and he *can* do it ! In his fidelity to his Father, and to us, in the everlasting covenant, I have the perfect guarantee that his *will* shall be fully carried out in the emancipation and glory of his saints !”—Oh ! I shall see *her* face to face, in Jerusalem, our happy home ! I shall see her soul and body, with immortal eyes : and I shall be seen of her ! And O how resplendent in the glory of our Redeemer, shall that soul and that body be ! We shall be like *Him* ! And see in ourselves, mutually, his image on us ! *Her* resurrection body, and *mine*, shall be endowed with the resurrection attributes.

We shall be *pure*, and *powerful*, and *spiritual*, IMMORTAL bodies!\* What splendid tabernacles for such perfect spirits! And, to crown the whole, we shall be ever with the saints,—now ALL at home! We shall be for ever with the angels! And, O most glorious, and what crowns even all that,—WE SHALL BE FOR EVER WITH THE TRIUNE GOD!”

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## CHAPTER VI.

SUCH were the feelings, and enlightened views of this pious Christian. And this, I understood, was her every-day's display of active and growing grace. “Her path was like the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day!” She assumed no merit in being weaned from the world: she seemed not to be sensible of it. She thought every one superior to her, in Christian attainments: and she longed, and prayed for more grace. Every Christian has his own weaknesses. She had hers: she yielded to a morbid melancholy: she smiled not: she would not accept the sweet comforts of religion; and cheer her heart. She seemed to say, I shall go mourning all my days, and my grey hairs shall go down, in sorrow, to the grave. Yet, she was no misanthrope: there was no sternness, nor severity in her manners. On the contrary: she was kind, courteous, and benevolent. She thought well of every body,—except herself. She was delighted in seeing the poor, and needy, and widow happy,—but she found no comfort, in worldly things, for herself. She was ready to take the lead in religious conversation: that was her element. But she never obtruded her personal sorrows on others: nor sought to engross conversation with her own afflictions. There was a Christian simplicity and dignity

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\* 1 Cor. xv. 42, 43, 44.

about her, relieved from vanity and coldness ; and softened by an attractive kindness of heart, that made her a pleasant companion for all kinds of company.

We saw in her case, the accomplishment of God's holy and wise ends in his afflictions. Most certain it is, that he afflicted not willingly ; he grieveth not the children of men, wantonly. It cannot be : **GOD IS LOVE.** These afflictions, measured out in full and bitter cups, to the best of Christians, cannot proceed from wrath ! For there is nothing in the heights or the depths, of heaven or of earth, that can separate us from the love of Christ ! or Christ's love from us ! " Whom he loves, he loves to the end ! " His love from everlasting to everlasting is immutable ! He loves his children in the deepest hours of sorrow, and while his hand is heavy on them, as much as when they are on the mount, with the Redeemer, in sweet communion with him ! The dark clouds which return after the rain ; and roll heavily across their minds,—causing the hidings of the Sun of Righteousness, arise, not from any mutation in their Saviour's love ; but from the effects of the sin that dwelleth within them.

And the words of divine consolation are fully responded to, by the afflicted Christian's experience. When they passed through the water, God has been with them : and through the rivers, they have not overflowed them : when they walked through the fire, they have not been burned ; neither have the flames kindled upon them. In the midst of the burning fiery furnace, the Son of God has been seen walking with them.

We must, therefore, seek another reason for these severe afflictions. They come from God, and his wise ordering ; whatever may have been the instruments, stirred up by the world, and the evil one, the hand that strikes, is the hand of God.

" They are the rod, the hand is thine."

This we lay down as an elementary principle : and the originating cause, not being his *wrath*,—it must be something else. It is his LOVE ! It is in order that the trial of our faith may be precious. He brings us through fire, and through water, into the wealthy place : that we may be washed from our sins ; and purified, as the fine gold by the fire ! Show us the Christian who has never suffered much affliction ; and we will show you one, who is, most probably, remiss in secret prayer ; languid in duties ; loose and vain, often, in his conversation ; much conformed to this world : much in the company of the ungodly : and very often, without compunction, absent from the house of God, and the communion table !

On the contrary, show me one that has been often, and severely afflicted ; being bereaved of near relatives, in the early and strong attachments of youth,—and I can show you one who lives near to his God : who is much in communion with him : who watches, with a godly jealousy, over his spirit : who longs much to be more like unto his Saviour : and less conformed to the world : who is devoted to the services of the sanctuary : who enjoys them with uncommon pleasure ; as some of the early foretastes of Heaven : as some of the ripe grapes of Eshcol, brought, by angel visits, from the heavenly Canaan, to refresh, and comfort him, in the wilderness !

Such was this afflicted Christian mother. In her unobtrusive and retired manners, you could yet see the different graces in a very beautiful consistency, and vigorous operation. The fire of affliction had, indeed, burned long and hot in the fiery furnace : it had consumed many of her sweetest worldly joys : but, under the influences of the Holy Spirit, it had not consumed one real spiritual comfort. On the contrary, it had consumed so much of the sin that dwelleth within us : and had kindled up a light of holiness ; and a warmth of Christian love, and zeal, in the soul, to such a degree, that

she had, perhaps, no superior,—and few equals in this portion of the Christian church.

Out of her weakness, what a display of Christ's strength! Out of her public afflictions, what a triumph of divine grace! Out of sorrows, which would have crushed the worldling to the dust, what a dignity, and vigour, and elevation of Christian character, was set before the eyes of the world! Here was a living witness for God! Here was the hand-writing of God's living testimony, "written in our hearts, known and read of all men!" And that, too in a delicate female!

In this whole matter did not our Lord do all things well! Were not these appalling afflictions, upon the whole, all for the best! This, every Christian must admit: this, she herself acknowledged, to the glory of God, a thousand times, before she departed this life! For it was a part of her religion to justify the ways of God, in all things.

After supper, and family prayers,—our conversation was renewed, and kept up to a late hour. It was directed by her suggestion, to this topic:—*Why must God's children, for whom Christ suffered the pains of death, nevertheless, be subjected to death?*



## CHAPTER VII.

"I AM as fully persuaded," said this judicious Christian, "as I am of my Saviour's love, that there is not a dreg of the curse in the cup of death, put into the hands of his people. When my heart has been ready to break, how often have I been comforted by this divine assurance: "Death is swallowed up in victory! O death, where is thy sting! O grave, where is thy victory! the sting of death is sin: and the strength of sin is the law! But thanks be to God who giveth

us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ !” Hence, I have, my dear young friend, an abiding and sweet assurance, that, when I am justified through faith in my Redeemer’s righteousness ; I am set free from all the consequences of the broken covenant, and curse of the law ; and, thence, from all the guilt of all my sins ; and, thence, from the virulent sting of death. For this, I am persuaded, applies equally to *death*, and to all my *afflictions*, which precede death. For death is but the last closing act of all our sorrows, and sufferings. Hence, all our afflictions come to us unstinged ; and so does death itself also ! Moreover, the pains of death can be no part of the meritorious cause of our personal acceptance. No, no : our Redeemer’s righteousness is the only meriting cause : and that being infinitely perfect, by the merits of the Son of God, it can admit of no addition, made to it by any creature on earth, or in heaven.

This point being settled, then, why is it, my dear sir, that we, the children of God, *must die, and see each other die* ?

In reply, I assigned several reasons. I admitted that our God, had he seen fit, so to decree it, might have translated us to heaven, and exempted us from death ! There is nothing in this, inconsistent with the natural claims of his justice, and holiness. For he certainly did take Enoch and Elijah, home to his glory. May we not then, dear Madam, resolve it into an act of his sovereignty, put forth in his election of his own means, and method, of bringing his many sons, and daughters to glory.

Yet, while we resolve it into an act of adorable sovereignty, we may, without presumption, humbly inquire into the reasons why he subjects us to death. I shall suggest the following, leaving them to your riper experience, than mine can be, for I am comparatively young in the school of Christ.

1st.—*It does not seem fit, in God’s sight, to work miracles*

*daily*. "It is appointed unto men, once to die." This is the *common law* of our nature: and it follows, necessarily, as the consequence of our universal apostacy from God, and our incurring the penalty of the broken covenant. Man must die. Hence, if God were to take men home, without tasting death, as in the cases of Enoch, and Elijah, he would suspend this *common law* of our guilty nature; that is, he would work miracles daily. But, in as much as our Lord has closed his revelations, and sealed the canon of Scripture, by every necessary evidence, the grand end of miracles has, of consequence, been accomplished. And, moreover, having given us, by the doctrines of his word, and the recorded specimens of Enoch and Elijah, ample enough evidence, that there is a state of blessedness, a heaven *for the bodies*, as well as *for the souls* of the ransomed: no further evidence can be demanded. And hence, the necessity of miracles, as it regards this matter, being taken away, he will not, now, work them daily.

2d.—May we not say, that *God subjects his own children to death, as well as the wicked, because he will not, in this state of human existence, divulge to the world, the secrets of his holy purposes?* Is there not a striking reason discoverable in this? Or, is it merely an act of sovereignty? But, admitting this, in keeping his awful secrets, he adopts a course which prevents the feelings of his saints on earth, from being afflicted, and lacerated, beyond measure.

"What is it you mean?" cried she, eagerly: "pray explain yourself."

"I mean, my dear Madam, that if God translated the righteous to heaven, without tasting of death, and subjected the wicked to death, then the whole world should know who are received into happiness, and who are hurried *visibly* into perdition! The Christian parent would know when a child of his was lost! But, now, a veil of deep concealment is

thrown over it, and the terrible truth concealed from his mind, in mercy to the poor feelings of humanity!"

"My dear friend, I thank you for that idea," said she; "I do believe it. Oh! yes, there is *love*, there is love, in every thing that our blessed Redeemer does. My dear child—my Isabella! I do bless the name of my God, for the evidence of thy early piety. But, O how many of God's dear children, would have had their hearts torn with agony, by the death of their dear children,—if this system of subjecting all men, equally to death, had not been pursued by God's sovereign goodness. Pray, go on."

3d.—*This system is in perfect accordance with his uniform system in nature, providence, and grace.* He perfects all things in nature, and in grace, by degrees: and our happiness he also perfects, by degrees. Grace in the soul, gradually springs up: gradually are we sanctified. And, then, as there is a regular succession of degrees in the growth of grace, and its corresponding degrees of happiness, so it is in the final consummation. First, the soul is made happy: then the body, and the soul; or the complete person, at the blessed day of the Resurrection. And, even in eternity, this system will be pursued; in the gradual unfolding of his divine perfections, and his holy providence. And in the gradual increase, and vigour of our faculties; and the extension of our views, and knowledge, there will be, no doubt, a constant increase of our happiness and pleasures, for ever and ever, without bounds or measure!"

"Amen," cried she. "Shall I wish God's grand and beautiful system to be changed for me, merely to escape, on my part, a pang or two, in a dying hour?"

But: 4th,—I must not omit *that this system, in the mode of his divine administration, is perfectly consistent with all the methods which God has taken to impress on the minds of all intellectual beings, his infinite abhorrence of sin!* This affect-

ing lesson is taught by God, in all the convulsions of nature : in all the groanings of the dumb beasts : (Rom. viii. 22.) in all his terrible judgments : in all the sufferings, and in the death of his own dear Son ! And the last closing lesson is given in the death of every one of his dear children. Oh ! how he hates, and abhors every sin, when he commands, that even his own dear children—his own sons, and daughters, must be made to feel in the bitter pains of death, and exhibit to all, the terrible effects of sin ! Even the temples of the Holy Ghost, which he has been cleansing, must, like the house, infected with leprosy, of olden times, be pulled down, and strewed in the dust, the more effectually to kill, and destroy this inveterate and loathsome disease !”

“ It is all right, very right,” she added, in a low tone, as if to herself.—“ Help me, O my God, to hate the *sins*—to hate *the sins*, which made my Saviour bleed on the cross !”

5th.—There is another reason, which we must not forget : “ *Our Heavenly Father, so far as we can penetrate the awful veil, which covers his pathway, has adopted that system, in all his works, whereby the most magnificent displays are given to the glory of his attributes.* And these are, therefore, a part and portion of the plan of redemption by Jesus Christ. In taking our bodily frame apart ; in conveying, first, our souls to heaven : in decomposing, and reducing these limbs of ours to their original dust : in watching our every atom of that dust, which constituted formerly our bodies : in preserving it, though it may pass through many forms, though it be scattered in the winds, or swept by the waves into the ocean’s abyss : in collecting every portion of that dust that goes to constitute our bodily identity ; in re-uniting these particles : in building all our bones afresh ; and out of loathsome dust and corruption, constructing a beautiful, a glorious, and heavenly body :—how infinitely greater is the display of all his divine perfections, in these magnificent, these divine, these

Godlike acts—than that given in the mere act of conveying us by angels, into heaven, without tasting death?”

Here there was silence for some moments. It was, at length, interrupted by her, breaking out into holy adorations of Christ Jesus. “My gracious Redeemer! I admire, I wonder at, I adore, with transport, all thy works, and all thy acts, and all thy ways! We need only but to see God’s wise and holy purposes, to be able, more cheerfully still to say, *all thy will be done*: and, at *all times*, may it be done, with me, and mine!”

6th.—Will you allow me to add one reason more? It comes home to my own heart: I doubt not, it will to every one here, as well as yours, my dear Madam. *Our subjection to death certainly puts a more general, and a more uniform requisition on all our graces, than the contrary system, probably, could do.* Were you, and I, my dear Madam, persuaded that we should not taste of death, nor experience the tumultuous feelings awakened at the very idea of approaching the valley of the shadow of death; and were we fully persuaded that we should, at the hour of perfection, be carried away by the ministration of angels, into the bowers of bliss, and communion with HIM that loved us, we would not, perhaps, be quite so watchful, and steadfast in prayer. Be that as it may, when we know that we must die,—when we have not, in the vale of tears, the assurance of sense, always throwing the sunshine of joys, and bright hopes over our spirits: when we know not how soon we may be surprised by death,—and may be a terrific form of death;—Oh! how watchful, how guarded, how studious we are constrained to be—and by the love of Christ constrained—in order to be ready to meet death! Besides, in the last extremity, in the article of death, what a call is there for the vigorous actings of faith! What holy longings, and strugglings of the whole renovated nature! What new, and intense desires

after the manifestations of his love, and fresh supplies of his aid! Oh! what penitence, what godly sorrow for sin: what humility: what meekness under the smarting rod: what eagerness to recline our throbbing head on his dear bosom, and calmly breathe our spirits out into his hands!

Now, in proportion to the number, the vigour, and the beauty of these graces of the Spirit in us, and put forth in the presence of these to whom we are called, as the last act, on earth, of our gratitude to our dear Redeemer, to set the example of *holy dying*, as well as of *holy living*; surely, in proportion, do we honour and glorify God; and do a real blessing to those around us. May I not call death, then, the last, closing, and heroic struggle, to render the greatest possible glory to God! The last Christian effort to consummate the bright example of a holy life, by the most touching example of a Christian death! What a mortifying spectacle is the triumphant death of a Christian, to the Prince of darkness! What a splendid triumph of the mighty Redeemer's grace and power! In fine, then, we may well say with the martyrs,—WELCOME DEATH? It is a part of the cross of Christ, as well as any other part of our sorrows, and sufferings, in our journey to Heaven! Without it, we should lose the last and highest opportunity of glorifying God, in a consummate degree!

“Well then,” said she, after a long pause, “we are taught by the word of God, and by the recorded experience of the saints, to say,—“*It is good for me, that I was afflicted.*” And I doubt not, that if we had more spiritual views, and a more ardent love to God, we should also say,—IT IS GOOD FOR ME THAT I MUST DIE!”

## CONCLUSION.

Next morning, we took our leave of this interesting Christian couple, after breakfast ; and after we had mingled our vows and prayers, at the footstool of God's throne, with them in the domestic circle.

'This eminent Christian lady departed this life, a few years ago. She died after a short illness, without much pain ; and finally, without a struggle, as she was endeavouring, with her dying lips, to utter, in a whisper, the words of good old Simeon : "*Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word : for mine eyes have seen thy salvation !*"

Her body was deposited near the remains of her murdered child, in the church-yard of Buffaloe. And there they will sleep in peace, until the morning of the resurrection day,—when the voice of the archangel, and the sound of the last trumpet, shall awaken "the dead in Christ first." And, dear reader, may you and I meet there, on his right hand ! Amen.

THE ELDER'S SON,  
OR,  
THE SPOILED CHILD.

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A NARRATIVE OF FACTS ;

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Honour thy father, and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.—*Fifth Commandment.*

## THE ELDER'S SON;

OR

## THE SPOILED CHILD.

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THE valley that is bounded by Long, and Stony hills, in the county of Morris, and state of New-Jersey, is remarkable for its beauty and fertility. The sluggish stream of the Passaic winds slowly in its serpentine course through the midst of it, and waters a succession of well-cultivated farms. The inhabitants used to be among the most church-going and happy people in that district of the country; until, by the influence of General ——, and a club of his friends, the spirit of infidelity, and with it, dissipation and corrupt morals, crept in among them.

John C—— was one of the wealthiest and most influential men in the valley. Every thing was neat and well arranged in his mansion, and the outbuildings, and every nook and corner of the fences, and the whole farm, displayed the hand of the tasteful and diligent cultivator. He was one of those men who retained the rural simplicity of the first settlers of our country. He had received the usual substantial English education of his day; his mind was one of a high order; his judgment was discriminating; and his memory retained, with unusual tenacity, what he had read. In his whole deportment there was just such a dignity, and air of pleasant-

ness as one might expect to find in a Christian who had long walked with God, who had daily studied his Bible ; who had a warm and benevolent heart : who had, next to the pastor, been the leading man in the parish ; who had been in the magistracy, was honoured in his county, and had always been accustomed to be consulted in matters of delicacy, and public interest. The exterior was worthy of such a mind : he was a tall, venerable man, the patriarch of the valley.

His house was some five miles from the village church : and yet no man was more punctual in his attendance. It was never recollected, even by an enemy, that he was in any instance, late. The secret of it was this : he rose as early on a Sabbath morning, as on days of business ; and it was a part of his religion not to give any offence, or disturb others, during the worship of God, by coming in late. Besides, he loved God's sanctuary : his heart was early there : and it was natural that he should wish to join in the first ascriptions of praise to God. No ordinary storm would prevent him from being, summer and winter, in his place. If it rained, he put on a great-coat : for he always rode on horseback : and if it stormed severely, he would put on *two*. And when he reached the church, usually among the foremost, he would gravely observe, that " it was greatly to be desired that the rain should cease, that those who dwelt close by, might venture to come out to the house of God : " adding, that " if like himself, they had five long miles to come, they would probably prize in a higher degree, the privileges of the sanctuary. "

The domestic arrangements of his family seemed also, in all respects, befitting his Christian character, and profession. And his wife, endowed with singular prudence, and the other Christian graces, was a true helpmeet. Every morning and evening, the whole family was assembled around the domestic altar, and the worship of the Most High performed

with great reverence. In the busiest seasons he would frequently say to his laborers, " My friends, we always find time to take our daily food ; let us also take time to worship the Lord our God ; and remember, *Prayers and provender never hinder work, or a journey.*"

Here were the various elements of happiness, usefulness, and honour, apparently combined. Surely, his neighbours would say, Mr. C—— must be a happy man ; rich in this world's goods, and rich in the grace of God ; honoured in the church ; esteemed and respected by all in the social and political circles ; possessed of a fine constitution, and enjoying uninterrupted health : what is there to disturb his mind or mar his peace ?

But it had been long observed by the pastor, that there was some secret worm at the root of his joys ; and it became, at length, manifest to all his intimate friends. The grace of God will, indeed, carry a Christian through any afflictions : it will give buoyancy to his mind, and spirits in the darkest and most distressing hours. Our heavenly Father's face shining upon us, will disperse the heaviest clouds. An humble and believing view of the Redeemer pleading for us at the very moment when we were like to be overwhelmed by the waves of sorrow, will send a foretaste of Heaven's joy into our wounded souls. And when the Holy Comforter seals upon our hearts the consolations of his grace, we can praise him, even in the valley of the shadow of death.

But, of all the sorrows which befall a Christian, that which comes nearest to his heart, paralyzing his mind, and drinking up his joys, is the outbreaking of wickedness in his children.

Mr. C—— had a son, he was his eldest child, and his only son. On this child he had doated : he had made an idol of him. This is the besetting sin of Christian parents, especially those who are, by natural temperament, unusually kind-hearted, and affectionate. It is indeed a strong and

overpowering temptation. We doat on our offspring: they become *spoiled* children. And, such is the ordering of divine Providence: we, who had sinfully indulged them, and “spared the rod,” when we ought to have employed it to drive away folly from the young heart, according to the command of God, learn to our sorrow, that they are employed, in our old age, as the rod in God’s hand to chastise our criminal indulgence!

It has been unfeelingly asserted, particularly by some who are unfriendly to religion, that “pious parents have generally very wicked children.” But facts do not warrant the assertion. On the contrary, the fact of an eminent Christian, whether minister or layman, having a profane child, always calls forth a *very* marked attention, as something which the public did not expect in such a family. Whereas it is never a wonder with any one, that wicked and profane children should proceed out of wicked and profane families. The Christian parent, however, in the hour of sorrow for the waywardness of his children, will make great searchings of heart into the causes of it. The promise of God is full before him; he seeks not to pervert, or modify its import, “Train up a child in the way he should go, *and when he is old he will not depart from it.*” He bemoans his delinquencies in many, yea, innumerable instances, which the eyes of the world have never perceived, but which his own delicate conscience promptly discovers. Such was the fact with the father, whose character we have been describing. No enlightened Christian, perhaps, was ever more ready to admit his delinquencies before God; or more earnest, by prayer and supplication, to regain the ground he had lost, and subdue what had hitherto baffled his skill.

It was in autumn, on a visit which the pastor of the church of Basking Ridge was making to Mr. C., that the following incidents occurred. It was one of those charming days, for

which our autumns are so remarkable : when the deep blue sky, without one speck of cloud, beams so lovely upon us ; and when every thing in the country is smiling under the profusions of divine beneficence : while the forests, which skirt the adjacent fields and meadows, put on their rich and variegated hues ; the deepest green of the oak foliage being interspersed with the yellow and sere leaves of the maple, and hickory, and the blood-red foliage of the dogwood.

The pastor found him sowing his fields with the winter grain. He would not permit him to desist from his labour, and thereby interrupt the arrangements of the day : but he walked side by side with him, discoursing on general topics ; and finally, on the state of the church, and the happy prospect of an answer to their prayers, in a revival of religion. For often had that parish been blessed with seasons of refreshings from the presence of the Lord ; accompanied by a rich ingathering of souls : and there were now some cheering evidences of another outpouring of the Spirit.

While they were thus engaged, the son of Mr. C., a lad about seventeen years of age, approached to mock. He groaned, and made singular grimaces, or laughed aloud, as he walked immediately behind his father : and at the end of the ridge, next to the house, having caught up a young animal, he contrived, by tormenting it, to make it utter one continued yell. This he did, in defiance of the solemn rebukes of the Pastor, and the entreaties, and threats of his too indulgent parent. An end had been thus put to all regular conversation ; and at this last outrage, the aged father wept in silence, and sought to conceal his tears, as he hurriedly sowed his field.

This ebullition of youthful fury had been caused, it was afterward discovered, by the father's peremptory refusal of the usual supply of money. Like too many parents, foolishly indulgent, he had yielded to the dominion which his

only son possessed in his heart, and had given liberally and often. This only created an appetite for more: he soon found himself compelled to give liberally, simply to get rid of his importunate duns. And having made the discovery which, as a wise man, he ought to have anticipated as naturally as any common effect from a common cause, that this free indulgence with money, had led him into habits of dissipation, and that the present solicitation was made to enable him to take the lead at a "frolic" in the tavern of the adjacent village, he had positively refused him. The young man now left his father's presence, with a threat that "he would have money, and just that sum which he needed; if not one way, at least by another, which he (his father) might conjecture."

This was too much for a tender parent's heart to endure. He took hold of the Pastor's arm, and led him to the shade of an aged apple-tree; and placing him beside his wife, who had joined him by this time, he sat down and wept.

"My poor ruined boy!" was all he could now utter in his grief. His wife and the Pastor also burst into tears.

"I now see my error," said the afflicted parent, after a short pause, as if awakened from the sleep of a long delusion: "my eyes are opened to the calamity that has befallen us. But, oh! Sir," he added, as he grasped the Pastor's hand, "how can I retrace my steps? O my God, have mercy, have mercy on my poor spoiled child! God of my fathers, who didst in thy tender compassion, bring me into thy fold, look in mercy on my poor son! Thou, O Lord, didst convert a Manasseh, and didst arrest a persecuting Saul in his wicked course, on the way to Damascus, to murder thy saints, and didst reclaim the sottish prodigal! O have mercy on my son! Let the riches of thy grace, Father in heaven, triumph one day in his return to thee, and to his parents' heart!—You may well ask me, dear Pastor, why I

do not correct him. Could I succeed in detaching him from his companions, then, perhaps, I might do it, with some hope. But, until that be done, correction may only drive him to a more desperate resistance; or, more probably, to a final abandonment of my roof; and ultimately, to the commission of some fearful crime; and thence—my soul is tortured at the bare possibility of it—to a public and ignominious suffering! But I have not yet revealed the secret cause of all this mischief. There is a demon in him, which sets at defiance Christian discipline, and the rod of correction: yes, in him, young as he is—I mean **THE LUST OF STRONG DRINK!** This, with the influence of vicious companions, has, I am grieved to say, seared, as with a hot iron, the sensibilities of his conscience, and of natural affection. O! I look back on the past, and I see my fatal errors staring me in the face!”

“Did you not commit a great error,” said the Pastor, with tenderness, “in not sustaining the discipline under which his *teacher* sought judiciously and faithfully, to bring the daring and turbulent spirit of this youth? This I recollect once to have witnessed, and ventured to predict the result.”

“We did, dear Pastor, we did,” was the answer, as he cast his eyes on his afflicted wife, with more of sorrow, than reproof, “we did: and here is an exceedingly great evil under the sun, and an error committed by almost every parent. The Teacher is one of the most useful officers in the Republic; one of the most necessary and influential office-bearers among us; one who walks forth over the land, bearing the future destinies of our country, and the church, as it were, in his hand. He has the training of the rising generation, the hopes of our country, and of the church of God! What an important, what a responsible office! Yet, how often, and how much is it despised! And it is miserably ill paid, moreover, and still worse treated! When the

schoolmaster would bring the wayward spirits of our spoiled children under a wholesome discipline, both parents are, in too many instances, in arms against him. And their ill-timed and foolish pity, fails not to sustain the boy in open and daring rebellion against his teacher, and in the repetition of fresh crimes. This parental interference, by paralyzing the arm of salutary discipline, has helped to consummate the ruin of many a hapless youth in our land !”

“ This has been a fatal error,” said the almost heart-broken wife. “ But this is not all : frivolous excuses, I remember to my sorrow, would be sustained by us, for neglecting his evening tasks ; and the slightest indisposition, (I am mortified to think how easily we were deceived) and that, too, very often pretended, and our excessive anxiety about the “ *dear child's*” health, would be reason enough for allowing him to absent himself, whole days, from school. And then, from our foolish fondness, he would gain permission from us, to rove about from house to house ; and, what was worse, to absent himself whole nights from his parental roof. It is thus that a young mind acquires, at too early an age, a taste for company : its inexperience lays it open to cruel temptations, while it is too young to derive, without a parent or a teacher's guidance, any real benefit from it. This early taste, or I should rather say, this passion for company, together with a plentiful supply of money from indulgent parents, has laid the foundation of utter ruin to many thousands, and tens of thousands of youth. And I know it, to my sorrow, dear Pastor, that in the young and inexperienced mind, where we are not busy in sowing the good seed of God's word, the evil one is very busy, and successful in sowing tares.”

“ How easy it is to see errors,” said the father, “ when the bandage of our delusions is thus torn from our eyes. Ah ! Sir, experience is the mother of wisdom. One of our principal errors was, that of allowing our child to *associate*

*with vicious boys*, until they had so entwined themselves around his heart, that no influence or authority of ours could detach him from the snare. And often, I remember it with the bitterness of remorse, when I should have wooed him over with kindness, I have, in my wrath, reproached the character of his associates to his face. The consequence was just such as every wise student of human nature must have observed. His galled spirit clung closer and closer to them, as they were "*persecuted*" by me, for his sake. There is a witchery in a young profligate's companions, which parents have never duly conceived. It is the result of that depravity which pervades the human heart, and which makes us averse from all that is good; and swift to learn, and practise what is evil. One hour's influence of profligate companions on a young mind, may not be effaced by days, and months, and even years, of parental labour, and prayer."

"And, my friends," said the Pastor, "there was a defect in your efforts to win over his *love for the house of God*. I have always lent my countenance to the practice of our good old fathers, which is still kept up in our church, of bringing the children into the house of God, on the holy day of rest. God, by the mouth of his servant Joel, commanded the children, and even the babes at the breast, as well as the elders and the people, to be assembled before him in the solemn convocation. And our Redeemer, in the days of his humiliation, charged parents, and the disciples, 'not to forbid little children when coming unto him,' 'for of such,' said he, 'is the kingdom of heaven.' We must train them up, in infancy, by our prayers, privately, and in the house of God; and in riper years, by parental and pastoral instruction. And thus, by the grace of God, we can beget a respect, and a love for the courts, and the ordinances of God in the young and tender mind."

"Yes, dear Pastor," cried the father, "here, in the weak-

ness of our hearts, did we commit another great error. The slightest excuses were often sustained : and ' the dear child' must be spared the journey, and the pain of going to church, and of sitting so long, and being so long confined in church ! And there was another error, as serious on our part, by which the mischief was consummated. When we were urgent to overcome his aversion to the church, which we invariably found to be strengthened by every fresh indulgence and permission to remain at home, he would then, to get rid of our importunity and command, beg permission to go to the church in the next village, which happened to be a little nearer. And, in order to induce him to go *somewhere* to the house of God, we thus left him, or rather abandoned him to himself. That which we ought to have anticipated, and feared, did take place. His vicious companions took the charge of him. And they led him, not into the house of God, but into the village taverns ! Whole sabbaths had he thus spent, before we made the appalling discovery !"

" And then," said the Pastor, " did not your too fond and compliant hearts place *funds too profusely* at his disposal, even from the first ?"

" Ah ! Sir," cried the father, " that indeed was my next error, which, perhaps, gave pungency and fatality to the rest. I gave him money, first, because '*I loved the dear child.*' Then I gave him money, because I saw other parents giving liberally to their children. Then I gave him money because my pride said, *my only son shall not be behind his comrades in any thing.* And, finally, I confess that, latterly, I gave many sums purely out of self-defence, or an indolent aversion to resistance, simply to get rid of his importunate and fierce duns ! And now I can say, from experience, that these ill-timed donations to children fail not to beget *new wants*, and create *new appetites*, and *new desires*. This evil is like the dropsy in the natural body ; it increases by its own means of indul-

gence. The more water the dropsical man drinks, the more thirsty he becomes, and the more inveterate is his disease rendered, by every fresh draught. That parent who lavishes 'pocket money' on his child, before he has acquired sound principles, and prudence to controul his passions, and a spirit of enlightened charity, and good taste to make a wise use of it, exerts his influence directly to initiate him into habits of gambling, intemperance, gluttony, and their attendant revolting vices. He furnishes the means of gratification; he lays the train; and he puts into the hands of his child the lighted torch, and the match ready to be applied! All this, alas! to my sorrow, have I done. And when, at length, I did awaken to the frightful consequences, now too evident in the confirmed habits of vice in my poor ruined boy, I found myself adding another error to the former, and thereby helping on the mischief. When I was dunned with incessant clamours, to supply the appetite which my folly helped to create, I have replied fiercely, adding reproach and insult to refusal, instead of making the effort with paternal kindness, and love to reclaim him. What was the result? Just what you have witnessed, and what might have been anticipated in one whose conscience is seared, and who is prepared for the most debased and debasing conduct; just that which is practised by unprincipled and ruined sons, and apprentices every day. He actually abstracted property, article after article, weekly; he even drove off, in my absence, the sheep and young cattle, to pay his *debts of honour*; namely, his tavern and gambling debts! And, O! Sir, I am well aware, that within an hour he has been repeating this robbery on his father!"

"It is a desperate case!" said the Pastor, after a long pause of sorrowful silence. "But, all that you have been alluding to, my dear friend, are only the branches of the evil you deplore. If you go farther back than to his boyhood at school, perhaps you may discover the *root*. And, my dear

Madam," continued he, in the most tender and respectful manner, " I allude to a *a mother's earliest influence* over the young heart, to show how much depends on a mother's care; not by any means to insinuate that you, like Eve, were first in the transgression. But did you not miss, in his early infancy, or at least in the earliest part of his boyhood, the grand opportunity of establishing your parental authority in the heart of your dear boy?"

" I fear I did," said she with great emotion; " and often have I bewailed it. Ah! Sir, I am assured that a child is capable of receiving instruction, ay, and of being spoiled, as it regards religious matters, sooner than most mothers have any just conception of. I did, indeed, long for the grace of God to sanctify his soul—and earnestly, if I know my own heart, did I pray for this. But, on review, it is a question involving serious doubts with me, whether I did labour aright, or use the means of God's grace in a skilful and judicious manner, to convey the truth into his young heart, and establish there a sense of God's authority, and thence, of my own as a parent. I did not make, I fear, a scriptural effort to melt down his heart, by causing the knowledge, and thence the fear of the great God, Creator, Preserver, Redeemer, and Judge, to distil, as it were, drop by drop, on his mind and heart; and by teaching him to pray to God as soon as reason dawned, and as soon as he could lisp a word. The first word I should have taught him, the first sentence I should have made him breathe out, should have been, 'THOU GOD SEEST ME!' And then, again, I fear I did not take sufficient care to sooth his spirit when ruffled, and subdue by reason and kindness, his little fits of violence and brawlings, and woo him over by love, and firmness. I have known a mother to do this by singing softly a melting hymn on the ear of her little child; and by teaching it, also, to sing a sweet and plaintive hymn, as well as to pray with infant lisp, *to him, the*

*great God who always sees us!* Awe and submission to God, I am fully persuaded, is the only true basis of genuine and unaffected submission, and reverence to parents. It must be so, if it be a moral virtue, and not mere instinct. And there are no genuine morals without a principle of religion. Hence the pagan is described as ‘without natural affection.’ And this truth is written in fire and blood: for the parent sacrifices his child, and the child his parent. And we have most painful evidence, that a profligate child is, likewise, without natural affection! Oh! it was here I failed: I see my error. I should never have given up. I should have daily renewed my efforts. I should have laboured, and wrestled in prayer; until, by the grace of God, I saw the fruits of my exertions showing themselves in filial reverence, and submission, based on the fear, and the love of God.”

She paused, and wiped her flowing tears. “These are not tears of sorrow and despair, dear Pastor,” she added, after she had composed herself, “neither are these the conjectures of a theorist. I saw my error with my boy; God, I trust, was my guide in training that dear child, my daughter, who is advancing to us. She is not only a sweet child to comfort us in our sorrows:—I have reason also to believe that God has changed her heart; and I know not that she has ever needed a reproof from her dear father these three years past. But I am interrupting you; you were about to say something.”——

At this moment the daughter came up; a beautiful girl of fifteen years; who cast a look of tender anxiety on her parents; and, saluting the kind pastor, with the frank and blushing simplicity of maiden innocence, as she presented her hand to receive his cordial welcome, she sat down by her mother’s side. The pastor went on.

“I have learned, from painful experience,” said he, “that many parents, and even some of them the most pious, are apt

to prove defective in *two* grand points, in their domestic discipline, and the early training of their children.

“ They are defective in the *matter* employed to train them, and in the *manner* of applying the proper matter. Some parents I have found defective in both of these: some in the former: others in the latter.”

“ Have the goodness to explain yourself more fully,” said the father. The pastor went on.

“ To understand how a parent may be defective in the *matter* which he is to employ in the training of his children, you need only to recollect that vital godliness, as Mrs. C—— has just now hinted, is the only true basis of all genuine morality; and therefore of all pure moral order, such as is pleasing in the eyes of God, in families, as well as in the community. I do not deny that there may be morals, even lovely morals, and virtuous deportment in a person destitute of true religion. And I also admit that these are good and valuable in their place, and so far as they go. Our blessed Saviour looked on the young man spoken of in the Gospel, who had, in the exterior, kept the commandments, ‘ *and he loved him,*’ though his heart was as yet a stranger to vital piety. We instinctively love such a character, while we are disgusted with vice, and profligacy. But all those lovely and beautiful traits are, nevertheless, radically defective: they can no more be compared with the virtues, and morality of the Gospel, I mean, ‘ *the beauties of holiness,*’ than the apples said to grow on the margin of the Dead Sea, to these golden apples of a skilful hand’s engrafting, which you see richly clustering on that magnificent tree before us. The former were fair, very fair, to human view; but they were light and deceptive; the interior was filled with black dust, emblematical of the depraved and unconverted heart of the mere moralist. But the latter, I mean these rich apples on that grafted tree, are solid, sound to the core, and delicious.

