

*Reverend Mr. Heston, with
the friends, members
of the 'Fellowship'*

MISSIONARY

S E R M O N,

DELIVERED

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BEFORE

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OF

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

IN THE

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BY JAMES INGLIS, D. D.

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MISSIONARY SERMON.

*“As ye would that men should do to you,
do ye also to them likewise.”*

LUKE vi. 31.

IT is not surprising that mankind have concurred in applying to this precept the title of the “golden rule.” So excellent is it in itself; so perfectly equitable; so thoroughly intelligible; and, withal, so well calculated for common and universal practice; that it can never be appreciated too highly, or too much admired. It shines as a star in the front of that moral system which has the wisdom of the Father for its Authour.

That which, in the text, is a positive direction, has often been made to assume a prohibitory form. The Authour of the Apocryphal book of Tobit, which has some good things among many absurdities, delivers it in this form; “Do *that* to no man which thou hatest;” (*Tob. 4. 15.*) and, in popular use, the precept frequently wears a negative dress, What thou wouldst not that another should do to thee, do not thou to him. The principle, however, is, undoubtedly the same; although I cannot but observe that the manner in which it has pleased our Lord to convey it, in the text, and in the corresponding passage of Matthew’s gospel, (*Matt. 7.*) is more liberal, extensive, and universal. You may, possibly, be thought to comply with the mere prohibition, when you refrain from giving offence; but compliance with the commandment, under its direct, impulsive, and more immediately

operative character, includes a generous and active virtue. Perform every thing that you are obligated to perform ; and I do not perceive how you can avoid abstaining from whatever militates with your obligations. Do habitually to others as you would have them to do to you ; and it is impossible but that you will as industriously avoid that conduct towards others which you would have them avoid with reference to yourselves.

This, like most of the statutes of Christ's kingdom, is binding upon the *heart*, as well as the *life* ; upon the *affections*, as well as the *deportment* ; upon our *thoughts* as well as upon our *deeds* and our *conversation*. You expect your neighbour to be kindly disposed towards you : you think it no more than just and equitable that he should be so : you complain if he be not so : you complain if sympathy do not prompt him to comfort, aid, and relieve you, with an influence as constraining as the sentiment of duty. I do not apprehend that you carry your expectations to an unwarrantable point. For, certainly, benevolent feelings are incitements to actions truly kind on which dependence may justifiably be placed. But out of your own mouth be you judged. Complaining of indifference in others, banish it from your own breasts. Deprecating unfavourable opinions and unkind hearts in *them*, be you, in your turn, kindly-affectioned.

Virtue, however, is never found in *extremes*. Duty has its limits, the definition of which should be one of the first objects of moral and religious enquiry. If we may judge from the references frequently made, in conversation, to this precept of our Saviour, there are few rules of conduct more strangely misunderstood.

There is a golden mean in which alone the right application of this golden rule is to be traced. Be it our endeavour to ascertain it.

Jesus Christ does not erect *simple inclination* into a standard of conduct. Perhaps there is no rule more unsafe than inclination. Inclination is mutable. Inclination is capricious. Inclination is partial; selfish; animal: too often terminating in illicit objects; too often pursuing those of a less exceptionable cast with forbidden zeal; too often bidding defiance to every restraint of conscience and of principle. Must you, then, meet the wishes of another, for no better reason than because you are not unconscious that they are your own; although these wishes may lead both *them* and *you* to disobey the laws of God, or to offend against prudence, justice, honour, truth, benevolence, or piety? If so; then down with all discrimination between right and wrong: let the sword of judgment be broken: let charity become uncharitable: and henceforth let all things happen alike to all. The inclination of the street-beggar will lead him to be dissatisfied with any thing short of ten times the amount of what he receives: therefore, because, were you in his place, you would possess his inclination, lavish an unlimited bounty on him, however he may abuse it, and however it might, by a more judicious distribution, cheer the gloom of meritorious poverty. The inclination of the felon is that the magistrate may pardon him: therefore, because the magistrate, were he the felon, and the felon, the magistrate, would be equally inclined to escape the sentence of the law, let him, without hesitation, issue the pardon, and turn the criminal loose to endanger the

lives, the fortunes, and the peace, of honest men. The pernicious absurdity of all this is too prominent to remain invisible. Jesus Christ, then, does not erect *simple inclination* into a standard of conduct.

But it is otherwise with *inclination grounded in understanding, and guided by enlightened conscience*.— Let a man sincerely endeavour, through grace, to divest his mind of every improper influence. Let him maturely examine the nature, qualities, and merits, of every proposition suggested by his own propensities, or made to him by others, before he acts upon it. Let him diligently and manfully employ his moral sense—his conscience—in separating between good and evil; not simply in human conduct in the general, but in the particular case which may come under his regard. Let him compare this case—this proposition—the suggestions of his conscience, and the notices and workings of his mind, respecting it—with God's holy word.— Whatever, after this