‘Neither circumcision, nor uncircumcision,’ that is to say, no exterior virtues, or accomplishments, or mere profession, ‘availeth any thing’ before God at his bar, for our personal justification and acceptance—no, nothing but our Redeemer’s righteousness : and for morals, ‘*nothing but a new creature.*’

“And this, my dear friends, opens up the true secret why the philosopher and moralist, who trust in human virtue alone, with all its defects, have *never* succeeded in this matter. There is nothing in philosophy; there is nothing in the most eloquent declamation on virtue; nothing in the most persuasive words of man’s wisdom, that can ever convey the life, or spirit, or principle of vital religion into the human heart, after having conquered all the opposition from the devil, the world, and the flesh. Hence these never did, and they never can convert a man; they never have made, they never can make a true Christian. They may appear to be limpid streams; but they are the streams of Damascus; not the divinely appointed, and health-giving waters of the River of the God of Israel. The life of the Spirit of God is not in them. ‘If any man be in Christ Jesus, he is a new creature.’ ‘I through the law, am dead to the law, that I might LIVE unto God. 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.’ Hence, it is only when we are risen with Christ, that we seek those things which are above, and do ‘mortify our members,’ and bring forth the fruits of holiness in ‘good works which God hath ordained that we should walk in them.’

“It is easy to see, then, that where ‘the life of Christ’ is wanting, no fruits of holiness *can* be produced: this ‘life of Christ’ wanting, the very basis of *pure* morality is wanting.

“But the Spirit of God is the only author of this life. For this is the testimony of God, ‘We are his workmanship,

created anew in Christ Jesus,' 'by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost.' Eph. ii. 10; Titus iii. 5.

"And in the production of the 'new creation,' the Holy Ghost employs, not the moral declamation, and the enticing words of the philosophy of this world; nor the persuasions of 'science falsely so called.' These may be useful and ornamental in their place: they may be as choice gold and pearls: but what are gold, and pearls to a hungering and thirsting soul? What are mountains of yellow gold, and a wilderness strewed with sparkling diamonds to the famished Arab, in the dry and barren desert? It is the voice of God alone that raises the dead: it is the precious truth of the Gospel alone, which the Holy Ghost employs to convince and convert sinners. It is the bread and water of life alone, that can bring back the fainting spirit of man, and can sustain the life of God in the soul.

"The words of our Lord are explicit on this point. 'We are born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. And this is the word, which, by the gospel, is preached unto you.' And, under a deep sense of our responsibility, and in the faithful and diligent use of all the means and ordinances appointed of God, 'we purify our souls in obeying the truth, through the Spirit, unto unfeigned love of the brethren,' 'and building up ourselves on our most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, we keep ourselves in the love of God,' and 'grow in grace,' 'till we come unto the perfect man; to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.'

"And, I need not tell you, my friend, how fruitless would be your labour in planting, in this beautiful orchard of yours, a tree, 'twice dead,' which had been, long ago, 'plucked up by the roots:;' or, how fruitless would be your utmost diligence, and painstaking in ploughing and sowing these fine

fields of yours, if you throw in the *wrong seed*. He who resorts to human means, and human wisdom only, in the training of his family, and adopts the world's cold and lifeless morality, instead of 'the living and powerful word' of God's Gospel, is actually sowing *tares* instead of *wheat*. He may toil late and early; but he will, at the last, be mortified to find that the crop will be *tares*, and nothing but *tares*! This, my dear friend, is the dangerous result of erring in the *matter* of training. It is the pure doctrines of the Lord's own Gospel, that he will own and bless; none but these will the Holy Ghost employ; and none but the Holy Ghost *can* give the new heart!"

"Ah! dear Pastor," exclaimed Mr. C——, "It may be that I have erred in the skilful use of all this; but not, as I trust, in the *matter* itself. What you have kindly recited, are the truths which my soul loves. We have erred, I think, less in the *matter*, than in the *manner* of applying them. Will you, dear Pastor, have the goodness briefly to notice the usual failures here?"

"Touching this matter," said the Pastor, "it is not only our duty, but a pleasure to copy the manner of our divine Master in all points practicable. Now, it must have struck you that our Lord exhibited the most perfect kindness, tenderness, and benevolence, in the whole manner of his instruction. Let us, then, put kindness, tenderness, and benevolence foremost, in the list of the graces of parental government. Let our whole souls flow forth in kindest emotions. O! let us ever think of the unutterable value of the souls of children entrusted to our care. Let us lose no opportunity, let us spare no pains, to pluck them as brands from the burning. Let us never cease to woo over their souls to Christ, by our entreaties, by our tears, by our prayers, by our love, by our example. Knowing the terrors of the Lord, let us use

the most touching persuasions which the yearning of parental love can suggest.

“ But, alas ! how often do parents err in this point ! The error sometimes arises from an irritable temper : passion overwhelms reason, and reflection ; we do not stop to recollect how much our own dear parents bore with our waywardness and follies. We forget how much, and how long our heavenly Father has borne with us. We forget how inconsistent this hasty spirit is with the character of Christian parents, who must be ‘ apt to teach ;’ and therefore, patient and long suffering. The error sometimes proceeds from a failing leaning to virtue’s side. A Christian has warm and strong feelings of piety ; these hurry him on ; and he does not exercise calm reflection, so as to make the proper and necessary allowances for youth’s thoughtlessness and follies. But did our Father in heaven bear with us ? Did our Master forgive us ten thousand *talents*, and shall we not bear with our children, and forgive them a hundred *pence* ! Shall we, who profess to be the children of light, not remember that we must subdue the young heart by the discipline of truth, applied with labour and prayer, not by force, or the spirit of persecution !

“ And permit me, also, to add here, that we who are parents, are often a great deal defective in another valuable quality, or virtue, if you will allow me to call it so—I mean, *cheerfulness*. To the absence of this, and the influence of moroseness, may we not, in a great measure, ascribe the aversion so manifest in many young people, of the higher and middling ranks, to the topic of religious conversation ? In all our allusions, and conversations on the matter of religion, we should carefully study to make it what it is, in sober reality, the most lovely and the most charming thing in the world.

“ Much wisdom, and spiritual skill are required in making

a cheerful and exhilarating improvement of the *Sabbath evening*. In recalling to memory, and reviewing the duties, and exercises of the day, we should studiously endeavour to make our fireside and Sabbath evening conversations the most delightful, and most captivating possible to the young mind. There are some parents, and masters of families so stern, so awful, so morose, in their manner, that their exhibitions of the lovely Gospel of Christ, are really revolting to young persons. They seem to mistake sternness for solemnity, moroseness for zeal, and a spirit to find fault with, and chide every one, for a spirit of piety and purity. They seem as if they took a pleasure in picturing out religion, not as an angel in robes of glory, but as a dark and lowering demon, come to rob us of our joys! This cannot fail to excite disgust. To this cause, and also, in an equal, if not superior degree, to another cause—I mean, the total absence of all religious conversation at a parent's fireside, do I ascribe that prevailing dislike for religious conversation among young people.

“But, my dear friends, while I recommend *cheerfulness*, I would implore every Christian parent to be on his guard against the want of a proper and becoming gravity. An ill-timed *levity* has, in many instances, produced lasting, and most injurious consequences. Gravity and cheerfulness are perfectly consistent, and even congenial: it is the former which prevents the latter from degenerating into utter levity. Never, on a Sabbath evening, and never on a religious subject, should becoming gravity permit the introduction of *wit and levity*; far less, ‘foolish talking or jesting, which are not convenient.’ It was one of that learned and truly godly man, President Edward's recorded rules of life, ‘never to say a thing on the Lord's day, which would excite *mirth*, or a *laugh*.’ This should be strictly observed by every Christian parent, and master of a family. We may be perfectly cheer-

ful, without mirth and laughter. Let every thing be in its proper place, and always seasonable.

“ There is another defect in the *manner*, which I cannot omit ; the want of a due equanimity of temper. This is usually betrayed by impatience, and irritation. It is of essential importance not only to be on our guard against these ; but to have the mind cured of them, as an exceeding great evil. A parent should never use the rod until he is convinced, on cool recollection, that it is his imperative duty to have recourse to it. He should never correct a child, until he has convinced him of his error and crime. He should never correct a child in a passion ; to do so is to indulge in a spirit of revenge ; not to exercise salutary parental discipline. His whole manner should indicate to the child that he administers the correction with the utmost reluctance, and from a painful sense of duty. An estimable friend of mine, and an elder in the Scotch church, in Philadelphia, in which, in my youth, I had the honour to be pastor, had an untoward son. He had committed a crime against the laws of the household : he took him into the family circle, spent some time in explaining to him the nature, and the evil of that crime, and laying the rod down, he said, ‘ It is my duty, my child, to correct you ; but I will do it in the fear of God. Let us first pray.’ The whole family circle threw themselves on their knees, while he poured out, with deep emotions, and many tears, a prayer for his stubborn and rebellious child. The culprit alone remained standing ; but the prayer, and tears of his father melted his refractory heart, and he kneeled down also. The correction was administered with evident distress ; but it was light, for the child bowed instantly in submission, and penitential confessions. And, to my knowledge, it was the last he ever needed. Young Millikin is still alive, or was so, lately ; and a more dutiful, and excellent son you will not readily find, any where,

“ There is another defect which is originated by a parent’s constitutional indolence, and aversion to the trouble, and pain of discipline. This dangerous failing has made many a parent criminally yield to his own ease, or natural feelings.

“ And finally, my friends, a painful defect shows itself in the *want of a proper unity between the parents*. One parent *scolds*, when he ought to administer solemn, but affectionate rebukes ; while the other parent takes the child’s part, and makes an apology for it. One of the parents corrects in wrath ; the other interferes, and pities ‘ *the poor child* ;’ and insists that it shall not be corrected. The child thus creates an insurrection in the family, and contrives to escape in the unseemly brawl. The result is, that he laughs at the weakness of both parents ; and, too soon, begins to set parental authority boldly at defiance.”

While the Pastor was uttering the last *three specimens of parental delinquency* in the *manner* of conducting family discipline, the elder and his wife, having turned their eyes mutually on each other, with more of sorrow, than reproach, began to testify their unaffected grief. They were both bathed in tears. It had occurred to them that this was the main origin, and source of the evil which they were now bitterly deploring.

Towards evening, the Pastor, previous to his departure, took some pains to find out the youth ; and bringing him in, placed him by his father’s side, and addressed another of his pastoral admonitions to him. There was a dignity in the Pastor’s manner which seldom failed to command the awe, and attention of this young man, when in his common moods. It is true, he had insulted him in the field, but it was in a gust of passion, which was now, for a season at least, soothed into a calm. But the Pastor knew not the depth of that youth’s depravity : he was silent, but unsubdued.

The Pastor commenced his address to him in a tone of un-

affected tenderness, while he sought to conceal the tears which coursed down his cheeks. But it had no effect on him. He rose by degrees into the most touching pathos, as he addressed himself to the youth's conscience. Then he spread out before his mind the terrors of the law, and the majesty of the Almighty; and told him of the coming hour of death, of judgment, and an eternal retribution.

“ My poor boy !” cried the Pastor, with the utmost tenderness, “ I will not fail to tell thee thy duties, whether thou wilt hear, or whether thou wilt forbear. It is the command of God to cherish in thy soul, the principle of *filial affection*. ‘ Harken to thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother, when she is old.’ And remember, my child, that the basis of this affection, and veneration which you owe your parents, is a holy veneration of God. And, O, were there a principle of piety toward God in your heart, you would not thus break the hearts of your parents. In proportion as a child has the fear of God before his eyes, he is dutiful, and affectionate. And, in proportion as the fear of God is banished from the mind, the child is unnatural, stubborn, and rebellious. The drunkard, and the gambler exhibit a mournful evidence of this. They would shuffle the implements of their folly and crime at their father's death-bed : they would make their last stake on a mother's coffin !

“ In addition to filial affection, I charge you to render a corresponding reverence, and honour. Carry it in all your looks ; be courteous, gentle, and kind ; shun petulance, and the distressing spirit of contradiction, even when you may be confident that you are in the right. Never utter a disrespectful word of them to others. He who can do this, *even when they are in error*, lessons the dignity of his family, and detracts from his own honour. Like the pious sons of Noah, always throw a veil over their frailties, and failings ; and always be ready to defend them from the tongue of slander.

And in a particular manner show the substantial evidence of your filial reverence and honour, by a dignified deportment before *all men*, in your intercourse with the world. I would not ask a higher compliment from a child of mine, than this, I mean as it regards temporal honours.

“ In addition to this, my child, God enjoins it on you to render to your parents a prompt filial *obedience* in all things. Always lend a willing ear to them in all their instructions. Yield up your heart to their injunctions promptly: humble yourself under their admonitions and reproofs: bow down with filial submission under their corrections, whether expressed in words, or in a temporary exile from their presence, or by the rod of correction. Consult with them frankly, and make them your counsellors, and guides; especially in matters of such importance as your establishment in life, the choice of your employment, and business, the choice of your company and companions, and in a special manner, your early attachments, and choice of a companion, and in all your spiritual concerns.

“ And finally, fail not to give them endearing evidences of your filial *gratitude*. This includes in it, love for the benefits received, and a high value put on them, on account of their proceeding from persons beloved and dear: it includes *affection* to the persons of the donors, joy at the reception of favours, and a prompt disposition to render back what it can, in return, for them.

“ And now, young man, these duties are enjoined by the awful authority of God speaking to you in his holy word, and by the mouth of your honoured parents. And they are enforced by the captivating example of our Lord Jesus Christ toward his mother in early life, and as, in a most touching manner, while expiring on the cross, he recommended her, in his last moments, to the beloved disciple, with whom she should find reverence, affection, and a home! John xix. 25,

26. Moreover, God has enforced this duty by a promise of long life, and prosperity; and when this duty is rendered by faith, and love to God's authority, it receives its eternal reward in the heavens. On the contrary, hear the denunciations of Heaven against the rebellious and wicked child: 'Cursed be he that setteth light by his father, and his mother: and all the people shall say amen. Deut. xxvii. 16.' The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it.' Ah! young man, look on these weeping parents, and say, can you dare pursue the course, which will bring down their gray hairs with sorrow to the grave?'

Having finished his admonitions, he kneeled down with the afflicted parents, and uttered a fervent prayer for them, while he did not forget in his holy wrestlings, their poor prodigal son. For he felt that he had received his ministry of the Lord, and watched for souls as one who knew he was soon to be called to give his last account—even for those who might be *lost*, as well as for those who should be *saved*! \* \*

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The writer of this narrative succeeded that venerable minister in the pastoral charge of the church of Basking Ridge. And when he came into the charge, the Pastor, and Mr. C., and his wife also, had all departed this life. They had all died in great peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. Mr. C. died first,—if I remember correctly,—and shortly after, his wife; after closing their often-renewed, and solemn entreaties and admonitions to their only son, to return to the Lord God of his fathers, and eschew the miseries of the second death; and enforcing these admonitions with many tears, and by all the solemnities of their trial, and experience of a dying bed! The Pastor, a man of extraordinary piety, and enterprise, had accepted the invitation to take on him the Presidency of the University of Georgia. But, to the inexpressible grief of all

good men, and the irreparable loss of his dear family, he died in a very few months, after entering on the duties of his office. And his name is embalmed in the holy and tender recollections of the church. And I must not forget to record it to his honour, that he is the man who first suggested the idea of the American Colonization Society, and made the first move in it.

John C——, the son, was the husband of an amiable lady, and the father of several beautiful children, when I first visited his mansion. He had been, for a season, reformed, to appearance at least; and had sustained a tolerably decent character, for about a year after he had been married to his excellent wife. But, now, he had added the crime of a boasted and obstinate infidelity, to the most disgusting habits of intemperance. And having once returned to them, his latter end was worse than the beginning. He was now a miserable and degraded man, lost to all self-respect, and reckless of character, and public opinion. His wife, once the most beautiful and happy woman in the valley, was now a broken-hearted and haggard being; and his own children, to complete his misery, and degradation, fled at his approach, and hid themselves from his presence. His fine estate was now involved in debt, and every thing around him indicated the condition of one fast sinking into ruin. His person, formerly athletic and handsome, exhibited a revolting spectacle. He had been visited with several attacks of the *delirium tremens*, or the drunkard's brain fever: and yet he would daily drink incredible quantities of the poisonous liquid, which was drowning him in perdition!

I remember as distinctly as if it had been only yesterday, the last pastoral visit which I paid him. I was accompanied by an elder of the church, who had for some years filled the place of Mr. Caldwell, his venerable father. He received us kindly; he was sober, for it was rather early in the day; he sat down on my left side, the elder on the other; his meek

and humble wife, with her three pretty little children, casting anxious and sorrowful looks at their father, placed themselves over against us. A deep and painful silence prevailed for some minutes. Every thing about the chamber, and about the house, on which the eye could rest, exhibited tokens of desolation, and wretchedness. This was the inheritance of A SPOILED CHILD—the house of A DRUNKARD AND INFIDEL!

“ Will you, Sir, bring me your father's Bible ?” A smile, not of pleasure, but that of the scorner, played over his face; nevertheless he rose and brought it out, covered with dust, and cobwebs.

This led me to notice the very different use which the good old man, his father, the Elder, made of that book, and the use which all good men would make of it. He smiled contemptuously, but said nothing; for his wife cast a beseeching and imploring look on him, tempered with her winning sweetness, rendered more touching by her unaffected sorrow.

It was a long visit we paid him; and we endeavoured, by the help of divine grace, to improve our time. We set before him, after reading the nineteenth psalm, a brief outline of the authenticity, and divinity of the Holy Scriptures; and begged respectfully his attention to it. “ Ah! Sir, this points out to you the good old way in which your fathers walked, and found rest and happiness. I appeal to your own experience if you have ever tasted one drop of happiness, or even the semblance of happiness, or peace, in all your wanderings from these ways.” He turned away from the discussion with a sally of ridicule. Yet in that sarcastic laugh a child might have seen that he felt miserable in his soul. His wit had rebounded back on himself, and pierced his own conscience.

We turned to another subject—the nature, and the worth of the immortal soul. “ O let the son of your father remember the words of him whose lips never spoke falsehood, even

Him whose lips, as the Lord God of Hosts liveth, will ere long judge you at his tribunal ! O hear his words, “ What is a man profited, though he should gain the whole world, and lose his own soul ? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul ? ” O what will you feel—what will you say—what will you do, when you are in the last awful conflict—in the act of leaving this world—and soon—soon will you be summoned to leave it ! As the Lord liveth, and as your soul liveth, there is only a step between you, and death ! O what will you feel—what will you say—what will you do, when the eternal world in all its fearful realities, in all its overpowering glories and terrors, shall burst on your astonished, and disembodied soul !

“ And, oh ! hast thou ever paused to ask thyself, *what is eternity ?*—Put forth the utmost energy of thy mind, and comprehend it,—if thou canst : let thy imagination soar on its loftiest wing, to conceive it, if thou art able. Look over the duration of a hundred millions of years ; count the hours, the minutes, the seconds, which make up that mighty space—hast thou yet any idea of eternity ? Look next, beyond that space,—over a duration that is boundless, interminable—infinite ! What conceivest thou of eternity ? Come with me and make the calculation.—Put down, in one column, a hundred million of years for each leaf of every tree : put down in another, a hundred millions for every blade of grass over the entire surface of the globe ; in another, a hundred millions for each drop of water, of every sea, and ocean ; in another, as many for every single grain of sand in the solid contents of this globe ; and in another, a hundred millions for each particle of matter in all the worlds which roll on in boundless space ! And then, young man, sum up the mighty—the overwhelming amount if thou canst !

“ And the shortness, and uncertainty of human life, may well make thee tremble at the thought of being so very near to

the bar of thy Judge ; and very near the final execution of this sentence : and so very near that long—long, eternity, stretched out before thee, with its dark, and endless waves of death ! And yet, oh ! alarming condition, thou resistest convictions ; thou puttest away from thee the gifts of mercy ; thou shuttest thy eyes against thy manifest danger, and against the tender and most moving exhibitions of the gospel !

“ Then hear, O, young man, one solemn truth, and may it pierce thy conscience, and thy heart. Every sinner is bowed down under convictions, at one period, or another, of his existence. The humble and broken hearted penitent, is bowed down at the foot of the cross of Christ, and sheds his tears of contrition in Mercy's sight, while in the land of the living, and the place of hope. But HE who never felt convictions in his life ; or who now resists and stifles them, *shall remain under convictions the most pungent, and overwhelming through all eternity !*

“ And there are groans which never end, and sighs  
That always sigh ; and tears that ever weep,  
And ever fall, but not in mercy's sight !”

“ *Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead ; and Christ shall give thee light.* Listen, O, listen to the pleadings of divine love : obey the call before it be forever too late : yield to its entreaties ; throw thyself at the foot of the throne of grace : cry aloud for mercy ; on thy knees implore it ; and pour out thy soul in all the persevering fervour of devotion ; do it now—do it instantly, before the hour of repentance has passed away for ever from thee. Go, in the brokenness of thy heart : and in the terrors of thy stricken conscience ; with weeping and supplication look upon the man of sorrows, hanging on the cross. *He has finished transgressions ; he has made an end of sin.* Then raise thine eyes to the blessed Son of God, exalted on his throne.

Behold him, a Prince and a Saviour, granting repentance, and the remission of sin ; flee unto him—behold he is ready, and he is able, to save even unto the uttermost, all that come unto God by him. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved ; for in the Lord alone is the salvation of his people. Oh ! come unto him ; lay hold upon the hope set before thee ; by a living faith accept of this blessed Saviour as the Lord thy righteousness, and thy strength ; in filial confidence repose the salvation of thy soul in his hands ; saying, in humble and believing penitence, Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief : unto whom shall I go, but unto thee ; thou only hast the words of eternal life.

“Return then, Oh ! return, to the Lord God of your father ! I beseech you, by him who loved us, and gave himself for us—by him who died on the cross for us—by the Lord Jesus Christ, I beseech you, return to your God ! By the memory of that dear old man, your father—by the memory of his tears, and prayers, and vows—by the memory of that dear saint of God, now in heaven, your mother, who bare you, and nursed you in her bosom, and wept and prayed over you—whose last prayer, and sigh were breathed from her dying lips for you—O return to your God ; and break off your sins by repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ !

“Conceive to thyself these venerated beings, entering thy chamber, in the still hour of thy retirement ; in the vivid affections of thy heart, conceive them standing now before thee : in the fulness of their hearts, and with eyes flowing with tears of sorrow, they extend their parental arms to thee, and beseech thee ; “Son, we nursed thee in thy hours of helplessness ; these arms have borne thee ; this bosom has nourished thee ; our eyes wept over thee the tears of sorrow, as well as of joy ; these knees were bent in tears to the Most High for thee ; our bowels yearned over thee ; and our lips have not ceased to breathe the most earnest supplications

for thee, when no eye saw, and no ear heard, but that of heaven. And oh! do we now see thee rendering thyself hateful in the eyes of all good men; a disgrace to thy country; a nuisance in the circle of thy friends; a curse to the church of God; and a traitor to thy Maker!

“And, oh! there is ONE,—whose eyes are ever on thee; and who ceases not, in his righteous severity, as a judge; and in his bowels of mercy and compassion, yearning over thee, as a Heavenly Father,—to awaken thy attention, and urge thy soul to return.

“In the thunders uttered by his broken and insulted law, he speaks unto thee. And HE *must* and *will* be heard:—He who smote Korah, and his rebel associates; and the young men, Nadab and Abihu—*must* and *will* be heard—*now* or in *eternity*! He whose judgments have gone forth irresistibly, in vengeance upon the heads of the wicked in all generations, *must*, and *will* be heard,—*now*—or in *eternity*!

“Oh! pause—reflect—there may yet be hope for thee. But, if thou passest one step farther, and addest the wilful rejection of Christ, to the crime of blasphemy, and the malicious repulse of the Holy Ghost—then thou sinnest the unpardonable sin: the eternal doom is sealed; and hope turns away from thee, and abandons thee for ever!

“O, Sir, turn from the path of destruction; come not nigh it; turn from it, and pass away. God has set before thee life and good: death and evil; and he calls heaven and earth to record against thee, this day. Oh! by the value of thine immortal soul; by the dignity and glory of thine eternal existence, be entreated to come to the Lord Jesus Christ! By the pains, and the awful suspense, and terrors of a dying hour; and by the unutterable pains of perdition: by the pure ravishing bliss and glory of paradise; and by the august majesty of the Deity; and oh! if any thing will move thee—by the most affecting and divine love of Christ—and by

his coming to reward his saints, and take vengeance on the impenitent, we entreat and implore thee, to return this day ; this instant, to the Lord thy God ; while yet thy prayers may be heard ; and while yet thy tears may be poured out in mercy's sight ! For *now*—now is the accepted time : to-morrow it may be too late ; by to-morrow, thou mayest have passed the valley of the shadow of death ; and proved in thy dreadful experience, the fearful realities of the *eternal world!*"

Caldwell had struggled, but in vain, to conceal his emotions during this pastoral address, which was delivered officially, according to the custom observed in our churches at pastoral visitations. But, at the allusion to his pious deceased parents, he burst into tears ; and placing his hands on his face, and bowing himself down, his face on his knees, he wept aloud.

We all kneeled down and prayed : the miserable man kneeled close by me. My heart was utterly overcome. I poured out my soul in almost incoherent words. I implored the outpouring of the Holy Ghost on him, his wife, and his dear little children. Every one of us wept : the very children sobbed. And I shall never forget the scene : the floor where the prodigal son bowed his head, was wet with his streaming tears.

The sun was now setting : we took our leave of him with a cordial embrace : he led us to our horses, and on parting, besought us to visit him soon again.

But, alas ! it was our last interview with him. I never saw him more. I was called into a neighbouring State on urgent business of the churches, and I was absent two weeks. The first news I learned, as I alighted at my own door, on my return, was the appalling intelligence that POOR JOHN CALDWELL WAS DEAD, AND BURIED !

I learned, in brief, his last moments from the Elder who had

accompanied me on my last visit, and who had seen him when dying. Poor Caldwell was attacked with fits: he raved in his deliriums: at intervals he recovered his senses; and, for a season, was somewhat composed in his mind, but expressed deep compunctions, and sorrow for his evil ways and doings. When he felt himself dying, he became awfully alarmed: he seemed actually frantic. The very bed shook under him. As if with supernatural strength, he tried to raise himself up; and shrieked out for some moments, "O Lord Jesus, have mercy on me! God of my father, have mercy on me! O Christ, have mercy on me!—O curses, curses on the head of General —, who seduced me from the ways of my father's God into his infidel ways!—Curses on my vicious companions, who taught me to break the Sabbath, and to dishonour, and disobey my father, and mother! And led me into taverns, instead of the church of my fathers! O mercy, Lord, mercy, on me, a poor miserable outcast!" Thus he continued wailing, sometimes crying for mercy, and frequently uttering fearful imprecations. In a few hours, during which there was nothing but horror, and distraction in the family, his strength, though the strength of a giant, became utterly exhausted. And his spirit, with an agonizing struggle, took its everlasting flight!

This, as reported to me, was the end of the SPOILED CHILD.—In these solemn facts, we set up a beacon, to give an awful warning to parents, of the fatal rock on which they also may strike. "Avoid it; pass not by it; turn from it, and pass away!" "O let us hear, and fear, and do no presumptuous sin!" Let us labour for the conversion of our dear children, like those who feel that they are labouring to "pluck brands from the devouring fire!"

Of course we pronounce not on the final destiny of poor John Caldwell. He is in the hands of his Maker; and God cannot do what is unjust. His grace is as swift as his own

lightning's flash ; and it is potent, as it is swift, to save. There is an epitaph to which I love to refer. It was written over a wild laird in Scotland, who was killed instantly, by a fall from his horse.

“ Between the saddle, and the ground,  
I mercy asked, and mercy found !”

It may have been so. And so also may it have fared with the Elder's Son, for whom so many prayers were uttered in the ears of the Lord God of Sabaoth ; and who, in his extremity, cried for mercy unto Him who is able to save him in his last agonies !

Yet, who of us, I beseech you, would wish a child of ours to follow his course of life, or die his appalling death ?



SOME INCIDENTS

IN THE

LIFE AND MINISTRY

OF THE

VENERABLE MONCRIEFF OF KILFORGIE,  
SCOTLAND.

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COLLECTED FROM AUTHENTIC SOURCES.

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## SOME INCIDENTS IN THE LIFE AND MINISTRY

OF THE

VENERABLE MONCRIEFF OF KILFORGIE, SCOTLAND.

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CHAPTER I.

MR. MONCRIEFF stands enrolled among the most eminent ministers of the gospel, of the last century. He was one of the leading ministers of the Associate Church of Scotland, from which the two great branches of our American Presbyterian Churches, the Associate, and the Associate Reformed, are descended. He occupied the chair of Professor of Divinity in that distinguished church: and he trained up that young generation of preachers, who were, beyond doubt, the most able and successful pastors in the Scottish church, in the middle, and latter part of the eighteenth century.

He was descended from a family adorned with the honours of a long line of pious, and illustrious ancestors. Alexander Moncrieff was the grandson of the apostolical Moncrieff, the pastor of the parish of Scoonie; and the companion of the martyred James Guthrie; who has received an immortality of fame as a preacher, a writer, and a patriotic sufferer, in

the history of the persecution of Charles II., King of Great Britain.

MR. MONCRIEFF inherited from his father, an eminent civilian, the rich and beautiful estate in the parish of Abernethy, known by the title of Kilfogie; with an elegant mansion house, situated on the banks of the river Earne.

Having gone through his collegiate course, in the ancient College of St. Andrews, and taken his degree, he entered on the study of divinity in St. Andrews. And after he had finished the usual course there, he passed over to Leyden, in Holland, and there devoted a considerable time to the acquisition of literary and theological knowledge, under the celebrated Professors Mark, and Waelig. And he returned to his native country, one of the most accomplished scholars, and theologians of his day.

But these were among the least remarkable traits in his character. This young man, so learned, so courteous, and accomplished; a man of wealth and influence; and to whom the pathway was opened, to high rank among the nobles of his native land,—a thing to which, alas, too many of our young men ambitiously aspire,—was, withal, one of the meekest and most humble of men. And he deemed it the greatest honour, to which he could aspire, to have the opportunity of consecrating himself to the service of God, in the ministry of the gospel.

The secret of all this was, his true and sincere piety. From his boyhood, owing to the influence of his religious education, and the example of his dear and pious relatives, he always exhibited profound respect and reverence for religion, though, as yet, he felt not the power of it. He writes thus in his juvenile diary. “I have wished to be religious and holy: *but not quite so much so*, as I have heard my grandfather to have been.” In his seventeenth year, he was awakened to the alarming sense of his condition, as a sinner,

by the Spirit of God. Deep and abiding convictions followed upon this : he was overwhelmed by a sense of his guilt. Long had “ *he heard of God by the hearing of the ear : but now, under the divine influences of the Spirit, he saw him : and he abhorred himself : and repented in dust, and in ashes.*” In the agony of his spirit would he often exclaim, “ Lord, what must I do, that I may be saved !”

This awakening took place while at college. The summer recess he spent with his uncle, an eminent and devout scholar, Mr. Moncrieff, the pastor of the church of Largo. Here he enjoyed the benefit of patient and pious instruction, and the profound experience of one, who had been long accurately acquainted with the Christian’s varied exercises, and spiritual troubles.

There were two things which this eminent servant of Christ ceased not to impress on the tender mind of his relative, the young Laird of Kilforgie. *First*, the law of God ; its obligations ; its purity ; its spirituality ; its extent ; and strictness of requirement ; its demands of truth in the inner man ; namely, conformity of the whole soul and heart, to the image of God’s holiness ; and universal obedience in all the faculties of the inner, and the outer man : and this must be rendered conscientiously in the various circumstances, and relations of life.

This faithful exposition of the law, the pastor placed before the mind of his young pupil, in the most simple and touching language. And, above all, he sought with fervent prayer, to exhibit it to him, as under the presence of God, and in the light of his most holy Majesty. His mind, already melted down, now felt that “ the word of the Lord is quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword ; piercing to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit ; and is a discernor of the thoughts, and intents of the heart.” It was this which gave him such a deep insight into the nature, and the extent

of the depravity of his heart ; and thence the overpowering convictions of his utter helplessness, and the entire hopelessness of personal acceptance by his own righteousness. *All his righteousness* he felt to be utterly unfit to clothe him, far less to adorn him. *It seemed to him the loathsomeness of filthy rags!* The thunders which burst from the top of Sinai, rung louder and louder on his ears. The terrors of the law seemed to stand forth in appalling display, in words of fire—“ By the deeds of the law shall no flesh living be justified : ” “ Cursed is every one that continues not in all things written in the book of the law to do them.” And, by degrees, he was brought, as every true convert is brought with the apostle, to acknowledge, in the most humbled tone of self-abasement,—“ I was alive, without the law, once ; but the commandment came, and sin revived, and I died.” The stoutest-hearted sinner the law of God has humbled in the dust.

*Second* :—The Pastor of Largo took the greatest pains to impress on the young Laird’s mind the gospel exhibition of the covenant of grace : the character of our Redeemer, as the Eternal Son ; the Almighty One,—the Great God, our Saviour : his official character as Son of Man, the Mediator : the Father’s servant. He had an unfeigned pleasure in dwelling on this precious theme : and while his young inquirer was bowed down in sorrow, would he say to him, “ look unto this blessed one, and be saved : remember, my child, it is the BUSINESS of our Redeemer to save.” He expatiated on the atonement of Christ : its nature, perfection, and admirable adaptation to every want and necessity pressing on us in our helplessness. He dwelt with earnestness on the nature and exercises of faith ; evangelical repentance, arising, on the one hand, from a believing view of God’s pure law : and on the other, from the winning, and all-subduing kindness of God’s love abounding unto us. And he ceased

not to pour on his troubled conscience, the consolations of the gospel promises, and doctrines : the love of the Father, the grace of the Son of God, our most compassionate Saviour : the peace and comforts of the Holy Ghost. These formed the standing themes of his discourses, and of his fervid prayers, with the young inquirer. And there was a captivating air of cheerfulness, and melting pathos, thrown over the whole. It illumined and melted, at the same moment, like the fire of heaven.

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## CHAPTER II.

ONE thing strongly characterized the exercises of young Moncrieff. That was,—his constant and humble prayers and supplications. He used to retire into his uncle's church, or,—it being the summer season, into the solitude of the church-yard of Largo, and pour out his soul in wrestlings with God, in the still hours of night. After long nights of affliction, and strong crying, and tears, God heard him, and loosed his bonds. "He gave me,"—said he in his diary,— "such discoveries of his mercy, as produced a kindly sorrow for sin." His heart was melted by the grace of the Holy Ghost, into a sweet submission, and faith, and love : and he yielded himself up, in duty and obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ. In a few months after this, he was received into the church, on confession of his faith.

His emotions, and exercises on that occasion are thus described in his diary ; and we quote them as highly instructive to young converts, and encouraging to those who come, at their master's bidding, in early life, to the Lord's supper. "At the communion of Largo, I got more of a broken heart, on the Sabbath-day, than ever I found before ; not in a ter-

rible ; but in a sweet and pleasant manner ; by many degrees more than ever I had formerly experienced : a day I ought never to forget. I hope my sorrow for sin was genuine and evangelical.

At the joyful recurrence of these solemnities, he enjoyed farther enlargement of heart ; and animating experience of growth in grace, with peace, and comfort. Often did he recall these seasons, in joyful remembrance, years after ; when he had become ripe in knowledge ; and a profound theologian. The recollection of them was delicious to his soul ; and failed not to excite songs of joyful gratitude.

The following is from his diary :—“ O what I felt at the second sacrament I participated of, at Rhynd ! I hope I got a real manifestation, and an earnest of heaven ! What a blessed manifestation I got, of the love of God, at the first, and second time, I communed at Largo ! What thirst for God ! What love to my Saviour ! O sweet church,—sweet churchyard of Largo, where I have wrestled, and seen something of God, great, glorious, soul-engaging ! O sweet fields of Forgan ! How good is it to wait upon God !—Many a temptation I had, many a struggle with corruption ; many a time was I foiled ! But thanks to my God who giveth me the victory !”

For years this young Christian was gradually ripening for his Master's work. Every page of his diary exhibits his conflicts with sin that dwelleth in us : and, what displays the singular care of his blessed Master, every conflict seems to have resulted victoriously, in the enlargement of his spiritual conceptions. He made daily, fresh discoveries of the deceitfulness of his heart ; the urgent need of hourly supplies of grace ; the necessity of guarding against self-trust ; the duty of seeking safety in habitual watchfulness ; and of relying simply, and entirely on the grace of Christ, and the guidance of his word, and Spirit.

About the time he went over to the university of Leyden, it appears, he had experienced one of the most distressing of these spiritual conflicts. He was even so perplexed, and overwhelmed with mental darkness, that he seemed incapable, for a season, of remembering the years of the right hand of the Most High: and was writing bitter things against himself. In this oppression of despondency, and fears, he was ready to conclude that he was a stranger to the grace of God. "I am the man," cried he, "who hath seen affliction by the rod of thy wrath: thou hast filled me with bitterness: thou hast removed my soul far from peace: I forgot prosperity: and I said, my strength, and my hope is perished from the Lord; remembering mine affliction; and my misery; the worm-wood, and the gall!"

But our faithful Redeemer was working out the precious trial of his faith. And while he taught him to work out his own salvation with fear and trembling, he was bringing him by a way he knew not; and leading him in paths which he had not trodden. He was teaching him, while in the furnace, a lesson which he never afterwards forgot, when called of God to teach others,—that '*it was God that worketh in him both to will, and to do, of his good pleasure.*' Out of these fires, the Laird of Kilfogie came, purified like the most fine gold.

It was in these sharp conflicts that he learned the lessons of practical godliness, never so effectually learned by those who are not so tried in the deep sorrows of affliction. Happy is that minister who is in like manner, proved, and tempered as the polished blade in the hand of the divine Master. Young Moncrieff, in the furnace of trial, acquired such conceptions of the deceitfulness of sin, its power, and fatal malignity, as, in his view, enhanced, in the greatest degree, the astonishing grace, and love of God, to poor sinners. And often, after this, did he express his wonder, that the free

grace and love of God should be vouchsafed to sinners—to such sinners as we are, whose hearts, as he was most sensibly made to know, from his own experience, were so filled with enmity against God!—"Nothing,"—he used to say,— "Nothing short of omnipotent power could subdue the corruption of the heart."

And ever after this, did he tenderly and impressively feel his entire dependence on the righteousness of Christ, for his personal acceptance before God. He could not trust to "comfortable attainments;" or, "to the best frames of mind which he was ever blessed to enjoy." These often pass from the memory, or the sensibility of the glowing heart; and under some sudden, or potent temptation, vanish away as the morning cloud, and the early dew! It is thus, the Master corrects us, in tender mercy; and thereby brings us back from all our wanderings, to his own bosom; there to lean on his strength and love; instead of seeking support on our own broken reeds. It is thus,—that when our feet slip, and we are falling, we are brought to feel, more than ever, our entire helplessness, and the utter inadequacy of all our own resources; and, thence, our sole dependence on the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.



### CHAPTER III.

MR. MONCRIEFF has recorded the following sentiment, valuable to every Christian; and learned by us, sooner or later, in our own growing experience. "It is well worth while to notice the wisdom of the divine conduct in dealing with some souls. The soul, at first conversion, has yet a *great touch of the law*; and a propensity to be saved by the old covenant: and the Lord leaves to formal, sleepy, suc-

cessless prayers to convince, (as I hope he has convinced me,) of the uselessness of all performances, *in order to our justification before God.*" "O Lord, teach me to fight in the name of the Captain of our salvation. Possibly it is to teach me this, that I am so often foiled by the enemy; and fight with so little success. I hope I have been, ere now, convinced, of the helplessness of all my duties, as it respects my justification, and personal acceptance before God. But, Oh! that I may flee to Christ for all. I remember I did, in the days of my inexperience, think it strange-like doctrine to be saved by the atonement, and the righteousness of *another*; and to have *all for nothing,—even of free grace!* Now I think it strange that I do not experimentally understand what it is to live by the strength of another. Without this, sin never will,—never can be mortified. See Gal. ii. 19."

In the Christian conflict, this is, usually, the last fortress which the enemy is compelled to surrender, in the victorious progress of subduing grace. How impressively did this profound theologian,—yet humble and practical Christian, feel it, and express it! "I am sometimes hanging between the law, and the gospel,"—said he,—"I have been seeking terms and conditions to bring with me: and thence, putting my duties in the place of Christ." "God has been pleased sometimes to awaken me, as he has done now: but, in a little time, an unction made up of law and grace, of self-righteousness, of some good inward frame,—has given me momentary ease. But, O my God, now I beg, for Christ's sake, O wound, wound, wound,—till no such unction,—till nothing but the blood of my Saviour alone give me ease, and peace!"

On the subject of Satan's temptations, when "he works in the hearts of the children, of disobedience;" and assaults the souls of God's children, by hurling the fiery arrows of doubts, and exciting a spirit of murmurings against God,—he has

this sensible and judicious observation, to which we would do well to give heed :—“ If Satan have such power in trifles, as to make a reasonable man doubt, contrary to all common sense, what power must he have when permitted, *to make men doubt of the great truths of religion!*”

In the midst of the most fiery trials from the buffetings of the accuser of the brethren, he used to say,—“ I have the experience of these TWO TRUTHS, namely, that of man’s sin and misery : and, the other, of the matchless and suitable nature of the remedy. And, hence, I am perfectly persuaded, that the soul’s exercise about them, in a conformity to the word of God, can be no delusion ! It is a diabolical delusion that religion is a fancy ! Let the world, and Satan’s slaves believe it. Is it a delusion to love Jesus ; to mourn over sin ; to fight with corruption ; to take Heaven by a holy violence ? No, no : it is hell’s darkness in spiritual things that gives occasion to such a profane dream !”

When the Laird of Kilfogie was constrained by the love of Christ, to enter on the holy ministry, he frankly and cheerfully consecrated to the Lord, his learning, rank, and influence. He bowed with the meekness of a little child, to the will of his father in heaven : and gloried in being counted worthy of being an ambassador for Christ. Alluding to his literary attainments, and studies, as I conjecture, he writes thus in his diary :—“ I hope God is putting on my robes, and fitting me out for going in the quality of his ambassador, which is far dearer to my soul, than if he were encircling my head with an earthly crown : unless by so doing, I could do as much for his glory. I hope I have got some sweet lessons from Christ. Oh ! his teaching is sweet : I would cry to God for more love to Christ ; and to have him enthroned in my heart !”

Having finished his studies in the university of Leyden, in Holland ; he returned to his native country. Soon after

this, he was licensed to preach the gospel: and, in a few months, was ordained to the ministry, in his own native parish of Abernethy, in Fife; over an affectionate people, among whom he had been brought up.

In the charge which was delivered to him, on this occasion, a relative of his own, the venerable Mr. Moncrieff, of Methven, ventured to warn him of the snares, and dangers into which he might be tempted, and drawn by his riches, and high station in life. "Kilfogie!" said he, familiarly, after the Scottish custom of calling a gentleman by the title of his estate,—and with an effusion of perfect kindness, and fidelity—"God has given you wealth, and great influence, as well as learning: and you are yet but a young man. Beware, I charge you, of Satan's traps, spread for your unwary feet: and beware, as a plain presbyter, placed, as you are, on a footing of the most perfect equality with your brethren, of making any account of your high rank, and distinction."

When some of his other relations were disposed to resent this honest freedom, and to rebuke the faithful pastor, Kilfogie, unconscious of any thing having transpired to give offence, demanded the cause of their resentment. And upon the expression being repeated to him, he replied,—“I heard all that: but I heard nothing in the whole of that charge, but what was highly necessary; and every way befitting him to speak, and me to hear.” And, indeed, had his cousin known the humility, and unassuming spirit, and disinterestedness of Kilfogie in temporal matters: and particularly, had he known the deep and awful sense of his responsibility, with which he had approached the ministry of the Lord, his honest warning would have been deemed unnecessary.\*

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\* Kilfogie made annually a donation of the produce of the parsonage to the Church Session, for spiritual uses. and he appropriated to other purposes, the salary to which he was entitled, as pastor.

## CHAPTER IV.

FOR forty-two years this eminent servant of Christ laboured in the gospel of the Lord; during nineteen of which he also discharged, in connection with his ministerial duties, the office of Professor of Divinity, with the greatest diligence and success. We have seen how he was exercised in practical religion. He was eminently characterised by another trait,—namely, his unaffected devotion to purity of doctrine. While he was yet a student at Leyden, he entered the lists against the alarming errors of Professor Simpson, of the divinity chair in the college of Glasgow; who had ventured to impugn the supreme deity of our Lord Jesus Christ; and his *necessary* existence. And this early production gained the applause of Professor Mark, as an able defence of this fundamental Bible doctrine. He also took his stand by the side of those choice spirits, in the earlier part of the eighteenth century, who stood up for the defence of the doctrines of the gospel, usually called *The Marrow Doctrines*: against that flood of error, and irreligion, which was introduced into the Church of Scotland, by the reception of ill-educated, and unprincipled persons, into the ministry at the revolutionary settlement, of A.D. 1688. And he was the spirited associate of the famous ERSKINES, and other eminent ministers, who were constrained, by an uncompromising love of truth, and liberty of conscience, to *secede* from that national Church: and who have the immortal honour of founding, and consolidating that society, called *the Associate Presbytery*; and which has, under the favour of God, grown up into that extensive and influential branch of the Protestant churches now known in Great Britain, and Ireland, as the *United Associate Church*: and in our own land, its collateral branches are called THE ASSOCIATE, and THE ASSOCIATE REFORMED CHURCH,—

Churches which assume a commanding attitude, as it regards talent, literature, piety, and evangelical principles, among the American, and British churches.

When Moncrieff's venerable colleagues were thrust out of their churches by the arbitrary measures of the men in power, it is remarkable that Kilfogie retained his parish, and his charge, to the close of his life. Not one individual in the parish was known to oppose him, or utter a whisper against him. The people clung to him, and his ministry, with the most filial affection; and as a body they would permit nothing to be done to separate them from their dear old pastor. And when the arbitrary leaders in the Assembly insisted on appointing another minister to the parish, by the right of patronage,—it is said that Kilfogie observed to them, with the utmost mildness, and respect, that, as the law of the land had placed in his hand, the right of *patron* of the parish,—if they wished that power to be exerted, he, of course, had, by their own admission, the right of putting into the pulpit, whomsoever he pleased. And, therefore, he should put himself into it! This, together with the unanimous movement of the whole body of the people, put an end to all farther harassing aggressions.

Professor Moncrieff's manner in the pulpit, exhibited a happy combination of earnestness, gravity, and dignity. In preaching he delivered himself with great animation and warmth: but, at the same time, as every sound scholar and christian does, in a style simple and luminous. In his appeals to the children of God, nothing, it is said, could be more affecting and winning. So deeply had he himself been exercised; and so plentifully had he drunk in the spirit of his Master, that he excelled all his associates in speaking "a word in season" to the various classes of old, and young christians. And when he addressed himself to the impenitent and ungodly; or, in vindication of the honour of the holy law of God, he would do it in the thunders of Sinai; and the

stout-hearted sinner quailed, and trembled, as he spake of death,—and the throne of judgment, and the eternal doom!

At other times, he would pour out his soul in tenderness, and with floods of tears over the errors of the infatuated prodigal, who had wandered, in his folly and misery, far from the house of his father; and was involved in the wretchedness of the world's snares, and bondage! But, in no instance, even when his manner struck awe and terror, did any one ever hear Kilfogie utter the dreadful terrors of the final judgment, and the quenchless fires of the second death, in a loud, harsh, exulting, or even a declamatory manner,—a thing too common with superficial, and unfeeling men. Such a mode of addressing perishing sinners, was, in his view, insufferable, and inexcusable. He could never address himself unto dying sinners; and speak of the eternal punishment of the ungodly; and the unutterable pains of the second death, in the fearful sinking, and endless torment of “the bottomless pit,”—without feeling his heart labouring, and ready to burst, with emotions of the deepest sorrow: tears would flow incessantly from his eyes as he spoke; and his voice seemed choked with unutterable grief! Having known the terrors of the Lord, he laboured to persuade men with all the urgency of feeling, overwhelmed by a view of the coming wrath; and, at the same time, constrained by an impassioned love to the Lord Jesus Christ.

In the warm and glowing heart of this pastor, the young people of his parish occupied a very prominent part. It is difficult to say whether we are to admire most, his parental kindness, and thrilling appeals to them in the house of God; or, his courteous and winning manner, as he mingled among them, in his pastoral visits;—the profound theologian, and man of rank, and commanding influence, being laid aside; and forgotten, in the parent, and pastor. And he failed not to bring, and consecrate to his Master's cause, in recommenda-

tion of piety, and godliness, all that influence which his rank, his courteous manners, and Christian humility gave him in the affections of all classes of his people. He was the universal favourite : his name was pronounced with veneration by every one.



## CHAPTER V.

THE devotional frame of his mind, in early life, we have already noticed. As he advanced in years, and attained the mature growth of a cultivated mind, this devotional frame became uniformly more and more strengthened. This is usually the happy lot of the true Christian, who diligently exercises himself in every good word, and work. In him the spiritual life is an element, and a component part of the soul. It is a real principle in all the faculties of his mind :—a real life, pervading, animating, and growing up in the soul, just as the principle of natural life pervades, animates, and grows up in the infantine body ; and is ripened with its perfection.

And just as the young mind, *physically* considered, must undergo a process of mental cultivation ; so must the young Christian mind be put under a course of *spiritual* training. If man must be trained for his high and important career in time ; ought he not to be trained by a high and holy discipline, for the purpose of his “ coming out ” in his glorious career in heaven ? If we point with pleasure, and proud gratulation to our primary schools, our academies, and colleges, by which the former object is effected ; with what pure and sublime emotions should we look to our churches ; our Sabbaths, our Bible, our ministry, and the ordinances of Zion, by which the latter magnificent object is accomplished.

It is true ; there is priestcraft, and there are delusions, and errors abroad in the world : throwing their destructive impediments in our way. But the abuse of a thing can never be converted, by any reasonable man, into an argument against that thing. It can only be converted into an argument against the depravity, and wickedness of man who originates the abuse. The quackery, the pedantry, and impostures so boldly stalking abroad in every department of science, have not yet been converted by any rational being, into an argument to show why we ought to banish all science, and its devoted and high-minded professors from society. It has providentially been the lot of scepticism to commit the suicidal act of demonstrating its own irrationality, and absurdity, by its converting the abuses of Christianity into an argument against its truth. It actually charges on the true teachers and professors of the gospel, the impostures of priestcraft : and the errors of heretics, and the fanaticism of hypocrites, on the stainless purity of the gospel of the Blessed Jesus.

Now, this science taught in the school of Christ, takes the lead of all other sciences over the whole field of human literature. This is determined by a few facts. Man has a *temporal* career to run ; and he has an *eternal* existence. In the schools of human science, is he trained up for the first : in the school of Christ is he trained up for the last. In the first, he is made capable of rising to eminence in this world ; in the last, he is put in possession of the splendid graces, and accomplishments to fit him to rise in glory in the assemblies of heaven. By the first, he is polished, and perfected for communion with kindred spirits in the political, mechanical, or literary arena of human competition ; by the last, is he perfected in soul, and body, through God's grace, to be the companion of high intellectual beings ; and to hold communion with the Deity, in the pure and everlasting pleasures

of glory ! Can any hesitate on this point ; or prefer human science to high and spiritual perfection ? If he is justly set down as a barbarian, who pours contempt upon learning, what must he be, who pours his scorn on the high and holy science, by which immortal beings are trained for the presence of God, and the fellowship of the pure beings around his throne !

We institute this comparison not to disparage literature. By no means. The Christian does cultivate with sedulous care, each branch of literature. But, like Moncrieff, he yields his heart, in decided preference, to that divine discipline which leads the soul, in holy and sublime devotion, to God, as immeasurably the most important. But, the philosopher, and the infidel, while they do cultivate their boasted sciences, (yet with no greater assiduity, and success, than does the Christian,) do yet crown the climax of their reckless folly, by neglecting, and pouring contempt on the highest department of all science,—that which guides to immortal glory in the skies !



## CHAPTER VI.

LET us see how the cultivated, and polished mind of Professor Moncrieff was regulated by the pure devotion of the spiritual life. Besides his regular family hours of worship, he had three stated seasons for retirement, and secret prayer ; namely, morning, noon, and evening. And what a spirit of prayer was there ! What an exemplification of “ praying in the Holy Ghost ! ” What meekness, and simplicity ; what fervour in the holy outpourings of the soul to God !

Is there an intelligent Christian who has not been struck with the remarkable spirit of the times, at, and near the Re-

formation, and of that period in the British persecution, under Charles II., which our Scottish ecclesiastic writers, with great propriety and truth, call **THE SECOND REFORMATION**? These were the times, not only of great zeal and untiring activity, in diffusing the gospel throughout the land, but of an extraordinary spirit of prayer and supplication. It was so also, in a great measure, in the beginning of the eighteenth century, when Moncrieff, and his indefatigable associates, laboured in the reformation of the Church of Scotland. These were times when men communed with God, in the fulness of their overflowing hearts, and the bright display of all the Christian graces. How unlike these men, were to the men of our times, when the leavening spirit of scepticism spreads a chilling influence over the devotion of many professors, and even over the once warmer devotion of Christians! Those men of God prayed, and wrestled. And they waited, and looked in holy patience and faith, after an answer to their prayers! And, often, were they heard in a remarkable manner. Witness the life and times of John Knox; and Melville; and Craig; and farther down, James Guthrie; John Livingstone of Ancrum; John Welsh; Archbishop Usher; Archbishop Leighton; Brown, of Wamphry; and, later still, the Erskines, our Moncrieff, and other fathers of the Associate Church: and, later still, our Whitefield, the Tennants, Laidlaws, Masons, Marshalls, Rodgers, and Livingstons!

There was, in the case of Professor Moncrieff, something novel, in this respect, in the eyes of a stranger. In advanced age, his soul, as if ripening for the land of glory, and unceasing communion, seemed often absorbed in this duty. When prevented, by company, from enjoying his hour of retirement in the closet, he would, after the example of Nehemiah, in the court of the King of Persia, betake himself to ejaculatory prayer. He would, for an instant, says a friend of his, take a step or two across the room, or retire for a brief space to

the window, as if looking out, to take an opportunity, without any one observing him, of pouring out, in the fulness of his soul, the tender overflowings of his love, to his Father in heaven. It was his habit, also, in the pulpit, and in the professorial chair, to pause a few moments, in the midst of his discourse, while his hearers were hanging on his eloquent and pious lips, in order to lift up his soul to God, for wisdom and counsel. He thus imitated the good old Jacob, the patriarch, who, when he was uttering his last instructions, and prophesyings, paused, and breathed out the emotions of his soul, now lingering on the verge of glory, saying—"I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord!" Such instances of spiritual mindedness are, alas! very rare in these superficial, and ungodly times.

And even this is not the worst characteristic of the times. Pure religion and devotion, the crowning science, and glory of the human mind, are often made the subject of sarcasm, and bitter scorn, among our youth, by those sciolists, and ephemeral writers, who hasten to teach others, before they have themselves learned to form any correct ideas on any subject.

*Three* causes have lent their influence to produce this state of things. 1st.—The progress of scepticism, which, like the wrath of Heaven on Sodom and Gomorrah, converts the depraved mind into a dead sea! 2d.—The neglect of connecting the study of mental and natural science, with the devotional study of the Holy Bible. 3d.—The prodigious mass of impious and corrupting literature poured out in every form by the press. And, like the fifth vial of St. John, poured out on the seat of the beast, it is filling the world with darkness, and causing the '*darklings*' to gnaw their tongues with pain, and blaspheme the God of heaven! The age of gold, and even of iron, has passed away; the age of lead, with its characteristic poetry, and novels, is pressing, as an incubus, on us! And while its productions debauch, and cause a

moral derangement in the wild, and undisciplined mind, they do create a positive disgust, and nausea at the very approach of sober history, sound literature, and evangelical instruction!

But folly, and a consequent want of taste for spiritual things, are inseparably connected with profligacy, and wickedness. It is, therefore, not to be wondered at, that such debauched minds should entertain no regard whatever, for the pure, the sublime, and beautiful in religion.

I challenge the ingenuous youth, and even the philosophical sceptic, to produce an instance of greater beauty, and sublimity in the moral world, than that of a great and good man, well instructed in science, and adorned with the beauties of holiness, holding communion with the high and holy One,—his Maker, Preserver, Redeemer, and Judge!

“A great man struggling with adversity,” says Cicero, “and rising superior to it in his virtue, is a spectacle on whom the gods look down with delight!”

What a delight would the lofty, high, and polished mind of that great man have felt, had he been admitted to see what the sciolists, and self-styled philosophers of our time, treat with scorn! What would Tully have said, had he witnessed a great and good man rising above all the ills and trials of life; not by the stoic apathy of Cato, or Socrates; but by a holy principle, brought, like Prometheus' fire, from heaven; and walking in the heated furnace, in the midst of the blazing flames, in joyful communion with the Son of God, and exulting in the hope of the glory of God? What would Tully have said, had he seen a great man, with the palm of literature in his hand, and surrounded by the pomp and pleasures of affluence, retiring, without regret, from the path which leads to the summit of human glory; looking down with a loftiness of mind, truly Christian-like, on the splendours of the world's gayest scenes, disdaining, like Lot, to look be-

hind him: pouring utter contempt on the pursuits, and pleasures of the men of the world, who are "*dust*," and are doomed to be "*the serpent's meat*;" and on all our modern philosophers; and on all human speculations, self-styled wisdom and truth: and there, in the temple of his closet, holding high and solemn converse with Jehovah, "the holy One, who inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy!"

What would Tully have said in his enthusiastic encomiums, had he been conducted into the blaze of our sanctuary's glory, and heard words which pagans never heard, and infidels refuse to hear? Had he seen the gospel light, and heard the words of the compassionate DEITY, condescending to reveal his mind, and his will unto us; and sending his only and well beloved Son, on the lofty errand of mercy; to ransom us, in a manner designed at once to secure the perfect honour of the laws, and sustain the spotless purity of his universal government: and bending, from his throne of grace, his ear most graciously to hear our humble prayers; accepting our homage; vouchsafing to us all manner of blessings, in answer to our supplications:—in what terms would such a man as Tully have poured out his soul, as he bent over the divine vision, in an ecstasy of admiration, and delight!

If 'a virtuous man struggling with calamities, and rising superior to them, be an object on which the gods look down with delight',—truly we have an object of greater delight here. The Christian, rising superior to every temptation; and the effect of every enemy,—setting his feet on the world; aspiring to holy communion with heaven; while HE who fills all space with his presence, and throws the glory of his influences over all the happy assemblies above, deigns to hold communion with him in the ineffable delight of his paternal love! This is an object on which all holy beings look down with delight! It is a spectacle to which no mind can

conceive an equal upon earth! Its moral grandeur, sublimity, and beauty, can be surpassed only in the mental exaltation, and the pure and perfect communion of intellectual beings with God, in the eternal world!

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## CHAPTER VII.

PROFESSOR MONCRIEFF lived sixty-seven years, *forty-two* of which he spent in the faithful and laborious service of his Maker, and doing good to all around him. His labours and intense studies brought on premature old age. In the summer of 1761, his strength became greatly exhausted, and he spoke of death, with great cheerfulness, as nigh at hand. In the month of August he was called to attend the funeral of a dearly beloved brother in the ministry, Mr. Brown, of Perth. When he entered the room where many of his reverend brethren were sitting, near the remains of him whom they loved, the venerable Professor observed, as his eyes rested on the cold remains,—“My brother has got the start of me: it was a question whether he, or I should be first removed; the Lord has decided it. He knows who are ripe.” His desire to be useful in his Master’s cause, was unabated to the last. Two weeks before his last illness, notwithstanding his feeble state, he rode forty miles to administer instruction, and consolation to a feeble church, which had been bereaved of its pastor, by death. He expired on October 7, 1761. He was speechless during the greater part of the last twenty-four hours of his life: during the last three, he seemed to revive: and this reviving was discovered by his afflicted family hearing him breathing out praises to the Lord. He then insensibly fell asleep in Jesus, and was gathered to his fathers. On the Sabbath following, his son

and heir, and his successor in the ministry, the famous MATTHEW MONCRIEFF, preached his funeral sermon from that text.—“ And his disciples came, and took up the body, and buried it, and went, and told Jesus.” Matt. xiv. 12.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

I SHALL close this notice of Kilfogie with a remarkable incident in his ministry. It has never appeared in print, so far as I know. Of its authenticity I have satisfactory evidence. I heard it in Scotland, some years ago, in the house of a friend, when there were present, at least two ministers, whose wives were grand-daughters of Professor Moncrieff. And I have heard it minutely detailed, more than once, by that Christian gentleman, the late Andrew M'Ara, Esq., of Philadelphia, who came originally from Abernethy, and was so attached to the memory of Kilfogie, and that of his son, the Rev. Mr. Matthew Moncrieff, that he seldom spoke of them without tears.

In the parish of Abernethy, and about four miles from the mansion house of Kilfogie, there lived a wealthy young Laird. He revered the pastor, as every one did, but he rather feared, than loved him. He had neglected his duties, and misimproved his pious education. He had forsaken the ways of the God of his fathers, and had gone on headlong in the career of vice, and wickedness. He was an heritor of the parish, and the representative of a distinguished family; and as such, he had occupied a conspicuous seat in the house of God. This was now deserted; and he sought by every means, diligently to shun the presence of the pastor, at home and abroad, as well as that of his associates in the discipline of the church. Horse racing leads invariably to vicious company; thence to scenes of gambling; and, finally, into

brutish dissipation. Every one saw that the young man was hastening on to ruin. His amiable spouse was now neglected, and broken-hearted. Profaneness destroys even natural affection, as it blunts the conscience, and finally sears it as with a hot iron. His very children seemed to be forgotten; and the peaceful and happy fire-side scenes of his former days, were lost sight of, and forsaken, for the revolting scenes of drunken companions, and blasphemers. And his fine estate was fast melting away, as the snow before the summer's sun. And pious and prudent parents pointed him out and set him before the eyes of their sons, as a painful example of the utter ruin which the loathsome and infamous vices of gambling, and drunkenness fail not to bring on a young man. "There," they would say, "is a youth, naturally of superior talents, and accomplished mind, born to wealth, and influence in social life; one who should have filled the place of his good old father before him, the venerable elder, and leading heritor in our parish; who should have stood up among the nobles of the land, as a Christian patriot. Behold him now, my children," they would add with anguish, "and avoid him as a pest:—he is a ruined, and lost man!"

The young Laird was running fast on in his wild course; he soon wasted, and wore out the powers of nature, and soon exhibited, like the rest of his reckless companions, the enfeebled energies of a wasted and broken down constitution. And when he once began to sink, having within him no cheering support from the testimony of a good conscience—no sustaining vigour of a healthy, and moral state of mind—far less the sustaining grace of a sympathising Saviour, he did sink rapidly in body and spirit, like every other unhappy profligate. The young man, in fact, found himself deserted by all his companions; tormented in his conscience; oppressed by severe bodily pains; and, as he thought himself,

nigh to death. And the very sight of his mourning injured spouse, and poor weeping children, wounded him deeply to the heart !

The sick bed of a man who has had a faithful Christian education, generally exhibits something very different from that of one who has been brought up in ignorance, and without the fear of God. The instructions of this young man's father ; the tears of a pious mother ; the family devotions, in which that dear child was named with a gush of parental emotions, now rushed with terrific force on his busy memory and conscience, and especially these words often uttered in his father's prayers—" O good and merciful God, the God of our fathers, remember in thy love, our wee Jamie ! O grant that the grace of the good Spirit may be lodged deep in his breast ; and may he stand up, in our stead, when we shall sleep in the silence of the grave !"

A mother's love, and a father's prayers, fail not to make a very deep impression on the young heart. This is the nature, and the tendency of divine truth, when impressed on the minds of children, by a parent's tender love. Like the good seed, it is true, it may be long before it appears to shoot forth above the clod. In the career of vice, and by the baneful influence of vicious companions, these early impressions, the fruit of an early religious education, may seem to be effaced, and destroyed. But, let a sick bed only brush away the cobwebs of delusion, thoughtlessness, and folly, from the soul of the young man, who has been thus religiously taught to fear God ; and under the grace of a kind and most faithful Redeemer, these early impressions begin to appear as vivid, and clear, as do the deep imprinted letters chiseled on the monument, when the overgrowing moss is carefully removed away.

The first dawn of this young man's sensibilities, and the awakenings of his conscience, appeared in a gush of tender-

ness of spirit toward his long neglected, and amiable spouse, and his sweet little children. They were all hanging round him : he took his wife gently by the hand, and said with tears,—“ My dear, canst thou forgive me the wrongs I have done thee ? ” She could make no reply : she burst into tears : and when the first surprise of her long sorrowful mind, unaccustomed to such words of tenderness, was over, she replied in silence, by kissing first the one cheek, and then the other, of her long estranged husband, and shedding a flood of tears in his bosom ; while the children, melted by the new, and unusual tenderness of a father’s voice, drew nearer him, and sobbing as if their hearts would burst, affectionately kissed their afflicted father.

“ My dear ! ” said his spouse, as she witnessed his pain, and mental distress, “ shall we send for our dear old minister, Kilforgie ? ”

He waved his hand in a very dubious expression of his will : he was evidently overwhelmed at the idea of meeting the minister. She, however, ventured on her own course ; and whispered to the servant in attendance, to send an express for the pastor, and give a hint to the good man, not to lose any time in coming to the Laird’s sick bed.

Kilforgie heard with surprise, and sorrow of the mournful condition of the son of his old friend ; and calling an attendant, who always accompanied him in his pastoral visitations, he ordered him to have two horses forthwith saddled. And in less than forty minutes from the time of receiving the message, they were sitting by the bed of the sick Laird.

There was a long and distressing silence. None of the parties seemed disposed to break it. The pastor, on his part, was anxious to ascertain the true condition of his parishioner’s mind. He saw his agony. But did it proceed from bodily pain ; or from conscience ? If, from his conscience, whether was it from the slavish fear of the criminal under the

rod of punishment? Or did it arise from the overpowering sense of the purity of God; and from a generous grief for his offences against infinite goodness, holiness, and mercy? He perceived, by no dubious proofs, that the agony was mental. It was a raging fever: and there burned a fiercer fever in his soul. But, it was not difficult, also, to discover that it was the fear of punishment, more than grief for the evil of sin against God's most holy and pure majesty. He seemed to have little sensibility touching the exceeding evil of sin. There was more horror than self-loathing. And, hence, the manner of the pastor, though possessing the most tender and parental heart, assumed the appearance of unusual *severity*.

It had all the air of stern severity. But it was the severity of a parent struggling to conceal his emotions of grief, and compassion. He employed terrific words of truth; but they were the words of a benevolent spirit, labouring, in an agony, to win this poor perishing soul to the Lord Jesus Christ. There was no time—there was no room for silly pity; far less for flattery. Wo to the pastor who soothes, and flatters the deceived soul; and applies a soothing unction to a conscience, in order to heal his wounds slightly; when there is a deadly disease rankling in its very core. Wo to the pastor, who refuses to use the salutary sharpness of “the living and powerful word of God,” even to the dividing asunder of soul from its worldly spirit, and the laying open, to the sinner's eyes, the dreadful maladies of his soul. The Lord “hews” his people by the word of his prophets: but he “hews” not to destroy. After the manner of the skilful and painstaking statuary, he “hews” them into shape; and forms them on the model, and image of our blessed Redeemer.

The pastor took the Laird by the hand; and began to remind him of the example set before him by the good old man—his father—now in heaven: of the religious instruc-

tions by which his parents, and he, his pastor, had laboured long to impress the word of God upon his soul, and heart.

And, as the remembrance of his past conduct painfully rose on his mind, throwing from him the hand of the young man, he yielded himself up to deep emotions of sorrow, and with more of sorrow than of anger, thus went on :—

“ And, oh ! young man, what a return hast thou made ? We sowed wheat : nothing yet has sprung up in thy wicked heart and life, but *tares—all tares!* Thy Maker, and thy Redeemer called on thee—saying to thee, ‘ O young man, give me thy heart ! ’ Oh ! how tenderly this call was followed up by every means, calculated to enforce it. Turn thee, turn thee ; oh ! why wilt thou die ? But thou didst turn away from him ; and thou—thou *didst* sin still more and more ! Oh ! thou hast made thy brow as brass, and thy neck as a sinew of iron ! Thou wouldst not hear him that made thee ! He stretched out his hands to thee all the day long ; thou hast dashed from thee the cup of mercy held out to thy lips ! O, I tremble to think that thou mayest have been trampling the blood of the covenant under foot ; and counting that an unholy thing whereby He, the blessed Mediator, was sanctified ! Thy father’s son—the son of that good old man, now in heaven—even *thou* hast been crucifying the Son of God afresh, and putting him to an open shame.” He paused : he was choked with sorrow : the young man groaned in deep anguish, as he hid his face with his hands.

After a long pause, the pastor went on, in a tone of sorrow : “ Yes ! young prodigal, thou compellest us in sorrow and grief of heart, to say it—thou didst only want the opportunity of doing, perhaps, all this to the letter—hadst thou lived among the Jews : hadst thou mingled among the Roman soldiers, thou wouldst have shouted, *crucify him—crucify him!* Thou wouldst have taken the hammer, and the nails ; and thou wouldst have nailed the holy man of sor-

rows, the Lord Jesus Christ, to the cursed tree! And with the hard-hearted, unbelieving Jews, thou wouldst have mingled in the revolting taunt of blasphemy—"he saved others, himself he cannot save; let him come down from the cross now!"

"God be merciful to me a most guilty, and miserable sinner!" ejaculated the young man.

The pastor went on, though his voice was choked with grief; "Hard and obdurate hast thou been in thy prodigal course! And what shall I say? Oh! canst thou look over the past without horror? Look up to the throne of that judge, before whom thou must, ere long, appear—that most holy, faithful and just One, gave forth that law which thou hast so long, and so wantonly trampled under thy feet! On thee that law is now denouncing its curse. Hearest thou not its thunders? Fearest thou not his arm, and the devouring fires of his justice! 'Hear, O heavens; and give ear, O earth; for the Lord hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children: and they have rebelled against thee.' Ah! sinful young man: laden with iniquity, thou hast forsaken the Lord—thou hast provoked the Holy One of Israel to anger, and now that anger is burning hot against thee!" The pastor paused—for he was overcome with grief. The anguish of the Laird seemed now insupportable: he groaned and sobbed out, "Wo is me, for I am undone! mine iniquity is ever before me—against thee, Oh God—against thee only have I sinned; and in thy sight done all these evils! And now, thou hast cast me off forever!"

The Pastor continued in a low and tremulous voice—"Oh! did He not often warn thee of the evil of thy ways? Did He not knock long, and loudly at the door of thy hardened heart? With what a solemn voice did He often thunder in thy ear, in his providence? And now,—death may be near at hand. Ah! thou tremblest! but it is only from the fear of

punishment. It may be—it may be, that fear shakes thy heart's deep-rooted resolutions. Look on that throne before which thou art hastening—think of all thy sins,—and all thy guilt,—and all thy pollution.—And, oh! if death were to come—and a tempest of the night were to carry thee away to thy Judge's presence,—what wilt thou answer to the God that made thee?"

This long-continued reproof and warning, though severe, was uttered in a tone of the tenderest emotions, and with a flood of tears, by the Pastor; who seemed like one lost in the contemplation of the spotless, and awful justice of the Almighty: and to speak like one who seemed to see nothing,—to hear nothing,—to feel nothing, but the overpowering majesty of the Most High, and Holy One. He saw before him a guilty and miserable man: "a brand," which must be plucked by him out of the fire, by every evangelical means put into a minister's hands: he thought not of giving pain: he meant to hurt no one's feelings: his heart, all benevolence, and kindness, was too full of the all-absorbing subject,—namely, the young man's salvation, to think of any thing else. He was, himself, a sufferer too; like the faithful friend, who rushes into the midst of the raging fire, to snatch up the perishing child, and bear it off in triumph through the roaring flames. The glory and purity of God's honour, and the conversion of this wretched young man,—were the only things which engrossed his every thought.

It was now a late hour. The Pastor rose abruptly; and casting a mournful look on the afflicted man, he said, in a tone of anguish,—“Prepare to meet thy God!” and hurried out of the room; mounted his horse; and, followed by his attendant, he stopt not until he reached his own door.

## CHAPTER IX.

“ My good John,” said he, as he threw the reins into the hands of his groom, who helped him to dismount, “ let the horses remain saddled : and retire not to thy bed ; be ready at a moment’s notice to attend my call.”——

John afterwards stated that, according to orders, he remained in the anti-chamber,—incapable of penetrating his master’s intentions, who had, to use his own words,—“ poured without mercy, the vials of wrath on the poor Laird,—and had left him without a drop of comfort, or one ray of hope.” But John soon discovered his master’s purpose. He wished to be in a spot where he could enjoy perfect retirement for the purpose of wrestling in prayer for this young man ; and there was no place like his own study for that purpose. During the whole night, he heard Kilforgie engaged in prayer for the heart-stricken penitent. He could hear him, prostrate on the floor, pleading with strong crying and tears, for “ the poor perishing son of his ancient friend.” He heard him say,—“ Oh ! for *his* sake,—for *his* dear sake, who hung upon the tree,—thine own well beloved Son’s sake, O Lord, have mercy on this sin-stricken soul ! Thou hast shaken him, in the terrors of thy law, over the mouth of the pit,—O most compassionate Lord, do not let him fall in ! Spirit of all grace, —O life-giving Spirit, come, in thy love, revive and quicken him : he is broken, in the place of dragons : let the bones which thou hast broken yet rejoice ! O bind up that broken heart ! Look on his diseases, and his pains, and forgive him all his sins !”

Just as the early dawn began to break in the east, the Pastor summoned John : and setting off at full speed, in forty minutes, they were again in the sick man’s chamber.

The Pastor walked up with the most benignant smile. He

had been, like Jacob, wrestling with the Angel of the Covenant; and he felt a cheering assurance of hope animating his soul, in humble confidence, that he had prevailed at the mercy-seat.

“O Kilforgie! come away!” cried the distracted Laird, the moment his eyes fell on him: “my heart has been broken by the terrors of your message, and the law of God: and O! how I have longed these slow-moving hours past, to see your face again. I deserved it—I deserved it all! I deserve the frowns and terrors of the Lord! And had He cast me off, had He never allowed me to grasp at hope, I feel that I had deserved it all! Mine iniquities are great: my transgressions are infinite! The Lord is just and righteous in all his ways.”—And taking the Pastor’s hand he burst into an agony of tears, saying,—“But is there? no—no, there is no hope for such a consummate, hell-deserving sinner like me? Your words, like flashes of fire from Sinai, brought the overwhelming terrors of God’s law over my soul!—Never, never, before, did I so behold thy bright, consuming, purity and majesty, O God! O just and Almighty God—I throw myself at thy feet! Here I wait, and long—and look for thy face—like them who have watched for the dawn of the morning.

“In the hour of my overwhelming darkness, after you left me, dear Pastor, and after I had tried again and again, to call on the Deliverer,—a beam of hope seemed to spring up in my distracted soul:—Oh! said I, there is,—there is ONE MIGHTY TO SAVE! O God of my fathers, surely thou wilt not leave me in my extreme necessity!—And, now, sit down, dear Kilforgie, and preach to me this Saviour: and tell me if there be in the holy word one drop of comfort for this burning spirit of mine!”

This was a joyful moment to the Pastor’s heart. He sat down by the bed-side, as he secretly breathed a prayer for wisdom that he might speak a word in season to the broken-

hearted man : and he took the Laird by the hand ; as the delicious tears of joy stole down over his cheeks ; the spouse and children, the while, clustering around the bed of their beloved husband and father. Then he opened his mouth, and preached Jesus Christ, and him crucified. “ It was an hour,” said one present, “ of the most thrilling joy to all.” He spoke of the love of God : of Christ as God, and man, our Redeemer, the head of the everlasting covenant : he discoursed of the atonement, its necessity, truth, and perfection : he made a free and formal offer of the Saviour to the distressed man. And in the name of his Divine Master, he called upon him to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and declared to him officially, that in doing this he would be accepted, and saved. He next discoursed on the Holy Spirit ; his divine person, his offices, and work of grace on our souls ; and the nature and necessity of a new heart. And he concluded by imploring, in a fervent prayer, the plentiful effusion of the Spirit on the soul of his young friend, now ‘ coming up from the fearful pit, and from the miry clay ! ’ ”

As he closed the address, and the prayer, both of them wept some time in silence : the whole family were bathed in tears. The Laird first broke silence : he could no longer conceal his emotions :—“ O Lord ! I believe—help thou mine unbelief ! Glory,—glory to thy blessed name, for pitying such a wretch ! O the rich and free grace of the God of my salvation ! ”

After a pause he added—“ God has sent salvation to this house !—My Saviour ! Thee I accept, on thy own terms. Here I lay down my guilt, and worthlessness, at the foot of thy cross,—and I accept thy blessed righteousness, as freely offered, and given to me ! My Divine Teacher,—thou Blessed Spirit,—O teach a poor wandering prodigal to come to thee, O my God : and to walk in thy ways ! Blessed and pitying Saviour, I accept thee as my atoning, and interceding

High Priest, now passed into these heavens! O my King! accept a poor sinner,—the vilest of the vile,—who ventures, at thy bidding, to come, in all his poverty and need; to the foot of the cross; on thy atonement,—and on that, *alone*, I rely. And, O Redeemer, of poor perishing sinners,—may I venture to call thee *my* Redeemer! Take then this heart, it is thine,—wash it in thy blood, O *my* Saviour! To thee I give it away: to thee, my God, I dedicate this body,—this soul,—and my all! Oh! what a debtor to free grace! Thine I am, now, and evermore! For thou hast redeemed me, Lord God of truth!”

By a kind Providence the Laird recovered, and lived, I have understood, to a good old age; and gave, during a life of active and benevolent piety, the satisfactory evidence of having been born of God.

This is the substance and spirit of the conversations, and expressions, used on this occasion. The precise words, of course, I pretend not to give. I have only to add, that the name and memory of Professor Moncrieff of Kilfargie, is revered not only in Abernethy, but throughout all the Associate Churches in Scotland, to this day. Two of his grandchildren, and several of his great-grand-children, I have had the pleasure of reckoning among my highly esteemed and beloved friends in Christ Jesus. And I have had the pleasure of seeing one of his great-grand-sons in my house in this city.

THE FIRST,  
AND  
THE LAST COMMUNION.

THE FIRST,  
AND THE  
LAST COMMUNION.

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CHAPTER I.

THERE is a beautiful valley on the southern borders of Lanerkshire, near the northern confines of Ayrshire, Scotland. It is well known to the traveller in the south of Scotland; especially to those citizens who retire in the summer months, to the valley and the mountain, in quest of health; and to seek delightful amusement in the land of the choicest trout, salmon, and grouse. It is the upper part of Avendale.

The surrounding scenery is romantic and picturesque. On the east and west, lie ranges of vast mountains. And after the ancient manner of the land of our forefathers, each hill, each mountain, and each loch, and stream, has its own appropriate name: as well as every river, and every distinct house, and estate, from the lordly castellated palace, and manor; and the Laird's dwelling, down to the humblest sheelin. The range of mountains on the east, run south and north; the loftiest of these is the Darngavel; compared to which, the high range of the Allegany mountains, (and I have crossed them six times,) is, on an average, about one half in height. On the west, are the summits of Drumclog, and Loudon Hill, which raises its pallisadoed cliffs in the form of a cone, to a vast height above the adjacent plains, and the

small lake called Lochgate. On the west of this, is the great valley, which opens to the west, and discloses the rich domains of the Earl of Loudon, and the valley of Irvine river, bounded by the Firth of Clyde, and the blue summits of the isle of Aaron: on the south of Loudon hill, is situated the mountain still retaining its Celtic name, the Kairn Saigh, or Hill of Peace. The Strathaven valley is bounded on the south by the dark heathy mountains of Blacksidend. Its north end opens on the rich plains watered by the Aven, with its hamlets, villages, and towns, extending to Clydesdale, the garden of Scotland.

That part of the upper end of this valley, which stretches eastward of the Aven, is called Glengeel, from the name of the rapid mountain-stream, the Geel, which waters its plains. Nothing can be more beautiful and delightful in the eyes of those who visit its pastoral inhabitants, than this part of the valley, in the spring and summer seasons. The rich level plains wave with luxuriant crops of grain: its pasture fields of red, white, and yellow clover, are covered with numerous herds of cattle: and the lofty mountains on the south, and east, are whitened with flocks of innumerable Scottish sheep.\*

The family, of whose history I am about to recite a brief chapter, lived on an extensive and well cultivated farm in Glengeel. Its dairy lands stretch along the stream which waters the valley; and which, after meandering a mile or two, mingles its pure chrysal streams, with the dark and slow-moving waters of the Aven. Its uplands, devoted to the pasture of sheep, take in not only the adjacent hilly parts;

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\* The sheep on the mountains of Scotland are very different from the long-legged sheep of England, and America. The Scottish sheep is a smaller, short-legged animal, running wild, like the deer; its flesh is delicate, and of fine flavour. The Scotch call them *huggs*, *gimmers*, &c.

but extend some miles on Graystone hill, and the mountains which bound the valley of Avendale on the east.

William Craig, the head of this family, was a venerable man, exhibiting a fine specimen of that class of the Scottish population, which stands between the highest rank, and the lowest, usually called Lairds, or small proprietors: and which are usually exempt from the vices of the highest, and the lowest classes. They are a shrewd, intelligent, and religious class of men. They are as steady and immoveable in their habits, political and moral, as the plains and hills on their lairdships. They are fond of showing off a long line of ancestors, who were as steady and unwavering in their principles, as is their family name, and their unquartered coat of arms. They name, with feelings of pride, the men who have gone forth from their families, and have made themselves eminent in Church, or State: while they challenge the foeman to name one of their name, who ever was a disgrace to his 'kith or kin.' And the ardour of family blood is not soon cooled. They will count to the *twentieth* cousin, a cadet of their house: and run over the genealogy of twenty generations, to trace the connection with their family of one who is eminent for virtue, learning, or prowess. They love to rehearse, at their simple board, or in the long winter evenings, the fame of their ancestors, who stood forward in the days of peril, when *the Stuarts* laboured to turn Scotland into a hunting field; and hunted men down for their religion! They speak of the fields of Drumclog and Bothwell with mingled emotions of joy and grief; while they name their gallant forebears who drew the battle-blade when forced to it, for civil and religious liberty. And they are anxious to prove that none of their race ever favoured *the Popish Pretender* in 1715, or in "the Heelan' man's year" of 1745!

William Craig was not rich in this world's goods: nor did he seek great things for himself; for he had the true wis-

dom which teaches a man to be content with his lot. Yet he could look around him, and see his fields covered with as rich golden crops as any which waved in this fertile valley : and his flocks and herds were pointed out as among the best conditioned in the whole district.

He was not a worldly-minded man, nor covetous. He was always generous to his poor neighbours : and no distressed object of charity was turned away from his door, without food and raiment : while the more substantial and enduring parts of charity received his careful attention. He laboured to put the poor and unfortunate man in the way of industriously providing for himself, and those of his household. He never talked much of charity. But he preached it “with his hands, and his feet.” He, and his spouse were accustomed to set aside a regular annual portion of their substance, for the poor. This proceeded not from a kindly feeling only ; or, a mere instinct of tender heartedness to their fellow-men, and a hospitable spirit. It had a deeper root, and a better soil to nourish it. It sprung from a holy principle, rooted in the life of Christ, and nourished by the love of God, in the soul.



## CHAPTER II.

WILLIAM CRIAG had been a fearer of God from his youth : and, for fifty years, a professing disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ. There was a beautiful consistency between his profession and his Christian practice. He had lived all his days in one of those happy valleys, where infidelity had never obtained a footing. The inhabitants seemed almost to possess the primitive simplicity of pastoral life, and the happiness of the golden times. Indeed infidelity was scarcely even

known by name, to them in his early days. Remote from large cities and towns, they seemed almost entirely ignorant of revolting crimes, and profligate manners. They were a church-going people: they loved, and even doated on their venerable pastor; who habitually mingled among them as a father among his children; and took pains to instruct them in the pure doctrines of the gospel; and led the way before them in simple and fervent devotion. Most of them were the descendants of martyred fathers; the venerated Scottish Covenanters; who had borne testimony, in their day, to the truth, as it is in Jesus, in dungeons, and on the gibbet. Not a few of them traced their descent from the ancient Lollards and Huguenots: and they retained the simplicity; the pure morals; the devotion to the Holy Bible; and the spirit of charity and benevolence, which distinguished these apostolic worthies of the cross. The writer has, in his early youth, seen them, assembled beneath the broad spread oak, and the wild ash; or on the green mountain's side, listening, in solemn reverence, to their venerable pastor, expounding the Scriptures; and enforcing on their hearts, with a holy fervour, the duties they owed to God, and their fellow-men: while pastor and people were bathed in tears. And he has heard their slow, heart-stirring music of a primitive psalmody, floating on the morning, and evening breeze, from the lips of the vast assembly, ascending as grateful incense to the Most High; while the shepherd on the adjacent hill, above them, with his eyes bent on the congregation far below, leaned forward on his crook, to catch the solemn sounds, and to mingle his pious vow with theirs. The writer distinctly remembers, from his earliest days, that this purity, and Arcadian simplicity of manners still existed. And in the last visit he paid them, to attend the funeral of a near and beloved relative, he remembers how the whole valley rung with the infamy of two profligate youth, the sons of one of the chief proprietors, who had come from abroad, vicious in mo-

erals, introducing the hideous and hitherto unheard of game of card playing : and the contemptuous breach of the holy Sabbath, and the neglect of the solemnities of the House of God !

William Craig had long been a prominent member, and an elder in the Kirk. The worship of God was daily offered up in his dwelling, in the simplicity, and fervour of his forefathers. His whole family were, at the appointed hour,—sunrise,—and sunset,—summoned around the fireside : himself on the one side, in the ancient high-backed chair, a kind of throne in William's household, which had descended to him as an heirloom from his forebears ; his spouse, a godly and intelligent woman, on the other side ; and their stately sons, and blooming daughters, with the domestics, formed a semi-circle between them. “ *Let us worship God,*” he would say, with a cheerful solemnity, as he cast his eyes over the beloved group, and lifted the family Bible, and laid it on his knees. Then closing his eyes, he first uttered a brief prayer for the divine blessing : then selecting a psalm, he led the family song, in artless, and heart-touching melody. For the soul of the humble servant, and sincere disciple of the Lord, sent that touching melody from the heart. He then read, in his “ ordinary course,” out of the Holy Bible. Then all knelt down, while he led, in solemn prayer, for his dear family ; for his relations at home and abroad ; for his neighbours, that the blessings of the Most High might rest on them, and theirs ; for the whole household of faith ; that the presence of Him who dwelt in the bush, might be with them in the trials, and in the joys of life, till they should meet in the General Assembly above ; for his poor, and ignorant, and perishing fellow men, in all parts of the earth ; for the faithful and painstaking servants of Jesus Christ, of all denominations throughout the land, and the world ; for all that were in authority ; that they might be, according to the will of God,

true and faithful men, fearing the Lord, and hating covetousness, a terror to evil doers, and a praise unto them that do well.

This was his uniform practice, as regularly as the sun rose, and set. And on the Sabbath evenings, this family solemnity was preceded, or followed, by parental warnings, and instructions ; and the careful recitation of the whole of the Assembly's shorter catechism, and other elementary formularies, by the whole circle : the mother always taking the lead in these devout exercises. " These," he would say, " exhibit to you, my dear children, the great principles of the oracles of God. Let them be deeply engraven, my children, on your memories. The early knowledge, and the hearty belief of these holy truths, will prepare you to do your duty as intelligent, and wise Christians ; and they will arm you, under God, against errors, and temptations." And he would conclude with a Scripture passage, such as this :—" And thou, Solomon, my son, know thou the God of thy father : and serve him with a perfect heart : and with a willing mind : for the Lord searcheth all hearts ; and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts : if thou seek him, he will be found of thee ; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever !"

In process of time, children of this family were, one by one, removed from their father's house—not by death, but by happy marriages, and settlements in the world. All except two, received inheritances in their native valley. These were called, in Providence, to settle, far from the land of their fathers. One of them died lately in Kentucky, the other in Ohio : both of them falling asleep in Jesus, and departing in peace, in the presence of their affectionate families ; mutually blessing, and blessed.

One daughter only, now remained in her father's house, when the most affecting incident in this family's history, took

place. She was very dear to her father and mother's heart. No wonder ; she was a beautiful and lovely being : she was the youngest, the only one now with them ; the child of their old age. Moreover, she was, as every one said, the very image of her mother, when, in the beauty and bloom of her youth, she had been borne off by her youthful husband, as a rich prize from the hall of her fathers. For the mother was descended from the ancient and pious house of the Campbells of Cessnock ; and lineally descended through Sir Hugh Campbell, of Cessnock, from one of the principal families of the Lollards, of Kyle, Ayrshire. She was, of course, of a rank considerably above that of her husband. And it was a notable event in the annals of Glengeel, when, having eloped with her first and only love, the gallantry of her blooming husband brought her off to the happy valley, in spite of all opposition.



### CHAPTER III.

JEANIE CRAIG was a well educated, and beautiful young woman ; a universal favourite ; a meek, and gentle young Christian. It is impossible to conceive the joy of her parents, when they first witnessed the evidence of their prayers being answered, which had been long offered up in her behalf. They had taught her from her infancy, with faithfulness, and many prayers, as they had done the rest of their children. The Catechisms of the Church were William Craig's text book, in teaching his family the Holy Scriptures : with these he diligently imbued the youthful minds of his children. But her mind had been, for a long time, drawn away into the world, and its beguiling amusements, in the neighbouring town, where she had finished her education. She

was inordinately fond of music, and an accurate performer ; this is an elegant accomplishment ; and it is good in its place. But, it had led her away, insensibly, into the company of the frivolous, the dissipated, and the despisers of godliness : with whom the world is the all-absorbing topic : while the pure and cultivated mind, ripening for the eternal world, finds no favour nor place with them. Long had the prayers and instructions of her devoted parents seemed utterly fruitless. They saw, it is true, kindness and sweetness of temper, spotless purity of morals, and perfect readiness to submit to their will. But, ah ! they sighed and prayed for something more. “ What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul ? Or, what shall a man give in exchange for his soul ? ”

“ My sweet child,” would the parent say, “ would that the Redeemer’s words might melt thy heart ! ” What canst thou give, dear Jeanie, in exchange for thy soul ! ‘ The world is too poor to ransom one soul ! Vanity of vanities ! All is vanity, in the comparison with the eternal weight of glory in heaven ! O deem not thyself right and safe, my lovely Jeanie, without a sure interest in Jesus Christ. The Lord himself has said it, that unless thou be born again, and made a new creature in Christ Jesus, thou canst not enter the kingdom of Heaven. Except thy righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, thou shalt, in no wise, stand in the judgment. Neither circumcision, nor uncircumcision will avail thee : nor the washing at the baptismal fount merely, nor any outward privileges. Nothing can avail thee, my dear, but THE NEW HEART ! This is the one thing needful. Without this, it will not avail thee, my Jeanie, that thou art the child of that dear Christian beside thee,—the mother that bore thee——.”

And as he uttered this, he turned his eyes, moistened with

tears, on his beloved companion, who had walked with him in the way of godliness, for nearly forty years.

“No, no,” said the mother, “nor will it profit thee that thou wast early offered, and given to the Holy One, in the family covenant; and art the child of a long line of Christian parents. Thou must glorify the God of thy fathers, thyself. And as thou, dear Jeanie, must stand up in the judgment, and answer for thyself, on thy life and thy soul,—and not by another, as thy *proxy*; so must thou thyself seek, from the Lord God of thy fathers, a pure and perfect heart. What are the promises? How readest thou? “I will sprinkle clean water upon thee, and thou shalt be clean;—a new heart also will I give to thee.” “I will pour out my Spirit upon thee.” Go, in all the helplessness of a sinner, to Jesus Christ: out of his fulness receive. “Ask, and it shall be given thee: seek, and thou shalt find: knock, and it shall be opened unto thee!” You have the means of grace in your hands, my Jeanie: and you must “cast away all your transgressions, whereby you have transgressed; and make you a new heart, and a new spirit:” “you must work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you both to will, and to do, of his good pleasure.”

“What a cheering encouragement is here given us to work out our salvation! *He worketh in us both to will and to do!* And then only think, what paths of pleasantness, my dear Jeanie, are those paths of wisdom! ‘My child,’ says thy God, ‘give me thy heart’—Oh! then, yield it up,—yield it up to him; throw thyself as a suppliant at the foot of the cross: Oh! accept,—believe,—repent,—obey,—and live.”

They often dwelt with deep interest on this all-important subject. They drew their views fresh from the pure fountain of God’s holy word; and sought prayerfully, to have her whole soul thoroughly imbued with the same spirit. They

sought carefully to impress on her mind, her true condition by nature :—even “ a child of wrath as others.” They dwelt much on the nature, and the necessity of the atonement ; and the necessity, and sure tests of regeneration, by the Holy Ghost. They spread out, in a word, the prominent doctrines of the gospel before her young and tender mind ; and then wrestled for her salvation, with strong crying, and tears.

“ Was she then so profane ?”—methinks I hear the gay and thoughtless inquire, with surprise : “ was she, then, so wicked, young as she was ?”

Alas ! what fatal mistakes have prevailed on this matter ! No, my dear young reader, she was not wicked,—she was not profane, in this sense. Her parents never had one occasion to bewail her condition on such an account. In their prayers they were constrained to thank God, their Heavenly Father, that no one,—not even an enemy,—if she had one—could point out a blot in her stainless character. Before the world she stood forth as innocence personified ; and as an angel on a visit of mercy, among the sons of men. The poor and needy blessed her as their benefactor ; and they named her name in their prayers, and vows ; and implored God’s best blessings, on Jeanie Craig, the sweet flower of Glengeel.

But, ah ! my dear young friends, the finest natural endowments, the most amiable disposition, and the highest mental accomplishments, are but poor affairs to fit “ A SINNER” for the bar of divine justice. There may be most fascinating amiableness, and captivating innocence of manners ;—there may be all that pleases and charms the eye, and the ear of the world ;—while, yet, the heart is far from God ; utterly estranged from him ; and not only indifferent—utterly indifferent to truth, religion, and a godly life,—but actually filled with malignity against God, the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. Yes, God, the searcher of all hearts, has said so,

my dear youth: Where there is nothing higher than what the world approves; where there is only a decency of morals, and a superficial merit of human virtue; that heart is utterly destitute of the religion of Jesus Christ! It is "CARNAL." And "to be carnally-minded is death." This is uttered by God, your Creator, and Judge. "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God: neither indeed can be." "And they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh." So, then, dear youth, "they that are in the flesh," that is, an unconverted state, "cannot please God!" Rom. viii. 5—8.

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#### CHAPTER IV.

THESE, my dear young friends, are the words of soberness and truth. They are pronounced by the Most High, who will, in a short time, pronounce thy doom irrevocably. "If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself; but if thou scornest, thou alone shalt bear it." Proverbs ix. 12.

There were certain great points to which these parents directed the attention of their beloved child, next, and in subordination to the glory of God. They laboured with many prayers, and unwearied tenderness, to convince Jeanie of the *guilt* of her sin, original and actual; and the *defilement* of the soul by means of it. As guilty before the eyes of HIM who cannot look upon sin, but with abhorrence, it was, therefore, utterly impossible that she could escape by the merit of any human virtue. "Without shedding of blood," says the Judge of all, "there is no remission of sins." God had, in divine goodness, and sovereignty, enjoined a law upon man: that law of the covenant was enforced by the penalty required by divine justice, goodness, and wisdom. God pronounced

to all men that awful penalty, "IN THE DAY THOU EATEST THEREOF, THOU SHALT SURELY DIE!" And again, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them!" Now, what God said to one class, or generation of men, he does with equal authority still say to all, with as infallible certainty as he is Lord of all. "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things, written in the book of the law to do them." Hence they led Jeanie to perceive that there is an utter impossibility of obtaining relief from the curse, fastened on us by divine justice; or, of obtaining the blessings of life and peace, by any supposable virtues, or meritorious deeds!

Hence they led her young mind gradually to appreciate the atonement of Christ: the necessity of it: the perfection of it. Particularly is it of importance to the young, and inquiring to feel its perfection,—that is, its entire suitability to the sinner's misery, and wants. And the demonstration of its perfection is complete. It was achieved by God our Saviour. None but a divine person could approach, and lay his hand on both parties. "As for our Redeemer,"\* i. e. our near kinsman Redeemer,—God and man in one person,—"THE LORD OF HOSTS IS HIS NAME." It meets the full claims of law and justice: it is *divinely perfect*. God our Saviour did it: it is the moral work of God: and hence it is infinitely perfect. The Father raised him from the dead in testimony of his approbation of the finished work of his well-beloved Son.

By this atonement they taught her to seek justification; that is to say,—pardon of all sin, and gracious acceptance before God. "He was made sin for us, who knew no sin," for the express purpose that "we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Christ was made a sin-offering by

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\* Goel.

our sins being “ put on him,”—“ or made to meet on him,”\* “ that is, imputed or laid on him.” Therefore, in the first moment of our faith in him, and union with him, his righteousness becomes ours. And, hence, it is “ put on us,” “ imputed to us,” or laid on us as a fair robe: and we are made comely through his comeliness. From this moment are we justified from all our sins, and accepted in the beloved.

Another point on which they dwelt, in their domestic instructions, was the necessity of holiness: that is to say,—the removal of the *defilement* of sin in the soul. In the renovation of the soul by the Holy Ghost, the seeds of all the graces are sown in richness of love, and mercy. And they all spring up in the heart in due order. There are faith, penitence, purity, holiness, love, humbleness, meekness, and all the train of the graces of the Spirit; by which, in their progress to perfection, we are brought, by gradual elevation, up to the measure of the stature of perfect ones; and bear the image of our Redeemer.

There was one feature in these parental instructions, which deserves notice. I have seen it verified in the family of the sister of this young person, to whom I sustained a near relation. That sister was my mother. It was this: there was little of controversy, strictly speaking, introduced in these family instructions: and nothing of the earthly spirit of controversy was tolerated. “ Controversy and polemics,” the head of this family used to say, “ are proper and necessary in their own place. The infidel, and antichrist, and the disturber of the peace of Zion, must be rebuked, and opposed; defensive war is always lawful. Defensive war, and opposition to sin, and error, began in Heaven. Religious defence of the truth, and expulsion of rebellion, and sin, began in the court of

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\* Isai. liii. 6. Laid on him: Heb. *made to meet on him.*

God! He drove Satan, and the fallen angels, out. Our Redeemer was ever kind, and full of love, and compassion: but, in defence of truth, and his law, he was terrific in his words, and judgments.\* James, and the beloved disciple John, breathed love, and benevolence in their messages, and writings. But these same sons of consolation were also Boanerges,—sons of thunder, in opposing error and crime! Let this be engraven on the hearts of all my children,”—he would say,—“This warfare is carried on *without*. But, in the social, and family instruction, controversy and polemics are as a nipping frost to the life, and ardour of devotion, and the simplicity of Bible religion.” This sentiment William Craig did often repeat. For love, kindness, and prayer, were deeply interwoven in his feelings, and discourses on the subject of religion. Let me and mine drink in, deeper and deeper, of our blessed Saviour’s spirit. Oh! for more of his meekness, his simplicity, his godly sincerity, and fervour of devotion. Oh! to sit as little children, at the foot of his cross: to hunger and thirst after righteousness, and to receive with meekness, the divine influence of his word, into our obedient spirits!

It was this lovely spirit of the Christian, carrying its touching appeal to the pages of the Holy Bible,—this copying of the Redeemer’s example,—this fervent prayer for the teachings of the holy, and entire dependence on his grace, which first moved, and won our Jeanie’s heart to God. And it was a day of a joyful jubilee in this family, when the youngest, and only remaining one of the flock, who had hitherto remained at a distance from the true fold, came, at length, over to the green pastures of the Shepherd of Israel. She had frequently secluded herself, and spent days, and nights in meditation, and prayer, and supplication. Her gay companions,

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\* Matt. xxiii. —.

who had never known the value of their souls : and had never directed their serious thoughts, or wishes into the eternal world,—began to whisper, that Jeanie was losing her senses; and would soon be entirely deranged !—But the dark cloud began to roll away : for the blessed Sun of righteousness began to beam brightly on her troubled soul. “ He who begins the good work, carries it on to the day of Christ.” She found peace through the blood of the atonement. She yielded herself in faith, with humble submission to God. And coming out of her chamber, with the animation, and unaffected joy of a new creature, she threw herself on the bosom of her mother, and kissed her, as she sighed out, with a flood of delicious tears, that she entertained an humble hope that she had found him whom she had long been mournfully seeking ; even HIM who is the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely.” And she added, as she smiled through her tears, on her anxious father, “ Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name !”

“ Let us kneel down, then, my dear,” said William Craig, as he cast a look of joyful gratulation on his spouse ;—“ and let us give thanks to our Covenant God, that the last one of these dear lambs of the flock, has been, at length, brought home.

His heart was too full to utter a long, or a regular, and connected prayer on the occasion. He could only sob out the following,—so far as it could be collected. “ Shepherd of Israel ! who hast provided the green pastures, and the still waters of thy consolations—Thou the true Shepherd, and the faithful, who hast laid down thy life for the sheep—thanks to thy name ! Oh ! dear and faithful Shepherd, who gatherest the lambs in thine arms ; and carriest them in thy bosom,—and gently,—most gently leadeest them that are with young,—until Christ’s image be formed in them the hope of glory,—thanks eternal be to thy name, that thou hast most

graciously remembered us, thy poor servant, and hand-maiden, here ; and this dear lamb of thy flock,—our dear Jeanie ; and hast brought her home, out of all the places she has been wandering in the cloudy, and dark day, to thy own true fold ! And now, O holy and most compassionate God, what can thy unworthy servants say more ! Everlasting praises be to God the Father, to God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, for his rich, sovereign, and free grace, for ever, and ever ! And, now, let thy servants depart in peace, at thy own time, and bidding : for our eyes have seen thy salvation !”—And the mother pronouncing her fervent “ *Amen*,—so be it,—praises ever be to his grace !”—She fell on Jeanie’s neck, and shed tears of delicious joy on her bosom.



## CHAPTER V.

THE evening passed away with varied edifying conversation. For the ardour of a young Christian, who has just emerged from darkness into a new world, gives a fresh impulse, and a delightful excitement, even to the aged, and experienced Christian. One remark, however, was long remembered, as it made a deep impression, not so much at the time, when it dropt from the lips of his wife, as afterwards, when trouble came, and made it rush on his memory with a tumult of indescribable emotions :—it was this :—“ We need much grace to keep us humble, dear husband ; for when one’s cup is ready to overflow, there is danger of spiritual pride, and forgetfulness of God : the Lord grant that this precede not some heavy visitation on us, or ours !”

“ Margaret Campbell,” said her affectionate husband, who, after the Scottish custom, always called his spouse by her family name, when about to give utterance to something partaking partly of kindness, and partly of reproof ;—“ I pray

thee, spare that remark ; and brood not on the future, to draw forth sorrows from it, to thine own discomfort, and ours. Has not the Lord forbidden us to be unseasonably careful about to-morrow ? Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof. Besides, you know, my dear," added he with great tenderness,—“ that the Lord God omnipotent reigneth ; and He will watch over us, and ours. And remember, my dear Jeanie,”—continued he, as he turned to his daughter ;—“ Remember this : the good and faithful Shepherd who found thee, my poor wanderer, in the wilderness, and laid thee on his bosom, and brought thee into the green pastures, beside the still waters,—even He will feed thee, and lead thee, my love, and lift thee up for ever. Acknowledge the Lord in all thy ways, and he will direct thy paths.” “ The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in the green pastures, beside the still waters : he restoreth my soul : he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness, for his name’s sake ; yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil : for thou art with me : thy rod, and thy staff, they comfort me : thou preparest a table before me, in the presence of mine enemies : thou anointest mine head with oil, my cup runneth over. Goodness and mercy shall follow me”——Yes, dear Jeanie, *goodness* in the kind visitations of his providence, not only ; but *mercy*, free, rich, sovereign mercy, bringing us all spiritual blessings, shall follow you, and your dear mother, and me, and all whom God has given us. This will he do all the days of our life : and then, to crown the whole,—blessings, blessings to His holy name,—“ we shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever !”——That sweet pastoral psalm, my dear, gave light, and consolation to my poor dying brother Thomas, as he set his footsteps in the dark valley of the shadow of death. Let it dwell, Jeanie, in thy memory and heart. Thou wilt need its consolation, my sweet child, before thou reachest the years which I have seen, in my pilgrimage.

Not many days after this event, the returning season of the Holy Communion was announced on the Sabbath, by the pastor. And the affectionate invitation was given, as usual, to the children of God, to come forward ; and, at the bidding of their blessed Redeemer, “ show forth his death, until he come.”

Jeanie Craig was among the number who appeared before the Session ; and was received into the church on the confession of her faith. She gave evidence of her clear and accurate views of the gospel plan of salvation, in a brief, but deeply affecting account of her conversion, and her experience, unusually rich and satisfactory, for one of her years. This was the fruit of the early pains taken with her, by her parents. The seed had lain beneath the clods, in the cold and unpropitious days of winter. But when the spring season of divine grace came in its genial and divine influence, and life, what a joyful harvest appeared, waving luxuriantly, and ripening apace.—“ Blessed are the parents who give early and pious instructions, out of the holy word, to their offspring ; and such a training as this !”—said the venerable old Pastor, as the tears of joy rolled, in silence, over his cheeks :—“ And blessed are my dear young lambs, who have had such parental instructions, and guidance into the green pastures of the Shepherd of Israel ! And, above all, blessed be the Most High, who gives grace, and the blessing to you, my dear young ones.”

Jeanie spent the intervening days in retirement, meditation, and prayer. She had made a solemn dedication of herself,—soul, and body, and all she possessed, to her Lord and Master, Jesus Christ. This had been written down by her in the form of a vow, or covenant. A copy of this, or, at least, something in the form and spirit of it, is yet extant in the surviving branch of the family. She called it a *personal covenant*. And herein “ she surrenders herself, and all her hopes, and prospects, to the Lord her God : taking God the

Father, to be *her* father, and God: Christ the Redeemer, to be *her* Redeemer and Lord: the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, and sanctifier, to be *her* guide, sanctifier, and comforter: to be her Covenant God, wholly, only, and for ever! "So help me, my God, Amen!"

The morning of the Communion Sabbath day rose bright and beautiful. The sun poured his beams down on the mountain side, and over the rich plains, sparkling with dew-drops; and exhibiting every variety of hue, as if sent from an innumerable array of pearls, and diamonds.—"How lovely to a Christian's eye, is all nature in her morning, noon, and evening glory! What new beauties spring up before the wondering eye, in every one of her new evolutions! On every one of them, he perceives the marked impress of the wisdom, the exquisite skill, the boundless goodness of his Heavenly Father. The sage beholds them merely with the eye, and the cold heart of the philosopher. The Christian sees them with the affectionate recognition, and a holy transport of filial emotion. "They are the wonderful works of the Deity," says the sage. "They are the wonderful works of the Deity—my Heavenly Father!" says the Christian. The Christian *sees* him in all his footsteps, as He moves onward, scattering blessings along all his paths. He *hears* him in every murmuring breeze,—in every purling brook; in the roaring waves; in the sweeping hurricane, and wintry storm;—as well as in the enchanting music of the grove. All nature displays his glory: all animated beings utter his praise! But, Oh! "there is a *still small voice!*" And that voice utters in our ears, *the good news, and glad tidings of the gospel.* Sweeter is it than all the music of nature; for it is the voice of the Holy One bringing tidings of our Heavenly Father's love; our Redeemer's grace; and the Holy Spirit's influences! And, Oh! in all the richest profusions of nature's blessings, and sweetest joys,—there is no blessing,—there is no joy comparable to those shed upon our spirits by our Co-

venant God! All nature, and all her blessings fade away and perish, like the glory of summer before the frost, and snows of winter. But the sweet joys of heavenly love here, are followed, and consummated by glory unfading, in eternity!"

"To this Holy One, my God and Saviour, I dedicate myself. Oh! dear and faithful Redeemer, grant me to be filled with the knowledge of thy will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that I may discern the Lord's body, as often as I am called, henceforth, to the holy communion of the Supper. And, Oh! grant me faith to feed joyfully upon him: grant me sincere and godly contrition for all my sins; love unfeigned to thee, O! my God: and to the brotherhood, and to all my fellow men. And, Oh! hear a feeble young Christian's voice, and grant me grace to walk worthy of the Lord in all pleasing; being fruitful in every good word, and work; and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to my Redeemer's glorious power; in all patience, and long suffering, with joyfulness! And in this self-dedication, O my God! may I see thy face beaming on my troubled soul, in the holy communion, for the Lord's sake."

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## CHAPTER VI.

SUCH were the thoughts which had passed in the mind of Jeanie Craig, in her morning's devotions, as she wandered through the waving corn-fields, on the banks of the Geel; as it appeared from the record made in her diary, in noticing "the very gracious, and divine manifestations which God was pleased, that morning, to make to her soul."

"My sweet child!" said her father, with great tenderness

to her,—how long thou hast been absent ! If thou knewest how much we value thy presence, thou couldst not have left us behind thee, in thy walk :—But pardon me,—though methinks I could gaze on thy face continually, and talk with thee, the live-long day,—so dear hast thou become to my poor old heart, since I have seen in thee, the image of the dear One who died for us on the tree.” This effusion of parental affection led the way to an animated conversation ; which lasted till the hour of breakfast, and morning prayers.

But the Elder was not to enjoy the ordinances of God’s house that day. When Jeanie had done her toilet, and made her mother and herself ready, they found him so indisposed, that they insisted on his remaining at home. “ Be it so, my dear,” said he meekly, “ God has laid his hand on me, this communion day ; it is not his will that I accompany you, my dear wife, and sweet child, to the house of God, and the communion table. His will be praised. I shall remain in this chamber, and my fervent prayers shall be for thee, love, and our dear child, that this her *first* communion may be a delicious one to her, and to you ; and a blessed foretaste of the delights of the new wine\* of paradise. Would to my heavenly Father, “ continued he, as he laid himself down on his couch, “ that I had received health and strength to accompany, thee, Jeanie, to the house of God ; and sit down by thy side, and the side of thy mother, at the table of the Lord. But go your way, and leave me ; and may the presence of the great Master of assemblies be with your spirits. You go to enjoy him in his divine ordinances ; and see his “ face in the lattices,” of communion : I remain in the dwelling of Jacob,—to prove how good ordinances are, by this day’s privation of them : and to profit, I trust, under the rod now laid on me. God bless you : Adieu !”

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\* Matthew, chap. xxvi. 29.

“Archibald,” continued he to his attendant, whom he addressed, though he intended it for his wife’s ear, “take it on thee to hurry off thy dear mistress, and Jeanie, as soon as possible, after the holy service of the table shall be closed; for I have looked out on this morning, at an early hour: and if common signs of the weather, long noted by the shepherd boys, fail me not, there will be a heavy thunder shower ere the day close. May the shepherd of Israel have you all in his holy keeping.”

They were soon mounted on horseback. By ten o’clock they had forded the stream of Geel; and they reached the house of God, in the town of Strathaven, in safety, after an hour’s pleasant ride.

The Pastor was unusually animated that day: his face shone with unwonted joy. He discoursed from the words in John i. 29,—“Behold the lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” It was a genuine old Puritan’s sermon. He showed why he was called *God’s* lamb: why he was the *lamb* of God: and how he took away the sin of the world: he spoke of the well-ordered covenant, everlasting, and sure: when he became *God’s* lamb by choice, when “the covenant was between the Father, and him whose name is the Branch:” of his mission into the world; of his being sealed by the Father, by his pure and spotless life, and doctrines, and wonderful miracles: he dwelt with deep and affecting pathos on “him who was made a sin-offering for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him:” “who was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities.” As *God’s* lamb, he had the *real*, and the *proper* matter of a sacrifice. It was *real*,—for he was bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh. It was the *proper* matter of a sacrifice, because he was “the holy, the harmless, the undefiled, and the separate from sinners.” He dwelt with earnestness on Christ’s vicarious suf-

ferings, by which he has taken away the sins of the world. And he closed by a most affectionate address to all God's dear children to come, and show forth the death of the Lord Jesus. "Come," cried he, "and feast upon the sacrifice of our Redeemer, here held up so vividly in these holy symbols, and 'show ye forth his death until he come.'"

Margaret Craig, and her daughter, being placed opposite each other at the holy table, sat close by where the Pastor stood: and as he pronounced the solemn words,—"*Our Lord Jesus Christ, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread; and he broke it, and gave it to the disciples, as I now give it to you,—saying, take, eat, this is my body broken for you:*"—he put the bread into their hands, and added a sweet and refreshing word of consolation, to the poor trembling young communicant. "Fear not, my child, think of thy Redeemer: I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee: he hath said it!" Then raising himself erect; and spreading forth his arms, he continued,—"*As for our Redeemer, the Lord of Hosts, is his name: he left the throne of his glory; he humbled himself; he took upon him the form of a servant: he became obedient unto death,—in his holy human nature,—even the death of the cross. It was for us he humbled himself; it was for us he took on him the form of a servant; for us he taught, and toiled, and served, and suffered; for us he endured the agony of soul, when his sweat was as great drops of blood falling down on the ground: for us he died the accursed death of the cross, being made a curse for us! for us he rose again: for us he ascended visibly through these heavens: for us he intercedes, and reigns over all! Oh! height and depth, and breadth, and length of the love of God! Most faithful, and blessed Redeemer, here we devote ourselves unto thee; accept thy poor helpless, and trembling servants as they come unto thee: and bless this dear lamb of the flock, which he has brought home to the fold."*

A shower of tears fell from the cheek of the young com-

municant on the Pastor's hand, and on the holy symbol, as she received it with a trembling hand.—He next presented the cup, saying,—“ *This cup is the new Testament in my blood, shed for many, for the remission of sins; drink ye, every one, of it!*” It passed round in deep silence; and the Pastor closed the service of that table, with these affecting words from the prophet, as his eyes wandered over the whole of the communicants,—and finally rested on the youngest one of his spiritual children,—and that was Jeanie:—“ *Fear not, saith the Lord, for I have redeemed thee; I have called thee by thy name: thou art mine: when thou passest through the waters I will be with thee: and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flames kindle upon thee!*” Isaiah xliii. 1, 2. The affecting incident of the evening brought these words fresh to the memory of every one: and made them to be long remembered by the inhabitants of the valley.

The Pastor, according to his usual custom, continued his discourse, for some time, to the professing followers of the Lord. He dwelt with much tenderness, on the divine promises, and the delicious refreshings they afforded to the weary pilgrim passing onward to Zion. He adverted to the means of growing in grace, and holiness: to the discriminating marks of Christian experience: and to the urgency of the obligations by which the love of Jesus binds us to the love and practice of good works. “For the love of Christ constraineth us,” cried he: “and no one of us liveth unto himself, but unto God who purchased us with his own blood!” And then, with a tone of parental affection, he closed by pronouncing the Apostolic benediction.

It was observed, and afterwards called vividly to remembrance, that in his address to the aged, at the holy table, he exhorted them with unusual vehemence to stand ready, having

their loins girded, their lamps trimmed, and the pilgrim's staff in their hand. "For," said he, with tenderness, as he pointed to his own snow white locks, and to those around him as aged as himself,—“ Our Lord may be now saying to you, dearly beloved, and to me, I shall no more drink of this fruit of the vine, until I drink it new with you, in my father's kingdom.”

It is true, if no affecting occurrence had passed that day, these words would, probably, have passed silently away, and made no deeper impression in the memory of the inhabitants of the valley, than any other in the whole service of the day. But the impassioned tenderness with which they were uttered, and the melancholy disaster which followed, caused not a few to think them almost prophetic, and made an impression on all, which time could never efface.



## CHAPTER VII.

At the close of the service, Margaret Craig took her daughter's arm, and retired, from the table of the Lord to their pew; and pressing affectionately her daughter's hand, they leaned forward, and poured out their souls in secret devotion. Their faithful attendant, Archibald, was true to his master's injunctions. He gently touched his mistress' arm, and reminded her, that it would be proper for him to conduct them to their horses. And coming up closer to his mistress, he whispered in her ear, that there were no dubious signs of a heavy thunder-storm approaching: the bright summer sky of the morning was blackened with clouds, and dark. "I fear," added he, "that it has already poured its torrents on the summits of Dargavel mountains, and the head waters of the Geel."

A numerous company of friends, and their relatives, who resided in another part of the valley, saw them mounted, and set off.—And here, I must state, a mystery rests on this part of my narrative, which I have no means of explaining satisfactorily. Their attendant, usually very faithful, had not remained in attendance: he had fallen, some considerable distance, behind: his own explanation was this,—that the Laird of Gowrie, a blooming young man, well known in his accepted visits at William Craig's fire-side, chose to accompany Jeanie, and her mother: and to hint to him that he might, that afternoon, take his own course: and yet it is certain, that that youth parted from his charge, a mile distant from their dwelling; after making an engagement to meet Jeanie on the following day, at Trysting Elm, on the banks of the Geel.

But I must hasten to close my narrative. Margaret Craig and Jeanie had pursued their journey, the last mile alone. It was still day; and the sun breaking from behind a cloud in the west, sent a stream of light on their path; and illumined the heavy thunder-cloud on their left, in the east. They reached the banks of the Geel. It was now too evident that the thunder-shower had spent its fury on the head waters of this mountain stream, behind the Darngavel mountain; and it had swollen to a roaring torrent. As some of our family have supposed, and as far as it could be ascertained, Jeanie had contrived, without waiting for Archibald, to get her mother mounted behind herself, on her stout and gallant horse, as it seemed she refused to venture into the swollen stream alone, on her own horse. But just as Archibald was advancing, at full gallop, toward them, and as some of the domestics appeared on the other side, a piercing scream was heard. They looked, and the two horses stood alone without their riders in the middle of the impetuous waves of the dark red stream. Jeanie and her mother had both fallen in, and dis-

appeared. Others conjectured that they had entered the river, each on her own horse, side by side, Jeanie on the upperside, to break the force of the waves by her powerful horse: and seeing her mother, who had probably become giddy, by the rapid motion of the rushing torrent, fall from her horse,—she uttered a scream; and in a moment of thoughtlessness, plunged in, after her, to rescue her. The mother and Jeanie, each of them were seen, once and again, after painful strugglings, to recover their feet; for the torrent was not deep: but, alas! being entangled with their heavy riding gear, they as often fell, and were swept away by the torrent. And the last time they fell they were seen to fall towards each other, as if in an embrace; and rose no more out of the roaring waves!—It was Jeanie's FIRST AND LAST COMMUNION!

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## CHAPTER VIII.

THE alarm flew like lightning through the valley, that the “beautiful and the good Jeanie Craig, and her mother, had perished in the Geel!” Their bodies, carried far down by the impetuous mountain torrent, were found, after a long search, on the second day after they had been drowned; and were brought home, by a long and mournful procession of the neighbours.

It is impossible to describe the feelings of the venerable husband and father. During the Sabbath, and all the intervening days, while search was being made for the bodies, he seemed like one stricken dumb, and insensible. He spoke not: he wept not: he uttered heavy moans incessantly. Sleep fled from his eyes: or if exhaustion and sickness weighed down his eye-lids, he moaned incessantly: while the

single words escaped his lips,—“ My dear Margaret Campbell! My sweet young Jeanie!”

And when their cold, and drenched bodies were brought in, and laid down, he threw himself down on his knees by their side; and kissed the one,—and then the other, with a frantic sorrow: and bathed their faces with a flood of tears. Then rising up, and throwing himself into his chair, he lifted up his voice and wept aloud. And when his friends, and his dear associates, the elders of the church, and the affectionate old pastor came in, and sat down beside him, in deep silence; he seemed, after the first heavy emotion, and burst of sorrow, to lose, for one moment, the half of the burden of his grief. He looked up for a few moments, into the face of each: not a word was uttered: he clasped the hand of each: and as the recollections of the past again burst on his spirit, he covered his face, and wept aloud. The Pastor first broke silence with some words of consolation; but they were uttered in a tone which opened afresh the fountains of his sorrow. “ Yes,” replied he, after a long pause,—“ Oh! yes:—they are gone! Margaret Campbell—and my sweet young Jeanie! They are gone—lost! I cannot say it—they are gone—before me! Not lost—but gone before! Oh! my God—them thou gavest unto me—and thou hast taken them away.”—His voice was choked with grief, for an instant. He added, in a low murmur, after a pause, and after a vain struggle to subdue his feelings,—“ Blessed be the name of the Lord!”—There was not one dry eye in the room.

This disaster was the subject of mournful conversation among all, young and old, throughout the valley of Glengeel, and Avendale. Each felt as if he had lost a mother, and a sister. The universal sorrow, and lamentation showed how much Jeanie, and her mother, were beloved.

And this was awakened afresh, in each breast, by the ancient and striking custom observed in that pastoral district of

Scotland, of inviting to the funeral. Messengers are sent out, usually on foot, who hurry from house to house, throughout the parish ; and entering in without the ceremony of knocking, they present themselves with bonnet in hand, and in a grave tone and manner, say,—“ *I wairne ye a' to the burial o' our deceased freen and neebour—* :” on such a day, and from such a place : and they name the person's name at full length, without title or honours : and the woman's name, always by her own family, or maiden name.

On this melancholy occasion, they were young shepherds who were sent out as messengers ; and who gave utterance to their excited feelings in their own peculiar way. Entering a family circle, uncovered, and without offering any salutations, they delivered their message,—“ *I wairne ye a' to the burial of gude auld Margaret Campbell ; and her sweet bairne, the bonnie Jeanie Craig, wha were drooned, to the sair grief o' us a', last Sabbath day, in the Geel.*” And this message was invariably returned respectfully by some touching expression of mutual condolence.

The day of the funeral came ; and the whole of the inhabitants of the valley, as if by one common consent, were assembled at William Craig's dwelling. The Pastor improved the solemn dispensation of divine Providence, in a suitable discourse on death : and the necessity of being *always* ready for it. And he dwelt with much effect, on the touching incident of their coming from the holy communion of the Lord, at his table, and thence passing so soon after it, over Jordan to their everlasting rest !

They were laid in the same grave, in the church-yard of Strathaven. And there they sleep in silence, until the morning of the resurrection. And there never was seen a deeper mourner at a grave, than William Craig ; unless it were one individual, a blooming young man, who stood, uncovered, by the side of William, and supported him, while the grave was

closing up. And that was the young man, who had parted with Jeanie, and her mother, on the fatal day; and concerning whom the rumour in the valley was, that the Pastor was to have joined them in the holy bands of wedlock before that month had closed. This much seems certain, that he did not leave the house of William Craig: but was to him as daughter, and wife, and son. And when William died, like Job, old, and full of days, he closed his eyes; and laid him in the grave, beside his lamented wife, and daughter.

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#### CONCLUSION.

My dear young reader,—Here is an affecting lesson taught us, respecting the sovereignty of Almighty God. He bestows our being on us, and calls us out of time, when he pleases. He calls his children out of the world, by the word of his grace and power, in his own time and way: and he gives them grace to meet all their trials. He fixes the bounds of our habitation: he determines the number of our days: and he arranges the manner of our death, and departure from time. He carries some of them home to his paternal bosom, on the calm and peaceful death-bed: others in a raging fever; some he takes away by the blow of violence; others by the raging floods,—or flames! He taketh away to the land of glory, the good Christian,—gathered in the fulness of harvest joys, like a shock of corn fully ripe. And he plucks the beautiful blossom of the young rose-bud,—and transplants it to the hills of glory, there to bloom in the luxuriance of beauty, and glory in eternity! “Let thy will be done, O my God, with me, and mine!”

What rich mercies are mingled up in the lot of God's dear children, with their trials and afflictions! Here a ripe old

Christian is taken away : but not until she was permitted to see, with exceedingly great joy, divine grace triumphing in her daughter's soul,—for whom her spirit had been in labour and travail, that Christ might be formed in her the hope of glory. Here an aged Christian loses, at once, his wife, and his dear child,—but not until he had the consolation which the well grounded hope of their being in their heavenly rest, brings to the widowed, and desolate heart ! Here a timorous young Christian is called, as it were, from the very act of the *profession* of her faith, to the last *trial* of her faith. And may we not believe, that in the article of death, it was one of her joys from the Holy Comforter, that she was probably allowed to pass through the vale of the shadow of death, along with the spirit of her mother : and that they entered Heaven, at the same moment, and in company with each other ! And, therefore, it may be said, that they never were parted at all !

“ No man,” saith the wise Solomon, “ knoweth love or hatred by all that is before them : all things come alike to all : there is one event to the righteous, and to the wicked.” Eccl. ix. 1—2. The Christian, and the profane are hurried away into eternity by the same common sufferings : the wicked man, with an oath on his profane lips, is plunged into the wave : the tender and delicate young Christian, with the holy vow of Heaven's Communion, still breathing on her lip, is drowned in the roaring flood !

“ All things come alike to all !” But, Oh ! blessed Jesus, there is another, and a better world ! Is man looking on, death happens alike to all ! But, Oh ! what a contrast of things in the invisible and eternal world ! There is the presence of the COMFORTER : there are the guardian angels waiting on the departed spirit : there is the blessed throne of our friend, and Saviour, and Judge : there is the welcoming throngs : there the divine plaudit : there the crown, and the robe, and their

throne, awaiting the ransomed, as they come out of the deeps of Jordan ; bathed in the tears of their last agony !

But, on the contrary—Oh ! how shall I express it ? There—fear, and the pit, and a snare,—and a stormy vengeance of eternal fire are awaiting the workers of iniquity ! Oh ! my God, *let me die the death of the righteous ; and let my last end be like his !*

There was beauty, and propriety in the words of William Craig, which he is said to have uttered over his dear Jeanie, as she lay in her shroud, and coffin, when he was conducted to take his last look of the dear and beautiful remains.—“ I would not give thee, my dead Jeanie, for all the living monarchs of the earth !”

Let each one of us, young and old, learn from this mysterious dispensation of God’s holy providence, the necessity of being in a state of preparedness for our departure. Let us labour faithfully to be ready. Let us be *habitually* ready ; that is to say,—“ having oil in our lamps :” —grace in our souls ; the love of God shed abroad in our hearts, making us new creatures in Christ Jesus. Let us be *actually* ready ; that is to say,—let us be like those who have not only oil in their lamps, but their lamps trimmed, and sending forth a brilliant and steady light. Let the soul be not only renewed after the image of Christ, and possessing the various graces ; but let these graces be budding, and blossoming, and fruitful !

We know not what a single day may bring forth. That beautiful morning, when Margaret Craig, and her blooming daughter crossed the crystal streams of Geel, in the finest spirits, and with the most delightful anticipations ;—they had no more idea, than you, dear reader, this moment, that before the setting of the sun, that day, at that very spot, they should, both of them, be called to render up their souls to their Judge !

We are always in God's hands. Our times are always at his disposal. *We live in him; we move in him; and in him we have our being.* Oh! Let each of us strive after farther holiness, and preparedness for death. Let all of us seek to be found in Christ, ready through his righteousness, and grace, to take our departure, when HE calls: be it in the hour of business: or in the still hour of midnight: within the family circle; or far from home, and among strangers; or on our own bed; or in the midst of the roaring waves!

Finally—None of us ought to be anxious to have the choice of our own death. Let us be content to die *that* death whereby we shall *glorify God.*

The excellent Sir John Clark, of Pennycuik, an eminently godly man, used to say, that, “it would be a pleasant thing to fall asleep at night, in quietness and peace,—and awaken in Heaven!” On the evening in which his daughter was married to Professor Moncrieff, of Kilfogie, he retired to bed at the usual hour. Some time after, Lady Clark, having followed, and wondering that she did not hear him breathe, lifted a candle to look into his face. She found him dead,—lying apparently in calm and pleasant sleep, with his hand beneath his head!

The late venerable Dr. Livingston made the observation more than once, that he was afraid of death,—not of its consequences; not of what follows it,—but of the pains of dissolution. And he made his fervent prayer to his Heavenly Father, that he would either give him more patience, or *gently* take him away when his time came. It pleased God to take him away to his blessed rest in the midst of a profound sleep. He fell asleep, as usual; slept sound, and awakened in Heaven!

The late Rev. Mr. Henderson, of Chester County; and afterwards of Washington County, Pennsylvania,—though an eminently holy and devout Christian, was also much afraid of

death. He used to pray, that if it pleased God, his heavenly Father, he might take him to himself, when his time came, by a *sudden* death! That faithful and laborious minister of the Lord, who went to his rest a great many years ago, had his prayer singularly answered,—whether in divine compassion, or fatherly correction, I cannot tell. He died in a moment, by the fall of a tree.

It is beyond question, more trying to our graces to look the King of Terrors in the face: and see him slowly and steadily advancing on us! But then, we can, by the grace of Jesus say, “sure the blessed Comforter is nigh!” And, it is a moment when he “who has conquered death, and him that has the power of death,” is uttering the word on our ears as our king, “fear not; I am with thee!” And this word, God’s children feel not only as a command,—but an efficient word; reaching the heart; and composing the whole soul into a sweet and tranquil submission. This command removes fear.

Besides, there is another consideration. By a slow and gradual death, have we not more opportunity afforded us of preaching Christ to all around us, by our words, and our looks, and our patience, and submission, and cheerfulness, in our last moments?—Yet, what I should choose, I wot not. Were it put to my choice, I would, in all humility, throw myself at Jesus’ feet, and beg permission to refer it back to his own kind and sovereign election. O my God, let me only be ready against thy coming—and then, my blessed Redeemer, speak the word, for thy servant heareth. Here am I: let my Lord do with me as he will. “To me to live, is Christ: to die, is great gain.” Amen.

HANS VAN BENSCHOOTEN,

OR,

TRAITS OF PRIMITIVE CHARACTER.

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Heaven's patent of nobility, Christianity alone can confer on immortal man!

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## HANS VAN BENSCHOOTEN,

OR,

## TRAITS OF PRIMITIVE CHARACTER.

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“ A wit’s a feather, and a chief’s a rod :  
An honest man’s the noblest work of God.”

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## CHAPTER I.

HANS VAN BENSCHOOTEN was one of the best of men. The inhabitants of the valley where he lived, always spoke of him with respect, and veneration. They pointed to his house, embosomed in clustering fruit trees ; and said as they went by, there is the dwelling of honest Hans Van Benschooten. The wretched found in him a tender hearted friend : and the poor pronounced their blessings on his name, as they left his door.

He was always the same even tempered, cheerful, good old man ; whether he sat in the midst of his smiling and industrious family ; or of his neighbours, on the old fashioned *stoup* ; under the shade of his aged white cherry trees ; which threw their refreshing shadow over the front of his rural dwelling ; and over the rustic group—as they talked and laughed, and sent forth their clouds of smoke from the in-

spiring pipe : or whether he sat by the side of his much revered Domine ; or in the village circle : or in the house of God, with the elders and deacons of his church, where he had worshipped the God of his fathers, with enlightened and pious zeal, for more than sixty years.

Hans was an industrious and pains-taking man in temporal matters. “ He was diligent to know the state of his flocks, and he looked well to his herds.” But the holy Sabbath was literally a day of rest in the venerable Van Benschooten’s house. None of his family were to be seen in the fields, either labouring, or lounging away the hours of holy rest. He would greet his smiling children, of a Sabbath morning with, “ *Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.*” And it was a pretty sight to witness the circle of his family on the morning, and the evening of the day of holy rest, listening to the word of God read aloud ; or bowing down in lowly adoration before the Almighty. And it was still a prettier sight to see Hans, and her who had been his sweet companion from her sixteenth year ; and their six manly sons ; and their four blooming daughters, all in their best and neatest dress, in the house of God, actively employed in the holy service of their God.

Hans was devoutly attached to the church, the doctrines, and the forms of his venerated fathers. He had for fifty years praised his God ; and heard the sound doctrines of the good old Reformed Church, in his own native Dutch. The very sound, and the accent of the language was to him as the softest harmony of music on his ears. “ And where is the man,” he would earnestly say, “ who can be so heartless, as not to feel a pure, and deep veneration for his own native language ! The language of his country—the language of his forefathers ! There is a thrill of sweetest delight to a pure patriotic and sensible mind—communicated by the sound of the words and language of his fathers, and of his own native

land! And this is always more fully, and sensibly felt by a people in proportion as they are moral, and enlightened, and of a lofty and romantic turn of mind. I envy not the feelings of the thing who can part, without regret, with his native language!—He who can look back over his country—and the lingering remains of his father's language; and over the church of his forefathers—and can part with them—and forget them, can never be a happy man, or a sensible, or even, perhaps, a good man! His soul wants the very elements which enter into the composition of true happiness. He surely wants the capacity, and the delicacy of mind necessary to true mental enjoyment!”

Hans had been striving to suppress his emotions; and to submit to the task of learning—and in struggling to bring himself to speak the language which, he saw, must become the prevailing language of the country. When he looked back over the past years: when he recalled to memory the delightful hours which he had spent in the house of God in his own village; when his busy imagination presented before him, in vivid unfading images, his fathers, and his neighbours; and the line of faithful Domines, who had employed his own loved native tongue in that house of prayer, and in the holiest services of the sanctuary—he would sigh; and would often repeat, in the circle of his family; “I can never be brought to give it up—it does oppress my old heart to think of it: there is neither justice, nor reason in requiring such a sacrifice from me.”

But when, at the suggestion of his affectionate spouse, who had walked with him over the sunny years of life; and who had been his meek counsellor, and monitor from his eighteenth year—when at her suggestion he looked over the house of God crowded with the happy inhabitants of his valley; and at the rising generation; the blooming sons and daughters of his neighbours; and thought of the current lan-

guage of his adopted country ; and then looked up with affection and veneration to the Domine fluently speaking that language ; his regrets were gradually calmed down into a growing resignation, and satisfaction. “ We are all Americans—happy Americans,” he would say, “ the language of the majority must prevail. Our sons must learn the English, if ever they would aspire after honours, and important stations in life. The venerable language of my fathers, and my country—music indeed to my ears,—is fast fading away ! Our children cannot now use it in their associations in life. They do not understand the language of their fathers and mothers. Religious instructions, in that language, can no longer reach their minds intelligibly. I submit. I sacrifice my own wishes and pleasures, for the general good. It is even God’s will that this, like all other things, should be so.”

Hence it came to pass that the venerable old man sat in the house of God ; and listened to the voice of his Domine ; and to divine services in the church, in the English language, with an assumed air, not only of resignation, but of complacence, and a slowly growing, and fixed delight. And if at any moment the remembrance and regrets of the past, rose as a dark cloud over his mind—as often as he cast his eyes over the blooming countenances of his children, and the youth of the valley, who sat before him in the house of God ; and were gladly listening to their Domine—and even hanging, with earnestness, on his lips ; he would instantly find his mind restored to its wonted calmness, and even delight at the change.

“ I am not alone,” he would say, “ there are the estimable Huguenots who gave up gradually their French in our own Holland, when we opened an asylum to them from the merciless tyranny of Louis XIV. And they also gave up their French in this land of enlightened freemen. There are the

Scotchmen who gave up their native language for our Dutch, when we received them with open arms in multitudes, when exiled from their native land by the inhuman persecutions of Charles II, and the bloody Hierarchy. Nay, all around us—we see the Irish, the Welch, the Highlander, the Swede, surrendering each his native tongue. And they all begin to pronounce their devotions in the house of prayer, in this *new* language—the language of the country. And Hans Van Benschooten shall not be the last to submit—submit we must, my children. And it is just as well to submit speedily, and with a tolerable grace—and receive, in return, some credit for it. It is not of the Dutch character to be obstinate—at least,—when we see we cannot do better. And I am sure that I shall not be an exception, and set an evil precedent.

But still, however, he forgot not the language of his fathers, at the morning and the evening prayer—for Hans Van Benschooten never would permit the duty of family devotion to be neglected. Even in the busy day of harvest would Hans find time to bow down with his family, before his God. “Let us never forget our God in the bustle of the world. He never forgets us. And see,” he would add, as he pointed to the fields of the worldly man, “his work is nothing furthered by his incessant, and over-anxious bustling—which leaves him not even a brief space to read God’s Holy Book, and invoke his favour, of a morning, on his family, and on all the labour of his hands.” At these sacred family dedications, Hans always employed the venerated language of his fathers; and also in the humble and earnest cravings of the divine benediction on his household, at every meal of the day.

The great family Bible in Dutch, bound literally, in boards, with its massy brass clasps, was regularly brought forward, morning and evening. And Hans pronounced in a clear and distinct manner, a chapter of the Word of God, before his attentive family. His beloved children did not, and could not,

indeed, very well follow him in every one of the divine sentences. And his affectionate spouse would venture occasionally to lift her voice—not to chide him—not to blame him : Maria Van Benschooten, from her sixteenth year, when first she blessed the happy day which united her to the beloved of her soul,—had not ventured even to question the better judgment of her husband, or to chide him. And after having loved him, and obeyed him for upwards of four and forty years, she could not shape a hard thought, nor give utterance to a harsh word to him ; who was as much adored by her as in the sweet years of her blooming youth. She only besought him, for the sake of the edification and instruction of their own sons, and their daughters. “ And Hans,” she would add somewhat archly, “ I am not going to deny that I—your own Maria, do now begin to wax something rusty in the Dutch !” Hans would smile on her with a look of perfect unbelief, as if he meant to say that such a thing was utterly impossible. And, then, assuming a more sober air, as with parental authority, softened down by the tenderest affection, he cast his eyes over his blooming children, in the semicircle between him and his beloved, before the blazing hearth ; and laying his right hand firmly on the large Dutch Bible, and slowly opening its massy shining clasps ; he would say as he shook his long curled gray locks, that he could never give this up. “ I have made you a public sacrifice, as it relates to the divine service in the house of God. But you must yield to me in this one particular. At my own fire side, and in this beloved circle, this Holy Book shall continue to occupy its place. And I will continue to pronounce in your ears, the sacred doctrines of God’s Holy Book, in this my own language—consecrated to my heart by many endearing recollections. And—son of mine, and daughter of mine ; you can never be ashamed of the language of your fathers. And that you may not altogether forget it, your ears shall be recreated by it each morning, and evening.”

Hans Van Benschooten had named one of his sons Everardus Bogardus ; and another of them Henry Solyns. They were so named in grateful remembrance of two of the most distinguished of the primitive fathers of the Reformed Dutch Church in New-York. And he had often anticipated the joy of seeing the striplings grow up to rival their namesakes in fame, and usefulness. The fair haired, and ruddy son whom he had designed for the bar, was honoured with the endeared name of Stuyvesant.

No man in all the valley was more faithful than Hans Van Benschooten in training up his children. Copying strictly the manner of his forefathers here, and in Holland, the Sabbath day evening was devoted to pleasing and pious services. He studied to mingle the cheerful with the grave in all his instructions. He was aware of the possibility that a misguided zeal might carry things so far beyond bounds, that a Sabbath day, and a Sabbath day's evening, which ought to call up in the youthful mind, the most delightful associations, might be made to associate with itself the ideas of disgusting gloominess, and melancholy. He strove to excite a generous emulation, and rivalry in a trial of mental strength, and the evidences of a devout attention. He elicited notices, and observations on the Domine's sermon : his fervour in prayer ; the pathos of his applications ; his appropriate exordiums ; the lucid order preserved through his well jointed and well *pronounced* discourse ; unlike, *toto mundo*, to those nameless things introduced by graceless lads, and *read* with a flippant air from the once highly venerated desk, without one visible thread of connexion ; and so *artfully* concealing the *art* of regular order and division, that they set at defiance, at once, any intellectual power to follow them, or any human memory to remember the thought intended to be conveyed by them. Then, each youngster was made carefully to repeat out of his Heidelberg, and other summaries. And the questions

went round in rotation from beginning to end. Hans never reproached—never chid—never scolded in this exercise. If any one of his sons, or his blushing daughters could not get through with some of the longer answers to the questions proposed ; or, if they failed in giving suitable notes of the Domine's discourse, he would lift his eyes to the face of his attentive spouse, who was labouring all the while in whispers, to help the unfortunate child on ; and he would shake his head in sorrow, and pass the youngster, to try the next. This was the severest punishment in the discipline of the sacred day of rest, in the family of Hans Van Benschooten.

He would read occasionally from the Constitution of the Church ; or from the Liturgy, and the Canons of the national Synod of Dordrect. And each of his children would be ready with the Bible in his hand, to rehearse from the holy page, the passages quoted in proof of the Reformed doctrines. The Canons of the Synod of Dordrect received his marked attention. He took great delight in calling the attention of his sons and daughters to the history of that most grave, learned, and venerable Synod, the pride of the Church of Holland. He marked out their peculiar doctrines : compared them with the plain word of God : contrasted them with the doctrines of the Remonstrants, which, like a noisome pestilence, had laid waste some of the fair districts of the Church, and he would close his affectionate and familiar addresses with these words :—“ *And thou, Solomon, my son, know thou the God of thy fathers, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind.*”

And in that youthful circle, there was not the disagreeable symptoms of restlessness, and turbulence. They were still and silent ; as with affection and veneration, they hung each on the lips of him whom they loved so tenderly ; and the looks from so many bright faces and sparkling eyes, animated the fond parents' hearts, and rendered these exercises as

delightful to themselves, as they were instructive to their children. There was a touching pathos in the whole scene. And the evening of each day of holy rest, failed not to bring much peace, and real enjoyment to the happy inmates of this well governed, and religious family.

Hans was impressed with the belief, that parents in these degenerate times, were not fully aware of the necessity of imbuing the minds of their children, at an early age, with the pure doctrines of Christianity. "Occupy their minds with these grave matters ; and their memory with the hallowed language ;" he would say to his neighbours ; " the fruits of this early sowing will assuredly be abundant. And you cannot place in competition with this salutary branch of knowledge, another more fit to occupy their thoughts, and to guard their youthful years against the world's seducing influence. 'Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth.' He was fully convinced, that by this early attention to Christian education, parents could render a service of incalculable value to the happiness of their children ; to their own families, to the Church of God, and to their country. It would lay the foundation of steady and orderly habits, prevent dissipation and profligacy, make kind hearted and dutiful children ; and it would bind to our Church, by ties 'stronger than hooks of steel'—thousands of our interesting youth, who now grow up without religious knowledge, or principle, and who are seen at every public place of dissipation ; but never in the house of God, even on the day of consecrated rest. And with all due deference to many of our Domines, and without the least intention of taking from them the opportunity of *being instant in season, and out of season*, I do, nevertheless, insist," continued Hans, with warmth, " that parents can be unspeakably more usefully employed on the holy evening of God's day among their own children, than in any other place, or any

other services whatsoever. And it seems to me, that God willeth them to be so employed."

He took special pains in calling the attention of his two sons, Bogardus and Solyns, to the characteristic doctrines of the Protestant Church. "Make it a matter of conscience toward your God, and of honesty toward man, that you believe what you profess; and that you profess what you believe. The man who professes to belong to the church of his fathers, and does, nevertheless, reject some of the prominent truths, and tenets expressed in her Canons, is not conscientious towards God, nor is he honest before men. He hangs out false colours. Nay," continued he, with wrath rather unbefitting the occasion—but suddenly checking himself as the dark eyes of his spouse, with surprise and respect, fell on him with a reproving glance—"I had almost said, he is a fool and a knave."

"We will allow you, husband, to retract that," said his calm spouse, "unless your reasons bear you out very satisfactorily." "In the first place," replied Hans, "I would have said that if he did profess to believe, and venerate these doctrines in the Canons of the Reformed Church, and yet does not know what they are, he must bear that title, whether I, or he will, or not. And if he knows them, and sees their foundation clearly resting on the Holy Book of God, and yet does not believe them while he professes a vague attachment to them; then he partakes of the resemblance to a knave! And such, my sons, were not our primitive fathers in Holland, God bless their memory! But, spouse, I give up to you in this matter—and in all such cases of polemics, as in duty bound." She gave him an approving smile, and begged him to go on.

"These fundamental doctrines, of which I have been speaking," continued Hans; "and which have been drawn from the word of God, and set down with clearness, and pre-

cision in our Heidelberg, are read in our Churches every Sabbath day. And on this portion of our creed, supported by incontrovertible proofs from Scripture—the servant of God raises his doctrinal discussions. And thus, my sons, by a wise, simple, and judicious method, the whole congregation sees—if it chooses to see—and every devout mind does see, the outlines of the system of the Gospel, in their beautiful connexion, and order, exhibited each year; and from year to year. And thus, our people have every facility given to them, of understanding distinctly, and of knowing fully, all the leading doctrines of the Gospel, as they have been transmitted from our early fathers, and are exhibited in our Canons, and articles of religion.

“Nay, what is as important, the Dominies are themselves, by this simple means, restrained in their speculations, and kept in the rigid adherence to the spirit, and the letter of the truth, as it is in Christ. And delinquents will be compelled to leave the church in peace, and to seek proselytes on some other field.

“And, Henry Solyns, listen to me. There is a pretty narrative touching this matter, which was told by my father who witnessed it in Amsterdam, the city of our forefathers. In that city, famous in the times of old for its devotion to the doctrines, and integrity of Christian morals, there were thirteen churches of unusual magnitude. They were all under the care of associated pastors; as, for aught that I know to the contrary, they still are. The whole was a collegiate charge; for our fathers are strongly attached to *collegiate charges*—and their zeal I suppose must have been well aimed. There were two able pastors for each church: and three as supernumeraries, you see, were added to these, to render service in case of the sickness, or absence of some of the sacred college—making in all twenty-nine pastors. These preached in rotation in the thirteen churches.

“ The constitution of the churches of Amsterdam required that no person should be eligible to the office of pastor in any of them, under forty years of age : that the candidates should have been settled, previous to the time of their election, in some charge : that they must exhibit proofs of having been efficient pastors, and diligent students : that they must have attained to great acquirements in literature, and theology : and must have mature and sound constitutions. Those churches promised to themselves the attainment of three important objects by these regulations. They hoped to enjoy the labours of pastors who were not mere lads—who can sustain the labours of a city, perhaps, for a year or two—but, of men thoroughly acquainted with their duties, and of matured habits, and of vigorous constitutions : not of mere youth, who have themselves to learn, when they are called to teach old and intelligent Christians : but men full of knowledge, and of Christian experience, accustomed to the severest pastoral services ; and of accomplished minds, and polite habits, fit to appear with honour, and dignity in any literary and social circle. Not lads who are ambitious, and jealous of each other, and factious : but men whose passions are cool, and under the control of solid judgments ; who are less anxious about temporary honours ; and who bring, at once, vigorous bodies, and full grown minds, loaded with the mature fruits of theology, into an active and efficient operation on the minds of their respective audiences.

“ Well, it so happened that God took away one from this sacred college of pastors, in Amsterdam. The choice of the Consistory and the people, fell on a distinguished scholar and theologian, who had long been the ornament of a village about 20 miles from Amsterdam. His name was” ..... (and the old man laid his finger on his brow)—“ Now, what shall I call him ? Why ? my father, and also my venerable friend Dr. K. of New-York, told me all about him. Well—

no odds, and it is, perhaps, as well that I have lost his name. The pastor elect arrived, and entered on the duties of his office. And a powerful preacher he was. He imitated the immortal Saurin of the Hague. He thundered; he terrified; he consoled; or he melted all hearts.

“But the Consistory of the old Church—the Church of—my memory is so frail, I cannot name it neither. Well, let that also pass. The Consistory were men old in the service of Christ; and full of knowledge, and full of zeal; men well qualified to watch over the good old cause. Well, these elders did observe that their new, and favourite Domine omitted a certain section of the Heidelberg. Catechism in the course of his annual lectures. They held their peace at the first omission. It might have been an oversight. There might be some private reasons. They were not disposed to be captious. This is the character of our Consistories, when they are attached to a pastor. They view things always in the most favourable light. It is next to impossible to move them against their Domines. Their love is like their principles—firm, and solid. They stood by their young pastor, and defended him against the busy whisperings of suspicion.

“Time brought about the same section again, in the revolutions of the Christian Sabbaths. Again it was passed over. The venerable Consistory could not keep silence. They resolved with one voice to demand an explanation. The omission was evidently designed. Something must be done. There is nothing like preventing the first inroad of error.

“And it was promptly done. They presented themselves with their uncovered gray locks, respectfully, before their much loved pastor. They demanded an audience as a body. They asked him why he had, contrary to the rules of the Reformed Church, omitted that section of doctrine *twice*. The dreadful secret was revealed. Their pastor had imbibed sen-

timents utterly at war with the doctrines of the Reformed Church; and in his candour he felt constrained to own it, to the weeping elders. He had imbibed the doctrines of the Remonstrants. And his conscience would not permit him to touch that section. He was a man of honour. He knew that he had departed from the laws of the Constitution. He could not remain in that Church to whose doctrinal standards he knew he did not adhere. He wished to excite no factions. He would make no divisions among brethren. He retired in peace from the Church and her communion, to that sect whose creed he approved.

“ ‘I may be unfortunate, I may be in error,’ said he: ‘but I shall never act dishonourably. Your confession and creed are before the public. Your Churches, their property, and funds were established on that basis. I should deem myself *a knave* did I try to gain over to the support of my opinions, that property, and those funds which the honest donors left in sacred trust to support the system which they believed; and which they did intend to be supported *alone by their bequests*. I may be in error—but I shall never act dishonourably: fare ye well.’ ”

“ The weeping elders sobbed aloud; and they bathed his hand in tears as they kissed it, and bade him farewell. And many, and fervent were the prayers which they daily offered to the MOST HIGH, that he would illumine, and change, and bring back to the truth, one so much beloved—so honourable—and so candid!

“ Now, my son, I think it very evident, in the first place, that by reason of the regular annual exposition of the holy doctrines of the Gospel, in the order of the sections of the Catechism, the Consistories and the people, at large, are more fully instructed; and are, thence, rendered capable of detecting aberrations, and delinquencies. And, in the second place,” continued Hans, as he counted with his two forefingers—“ by

being constrained to take up each doctrine of the Gospel in due order, as exhibited in our Heidelberg, these young Arminians"—and Hans swelled his voice on this last word, and shook his gray head, as he saw a smile light up Henry Solyn's face—"these young Arminians, I say, are by their own conscience detected, and are brought, in honour and common honesty, to resign. While Hans Van Benschooten has the honour of a seat in a Consistory, and in the courts of the good old Reformed Church, he will uphold with both hands, this custom of our forefathers,—so full of wisdom and prudence. And woe be to the man who shall move the discontinuance of the instructive, and admirable system,—that is to say,—as long as he cannot put us in possession of a better."

"Look, my son, over the desolate Churches of Holland and Belgium. They have become, I fear, the nest of impure doctrines. Remonstrantism—verily, I do hate that long word, as much as I dislike the thing itself—Well, *that* aberration has taken the lead; and it has been paving the way, I fear, for Socinianism. This state of things arose from their neglecting the exposition of the constitutional doctrines of the Reformed Church, in the order, and definite words of the catechism. And our Church, in this land, has escaped distractions and divisions, thus far, by the honest and self-defensive enforcement of the good old rules. And see ye not, Henry Solyns, that our individual Churches are pure of the leaven of the Erastianism of old Holland, in proportion as the Consistories, and our Domines have adhered with enlightened zeal, and true charity, to this rule. And on the contrary," continued Hans, and he uttered it with a sigh, "the introduction of novel doctrines in the good old Reformed Churches of Vaderlandt, has been preceded by a sad lukewarmness of the Consistories, and a neglect of the exposition of the Heidelberg."

Here the conversation was interrupted by the approach of strangers.

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## CHAPTER II.

“ A wit’s a feather, and a chief’s a rod :  
An honest man’s the noblest work of God.”

Two strangers entered in company with the Domine, who greeted Hans in his usual affectionate manner.—Hans returned the salutation—but there was an abstraction of mind on the part of Hans. His hand indeed clung to that of the Domine, but his eyes were on the strangers—and he was scrutinizing their faces, with a keenness, and a shyness, very unusual for one of Hans’s hospitality, and kindness. There was also on the part of the Domine, an uncommon degree of solemnity ; and no small appearance of sorrow, which was distressing him ; and which he was evidently making an effort to conceal. For he passed more quickly than usual, from his kind inquiries after Hans’s health, and that of his family ; to salute the children, who came up with smiling faces, and sparkling eyes to salute one whom they were always pleased to see entering their dwelling. In a few moments he had seated himself in a corner, with young Auletta hanging on his arm. And a sweet blooming yellow haired little girl, with laughing blue eyes—a grand-daughter of Hans, was snugly seated on his knees, and was playing with the large twist buttons on his coat ; while the little romping Dieterich, her young brother, had already mounted the Domine’s cane, and was riding round the room as merrily, as if there was neither sin, nor sorrow in the wide world !

For the mother, Maria Van Benschooten, she had no

sooner cast a searching look on the strangers, than she clasped her hands, and uttered, in a piteous cry, "It is Richard Van Winkle!"

"I had just concluded so too," said Hans; "and it is even so, Maria. But I could scarcely believe mine eyes, that Richard Van Winkle would ever have darkened the door of Hans Van Benschooten," he added, as he dashed a tear from his eye, and led his wife to a seat—"comest thou, Richard, to my house in pursuit of fresh victims? I have not another son, surely, to be led into the broad way by thy false friendship, and thy murderous persuasions. My Jacob, *the beginning of my strength*, was the pride of his father's soul; and the flower of the youth of this valley. But what boots it to name his name"—continued he, as he turned to his sobbing spouse—"or to pine over joys which have passed never to be recalled?"

Jacob Van Benschooten was the eldest son of the family; but he was thought of only as one dead—or worse than dead. To lay a virtuous and pious son, the pride of our family, in the grave, creates not a pang of anguish and distress equal to that caused by the shocking disgrace, and moral death of a brutish intemperate son! Jacob was no more named in the family before strangers—and he was named in the dear and hallowed circle of wife and children, only with a burst of anguish. And morning and evening, in family worship, he was named with a most fervent aspiration to Heaven, and the yearning of a father's bowels—"O God, have mercy on our poor lost son!"

Being of an easy temper and amiable disposition, Jacob had been too easily allured into the ways of sin. Richard Van Winkle had enticed him to a fair; thence to the tavern; thence to the race ground; and finally, to that hell in which the ruin of our youth is consummated—the theatre—then to the table of the gambler—and the company of the wanton!

Jacob soon became a stranger, and an alien to his father's house. He honoured not his father, nor his mother. His depraved and hardened heart suffered him to smile at a mother's tears. And what is more, the blooming wife of his youth had become a stranger to him—and an outcast from his presence; and his sweet babes were no longer named by a father's lips. Intemperance, and the infernal spirit of the gambler had robbed an amiable mind of the traits of humanity.

“Thou seest before thee, Richard, the fruit of the works of thy hand”—said Hans, as he waved his hand to little Mary, and Dieterich—“these are the *orphans* of Jacob Van Benschooten—and wo is me that I should have to say that to the son of thy father, my old friend.”

His voice was choked; and the big tears fell like rain-drops into his bosom. He ceased speaking; but he withdrew not his steadfast eyes from the face of Richard, who turned from him, and wept bitterly. The good old man added, after a short pause; “But I bethink me, Hans Van Benschooten harbours not resentment against human being. *Be ye angry and sin not.* I have been very angry with thee, Richard; but my heavenly Father has given us a commandment—and the *sun shall not go down on my wrath*; no, not even on the seducer, and destroyer of my son! May the God of mercy forgive thee, Richard Van Winkle, for all the evil thou hast brought on us, even as I do, from this heart, forgive thee.”

His beloved spouse, at this moment, rose hastily from her seat, and laying her arm around the neck of her husband, kissed his cheek, while her tears fell mingled with his into his bosom. The children also, clung to their parents' knees, and wept—they scarcely knew why. And a beautiful young woman added herself to the group, from an adjoining chamber; and kneeling down before Hans, grasped his hand, and

bathed it with his tears. It was the wife of his poor prodigal son Jacob.

Annatje Brinckerhoff had been one of the prettiest, and most accomplished maids of the valley. No expense had been spared on her education; and her lovely mind had, at an early period, received the holy impressions of the religion of Jesus, which fails not to throw an indescribable charm, and glow of beauty over the female mind and countenance. She was an only child—and the heiress of a handsome estate, in one of the most fertile parts of the valley. And many were the blessings pronounced on her, on the day when, in the charms of early youth, she gave her hand to her first, and only love, Jacob Van Benschooten. And all the neighbours declared, that there was not a more handsome couple—nor a more happy, in all the valley where they lived. But O terrible infatuation! Most infamous and degrading vice of intemperance! Bane of families, and curse of our country! To this hellish Moloch, the unhappy Jacob had sacrificed all his earthly comforts, and happiness, and character, and his beautiful and accomplished wife, and his lovely children!

In the midst of this profound grief in which the Domine shared deeply; Richard Van Winkle threw himself at the feet of the wife of the unhappy man whom he had led so far astray; and with difficulty he articulated, with gushing tears, “Forgive me, loveliest of women, the evil I have wrought against thee.”

She turned on him her beautiful and mild face—which grief had blanched, and her eyes full of tears; but which sent forth no reproaches, nor wrath. Sorrow was uppermost in her Christian bosom. “Speak no more to me of that,” said she, rising up, and assuming a dignity in her manner—and drawing back gently from him; “but tell me, hast thou brought any tidings of the father of my children—of him

whom I once called my own sweet husband?—speak, Richard Van Winkle.”

Richard suddenly rose, and gave a signal to the Domine to speak : and throwing himself into a seat, he gave way to a burst of unsubsdued grief.

The Domine, with an air of parental affection, led Annatje to a seat ; and placing himself by her side, he began to prepare her mind for what he was about to disclose.

“ My lovely Annatje, thy husband is yet alive.”

“ And is he yet alive ? My heavenly Father !”—she added with a plaintive and solemn tone, yet full of awe and veneration—“ I knew that thy goodness had not utterly forsaken me, and these little children ! But go on, my ever kind hearted Domine.”

“ He is, indeed, yet alive ! And I take to myself no merit in saying, that from the day that he left thy house, and thy sweet babes, I was resolved never to lose sight of him, and I cannot say that I ever did. When I could not reach him in his wild wanderings, I continued to reach him by my friends, and by written messages. And I bear testimony to the influence of the blessed gospel of Jesus Christ, on one of the wildest and most thoughtless of men. Poor Jacob ! How my bowels yearned over him. I knew the state of his mind. There is a conscience there which responded to the living truths of Jesus Christ. And a principle is there, which no profligacy of vicious company—no deadly intoxicating draughts can extinguish.”

And as he uttered this, he cast a glance of indignation, tempered by sorrow, on the unhappy Richard. “ No, Annatje, for God has placed a conscience in thy Jacob’s bosom, which rendered him miserable from the very hour in which he left thee. And I do fondly hope that a better principle—it may be the seed of divine grace ; which, though

for a season, buried under the weight of iniquity, will yet shoot out ; and it may yet send forth the blessed fruits of penitence, and bring treasures of joy to this family. But why need I make a long narrative ? This unhappy man who led him first astray, has been the first to aid me in bringing him back within the reach of his home. Richard's conscience has long borne testimony against him ; and the Spirit of God has not ceased to strive with him. Broken hearted and penitent—it is long since he has cast himself down at the foot of the cross of our Redeemer. He has, I trust, found pardon ; and the fruits of this change are not of yesterday. I can testify that they have been that of an entire year's reformation of all his former vices. Receive him, Hans Van Benschooten—receive him. And as his God, and thy God has forgiven him, so forgive thou him.”

“ He has done it—he has done it already,” said Richard with great emotion, as he stood up before him. “ Come hither to me, Richard Van Winkle,” said Hans, “ I learned not before this moment, that thou hast been brought in from thy wanderings and error, by the painstaking ministry of our faithful, and beloved Domine. Now listen to me. Thus seal I the proof of my forgiveness of thee, who hast been the destroyer of my poor Jacob.”—And he kissed Richard's cheek, who had thrown his arms around the good old man. “ And if thou hast, in any measure, contributed under God's grace, to bring back that poor wanderer to the fold of God, and the bosom of his family ; then thou hast recompensed us for the days, and nights of sorrow, which, in their darkness, have passed over us. But, my good Domine, let us hasten to seek out the abode of the returning prodigal.”

The family carriage was soon in a state of readiness to receive them. It was a huge unwieldy chariot, the materials of which, or the whole of which—like the bricks, and beams,

and rafters of the first houses of New-York and Albany—had been imported from Holland! It had certainly belonged to Hans's grandfather. It had been splendid—it still was strong. On the pannel of each door, it had the national arms of his country blazoned; and some additions had been ventured by his worthy father, who had looked with some curiosity into heraldry. He had added two columns, surmounted by pyramids, each of which sustained a blazing star. And over the yellow ground which exhibited the shield, and device of the house of Orange and Nassau, there was the figure of hope with its casque, its vizor barred, and crowned.

“That device,” said the Domine, as he placed himself in the carriage, by the side of the ladies, “I love to see it. And that motto of your father, *NISI DOMINUS FRUSTRA, Unless the Lord prosper, every attempt is vain*—Verily, I love to recite it.” “Ay!” said Hans smiling, “it was always on the lips of my father, who set his seal to that truth: and he added, moreover, to that testimony the rich Christian experience of eighty and eight years, when he left us, ripe for glory.”

“Nor had he less frequently on his lips the other motto—for your father, my worthy friend, was not content with *one motto*”—continued the Domine, repeating the motto which is blazoned on the national arms of Holland, “*EEN DRAGT MAAKT MAGT; Unity makes strength.*” “Yes,” replied Hans, but he shook his head in silence; for the remembrance rose on his mind, that he had often repeated with earnestness, that motto, to his son Jacob, when he found that he was not *making might by drawing harmoniously* with his father, and his own beloved family.

A few hours' ride brought them within sight of the cottage, which the unhappy Jacob had reached with difficulty, in his last weary pilgrimage towards his once happy home. Here

he was brought low by the complicated diseases, which always cut short the miserable life of the drunkard.

The Domine had seen him frequently; and much had he laboured for the conversion of this unhappy man. Many an instructive admonition had he affectionately addressed to him; many a prayer had he offered with streaming tears, at his bedside, when Hans knew nothing of it.

On the way, the Domine had attempted again and again, to prepare the family for the afflicting sight which they were soon to behold. But his heart failed him. He could not go on—even while he trembled at the probable consequences.

They alighted at the end of the lane—for he who had planned it, had in the humility of his anticipation, never contemplated that a carriage should drive up to his cabin—it was a narrow lane—a mere foot path. The cottage was small, but neat; and it had an air of taste, and cleanliness: being whitewashed, it shone bright in the sun. The *stoup* was covered with a wild luxuriance of untrained jessamine, and honeysuckle. And on each side of it, and under the small casements, a bush of double moss roses, mixed with white roses, sent forth a cloud of perfume.

They approached with a light and hesitating step. All was silent. As they reached the end of the cottage, they heard through the small half shut casement, a feeble and plaintive voice slowly uttering these lines, which Michael Bruce composed in his last illness:

“ Now spring returns, but not to me returns  
The vernal joy my better years have known;  
Dim in my breast, life's dying taper burns,  
And all the joys of life, with health, are flown.”

“ Merciful Father! It is the voice of my husband,” whispered the afflicted Annatje, in a stifled moan, as she leaned on the arm of the Domine; and lingered near the casement

whence the plaintive voice had issued. She sat down, scarcely knowing what she did—on the grassy seat which had been rudely constructed of turf—and which was strewed with some roses, and wild flowers, withering in the sun; and for a moment gave herself up to despair. The kind hearted Domine sat down beside her, and with parental tenderness ministered unto her the consolations of the Gospel; and anxiously laboured to fortify her mind for the approaching meeting.

Meantime the father, and mother walked forward and presented themselves near the couch of their son. The nurse was, at that instant, administering some medicine to the unhappy man. “It is all over with me, Nanette,” said he in a soft whisper, as he was laid gently down, while he clasped his hands across his breast—and raised his eyes to Heaven. “Yet all is well,” continued he, “Oh! my heavenly Father, *thou hast chastised me, and I am chastised; like a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke; turn thou me, and I shall be turned, for thou art the Lord my God. I am ashamed, yea confounded, because I do bear the reproach of my youth.* In the midst of my days am I cut off—my sun goes down at noon; but less it is than what my iniquities deserve. Blessed Jesus—“*mighty to save*”—oh! sweet hope—“*mighty to save*”—My Saviour God—I place my poor soul, and all my concerns into thine hands—into thine hands I commend my drooping, penitent, and most afflicted soul, O my God!”

The parents were, the while, contemplating with many tears, what seemed to them the miserable shadow of their long-lost son—once so beautiful, and so manly. There was a hectic flush on the upper part of his lank cheeks; and his large blue eye had a glassy brightness. He uttered a faint kind of shriek, as his eye fell on his parents; and he held out to them his bleached, and long skinny hand. The fountain of his tears was dried up. He could not weep. His

voice was stifled ; and it died away in accents, partly like those of one crying, and partly like those of one laughing, with sudden emotions of joy !

The mother flew forward and clasped him in her bosom—and kissed his cheeks and his brow ; while she could only articulate, “ My own dear Jacob.”

“ And my beloved father too’—whispered the son—“ and are you come to tell your poor prodigal son, that you are reconciled to him ?”

He paused—his father wept aloud.

“ Here, my father, seal my forgiveness, for I am forgiven of my God. Our Domine—eternal blessings on his head ; he has led me back. He has led my poor wandering soul back into the fold of Christ, by the precious gospel of God. Yes, at the foot of the throne of mercy I got forgiveness. In my Saviour I have hope, and sweet comfort. But I may not live. The Sovereign of my existence, and destiny forbids it. He has *forgiven the iniquity of my sin* ; but he leaves this body to be slain by my filthy intemperance. The house, (as of olden times,) when wholly infected by leprosy, was no longer to be tenanted by man—no, it was pulled down, and strewed in the dust.—I die—this body must be strewed in the dust.”

He made a long pause for breath ; and the hectic flush died away into a clayey paleness. Hans stood by the bed of his son, and wept. His whole frame shook, as the poor penitent thus moaned out his complaints : “ I am cut off—Oh ! accursed lust of ardent spirits ! Infamous company of fools and gamblers ! See ye this victim ? Cut off from life to which I was so strongly attached ; cut off from my wronged and injured Annatje, and my sweet babes ! But,—O unspeakable riches of free grace ! Redeemed, and in yonder pure world—to which I feel—I see my Saviour beckoning me—*I will sing of mercy and of judgment, O my Redeemer !*”

Here his young spouse presented herself to his eyes. The unexpected sight overwhelmed him. He could only murmur out a few broken words—"My love—and thou too art come at last—the load is now loosed from off my burdened, and crushed heart—the night of misery has gone away—my sweet Annatje! and thou too hast forgiven me. Oh! Heavenly Father, receive my passing soul."

He uttered these words, with great difficulty; and with a convulsive struggle, he expired in her arms, as she kissed his pale cheek; and bedewed it with her gushing tears.

They all kneeled down around the death-bed of the penitent, in deep silence, and in the fulness of the grief of their hearts. After a long pause, the Domine, in a tone of voice, broken with grief, with frequent sobs, offered a solemn prayer for the new made widow, the little orphans, the father, and the mother. And he added a solemn ascription of praise to God, who, he humbly indulged a hope, had glorified his grace in the salvation of this broken-hearted, this humble penitent, and believer in Jesus Christ.

On the fourth day the remains of Jacob Van Benschooten were carried to the narrow house appointed for all living. It was the largest funeral which had ever been seen in the valley. Young and old pressed forward to testify their respect; and to mingle their sorrows with those of the much-loved family.

The Domine offered up a prayer as he stood at the head of the coffin; and then delivered an impressive address to the mourning assembly; in which he made some touching allusions to the deceased, his fall, and his recovery. And he closed with these words, as he turned himself affectionately to the young men, the companions of the deceased. "*Enter not into the path of the wicked; and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it; pass not by it; turn from it; and pass away!*" "*Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide*

*is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat. Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."*

Richard Van Winkle sat at the foot of the coffin, bathed in tears. He had entreated that he, and his companion might be allowed to lay the head of their deceased friend in the grave. It was granted to them. And their streaming tears, and trembling limbs, bore witness, that day, before the inhabitants of the valley, how deeply they lamented their past conduct ; and how truly penitent they were before God, and his Church.

Hans stood with his weeping spouse, by the grave of his son. His gray head was uncovered, as he bowed down his soul before his God. He raised not his eyes from the grave ; while the busy hands of his neighbours were filling it up. And when they had done their last office of kindness, in smoothing down both sides of the grave, all stood for a moment uncovered, and turned their eyes on the family. Hans raised his eyes, and pronounced in a deep tone of voice, "*The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away ; blessed be the name of the Lord.*" He wiped his tears away ; then turning to the young men who had closed his son's grave, he added,—“ God reward you for your last act of love to the remains of my poor Jacob : Farewell.”

He bowed to the surrounding multitude ; the Domine pronounced the blessing ; then turning away, he led the slow moving procession to the gates of the church-yard.

## CHAPTER III.

“ A wit’s a feather, and a chief’s a rod :  
An honest man’s the noblest work of God.”

“ HERE, then, find we a cool refreshing shade at length,” said Annatje Van Benschooten, as she sat down on the left hand of her father-in-law, within the group of the family circle. “ And, my father,” continued the young made widow, “ this retreat forces on my mind the contrast between this shady vale of tears, and the bright world above. From the dusky shades of the retired spot where we now sit, we look forth on that rich, verdant, and beautiful prospect which is stretched out far before us, to the base of the blue range of mountains which are lost in the azure sky.”

And it was an ingenious observation. There was on the spot where the family group sat, as much of the calm, and sweet, and the delightful of human life, both as it respects place, and also society, as is to be usually met with in this world.

On the sloping ground below, she beheld her two little fatherless children chasing with eagerness, the fluttering butterfly, from flower to flower, along the garden walks. “ And, ah !” said she to her soul, “ even here in the midst of smiles, there is room for a tear. How soon our little infants forget the words, and the looks, and the face, and even the memory of their father ! The grave of my poor husband, the father of these playful children, is not yet green ; and they have almost forgotten him. Yet, it is not owing entirely to the elasticity of spirits, the light-heartedness of the infantine mind. The father who has set before his children, the light of a long day of piety and virtue, lives in the memory of his children from generation to generation. My departed husband !”

thought she, "thy spirit is with the blessed in Heaven. But the gleam of thy setting sun, which had struggled under a dark cloud for years, was too short lived to shed an enduring light over the minds of thy little ones. Though the love of God, for Christ's sake, forgave thee the iniquity of thy sin; yet he causes the memory of an ill spent life to endure, that it may convey solemn reproofs, and instructions. The total oblivion which awaits the memory of ungodly parents, even with their own children, is a part of the righteous visitations of the Most High."

Hans Van Benschooten awakened her from her reverie. "Canst thou name a circle of friends more to thy taste, my Annatje, than this is? And canst thou name in all thy native valley, a sweeter spot than this is?" And he waved his hand around on the family group which sat with her on the grassy sofa. Here sat her mother-in-law, Maria Van Benschooten; and her sons and daughters, (arranged according to their seniority,) in the bloom of cheerful youth. And at the upper extremity of the circle, the Domine sat. For his conversation was so much esteemed, that his presence was always indispensable in a meeting of this kind. "And look now, my Annatje," continued, Hans with a paternal affection, "from these bushy vines, and the jessamine which shade us, look over the spot where these little urchins are straining every nerve to capture that splendid butterfly—a thing of nought after all—like the most of the silly objects of youth's warmest wishes and pursuits—look over these beautiful cornfields, and the rich waving fields of wheat, into the distant prospect that is bounded by the range of blue mountains. How charming that water prospect; and the scenery of these little green islands, with their waving woods, which seem to dip their long boughs into the lake. And in the distant back ground of the prospect, seest thou that rolling smoke, and the long rows of human dwellings peering from

behind the skirting woods ; and these lofty spires, and turreted castles, and that fair ship spreading her white canvass to the sun, and the wind. Sees thou those ships, with crowded sail, speeding on their course into the spacious harbour ; and, not one—I see not even one of them returning !”

The good old man here sighed. He raised his eyes to Heaven, and they fell with an affectionate sympathising look on his wife, and Annatje. For he thought that moment, on that distant city, and that shore, whither no storms can come, and which no plague visits ; whither one so dear to his heart had so lately gone. And anticipating their thoughts, he whispered these words—*now he is dead ; can I bring him back again ! I shall go to him ; but he shall not return to me ?*

This group had met for the purpose of consoling Annatje. The sorrow and grief of refined minds is expressed in a touching and delicate manner, in silence, and the sympathy of tears. The hypocrisy of grief is impertinent, officious, and loud in the silent and holy circle of mourning hearts. That is a most exquisite touch of a truly refined grief, that is delineated by a master’s hand on the holy page. *“Job’s friends came to mourn with him and to comfort him. And when they lifted up their eyes afar off, and knew him not ; they lifted up their voice and wept. So they sat down with him upon the ground seven days, and seven nights ; and none spake a word unto him ; for they saw that his grief was great.”*

During a long silence, every eye was turned to the far distant prospect before them. The sweet bower in which they sat, attracted not their attention ; nor the clusters of the half formed grape under its broad green leaf : nor the flowers with their cups sparkling with dew drops ; nor the beautiful late roses which still lingered on their stems ; nor the dark verdure of the fields, where the cattle lowed, and the sheep bleated ; nor the wheat waving in all its yellow luxuriance. The charms of the distant scenery, alone engaged every one’s

attention ; and this is the manner of human nature. Place a man in the most charming situation in life ; place within his reach every comfort ; let him be in his earthly paradise, within the circle of “ wife, children, and friends ;” he is never satisfied with the present : he feels the weight of an unsupportable *ennui* : he raises his eye above every present object, even the sweetest and fairest : and he looks far forward with irrepressible longings into futurity. This is a trait in the character of our immortality. It is inseparable from the actings of an immortal being, who is an exile on the earth ; and whose home is in Heaven !

Absorbed in the contemplation of the distant prospects, Annatje forgot for a moment that she was a widow ; and Hans and his spouse, that they had lost their first born. Oh ! what a display of Divine wisdom in the constitution of the human mind ! What an impress of divine love on the bright prospects of an unfading immortality, to which the mind of man is ever urging forward ! Without the blissful realities of the far distant prospects, which the holy religion of Christ Jesus sets before us in the world of glory above, we should be the wretched victims of *ennui*, even in the midst of the brightest prospects, and the most joyous scenes of human life !

This interesting group was interrupted by the approach of a little stranger, who presented himself at the door of the arbour, and bowed, with cap in hand, to the company. His cheeks were in a flush ; and his blue eyes, which sparkled from beneath a profusion of yellow curls, indicated agitation and sorrow.

“ Is the gude Domine here, an’ it please you ?” said he, searching with modest eye, the whole of the individuals within the group.

“ Here he is, my little man,” said Hans. “ Approach us, my sweet Scotch boy.” He walked up into the midst, and bowing very low to the pastor, he said, as the large tear drops, in spite

of every effort to repress them, chased each other over his cheeks. “ Sir—Domine, I mean—I wad hae ye to ken that my faither is unco sick ; and grandfaither has sent me to you, to speir gin ye wadna hae pity on a deein man.” He could proceed no farther, but sobbed aloud.

The kind-hearted Domine sprung forward, and took the little boy into his arms, and said, “ My little man, who is your father? I thought I knew every individual of my flock.” “ I doot nae, sir ; but we hae na been a’ oor days in thir pairts. My gude grandfaither is Colonel Bradwardine, and my father is General Bradwardine ; and they ca’ me wee Wully. We hae na belanged to yer Kirk ; and that’s been sair again my grandfaither’s wull. He’s ower auld, and ower frail to come aught lang miles and a bittock, ilka Sabbath to the Kirk ; and he spends his haly days o’ rest, in readin God’s gude Beuk, and in teachin’ me the carraches, God bless him. And, Oich ! Sir—my faither—I am afraid to speak it oot—indeed it breaks my young heart to speak it—my faither”—and he took out his handkerchief and wiped his eyes—and looked round on each face in the circle—“ my faither is a Deist—I believe that’s the wurd—God help me—I dinna weel ken what it is ; but this meikle I do ken, that it’s something terribly bad. For my grandfaither wull sit him doon by the bed o’ my faither—and he’ll no be aible to speak for cryin’ ; and sae after tryin’ to talk to him, and then readin’ some select pairt o’ God’s gude Beuk, he can du nathin’ but cry ; and he ay maks me cry to see him sae grievd. Then he taks me intil his bed-chamber, and he tells me to kneel doon aside him, and on his knees he’ll pray a hale half hoor, at a stretch, for his puir lost prodigal son and infidel, his Jamee—my faither. And, then, he maks me repeat the prayer for my puir faither ; and we mingle oor tears thegither for ane sae dear to oor hearts. And this is no a’, sir. For sax ooks past, I hae been waukened oot o’ my sleep, ilka nicht,

by the groans o' my grandfaither, prayin' and mournin' over my puir deein parent. Often I press me up into his airms, and on his kees, and smoothin' back his lang white hair, and lookin' wistfully into his weepin' een, I beseech him to tell his little wee man what makes him greet sae. For *sure* I am, grand pa, I *am* sure, my faither ay used you unco weel a' the days o' his health. My puir child, he wad reply to me—it's eternity—it's eternity, I think o' ! If yer faither dee in his present estate, it were better for him if he had ne'er been born. Noo, Sir, I hae come these aught long miles, an it please ye, Domine, to request you no to delay, but to come awa' wi' us. The last words that my afflicted grandfaither uttered, just afore honest Tam the driver, and I set out were these : The gude Domine *is wise to win souls* ; tell him to mak nae delay, to come over, and help us. And, sir, let me just add, that to save time, I hae the waitin' man, and the family carriage in front o' yer hoose. There is room for you, and some o' yer freens ; especially a gude man, and an elder in the Kirk." And the little fellow cast an affectionate, and modest glance on Han's venerable face—as much as to say, what a welcome visitant would such a good old man be to my grandfaither !

The Domine rose up hastily, and assuring young Bradwardine that he would soon be ready to go with him, he whispered to Hans that he must go along with him. "The general," said he, "lives on Lamb Hill, in the next town. Had he been as much distinguished by his good sense, and piety as he is by his riches, and high political career, he would have been a happier man than he is, this day, on his dying bed. His character has been well known to me ; and I have learned that he is in the last stage of a galloping consumption. He has been a sturdy disciple of Paine—a kind of champion in the ring of deism. And, he has, alas ! corrupted the heads of many families ; and almost all the youth of the better sort

of families, who live on Lamb Hill. And the inveteracy of his principles is too evident in the total failure of the prayers, and the tears, and admonitions of his father, to reclaim him; and in their destructive effects on some of his own family, and some interesting youth of the vicinity. When a man stands conspicuous, even in a bad cause, and the unblushing avowal of the worst of religious principles; he is loth to yield up the high ground which he has occupied, and his influence and authority over the souls of bad men, or even to confess his own errors, were it even to save his family, or his own soul from ruin."

In less than two hours, the carriage had crossed the beautiful valley, and had passed the wooden bridge over the dark and sluggish stream; near the spot, where, having gathered all its strength from the many rivulets which descend from the neighbouring mountains, it pours its floods through the deep gap in the hill, cut almost perpendicularly on each side of the river. They ascended the long, steep, and winding road, and soon found themselves on the summit of Lamb Hill. A charming prospect presented itself on each side of them. On the one hand there was a wide and long valley, covered with heavy timber, with here and there a verdant meadow peeping from behind the tall oaks, and dark green copse. On the other side, the valley was somewhat more narrow; but richly cultivated, and well watered by a crooked and slow running stream. The beautiful farms lay stretched out before them, as on a map; with their grazing cattle, and their bleating flocks. "What a goodly land God has given unto us," said the Domine, in the overflowings of a refined heart; "what an independent and happy race of men our American farmers are! There is no other nation under Heaven, where the yeomanry have more materials of happiness within their daily reach than our own happy Republic.

“ O fortunatos nimium, sua si bona nôrint  
Agrícolas ! quibus ipsa, procul discordibus armis,  
Fundit humo facilem victum justissima tellus.”

“Happy land of liberty ! Happy America ! No tyrant treads thy soil, or blights the pure happiness of thy numerous millions ! There is no land like thee ! But the restless ambition, and discontented heart of man, make him in a great measure, blind to the beauties around him : and insensible to the unnumbered blessings which bountiful Heaven has shed down upon him so abundantly !”

In a short time they were seated in the chamber of the dying General. Young Bradwardine pressed forward into the bosom of his sick father, and kissed his pale cheek : and anxiously inquired how he had been since he had left him. “ And noo, I hae brocht him to ye, faither—I mean the gude Domine, and ye manna scold at him, faither ; yer ain wee Wully has brocht him, and he’s a gude man ; and he’ll pray for ye.” “ Pray for me, Wully—ha ! ha ! ha ! my little chap, ye can cant it nearly as weel as yer grandfather, whose Scottish lingo you imitate.”

The little boy cast an anxious searching look on his father’s face, to ascertain if he was serious. He then looked at his grandfather, and sobbed aloud. He felt in his young mind that acutest of earthly anguish which an affectionate child feels, when shame overcomes the struggles of filial affection ; and he can no longer defend, or palliate a father’s errors.

The Colonel had placed the Domine on his right hand, and Hans on his left ; and was with a cordial welcome, pressing the hand of each. His little William stood between his knees, and was venting his grief into his bosom. The Colonel was, for some time, incapable of expressing himself. With a considerable effort, at last, he remarked—“My auld days are

grievously embittered. The companion of my youth—my sweet wife, sleeps in the narrow dwelling. She was of the seed which the Lord hath blessed. She died in the holy triumph of faith. I thocht that I could na hae leaved beyond her day; but she assigned me a task in her last moments, which teuk away frae this puir heart, the desire of following, or rather of accompanying her to Heaven. Our dear son, said she, is far frae the gude ways o' God. A' my prayers hae, yet, been unheered by Heaven. Noo, quoth she, ye manna get reckless o' the warld, and a' its gear. Ye maun live for Jamee's sake, my dear. Let your days and nights be given to his instruction; and to prayer for his conversion frae the deedlie ways, and principles o' that wearisome, and vile crater Tammus Paine. And even if God were to protract your days of pain, for mony a towmont behind me, think it nae hardship. It will be a glorious prize gin ye be the means o' reclaimin' our ain sweet Jamee. Oh! Jamee, said she to him, in her last illness;” and the Colonel here cast his weeping eyes on his breathless and panting son. “Oh! my son, would to God I could dee for thee. Oh! my son Jamee—my son—my son! And maun I leave thee denyin' the God o' thy father, and thy mother; and denyin' *the only name under Heaven whereby we can be saved, the Lord Jesus Christ?* Oh! It tastes to me, as it were, of the bitterness o' the second death. Maun I dee in my ain son? O God! reclaim him frae the deedlie errors o' Deism. But, Israel, added she, I commit you to God; His holy will be done. 'The time o' my departure is come; fare thee weel, my beloved husband: and, noo, Lord Jesus, receive my departing soul, for thou hast redeemed me frae a' evil.”

“It was thus my angel Mary went to Heaven,”—said the Colonel, as he wiped away the tears from his cheeks. “But far mair is my life embittered to me, by the sicht afore these auld een,” continued he, after a long pause, while his eyes rested on the General. “Days and months hae passed awa,

and I still behold my only son addin' to the burden o' my sorrows ; and, to the insupportable load o' his ain soul's guilt. He has denied his God : he has denied God's Haly Beuk, and *the only name under Heaven !*"

As he uttered these words, he kept his eyes on the General. But, finding that no impression was made on the hardened soul of his son ; he turned him to Hans Van Benschooten, and whispered—" Though we hae met for the first time, my gude frien' ; I'm nae stranger to the late visitation o' God on yer family. But, Oh ! Van Benschooten ! Could my auld een but see, what your een war blessed to see, the sight o' the prodigal returnin' to his faither's bosom, and to his God ; how gladly wad I lay me doon aside him, and dee by his side ; and accompany his pure and sanctified spirit hame to the dwallin' o' the blessed ! Lord Jesus, if thou wult, thou canst save my puir hard-hearted Jamee !"

A long and deep silence succeeded ; and none of them, not even the Domine, could for some time, bring himself to the resolution of addressing the sick man. The most faithful of pastors has often felt himself in this predicament by the sick bed of some hardened and heartless sinner. He cannot, for some time, venture to break silence. But his spirit is wrestling with Heaven for the most distressing object before his eyes.

During the silence the footsteps of one was heard approaching. It was one of the family. But it was one whom the rest (who, with the exception of another, were devoted to their grandfather and his views,) were not willing to see. It was a son of the General. In this unhappy young man the principles of the father were realized in their true nature ; and carried out into all their destructive tendency. Taught to despise the holy Sabbath, and to scoff at religion, he gave the idleness of his *sundays* (for he allowed himself no *sabbaths*.)

he gave his sundays to the tavern. The outcasts of society, the blustering and ignorant disciples of Paine, and of the philosopher of Ferney, met him there ;—and three years of irreclaimable drunkenness, and gambling had stripped him of nearly all the portion which his father had given him. But in one respect there was less misery in his case, than in that of some others ; and there was, for the same reason, less sympathy awakened for him. This withered branch had no green leaf, nor fruit on it. No lovely woman had smiled on him, or called him husband ! No child lisped his name, or called him father ! He was solitary in his misery !

He approached the bed of his dying father, with a flushed face, and the silly laugh of the drunkard : and with a due accompaniment of profane oaths, and blasphemy, he began to hiccup out in detail, the adventures of “ last *sunday*,” and his unaccountable “ *bad luck*.” In a constant “ *ill run*,” he had lost, he said, all his “ *ready rhino*,” and he had staked the oxen before the plough. “ And, (added he, with a most knowing look, and a drunken grin in his father’s face) it is a debt of honour, you know, father. And your lessons have too deeply impressed on this susceptible heart the laws of honour for me to flinch. I’m a lad of spirit, my father, your worthy representative, eh ?” And he staggered, and fell down on the bed of his dying father, and hummed a merry catch from some late profane cavalier novel :—

“ When I was a young lad,

“ My fortune was bad———”

At this moment his profligate brother entered ; and seeing the situation of his hopeful brother, he turned him round, without paying his respects to the company, and called on Cato and Cæsar. Two stout young negroes appeared. “ Here, my lads, (said he, with great *nonchalance*) “ take up this lump of mortality, this well-soaked clay, and throw it on some fresh litter. Bear him off, ye neegers !”

An infidel, when he is in the full assurance of his *faith*—or rather, to speak intelligibly—when he is sunk into the lowest depth of an irreclaimable unbelief, has not aught of the sensibility, or the touching delicacy of a Christian. The mind, having battled it long with a sense of guilt—and struggled with the agonies of a fiend, to stifle conscience, and conquer the suspicions, and fears of futurity—feels itself in a condition like that of the suicide, whose bloody hand has done the deed only by halves. The body is wounded, and enfeebled: but the soul is in convulsions; and there is a fever..... a burning fever of the soul in the infidel, which destroys all its finer fibres of love, and kindness, and affection. His soul is seared! It is scathed by the blasting lightning of Heaven! The burning of the never-ending fire is begun, long before he closes his earthly career!

Hence, the General did not seem to feel, in any great degree either shame, or sorrow for the unmasked profligacy of his two sons, which was rendered more aggravated by its exhibition in the sanctity of the presence of parents, and brothers, and sisters, and the venerable officers of the house of God. He shoved his miserable son off his couch, and merely frowned on the other. Then taking up his father's discourse, as if nothing had occurred to break the line of discussion, he remarked to his father, "That he knew very well his doubts about the things, and persons talked of in that book which he called the Bible." And the dying man gave a significant sneering cast of his head, which seemed to say, the weak old man means well enough; but he acts only according to the light which he has obtained!

The Colonel calmly replied, "My certie, that is spoken in the style o' the infidel, wha reasons not; wha investigates not; wha seeks not Heaven's light in the search after truth, but wha fulfils what is written of him in the Haly Beuk, "*there shall come in the last days scoffers,*"—And, sirrah!

(said he sternly) do ye talk to me o' doots? Am I to hear o' doots after having silenced ye, and answered every objection whilk eer fell frae your lips, backed even by a' the silly clatter o' that gowk Tamnus Paine, and that mair silly cratter, Voltaire. I hae shown ye that this Haly Beuk o' God contains divine truths: and is backed by evidence whilk nae being can resist, or gainsay, and yet glory in the dignity, and reason o' a man. But, son, it's ower late for me to reason, or for you to hear. Human arguments are cauldriife things; they canna set ice on fire; and a' my efforts canna pound the adamant rock to powder. I hae just ae say to say, and I hae done. Ye'll feel, sir—Oh! my poor heart—it is breaking!—Ye'll feel soon, sir—and ye'll see, soon, whether yer pious mother, and yer auld broken hearted faither spake the truth. I preach terror noo. I stand nae longer on the defensive. I come to attack you with the weapons o' the Lord Jesus Christ. Jamee, my puir son, 'prepare to meet thy God—We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ to give an account of the deeds done in the body, whether they be good, or bad. The Lord himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. 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. And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth, and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them,

and they were judged, every man according to their works. And death, and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found in the book of life was cast in the lake of fire.' These, my son, puir Jamee, are the words of the Lord Jesus Chrtst, before whom thou must ere long appear. I shall tell thy conscience ae fact, and that fact ye ken weel—ay, and ilka deist kens it ower weel—and it is this :—No ane o' ye a' that eer wrote, or uttered by word o' mouth, the foulest blasphemy—no ane o' ye a' dares, in the inmost thochts, and feelins o' yer hearts, to despise, or contemn the LORD JESUS CHRIST. There's something in that name—that maist venerable name—that strikes an awe into ilka man's heart, be he Jew, or Pagan, or Deist! Nay, the very '*Devils believe, and tremble.*' And weel I wot ye canna stand oot, ony ane o' ye a', when een the very '*devils tremble.*' My son, Oh! puir Jamee, prepare to meet the LORD JESUS CHRIST, thy judge! Ha! noo I see that thou feelest! Noo thou tremblest like the leaf o' the quakin' ash."

The venerable old Colonel uttered these words with great vehemence. His spirit sunk down under the weight which had been laid on it. He fainted, and fell suddenly on the floor. His little grandsons hastened to assist the Domine in raising him up; and they carried him into his bed-chamber, and sitting down by his bed-side they sobbed and wept bitterly.

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#### CHAPTER IV.

“ A wit's a feather, and a chief's a rod :  
An honest man's the noblest work of God.”

HABITS confirmed by the indulgence of many years, are not usually changed in a day, or an hour. Like the mountain streams, they form deep channels, and wear even through

stones, and rocks. Nothing is more deceptive, and less to be trusted, than a death-bed repentance. With the exception of a few cases, it is merely the result of a terrible alarm ; it is merely the effect of a distracted guilty conscience. The unhappy being is sorry for what he is losing : he is alarmed, because he fears a righteous visitation : he trembles, because God is just : he sheds the tears of repentance ; but that is too often a repentance unto death. It is not the mental agony of the humble penitent, who grieves not so much for the consequences of the guilt of his sin ; not so much for the fear of punishment, as he does deeply grieve for his offences against his God. Could the experiment be made, the difference would stand revealed before our eyes. Bring that dying man back from the borders of eternity ; place ‘ *that penitent* ’ out of the danger of death ; and he would, with returning health and vigour, turn “ *as a dog to his own vomit, and as the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire !* ”

It was so with the unhappy General. The touching discourse which came from a father’s heart, and fell in thunder on his ears, made him tremble like the aspen leaf. A cold sweat broke over him ; his brow was flushed—his eyes flashed fire. The early impressions of youth returned on his dark mind, like the gleam of a sun-beam from between two gloomy clouds in a rainy day. That partial light seemed to reveal to him the idea of a holy Judge—a great white throne—the despised and contemned Jesus Christ—the terrible aspect of unyielding justice : the sentence ; the everlasting destiny of his horror-stricken soul—the bottomless pit ! The whole groundwork on which he had stood ; his doubts, and his wishes which had marvellously grown up into *arguments* ; the scorn and satire of fools, which had passed for strong *proofs* against the Holy Book ; the whole building of his infidel system which he had been industriously rearing for many years,—all seemed to give way in an instant ; and he

seemed to feel himself helpless, without a “hook to hang a doubt upon,”—without help—without a friend—without a Saviour—and without a God! He felt for a few moments the purest agony of a vigorous soul; it crushed his hopes; it stopt the blaspheming lips. The big sweat drops rolled down his brow, and blanched cheeks. His eyes were wide, and staring: and rolling in tears. He gave a loud scream, and fell back on his pillow while he uttered these words, “O Jesus Christ, have mercy on me! Christ Jesus, have mercy!”

The kind Domine wept over him, as he raised him up in his arms. His wife fainted:—The children wailed aloud. Little William fell on his knees by the bedside of his father, and joined in the brief, but fervent prayer, breathed softly forth for the beloved object before them, and whom they all judged to be dying.

In a few moments the sick man looked wildly around him. He looked for an instant at his father, then at his little William; then with a fierce glance at the Domine.

“My dear General,” said the Domine, “my soul rejoices to hear you confess Christ, and to call on his name.”

“Who called on Jesus Christ? Who,—Sir—who? If it escaped from my lips, it was the effect merely of a partial delirium. I called not on Jesus Christ,—and no one should; and, now I am myself again.”

The father uttered a deep groan; and little William wept bitterly, as they withdrew to the other side of the chamber.

“I am a deliberate rational free thinker,” said the General. “I have embraced the enlightened system of Voltaire, and honest David Hume. I never admired Paine much. He is too vulgar and low in his conceits; and too gross, in his words for a gentleman of taste. He is useful, however; and we keep the dirty scavenger afloat. He is a successful

scourer of the mean and dirty dregs of society. He whitewashes the rascally mob: he converts the class of our species who cannot reason, nor feel the force of an argument. The vulgar Billingsgate of his pages succeeds to perfection on these weak and brainless creatures, when gentlemanly writings, and arguments would be only thrown away upon them."

The Domine heard him patiently out, as he ran on at a great length in this style. When he had done, he took the General by the hand, and asked him if he had done. "I have, my friend, and I am willing to hear you in defence of your book."

"My dear General, I am not going to offer any defence, or any apology for the Book of God. I am not much given to engage in works of supererogation. Time is too precious for you and me, to do that which is done in "*the thousand and one*" volumes of our Christian writers. Let your associates answer Lardner's *Credibility*, and Jones on the Canon, Campbell's triumphant Refutation of Hume on Miracles, and Beattie on Truth, who has not left a *pin, or a brick remaining together* of Hume's *Castle in the Air*; and Chalmer's *Essay on Christianity*; and Bishop Watson's *Apology*; though, in truth, he could not have much praise in annihilating such a buffoon as Paine, even by your own confession: Leland's *Review of Deistical writers: the Evidence of the Christian Religion*, by Dr. Alexander; Horne's *Deism Refuted*;\* Bonnet's *Inquiry*, and many others which are ac-

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\* *Deism refuted*, or plain reasons for being a Christian. By Thomas Hartwell Horne, M. A. *seventh edition*. "A book like this," says the London Evangelical Magazine, "ought to be in the hands of every youth throughout the land. Let it be thoroughly read, and infidelity will appear to be as foolish, as it is base."

cessible to you. These exhibit in the fairest, and most candid style, the evidences, external and internal, of the Holy Book; and they have annihilated every objection of your epicurean sect. Pardon me, dear General, I cannot compliment your regiment of troops, by calling them *arguments*. Now, as you have no doubt studied all these books—

“ I never have examined one of them, Domine : and the most of these names which you have pronounced, I never heard named before. *They surely cannot be much worth ; for I never heard of them till you gave them existence to me.*” The Domine bit his lip, and cast a sly glance at Hans Van Benschooten.

“ Spoken like a free thinker, sure enough, said the Domine in a whisper.” “ Perhaps,” said Hans, shrugging up his shoulders, “ you may never have heard of the many millions of converts to christianity in early times ; every one of whom was a witness to the truth of the gospel. The deistical writers have tried to convict the apostles and their successors, the preachers, of certain nameless inconsistencies, and to show that they were impostors. But, my dear General, they took care not to handle that difficulty, namely : how these impostors could, even in Jerusalem, and the adjacent parts, convince some thirty, fifty, or a hundred thousand good men and women, that they saw miracles, and felt them on their own bodies, and on the bodies of their children and relatives ; and how, upon getting evidence which satisfied those who had been, till that time, Christ’s enemies, they promptly yielded themselves up to what they could no longer resist, and became sincere believers in the Holy Book ; and devout worshippers of him, whom in human form, they had rejected, and slain on the cross. Did this difficulty ever occur to you?” The General shook his head and remained silent.

“ General,” resumed the Domine, “ the time has passed

away in which we stood on the defensive. We carry the war into the enemy's camp, as I now propose to do, in all courtesy, with you; and indeed you compel me. Our fathers have erected a battery, that has been playing on you from the days of the antagonists of Hume. Not one of you has silenced, or can silence that battery. This tells us that you have retreated to your last hold.

“ And now, my dear General, you have not, it seems, examined a single author who has written in defence of the Holy Scriptures. Am I to question your candour? Must I be compelled to think that you take up a system by which your everlasting destinies are to be determined, without even the examination of the main side of the question? I put you on your defence. You could not have embraced that system from the force of argument, or the pleasing prospects of futurity. Can that person be moved by purely the force of argument who rejects a system *good and sufficient*, for one that is not good nor sufficient for the purpose for which it is produced? But our holy religion exhibits the true character of the Deity, his purposes, his plans of mercy, his love to the lost world. Yours, like the oracle of Apollo, is dumb on all these important points. Ours reveals a blessed Saviour, who conducts his followers over the fields of time; and up to the mount of immortal glory. Yours tell you of no Saviour; yours cannot tell whether God be even willing to save us, and to take us to his happy Heaven of glory; for none but God can tell us that. And according to the first principles of your system, there is no revelation from God; that is to say, God tells us nothing; that is, he leaves the subjects of his government in the dark; and in utter uncertainty about every thing. Our system is sufficient for the purpose for which it was given to man. Open your eyes; look over the Christian world; contrast the lovely lands where Christianity triumphs, with the dark lands of paganism, and those lands,

Turkey, Asia Minor, and Roman Catholic Europe, out of which Christianity has been almost utterly expelled. Then look up to the holy world above; we *know* that millions are there in glory. Your system is dumb in this; you know nothing of the deceased; you never can know if your system be correct. For God only can tell this, and you deny all revelations, and intimations from the Deity.

“ Besides, these men are not led by any force of fair argument, who reject the Book of God on such principles as go to undermine all the evidence and testimony of the history of antiquity; and to reject the authenticity of every book, ancient or modern, which we did not actually see penned, with our own eyes! On the principle of Hume and Gibbon, it was ridiculous, nay farcical on their part, to write the history of ancient, and modern nations. The arguments pursued by them against the Holy Bible, render utterly uncertain the existence of every ancient, and modern event. With them history is the romance of utter fiction, the mere idea of a sceptic’s brain!

“ These men are not led by the force of fair argument in adopting their system, who reject a system which produced such divine and humanizing effects on the rudest and most savage classes of the species; and prefer a system which cannot be shown to have produced any other effect than to disorganize society; to uproot morals, and to destroy the most charming hopes which reign in the bosom of man. Behold the revolution of France, and see the necessary effects of pure Deism!

“ These men are not led by argument who reject a system which presents a certain and glorious immortality, rewards and crowns, and never-ending felicity of the purest and most elevated intellectual kind; in order to adopt a system that cannot determine whether the soul be immortal, or mortal; nor whether there be a Heaven, or even an existence beyond

the grave. I recur to my former argument. God only can tell whether he will choose to make us a Heaven, or not; and you deny that God makes any revelations!

“ It is sheer folly, my dear General, to pretend that either reason, or argument has any thing to do with these determinations against Christianity, by the infidel world. The fact is, infidelity is the result to which the soul of a profligate man is driven by his bad life. Forgetting the early impressions of his God, and his father’s warnings, he leads an abandoned and debauched life. His conscience torments him. The pure word of God aids his conscience, and lashes it into fury by its reproofs and warnings. He hates these terrible reproofs: he shudders at these awful warnings. But he loves his criminal course too much to surrender the pleasures of sin. He hates the book of God; which, through his troubled conscience, creates him so much uneasiness. He wishes every infidel insinuation against it to be true. He wishes very heartily that the Bible were not true; and when we do hate an object, and wish certain things to be true, to the injury of that object, how very easily we are induced to believe the weakest objection, the silliest *insinuation* even, to be an *argument* of no common strength against it. Thus human nature exhibits its perversity. It forms its religious creed according to the dictates of its desires, its passions, its appetites; and not from the force of fair arguments, or of enlightened reason! I appeal to the heart of every infidel. It is a matter of recorded fact; I appeal to your heart, which I see does bear testimony to the truth!”

He uttered this with tenderness and earnestness, while the General turned his face to the wall, and groaned, as his whole frame shook. Then turning him round with a ferocious look, he ordered the Domine to begone from his presence. “ Your words are to my soul what the prick of the

sharp steel is on the bare nerve ; they torture and rend my soul asunder.”

“ My dear General ! be composed. In the name of God, do not sacrifice that noble soul of yours, to the prevailing affectation of singularity of opinion. You have been seduced, I fear, by the flippant writers of the age, the infidel romances, which send forth around the soul, the impurity of a pestilential atmosphere. From your youth, I fear, you have been in the habit of devouring these popular novels of the age, with the greediness of an unnatural and diseased appetite. You have felt yourself rise from the perusal, charmed, and even fascinated by these great magicians ; but you have risen from them, actually cheated out of all respect, and reverence for our holy religion ; nay, even disgusted with it, and nauseating every approach to solemnity, piety, and devotion. It is an easy transition to pass from this state of moral feeling, to that of a deep aversion to the Book of God, which exhibits this holy religion. And when we hate a thing, the silliest objection—I repeat it with emphasis—the silliest *objection* passes current for an *argument*, when presented to a mind averse from the pains of investigation ; and labouring under all the benumbing influence of prejudice against the Holy Book.”

Here the dying infidel became frantic and outrageous. He clenched his fists ; and breathing hard through his chattering teeth, he commanded the Domine to begone, and cease to heap fuel on his tormented soul.

“ My dear General, Oh ! hear the voice of love and tender mercy speaking to you. “ Turn thee, turn thee, why wilt thou die ! What is a man profited though he should gain the whole world, and lose his own soul ; or what will a man give in exchange for his soul ? Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord ; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow ; though they be

red like crimson, they shall be as wool.' In the name of your Maker I urge you—I entreat you, seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call upon the Lord while he is near. By the inestimable worth of your soul, I beseech you. By the love of him who died on the cross for such sinners as you and me, I beseech you, turn and live."

The miserable man here exhibited a strange mixture of emotions. He shed tears. He then laughed in the Domine's face: then frowned on him in the progress of his pathetic appeal; and, finally, gnashed on him with his teeth.

"Begone, you canting hypocrite," said he with a kind of unearthly scream, half choked with passion: and he made an attempt to spit in his face, and leap from the bed upon him.\*

Overwhelmed with grief, the aged and tottering father leaning on his little William, approached the good Domine; and taking him by the hand, and beckoning to Hans, he led them all out of the room.

"My poor Jamie has given himself up; try we here by fervent prayer for him, to move God on his behalf. Pray for him, Domine, for the wrestlin' and effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man avails meikle." He turned himself round; and without waiting a reply, the weeping and afflicted father threw himself down on his knees; and little William kneeled beside him, and clasped his little hands, as the tears fell on them like the fast falling rain drops.

The Domine placed himself by their side: the whole family threw themselves on their knees, bathed in tears; and every heart present sent up its fervent aspirations along with those of the devoted Pastor, on behalf of the dying infidel.

"O thou, who art in the midst of the throne, and in the

\* This is no fiction. This was actually the painful position in which the Pastor was placed, at the sick bed of a parishioner!

midst of the four living creatures, and the four and twenty elders! Great God our Saviour! thou didst in the day of thy humiliation on the cross, cast thine eye of mercy on a dying wretch by thy side; thou heardest his words, *remember me*; thou didst speak the word—and he was healed—*To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise*. Thy potent arm of mercy, O! Great God, our Saviour, did snatch the brand from the devouring fire. Now, Oh! God, let the weary and weeping eyes of thy poor afflicted servants here, see such another triumph of thy invincible grace. Behold! O Lord, this wretched man quivering, and staggering on the awful brink of eternity! A few moments more, and he is gone. Oh! God of mercy, pluck this brand from the devouring fire, for the sake of Jesus Christ.”

The Domine’s voice was stifled with grief. There was one general burst of anguish from the whole group. The afflicted father threw himself along on his face on the floor, while he moaned, “O my God! save the soul of my son,—my poor, dying, unbelieving, impenitent Jamie.”

This painful silence was interrupted by the following words from the chamber of the dying man: “Behold the reward promised me by my new religion! I cannot go forward: rolling billows of the second death, how ye scathe my sight, and annihilate the last joy of all my hopes. I cannot retreat: Oh! time! time! time! how I have murdered thee! Which way I fly is hell—myself am hell; and in the lowest deep, a lower deep still threatening to devour me, opens wide, to which the hell I suffer, seems a Heaven!” He uttered a loud scream; and raising himself up, he threw himself over the foot of his bed, like one who plunges headlong over a precipice. A blood vessel burst in his chest; and he was dead before the Domine could raise him up on his couch!\*

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\* See note D, Appendix.

Every individual crowded around the bed of the deceased. Little William fell on his father's breast, and sobbed as if his heart would burst. The new-made widow shrieked, and fell on the face of her husband. The venerable father stood for a few moments in the middle of the chamber, with his arms extended, in breathless suspense, not yet having brought his mind to believe, or realize the fact, that his son was gone! He then sunk on the floor, and moaned out, "Oh Jamie, my son! my son! my son Jamie! would to God that I had died for thee! my son! my son!"

Hans and the Domine mingled with the crowd, which met on the fourth day to convey the remains of the General to the narrow house appointed for all living. There was on the faces of the neighbourhood, that day, a less display of grief, than of feelings of awe, and terror. They gathered in clusters on the green sward in front of the house of the deceased; and they would look in long silence into each other's faces: or, gathering round Hans, and the Domine, they would request them to repeat to them again and again, the narrative of the last shocking moments of the unhappy infidel's life, and the horrors of the closing scene.

"How suddenly the mind passes sentence in its own secret recesses of the heart, on deceased friends, and neighbours," said Hans, after a long silence, as the procession moved slowly forward. "We have no sooner heard of a death, than we strangely venture to take on us to conjecture, and even pronounce on their destiny. In the case of this poor man, whose remains we follow to the grave, we may yet meet him at the Judge's right hand. There were the workings of penitence, and deepest sorrow. There was an appeal, and a cry to Jesus Christ; and there were bitter tears. It may have fared with him, as it is registered on the tomb-stone of farmer Van Wyck's son, surnamed from his Jehu like habits,—Jack Wildfire, who died by a fall from his horse:—

“ Between the saddle and the ground,  
I mercy asked, and mercy found.”

“ That may be,” said the Domine, with a solemn shake of his head. “ With him who saved the dying penitent on the cross, nothing, by way of grace, is impossible. I know that the Judge of all the earth has fixed his destiny; and the Judge of all the earth cannot do wrong. He may have saved him; but if he has, no man can know it; no man can believe it, from any evidence here given.”—He added, as he laid his hand with solemnity on the arm of Hans, “ when we arrive in Heaven, we shall be surprised to find many a one there, whom we never expected to find there; and we shall miss many a one there, whom we did confidently expect to meet there.”

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## CHAPTER V.

“ A wit’s a feather, and a chief’s a rod :  
An honest man’s the noblest work of God.”

SEVERAL months had now passed away since the death of the General. And his name, and unhappy decease were already, in a measure, forgotten even in Hans Van Benschooten’s family. It is thus that we willingly drop out of our mind, and our heart, the memory of the wicked; while the righteous are had in everlasting remembrance. There is nothing over the whole extent of the life of an infidel;—nothing the most brilliant in talents,—nothing the most successful and useful in politics, nothing of earthly attainment, or of happiness, which can dissipate the terrible gloom which rests over his last moments; nothing which can shed a gleam of hope over his closing night. His set sun sends back no gild-

ing streams of light after him over the face of the heavens—there is no bright twilight lingering after his descent—on which our eyes fondly rest. All is darkness, distress, and horror! Every thing in his life is swallowed up, and lost in the wretchedness of the closing scene. The very mention which is made of him from time to time, and the contrast of his death with that of devout men of God,—all conspire to combine his memory with painful emotions. Hence we seek to bury it soon in undisturbed oblivion!

Often had Hans compared, in his family circle, before his eager and attentive little flock, the death of the wretched General, with the death of Laidley, Westerlo, Romeyn, and our other fathers, and worthies, whose memories are embalmed in the glowing remembrance of the Dutch Church, and he never failed to bring tears in the eyes of all present.

“And you might have added to the list of the holy men, your father’s bosom friend—I mean Domine Condit,” said Maria Van Benschooten.

“Yes truly,” replied Hans to his spouse, “that was an honest man of God. And he died as a man of God, from whom the fear, and the bitterness of death had been taken away. It is remarkable that during his life, he was ever timorous, and agitated when he thought of death. But in his last illness, having been told by his physician that he had not a long time to live, he received the intimation with Christian courage. He looked with a serene countenance, at his physician, and whispered his kind thanks for his fidelity and attention; he looked at his weeping spouse, and it was difficult to determine whether affection, or sorrow bore sway for a brief space in his soul. At last he felt his hour approaching. He raised himself gently up, lifted up his eyes, and his quivering hands to heaven, and uttered in a solemn tone these last words, “*I have fought the good fight—I have finished my course—I have kept the faith—henceforth there*

*is laid up for me a crown of righteousness.*”.....He leaned back on the pillow ; drew the blanket over his pallid face, and expired—full of peace, and the consolations of the Holy Ghost. This,” continued Hans, “I recite as a matter of fact, communicated to me by those who witnessed it.”

“Of Domine Westerlo of pious memory,” said Annatje, “I have heard my grandfather Conrad Brinckerhoff, tell an instructive anecdote. When the Domine arrived from Holland, and entered, soon after that, on his pastoral duties, in Albany ; he exhibited a mind, and literary attainments of no ordinary kind. He was also a profound theologian. But it appeared to my grandfather, and the little circle of aged and praying people (of which he was an honoured member,) that the worthy Domine was of that school who place almost all their religion mainly in orthodoxy ; in high attainments in theological knowledge ; and in cold speculation : and who, moreover, seem to exclude from religion, the ardent feelings of the devout soul ;—or, to frown on such feelings, and the recounting of christian experiences ; as well as on those warm and devout exercises which characterised the prayer meetings of this little Christian circle at Albany. The Domine stood without a rival in the discussion of doctrinal points, and polemicks. His pulpit resounded with the fame of his profound speculations, his beautiful discussions, and unanswerable arguments. He seldom, however, touched on practical points. He made not his appeals to conscience, but to the intellects. He roused not by the terrors of the law, or by the charming promises of the gospel. He even, sometimes, gave oblique hints against *enthusiasm*, and excess of *feelings*—by which weak minds are apt to be carried away. And he dropt some expressions which induced the leading members of the social prayer meeting, to apprehend that he meant to reprove. They felt, at least, that he was not friendly to them.

“ But these holy men made no remarks. They made no complaints. They knew that their Domine was young. They were sure that he was wrong. They knew it—they felt it. But the only resentment which they displayed, was an increasing degree of earnest and humble pleading at the throne of grace, for their young Domine, that he might be taught of the Holy Ghost *to feel*, as well as to *understand*. Ah! how sweet and powerful is the principle of genuine christian love! Injuries and personal reflections only afford it fresh opportunities of putting forth some of its most amiable and fascinating displays.

“ One Sabbath the Domine had uttered an expression more severe than usual. His eyes fell on those of my pious grandfather, Conrad Brinckerhoff, as he spoke the words. There was, it seems, more of grief than anger in his soul, on account of the Domine’s rebuke. His eyes certainly sent something of a reproof back upon the Pastor. For he paused, and was confused.” “ And if there was a look of reproof,” said Annatje, “ it was a reproof prompted by pity and love.”

Shortly after this, Domine Westerlo became very uneasy in his mind. He was extremely unhappy. He could find no comfort. He was distressed in his heart: and bowed down to the dust. He wished to conceal it; but this made things grow worse and worse, with him.

He came over to Conrad Brinckerhoff’s; and sat down between him, and his pious lady. “ Conrad,” said he, as he took him by the hand and pressed it, “ I am come to converse with you—and pour out my soul with you, before God.” He then ran briefly over the state of his mind, and described his sentiments, and feelings to the aged elder.

“ I knew it, Domine,” said Conrad, as the tear trickled over his cheek—“ I saw it coming. I remember me well the day when you uttered the harsh expression against our prayer meetings, and devout exercises. Ah! Domine, I

did, at that moment, utter in my soul a fervent prayer for you, that your Divine Master would open your eyes, and touch your young heart, as with a live coal from off his altar. And at the same moment, believe me, many besides myself were wrestling in like manner, for you at the same moment. Heaven heard us,—and you will never find peace, until HE bring you just to that which He has brought us to.”

The Domine begged the elder, that kneeling down with him, he would pray for him. “No, verily, Domine, you shall even pray yourself; for me, and for yourself.” Domine Westerlo looked on him a moment in silence—then said in a solemn voice, “Let us pray.”

They all kneeled down; and such another prayer, Conrad Brinckerhoff used to say, his ears never before did hear; nor has since that ever heard. The Domine was bathed in tears. And the floor on which he kneeled was wet with his gushing tears. His prayer was heard; and from that time what a preacher Domine Westerlo became! And from the time of this change in the mode of his preaching, there was a happy revival of religion. I speak, dear father,” added Annatje, “what you well know to be a matter of truth.”

“Most true indeed,” replied their worthy Domine, who had entered; and had listened to the last sentences of Annatje’s remarks. “That anecdote is authentic, Annatje. It will form an incident in the memoirs of Domine Westerlo.”

Hans immediately rose, and laying aside his long pipe, which he had been using with all the solemnity of a Burgo-master; and greeted the good Domine—and gently chid him for his long absence. But without waiting for his apology—as if conscious that the Domine, no doubt, had the very best one that could be offered, he was placing a chair for him: and was kindly urging him to be seated.

“No, my worthy friend, time speeds—I am about my Master’s business. I am come to beg your company to the

house of Colonel Bradwardine." And the Domine looked to the door, and beckoned on the youth, who had accompanied him, to come forward. It was little William who had wept so bitterly over the death of his father, the General. In an instant all crowded around him, to welcome little William under their roof.

"Yes, my maisters; I'm unco glad to see ye a': and especially the venerable face o' Hans Van Benschooten. Only I'm ay lik to greet as often as I look on you, and think o' my pair faither. But, honoured sir, ye munna detain the Domine this day: but e'en let him gang—and glad wad I be if ye could come yer wa's wi' him yersel. For the Domine, nae doot, has tauld ye that my ain sweet mother is in the last extreme o' mortal sickness."

"He has never mentioned it to me," said Hans. "But now, I bethink me, this accounts, at once, for his long, and, I thought, unaccountable absence. He has been giving his spare time to these distant visits to the Colonel's afflicted family."

"Oh? and it please you," cried little William, with a gush of tears, while his eyes beamed simultaneously with joy, "Nae human language can express how much the gude Domine has done for us a'—especially, my dearest mother, since she has been on her death-bed."

Here the Domine interposed, and stated to Hans that about six weeks after the General's death, he had received an urgent request, from the Colonel, by the hands of this sweet little boy, William, to come and see his daughter-in-law. She had drooped from the day of her husband's death; and a consumption had, at length, sent its paralysing influence over her delicate frame. She was fast sinking into the grave.

"You cannot imagine my surprise," said the Domine, "when, on conversing with her, I discovered she had im-

bibed the infidel opinions of her late husband. To a question which I ventured to put to her, she replied with much animation—that she believed as her dear husband had believed—that such a good husband could not possibly be a bad man in faith or in practice : that she was dying she felt ; and she had no wish to go to a better place, than whither her husband had gone.

“ With the state of her husband, I had nothing to do. I only combated her opinions, without the least allusion to him. But I was mortified that I could make no impression. Indeed, I had been compelled again and again, to leave her without being permitted to bow a knee in prayer at her bedside. But Hans, whole days and watchful nights have the Colonel and I, and this sweet boy, spent in wrestling for the soul of that amiable and accomplished female infidel.

“ This is now the ninth week since I have paid these visits, at the earnest entreaty of the Colonel. Nor are we labouring in vain. The dark clouds, I fondly hope, are breaking, and a flood of heavenly light is being poured in upon her soul. At my first visits the Holy Book was not permitted to be in her chamber. Now I see it laid down on the little stand by her bed-side. And she listens during her wakeful hours, to the sweet voice of her little William, who stands and ministers to his mother, by reading select portions out of the Holy Scriptures. Formerly I could find no place for a pious sentiment : nor opportunity for prayer, in her presence. Now she beseeches her honoured father, and me not to cease to pray for her.

“ But she has yet made no confession. She has yet uttered no aversion to the fatal errors of infidelity. I have no evidence that her soul is prepared. She possesses, indeed, all that is charming, and accomplished in the human soul. She is a talented and interesting lady ; and of an unsullied morality. But, I fear she lacks that which alone can procure

her favour before a holy, and just tribunal. Human virtues, and graces have their reward with men. All that is lovely in the character formed by earthly teachers, and earthly attainments—all that is dazzling, and useful in the cluster of human graces—all the admired morality of the world have their reward from man in the circles of society, in the meed of praise and adulation. But I speak of something unspeakably higher—I speak of our Creator and Judge.—What will gain his favour to sinful and degraded rebel man? What will draw down his smile on the wretched criminal? What will beautify a guilty, and polluted soul in HIS eyes!—What will lift a soul to Heaven! What will draw out the plaudit of the Eternal one, *well done good and faithful servant*? Our Lord has pronounced it. ‘Unless your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes, and Pharisees, ye can in no wise enter the kingdom of Heaven.’ Nothing can avail us but *a new heart*, and with that an interest in the Lord Jesus Christ by a living faith. That is the *one thing needful*! And that thing I fear she has not yet got.”

“Ah! gude Domine,” cried little William, “Dinna say that. I hae heard what ye hae na heard. In the still hour o’ midnight, when she thought ilka eye was closed but that o’ the Almighty, and a’ ears were sealed in sleep, but the ears o’ the Eternal, I heard her pray—and her ain wee Willy, kneeled down unseen behind the curtain; and I prayed too, and wept, and repeated after her, the words which came frae her anxious and crushed soul; wi’ a’ the earnestness o’ the maist zealous devotion. And if the prayer of my grandfather ascends to Heaven, surely that prayer o’ hers also did ascend: and if this heart be renewed, Oh! surely frae the breathings, and wrestlings o’ her soul, I may conclude that she too is renewed. But after a’, I dinna ken. My young soul kens unco little aboot thae deep things.” And the little man wiped away the fast falling tears. “I’m sure, at any rate, it’s the

burning wish o' my heart for her—" added the little boy with great simplicity, and cast down looks—while his tears still fell in large crystal drops from his long eye-lashes, down into his bosom.

" Oh! fear thou nothing, my little man," cried Hans, taking the little boy in his arms, " your mother, I doubt not, will be gathered to her rest in glory. I hear nothing from you all but the proofs of the dealings of a gracious Saviour with her. We shall all immediately set out: I mean the Domine, and I, with yourself—and we will try to bring comfort to her distracted mind."

" *Eendracht maakt macht*," said the Domine, as he ascended the steps of the old family carriage of Hans Van Benschooten.—" There is a great deal in a motto," he added, as he put his finger on the above Dutch sentence on Han's coat of arms on the carriage door.

" Ay, that there is," said Hans, " provided that you act up to it. Now, our gallant ancestors of the Netherlands not only adopted that, as their national motto, in their bloody and successful struggle with the Duke of Alva, and the Spaniards; but they *acted up to it!* They all pulled one way: as politicians, and Christians, they all pulled the right way; and a harmonious pull makes a strong pull. I do, from my heart and soul, pray that this may ever be the rallying word in all our Dutch Churches. I do pray God," added the venerable Hans, as he laid his hand on the Domine's arm, and spoke with deep emotion, " I do pray to God, that every Domine, and every man honoured with an office among us, who loves the pure, and holy gospel of Christ, and who loves the church, and the memory of our pious, and gallant forefathers, may often ponder these words in their hearts. If any one have an itching desire after some innovation, some new discipline, some new-fangled doctrine, I pray God that he may be induced to pause, and as he loves his God, and the peace

of God's church, reflect seriously on the national motto of his forebears—*Eendracht maakt macht*. And may God rebuke the man, let him be who he may, that cuts his cord, and refuses to pull; or who pulls the wrong way, and disturbs the peace of God's Kerck."

"Amen," said the Domine.—"For," continued Hans earnestly, "what signifies the best of mottos; ay, or the best of creeds, and canons either, if you do not, like honest men, stick to the letter, and the spirit of them? There's the royal family of the Stuarts, the kings of Scotland, who ascended the throne of England. They had their bold motto.

"Pray, what was that Latin phrase, Domine? At my time of life, one gets somewhat rusted in the classics; that is to say, if it be classic Latin."

"*Nemo me impune lacessit*," is the motto, said the Domine; and he added the translation—"No one provokes me unpunished."

"Ay, that is it," said Hans. "Bold, crabbed, and impudent; it is like that unhappy race of *absolute supremacy* rulers. They stuck to their bad motto, better than we do in a good cause, until an indignant nation hurled them from their tyrannous throne, and reversed the motto, proving it true, on their own heads!"

The carriage was, by this time, ascending, by a winding road, a steep mountain's side; from the summit of which they could see the house of Colonel Bradwardine, embossed in a forest, at the head of the beautiful valley far below them.

Hans, and little William watched to catch the first glimpse of the Colonel's seat through the stately oaks which crowned the mountain's side. The Domine was in a deep reverie, and his eyes rested on the valley below, with its smiling farm houses, and beautiful green fields, its orchards, and its lowing herds, and its few scattered flocks of bleating sheep,

at the foot of the opposite mountain; and its meandering stream, which, here and there, issuing from clumps of trees, and underwood, reflected back from its ruffled bosom, the broken beams of the evening sun. That valley is one of the sweetest valleys of New-Jersey.

“A stiver for your thought, Domine,” said Hans, as he broke in upon the solemn mood of the Pastor.

“The Domine’s soul I warrant you, maist worthy sir, is even noo breathing an unco fervent prayer for his suffering penitent, my ain sweet mither,” said little William, as he smiled in Hans Van Benschooten’s face. “Yonder’s the hoose, noo,” added he exultingly. “And I hae been hame there already, in imagination, a lang hoor and mair. Och! I think, I see my pale, languid mither panting for breath:—her eyes upraised to Heaven. And by her bed-side, on the wee table, there lies the big ha’ Bible—open at the third chapter o’ the haly gospel o’ John—and here and there are heavy tear drops on the pages. On a chair near the bed-head, I see my dear auld grandfather lowly bending doon ower the Bible, and reading, wi’ an audible voice, the sweet consolations o’ divine truth. His lang white hair lies in ringlets on his shoulders, and a few straggling locks hang doon, and rest on the pages of the Haly Beuk. Och! I see him, and I think I hear his fervent words. And at his feet, on the buffet-stool, sits wee yellow haired Jean, wi’ her blue een filled wi’ tears; and the wean sobs as she looks up to her grandfather, as if her wee bosom would burst wi’ grief.

“But pardon your little man’s impertinence. Let us hear yer thoughts, maist worthy sir—Domine.”

“My sweet child,” cried the Pastor, “it is not a hard matter to imagine all this just as you say it. It is what I and you, my little man, have seen, every forenoon, these many weeks, at the dying bed of your dear mother.—My thoughts

were occupied with another subject. Hans Van Benschooten, I was revolving, in my mind, a *dream*, a surpassing strange *dream*!"

"A dream, Domine!" said Hans, with unusual solemnity, and with an air and look something like chiding.

"Even so, Hans; and I never can pass up this mountain's side, and cast my eyes down over that beautiful valley, and over the forest trees of the opposite hill side, without feeling *the dream* constantly recurring to my memory."

"Ay!" cried Hans: "that unhappy being's dream, I suppose. What is it now I shall call him? He that was no better than he should be. He whom the Poet Laureat of England, who is no better than *he* should be, calls the head of the *Infernal School*! Oh! Byron, that is it. I allow none of my family to be polluted by his witcheries. And I do so seldom look into the *fool thing's* pages—I mean fool as it regards the things of eternity—that I had like to have forgotten his very name. And, indeed, I would not have blamed the treachery of my memory! Well, I suppose you mean *his* dream, beginning with—

"I had a dream, which was not all a dream!"

It is, Domine, truly, the sublime conception of a *demoniac* mind; a mind which has been privileged with a peep behind the curtain, into Satan's head quarters; and who has, in verity, had more than a simple anticipation of having his quarters fixed there ere long! No Christian, had he e'en a mind and soul like Milton, could have composed that dream.—The writer must have tasted a drop or two of the bitter cup of the *second* death, to have written that; and also no small portions of the rest of the poetry of the *infernal school*. But I am interrupting you, Domine."

"Indeed, Hans, I was not even thinking of that dream. I

allude to a dream recited in my hearing by Dr. S——, a Scotch clergyman, now in Scotland. There is nothing improbable in it. It struck me, on first hearing it, that it was a parable. But he assured me that it was *dreamed in reality*. And he assured me, moreover, that the catastrophe really took place as I am about to state it. It was a wonderful coincidence. The whole affair is this :—

There lived near Stirling, in Scotland, a young man, heir to a rich and extensive estate. As is too generally the case it proved a curse to him. It would have been better if he had been born to the inheritance of the poor. It is ordained by Heaven that man should not only work, but labour, either by body or mind ; or by both. When man is so unfortunate as to be born to an inheritance, and knows it, when he is young, the evil one sets him to mischievous work, when he has no honest work of his own to keep him employed. The path of the idle, is the path to hell.

This young man became an abandoned and lost man. Good men shunned him. They had for some time exerted their influence in vain. They said he was a lost man. He had forsaken his God. He read not his word. He was intemperate. He was a gambler. And no wonder ; for he had cast off the religion of his fathers. And God, in awful judgment, had given him up to believe a lie. He was an infidel. And what was more, he was not content with securing his own perdition. With the spirit of him who *first broke peace in Heaven*, and who would *rather reign in Hell, than serve in Heaven*, he seduced, and ruined many a worthy man's son. No parent of his own lived, whose heart he could break.—But he broke many an honest parent's heart, in the county where he lived. They looked on him as he passed by, and would wish that he had never been born. ‘ For he has ruined oor puir bairn ! and he will ne'er do weel !’

This youth dreamed a dream. He thought he was passing along the banks of a beautiful stream, which watered a charming valley. The birds sang sweetly over his head.—The dumb beasts were full of happiness around him. All nature rejoiced. He came to a place where his path parted into two. He took the left, which wended up amid the richest fields, and groves imaginable. On the right, far over the valley, he could see persons toiling and struggling up the steeps, toward a splendid dome; from which pure and holy beings in white, seemed to call, and beckon them. And often a voice came, swelling on the breeze, to his own ears, from some of the crowd opposite, urging him to descend, and return, and join himself to them. But, as often as he looked at them, and beheld their chastened manners, their grave looks, and dull pursuits, their thorny path, and the steep and rocky ascents before them, he shut his ears, and urged on in his lovely and flowery path, amid a profusion of flowers, and roses, and delicious fruits, and merry companions.

He dreamed, moreover, that as he stepped a small way out of his path, he came to a steep rock; and in the rock there seemed to be a door, bolted and fixed with steel bolts and chains. He had an invincible desire to see what this led into. He knocked. The mountain side echoed. A wailing was heard behind him, and a distant rumbling. A sound, also was heard through a crevice of the door, which made him start. Horror took hold on him; he knew not why. A being of a dreary aspect, and of an undefinable shape, opened the door, and bade him enter. He walked forward with troubled steps. The door was shut, and the heavy steel bars rung as the porter returned them to their place.

He walked forward. He beheld an immense plain before him. There was no green blade, nor speck of vegetation.

It seemed scathed by fire. Numerous multitudes of human beings were all around him. Some individuals walked apart; some stood alone, and in silence; here and there groups stood and looked each other in the face, with awful silence, and horror-stricken countenances. They were all clothed in long black raiment, like cloaks.

He approached one of the persons nearest to him, and asked him what place this was, and what these people were doing.

The being raised upon him his slow-moving countenance, and his eyes, which shot dark fire; he sent on him a look, which cut him to the soul. It replied to his question after a long pause, "THIS IS HELL!"

"Impossible!" uttered our youth. "I see no dark abyss, no lake of fire burning with brimstone, and the fire of the second death! That, I am told, is the Bible description of that place."

The group of beings near him made no reply; but bending on him their haggard faces, each of them in awful silence, opened his long black robe, and stretching out his hands which held the borders of the robe, they exhibited, each of them, a mass of blazing fire, from their heads, down to the soles of their feet!

Each of the spectres then wrapped himself in his flowing garments, and walked on, or they looked in horrid silence, in each other's faces.

With an instinctive shriek, our youth retreated to the door and demanded of the gate-keeper to let him out. The being fixed his eyes of fire on him, and uttered these words, in a hollow tone, which made his very blood run chill. "The dead who enter here, never again get out, *for ever and ever!*"

He rushed nearer the gate, and exclaimed to the jailor, "Let me out. *I am not dead.* I have not died!"

"True, thou art not dead," replied the keeper, with a most

stern voice. "And therefore I shall allow thee to pass out. But"—and he made an awful pause; and his eyes looked into his very soul—"on this express condition I let thee out, that thou return hither on this day ONE MONTH HENCE!"

"On any condition," exclaimed the distracted youth. "Only let me out, on any condition!"

The slow-moving gate opened, and returned him back to the air, and to the freshness, and beauty, and sweet music, and charming flowery paths which he had been enjoying a few moments before.

He awakened from his troubled sleep in great distress. But his pain was momentary. Next day he told his dream to his blaspheming companions, over the gambling table, where no thought enters, but thoughts befitting Hell and the lost.

The *month* rolled round. He gave a splendid entertainment to all his gay companions, and the guilty ministers of his licentiousness, on that day mentioned by the spectre.

"If old *Sooty* come for me," cried he, "on this day, I shall give you the pleasure of seeing him! And I shall myself, have the pleasure of making my exit from among you with a flood of claret, and amid the musical shuffling of cards, and the glorious rattling of the billiards."

The day came; and it went away. The evening came, and passed away, in peals of merriment, and with scenes of inordinate intemperance. The company rose, and were led each to his carriage. The entertainment had been served up, in a splendid hall on the second floor. Our young man conducted his friends to the head of the stairs. And he took leave of the last of the company, amidst peals of laughter at having staved off the *Black Keeper*.—"For there goes *twelve*," cried his associates. But just as the sound of the first stroke, which told the hour, fell on his ear, he tumbled

from the top of the stairway, and fell on his head in the hall, and expired instantly, in the midst of his boisterous companions !”

“ It is an awful dream ! It is a solemn parable !” said Hans Van Benschooten. “ But here we are in front of the Colonel’s house. We shall hear a different story here, I warrant you.”

In a few moments we were all by the bedside of the dying lady. And it was just as little William had graphically described it. At the bed-head stood the little table, with the Holy Bible ; the venerable white headed Colonel sat in the high-backed chair ; the little child was at his feet ; and the lady, pale, languid, and evidently approaching the last hour of her mortal existence, was stretched on her couch, in the upper end of the room. There was this little additional circumstance :—The Colonel had her hand in his ; and he was bathing it with his paternal tears. Her eyes were bent upwards, and shone with uncommon lustre. She was whispering out in a low murmur, and very slowly, these words as the visitants entered the chamber :—“ I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And though, after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God. Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold—” She made a long pause, sunk back on her pillow, and fainted.

While the domestics hastened around her to bring relief, the Domine retired for a brief space with Hans Van Benschooten, into the neighbouring apartment.

“ She is drawing near to the borders of the grave,” said Hans.—“ May God Almighty wash her soul in the Redeemer’s blood, that she may enter the assembly of the holy.”

“ She is prepared by the Most High, and is ready, I doubt not,” said the Domine. “ These words which we heard her

breathe out a few moments ago, add another confirmation to the refreshing proofs which she has already given to me, and to her bowed down relatives."

The Domine then entered into a minute detail of the dealings of God with her soul.

"I have sitten by her bed-side, weekly, and oftener, when I could, these nine weeks bygone. I did not attack her system of opinions. No, no. I made an attack on her conscience. The law of God exhibited to her the inflexible purity and justice of the Almighty. Sin, she was made to see, is an evil of infinite malignity; and of an evil tendency, continually increasing, and boundless in its destructive nature, unless it be put under bounds by God. My dear lady, such is sin, we cried. God is just. Justice gives the reward of sin, and the reward of righteousness; and that reward is eternal. *Thou art a sinner—in the name of Jesus Christ, believe it!* I can never forget the look of anguish she gave me at that moment. She was pierced to the heart. She wept, she trembled, she cried out, *O God, be merciful to me a sinner!*

"I next entered on a plain discussion of the *necessity* of the atonement. This I did at her request. I then led her, in a brief way, as she was able to bear it, into a view of the *nature* of the atonement. Christ Jesus, I taught her, was our substitute. He was placed precisely in our legal room, in the eye of God's law. He bare our sins *in his own body*. He sustained the penalty, that is, the curse of the law for us. God has declared it, and let none of the worms of his footstool gainsay him in their impious systems. For "He made Christ to be a *sin-offering* for us."—"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, *being made a curse for us.*"—2 Cor. v. 21—Gal. iii. 13. iv. 4, 5.

"I then taught her the infinite *perfection* of the atonement which our Lord offered up to God for such sinners as her-

self, and myself. I entreated and besought her, by all the motives which I could draw out of the book of God: by the glory of the Deity; by the happiness of Heaven, by the fearful doom of the wicked. I urged her with many tears. God has been merciful to her. He has heard our supplication. His grace is gaining another happy triumph. She will soon bid farewell to all our earthly sorrows; and sleep in Jesus."

At this moment they received a message from her; and they repaired immediately to her beside.

The Domine sat down beside the Colonel, pressed the hand of the dying lady, which she extended to him, and wet it with his tears.

"I die," said she. "But God has been very gracious. The Lord is my shepherd. I was a lost, and straying lamb. He has restored my soul."

To a question put to her by the pastor, she replied with animation, as she cast her eyes full of sorrow and tears, on her prodigal son Joseph. "Yes; I rest all my hopes, and the weight of my soul's salvation on the atonement of my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Oh! yes, the Lord has made with me an everlasting covenant, well ordered in all things, and sure. Oh! my God! This is all my salvation, and all my desire. Oh! height, depth, breadth, length, of the love of Christ. He loved *me*—poor *me*—and gave himself for *me*. And, now, oh! my Saviour! thou seest, and knowest the pains of thy mortal agony. Take me—blessed Jesus—Oh! take me home to thy rest. I long to see thee—I long to be holy—as thou, oh! Jesus Christ, art holy. I loathe sin. And no more—no more shall I ever wander from thee in the horrible mazes of infidelity, or even unbelief. Holy God! receive thy poor dying servant. Let me enter into the path of life eternal, and glory. I am tired of this dark, sinning, and wicked world. Take me to the pure land of Heaven.

Lord Jesus, receive my passing spirit—for——thou—— hast redeemed——me, Lord——God of truth.”—Here she sunk away into a swoon.

She revived after an instant. And opening her heavy eyelids, she uttered a brief prayer for the dear old Colonel by name ; for her own sweet little William, who was sobbing the while, with a heart ready to burst ; for her poor disbelieving Joseph, and all the other children, by name.—She named Hans Van Benschooten with an affectionate remembrance : and then added, “ And for the instructions, and pastoral care of my spiritual father, thy servant here, Lord Jesus, reward him, for I cannot.”—Then with the smile of a dying saint, she turned her eyes, full of tears, on the Domine, and added, “ Beloved Pastor, offer up one prayer more, yes, my beloved Pastor, and I shall ask no more. I will tell you—in heaven,—how much I loved you—when I meet and welcome you, to the land of the leal, and the blessed ; and tell before God and all Heaven, that you are my spiritual father.”

They all knelt down and prayed. And the Domine uttered the following remarkable words:—“ Oh ! thou blessed High Priest, whose foot touched the stream of the river of Jordan, and who madest the dark waves to divide hither and thither, that thy passing saints might walk on dry land—Oh ! receive our departing sister to thy own rest, in glory. Cause the enemy to be still as a stone while she passes over Jordan.”

At this moment he was interrupted by a burst of low wailing. She had that instant expired : and little William had thrown himself by her side, and was kissing the clayey lips of his sainted mother.—They all rose from their knees and sat down in deep silence, and wept around the death-bed of **LOUISA BRADWARDINE.\***

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\* This closing scene is no fiction : it is to me a sober reality ; which I delight to linger over, in dear and fondly-cherished remembrance.

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HANS VAN BENSCHOOTEN still lingers among us in his old age ; and so also does the venerable Domine. July 19, 1830.

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July 13, 1835. Both of these worthies have gone the way of all the earth. And I shall carefully retain in my possession *the old Dutch Bible*, which HANS VAN BENSCHOOTEN, as a token of his regard, ordered to be placed in my hands, on his decease : and which I received through the hands of one whom I sincerely love, and revere : as one who adorns the society in which he moves : and one who merits the name of THE WARM HEARTED, AND ACCOMPLISHED DUTCHMAN.

## A P P E N D I X.

NOTE A. p. 33.

THE evidence of the *facts* to which I allude in the text, confirming the Bible declarations, is found in the *moral* world. We need only appeal to the acts of injustice, fraud, cruelty, tyranny, wars, and devastations, which have filled the world with wo.

The evidence is strongly manifest also in the *natural* world.

1. "*In the present state of the interior strata of the earth.* When we penetrate the interior recesses of the earth, we find its strata bent in the most irregular forms: sometimes lying horizontally; sometimes projecting upwards; sometimes downwards, and thrown into confusion." The evidence of some dreadful concussion, that has spread its ravages through every part of the solid crust of the earth, is, in all regions of the earth, manifest to every scientific observer.

These could proceed from no created power whatever: they must have proceeded from the agency of Almighty God alone. And it cannot be alledged that he inflicted these 'curses *on* the earth, and *in* the earth, for *no* moral cause. The deductions of reason fully accord with the declarations of Divine Revelation: that 'the ground is cursed for man's sake.'

2. The various phenomena of thunder-storms, tempests, hurricanes, earthquakes, and volcanoes, with their terrible ravages, do all give a loud, and most appalling testimony to the Bible declarations, that man is a fallen, and guilty creature; and that divine justice, in the sustaining of the moral government of God, is pursuing him upon the dry land; upon the rivers, and the high seas; inflicting punishment on the guilty, by means of his terrific elements,—fire, and water, and the raging winds! The voice of nature thus utters in perfect harmony with the voice of revelation, the solemn truth that,—“**GOD IS ANGRY WITH THE WICKED EVERY DAY.**”—See *Dick's Christian Philosopher*, Chap. iv. Sect. 2.

NOTE B. p. 47.

Christianity has been charged by some who have more prejudice than philosophy, with originating fanaticism, and enthusiasm, by its “witch and ghost stories.” The best reply to this which could possibly be effectual, on the minds of those who make it, would be the illumination of the present race of infidels, by science and theology.

That this charge has proceeded from sheer want of information, I shall show, by throwing together certain extracts on the subject, from classical writers, ancient and modern.

The fathers of the Reformation had their own peculiar opinions, and imaginative theories on this delicate subject. They lived too near the period of the church's departure from the captivity of modern Babylon, to have correct views on this point. Their education had been in cloisters, and conducted by men who set at defiance, all just conceptions of sound theology, and mental philosophy. For, who ever heard of sound learning in the priesthood of Rome? Hence, some of these fathers, and their sons, have written very strange, and supremely absurd books on this subject. Our modern theologians, as well as philosophers, will smile to see them advance, as grave didactics, the perfect romance of imagination; and to exalt the reveries of the waking dream, and unbridled fancy, to the dignity of grave facts on demonology.

Suppose Milton had played off, as a living reality, enacted before his own eyes, all the splendid machinery of his sublime epic, *The Paradise Lost*: suppose he had placed in some haunted castle, or some fairy dale, all the acts of his angels, and inmates of pandemonium, as veritable realities: what would have been gravely said of him? Why, he would just have committed the error which certain writers have actually fallen into, in their frightful systems of *demonology*. They have detailed as facts, the conceptions of a poet's dream, put forth to astonish the vulgar!

The book entitled, *Satan's Invisible World Discovered*, I would put down as a specimen, with the remark, that it is rather a collection of brief dramas, than a regular epic. I once read it when young: and I can never forget my feelings of terror, commingled with perfect horror.

That it was written by a professor of moral philosophy in the ancient University of Glasgow, of the name of Sinclair, is by all admitted. But it was written about the middle of the seventeenth century,—a period when, as yet, philosophy, and Christian society had not polished the rust off the steel. But it is just, also to add that it was written before the period when men had polished, and rubbed the good steel, until they had snapt it asunder. If these ancient times produced and fostered extravagant credulity; our own times, we must confess, have engendered cold blooded misbelief, and atheism! Truth will be found to lie equally distant from each of these ridiculous, and impious extremes.

A sound and enlightened discussion on oracles, impulses, charms, influence of dreams, witches, &c., is yet a *desideratum* in literature.

With a view to draw the attention of our philosophical and theological *Literati* to this curious subject, and to induce some able writer to give us a dissertation on it, which shall be worth reading, I shall here throw together, a few gleanings, from the ancients, and the moderns.

It is readily admitted that the Holy Scriptures uniformly hold up the belief in "*ghosts*." But this word is synonymous with the word *spirits*. "He gave up the ghost," is the Scripture phrase for "he died." And these ghosts, or spirits of deceased mortals, are invariably spoken of as in *Hades*; that is, the invisible state. If they were holy and virtuous persons, they departed to that division of *Hades*, called Paradise, or Heaven. These two words are strictly synonymous. The *first* is a figurative phrase, borrowed from the first dwelling of our primitive innocent parents,—the Paradise, or garden of Eden: the *last* word,—*Oυρανός*,—Heaven, is so called from its purity and transparency,—its absence from all that is earthly, material, and gross. If the departed were impenitent and vicious men, they were banished to that region of *Hades*, called hell,—the place of fiery torments, and agonies!

But the Holy Scriptures in no one instance, give countenance to the idea that the souls of departed mortals linger on earth, and hover around their graves. "*The dust shall return to the earth: and the spirit shall return to God who gave it.*" Eccles. xii. Paul combines the phrases,—"*absent from the body,*" and "*present with the Lord:*" and he speaks of the latter without hesitation, as being the instant consequence of the former. "To be "*absent from the body,*" is to be "*present with the Lord.*" 2 Cor. v. 6, 7. With him also, "*the departure from this life,*" was to be "*present with Christ.*" Phil. i. 23. Heb. xi. 23.

But, every one acquainted with Homer, Virgil, and the other classic writers, knows that it was the firm pagan belief that the souls of their heroes, and departed friends lingered on earth, and about their graves, and often appeared in various forms. Hence "the ghosts" of modern superstition are purely of pagan origin.

The ancient oracles had sometimes a moral, and benevolent tendency. They frequently prevented wars, and the wanton shedding of human blood. I refer to Pausanias' Greece, iii. 6, 69, 240. Edit. 1794.—They have designated men to office, who became the saviours of their country. Cornel. Nep. *Miltiadis Vita*. And they predicted the fall of certain great men. Tacitus, Annal. Lib. ii. cap. 54: Sucton. Dom.

Those of the ancients who aspired to philosophical views on this delicate subject, were much divided in their opinions of the character of the oracles. The more rational and virtuous sects did not ascribe them to evil demons. In fact, with them all demons were pure celestial beings. They made them the objects of their love, and profound adoration. See Plato's *Epinom.*; Opera Plat. p. 1011.

Hence this sect believed oracular impulses to be from the Deity.

"Oracles are from God," says Aristotle, "*Και μη βέλτεροις, &c.* And

that he sent them not to the best, and the wisest, but to men as it may happen, is an absurd conceit." See Aristot. De Divin. &c., cap. i. : and Spencer *On Vulgar Prophecies*, p. 41. The Stoics embraced these sentiments.

On the other hand, the Cynics, the Peripatetics, and Epicureans entered the lists against them. They ascribed them to fraud: they ridiculed their puerilities, and ambiguous sentences; and poured out their unmeasured contempt of Delphi, and all its ghostly machinery.

And if we regard the numbers on this side of the subject, their physical strength, at least, will not appear to be small. Eusebius, in his *Evangelical Preparations*, lib. iv., mentions six hundred pagan authors who had written against oracles. See Fontenelle's *Hist. of Oracles*.

Of the moderns, the Dutch writer Bekker, in his book "*The World Bewitched*," which made a great noise in the end of the 17th century, insists that the spirit of Python, was a good spirit. But Wyenus refuted him, as Lampe shows, in his learned treatise of the *θεοπνευσται*.—Fontenelle combats the idea of oracles coming from demons; or of being any way, supernatural. He, indeed, admits that the learned in general, were against him. But he refers the current doctrine to the "easy belief" of the primitive fathers. And he labours to make Cicero of his sentiment, "and to spare nothing the most sacred at Rome." Fontenelle, p. 6, 61, &c.

Van Dale in his book, *De Idol. et Div.* part 3, cap. 10, attempts to show, that the whole is ghostly fraud. Of the same opinion is the English writer Ady, and especially John Webster, in his book "*Of the arts of Witchcraft*," chap. 6, sect. 49. And it was deemed a suspicious circumstance, and in their favour, that females, credulous and easily imposed on, were employed to utter oracles. Thus, at Delphos the Pythia; and at Dodona, as Strabo informs us, "three old women gave them out." And modern witchcraft has been found only among the gray tangled hairs, and frightful wrinkles of poor, old, and crazy females. But keeping out of view modern cases, Lampe in sec. 6, shows that the cases which they quote, will not bear them out. The one quoted from the sacred page, makes clearly against them. Acts xvi. The "damsel" had a spirit of Python. It was a being distinct from her. And this spirit was cast out of her by the apostle, in the name of the Lord Jesus. Some writers, leaning to Van Dale's sentiment, are inclined to add to fraud, the aid of a natural, or acquired habit: that of ventriloquism. It is certain from Plutarch, *De Oracul. Defec.* p. 414, that, with Greek writers, the word *πυθων* and *εγγασριμυθον* are synonymous. And the derivation of the former word by Clerk in Lampe, ut supra, sect. 7, is from

the פּוּת Hebrew, Puth, inus venter mulieris : and by Stockius, in his Lexicon, who adds *Spiritus impuritatis amans ex imo ventre loquitur.*" These Pythons, says Schleusner, " clausis labiis, inflatis buccis, tumido ventre, vel humi jacentes, vel tripodi insidentes ita loquebantur ut verba non ore proferrentur, sed intus in pectore audirentur, et homines superstitiosi facile credebant alium in pectore loqui." Jurieu opposes this in his book, " Des Dogm." part iii. Tract 2, cap. 5. And so does Deylingius, and also Wolfius. " There is ' no evidence,' say they, ' that this Pythia' used a strange sound. She spoke with a loud voice." But circumstances persuade us, says Lampe, sect. 7, that besides these usual paroxysms of ventriloquists, she uttered words in an ordinary form of speech ; " quæ edocta sunt in ipso afflatu diabolico."

Some ancient writers ascribe them to some natural causes operating in the place where they were given forth. Plutarch wrote a treatise *Περὶ τῶν ἐκλειπομένων χρησθηριῶν* : " concerning the oracles that have ceased." Not *the ceasing of oracles*, as some incorrectly have rendered it. For unless there be some other evidence, this certainly will not prove the erroneous and vulgar belief that oracles ceased at the introduction of christianity. He ascribes the ceasing of some oracles, in part, to a natural cause. The vapour by which the Pythia became inebriated and frantic, had lost its strength. He seems to have thought, that " the divine vapour" inspired the oracles. So also, Jamblicus *De Myst. Egypt.* p. 66. " Sibylla suscipiebat deum per spiritum tenuem igneumque qui erumpebat ex antri ore, &c." Plin. *Nat. Hist.* lib. ii. p. 93, and Strabo, *Geogr.* lib. ix. are of the same opinion : and also Longinus, who uses the epithet " ἀτμός ενθεός." " Ἐνθα ῥηγμα ἐστὶ γῆς ὃ ἀναπνεῖν φασὶν ἄτμον ενθεόν." De *Sublim.* sec. 13. Prudentius also, who has said, " Perdidit insanos mendax Dodona vapores." In *Apoth.* tit. contra Jud. This is in perfect consistency with the Platonic idea, " that demons were pure subtle air." Plat. *Oper.* *Epinom.* p. 1011. Aristotle reconciles the two. The Sibylls had no other inspiration, no other demon than " those divine vapours," by which they were agitated. *Aristot. Probl.* sec. 30. And this operated on them like fiery spirits. " Ardebant torrente vi magna flammaram." *Amon. Mercel.* lib. 21, and Spencer on *Vulg. proph.* p. 106 and 107.

In farther proof of this, some of the ancients state, that at Abdera, there were pasture fields, in which the horses were turned into a state of fury and madness. Plin. lib. 25, c. 8. And Tully, *De Natura Deor.* observes, that this vapour, or atmosphere affected also the people of the place, " obnoxios esse stupori." See *Templeri Idea Theol. Leviath.* p. 329, in *Rutger's Coll. Library*, N. B. Cicero seems to favour this

doctrine, where he says: "Quid tam divinum quam afflatus ex terra mentem ita movens ut eam providam rerum futurarum efficiat; ut ea non modo cernat multo ante; sed etiam numero versuque pronunciet?" De Divin. lib. 2. But in another place, lib. 2, cap. 54, he produces this very circumstance as an argument, to prove that there was "art and contrivance," at least, in these oracles. For it is physically impossible, that responses could be made, and uttered in high wrought poetry and verse, by a human being labouring under a fit of epilepsy.

Some of our divines are of opinion, that even in the case of some of the Pagans, the Holy Ghost might overrule their minds; and bend them to his own purpose, and give forth some truths by them. Hieron. Comment in Job. "Illis," (he is speaking of the prophets who were not of the true religion,) "dedit Deus verbum suum, ut pronunciarent mysteria futura hominibus." Dr. Owen, On the Spirit, vol. i. book ii. ch. 2, is also of this opinion. And the cases of Balaam, and the Magi at our Saviour's birth, and the Pythia. Acts xxvi., bear him sufficiently out on this point. For these Pagans uttered divine truths from neither their own powers, nor inclination, but by a divine power prompting them.

Sir Walter Scott in his book *On Demonology*, has given us what we may call a pretty, and amusing, popular work, *ad captandum vulgus philosophicum*. But with the exception of his well digested, and *selected* ideas on the character, and nature of the *witchcraft* of antiquity, and of the Mosaic law, which made it a capital crime: namely, that witches were "poisoners and destroyers of life;"—and, with the exception of his judicious remarks on the witch of Endor, his book is fit only for minute philosophers, and youth. Sir Walter was neither a profound philosopher, nor a theologian. He was not competent to the task. He went egregiously out of his element, when he composed "sermons," and wrote on "Demonology." In the region of poetry and fiction he reigned; and we cheerfully place the ever-blooming laurels on his venerable head. But, as touching this deep and delicate subject, he lacked talent, and acquirements. Besides, his book is a hurried work, by a *Lawyer* with a *Recorder's* book open before him; got up for the market, not for one's study. It was not designed to sustain his rich, and glorious fame. His unrivalled name was made to sustain the book! And our Harpers have given it a kind of immortality in our country, in their *Family Library*. The man who can write successfully on this delicate, and interesting subject, must be a profound philosopher, in natural and moral science, and a deeply learned theologian. I know of only *two* in Britain who could have done justice to it: and *two* in our own country. Three of them are now in Heaven: one of them still

lingers among us;—*sero rediens in coelum!* May we be allowed to name them? DR. PRESIDENT DWIGHT of New England: DR. ANDREW THOMSON of Edinburgh: ROBERT HALL of England: DR. ————. Let the reader fill the blank with *the living American divinc.* Palma Digno!

A dissertation on this subject, and the various phenomena connected with it, by a mind tutored by philosophy and theology, that can rise equally above the credulity and fanaticism of olden times, and the indolent, and brainless scepticism of our times, is, therefore, still a *desideratum* in the literary world.

I shall never advocate the vulgar folly that floats in society, and peoples the world with phantoms, ghosts, witches, and what is worse than all these,—supports and countenances miserable impostors, under the title of “*witch doctors,*” and “fortune tellers.”

Yet every scholar would wish to see the subject taken up in a scriptural view; and discussed rigidly according to the principles of the Baconian philosophy.

It is certain that there are spirits, good and evil. It is certain that they communicate with each other. It is certain, from scripture, that they can operate on mind, and on matter. It is certain, from the gospel, that malevolent spirits operate in the way of tormenting minds, and bodies. And the pages of the classics contain instances of oracular predictions of evil demons, uttered by human lips.—Cudworth, vol ii. book i. chap. 5. Hence malevolent spirits communicate with mind. Heidan states that in Germany, during the confusion of the time of the Anabaptists of Munster, when they had all property in common, “*puellas duas esse quæ revelabant omnia.*” Two girls revealed all things, when any of their members secreted the property, or did not give it fully up. Bodin. Mag. Demon. lib. iii. ad Templeri Idea Theol. Lev. p. 328. M<sup>r</sup> Knight in his Harmony, Dissert. on Demons, adduces instances of similar predictions. Tacitus, Annal. lib. ii. cap. 54, states that the oracle of Celaros predicted the untimely death of Germanicus. And, what is a still more remarkable phenomenon connected with this, we have decisive evidence that persons, illiterate and diseased, have uttered languages of which *they had no previous knowledge.* Psellius De Oper. Daem. states what he witnessed in a maniacal woman who knew nothing but her own language. When an Armenian came into the room she spoke the Armenian language readily, and conversed with the stranger. Cudworth, vol. ii. chap. 5. The learned physician Fernelius, “*De abditis rerum causis,*” states that his patient, a young nobleman, after

being three months under his medical care, and labouring under a disease that baffled medicine, made exclamations in Greek and Latin, and uttered distinct sentences. He knew nothing of Greek previous to this. Cudw. do. M'Knight in his Harmony, quotes some more instances to the same purpose. Melancthon writes that he had himself seen a person "nescientem legere," not even able to read, who yet spoke Greek and Latin.

By thus excluding theory, and adducing facts for every thought advanced, we might attain to a rational view of the subject." See Brownlee's Hist. of Quakerism, published in Philadelphia, A. D. 1824. Appendix.

In fine, it must be obvious to every sober and reflecting philosopher, that the doctrines of the Holy Bible occupy, on this question, the only happy position of truth. It discountenances, on the one extreme, the vulgar and heathen extravagancies of *pagan*, and *modern* witchcraft, and all the monstrous absurdities of ghosts. And, on the other, it rejects the equal extravagance of modern atheism, and scepticism, which deny a world of spirits; and that intercourse, which exists between spirits dwelling in our material forms, and those spirits of the invisible world, who do not inhabit material bodies. See Job, chaps. i. and ii.

#### NOTE C. p. 48.

The following summary of Mr. Hume's doctrines, published some years before his death, Bishop Horne says, was never, so far as he could find, questioned, as to its fidelity, and accuracy, either by Mr. Hume, or his friends. With very little variation, it is the same as that of the *intellectual* sceptics of the day. It will be seen from this, that *the unintelligible* often passes current for *the profoundly philosophical*.—Here are Hume's doctrines as carefully extracted from his works.

#### I. OF THE SOUL.

"The soul of man is not the same this moment, that it was the last moment: we know not what it is: it is not one, but many things: it is really nothing at all.

"In this soul is the agency of all the causes that operate throughout the sensible creation: and yet in the soul, there is neither power, nor agency, nor any idea of either.

"Matter and motion may be often regarded as the cause of thought.

#### II. OF THE UNIVERSE.

"The external world does not exist: or, at least, its existence may be reasonably doubted.

“ The universe exists in the mind : and the mind does not really exist.

“ The universe is nothing but a heap of perceptions, without a substance.

“ Though a man could bring himself to believe, yea, and have reason to believe, that every thing proceeds from some cause, yet it would be unreasonable for him to believe that the universe itself proceeds from a cause.

### III. OF HUMAN KNOWLEDGE.

“ The perfection of human knowledge is to doubt.” [Hence the perfection of *self-knowledge* was, on Mr. Hume’s part, to doubt his own existence !]

“ We ought to doubt of every thing ; yea of our doubts themselves : and, therefore, the utmost that philosophy can do, is to give us a doubtful solution of doubtful doubts.

“ The human understanding acting alone, does entirely subvert itself ; and prove by argument, that by argument, nothing can be proved.

“ Man in all his perceptions, actions, and volitions, is a mere passive machine ; and has no separate existence of his own, being entirely made up of other things, of the existence of which he is by no means certain. And, yet, the nature of all things depends so much upon man, that two and two could not be equal to four, nor fire produce heat, nor the sun light, without an act of the human understanding.

### IV. OF GOD.

“ It is unreasonable to believe God to be infinitely wise and good, while there is any evil, or disorder in the world.

[On the same principle it is unreasonable to believe that there is any thing wise and good in human laws, while there is evil.]

“ We have no reason to believe that the universe proceeds from a cause.

“ As the existence of the external world is questionable, we are at a loss to find arguments by which we may prove the existence of the Supreme Being, or any of his attributes.

“ When we speak of Power, as an attribute of any being, God himself not excepted, we use words without meaning.

“ We can have no idea of power, nor of one endued with power ; far less of one endued with infinite power : and we have no reason to believe that any object does really exist, of which we can form no idea.

## V. OF THE MORALITY OF HUMAN ACTIONS.

“ Every human action is *necessary* ; and could not be different from what it is.

“ Moral, intellectual, and corporeal virtues are nearly of the same kind. In other words, to want honesty, and to be a thief and a robber, and to want mental talents, and to want a leg, are all equally the objects of moral disapprobation and positive criminality !

“ That adultery must be practised to obtain all the advantages of human life : if generally practised, it would cease to be a crime : if done secretly, it would be thought no crime at all.

## VI. OF MAN'S ACCOUNTABILITY.

“ As the soul of man becomes,” according to Mr. Hume, “ a different being every moment, of consequence the crimes he committed a few hours, or years ago, cannot be imputable to him, at another time.”

[That is, no such thing as personal identity can be proved to exist.]

Three positions are clearly established from this fair specimen of Mr. Hume's philosophy ; and that of his followers.

1st. That DAVID HUME was absolutely deranged,—being a melancholy victim of *monomania*, when he wrote his *Philosophical Essays*.

2d That the ‘ intellectual sceptics’ of the Hume school, are as much deranged, and the victims of a melancholy *monomania*, as was their master ; and they are, therefore, beyond the reach of reason.

3d. Like the *delirium tremens* of the drunkard, this moral insanity is wilfully superinduced on himself, by the sceptic : and as certainly as *delirium tremens*, brought on by the drunkard's criminal conduct, does destroy the drunkard's life : so certainly does this moral insanity, superinduced by the sceptic's misbelief and wickedness, destroy the sceptic's soul by the second death !

## NOTE D. p. 355.

It is pretty generally known to those who have had the chance of reading a chapter of the *secret* history of ROBERT BURNS, his fatal intemperance, and his last moments,—that this is a graphical description of the mode of his final exit ! I learned it, more than thirty years ago, from a gentleman of Dumfries, in whom I had perfect confidence. And time can never efface the impression which his narrative made on my youthful mind.—Young Robert Burns, and I, by the way, were classmates *umquile*, in the university of Glasgow.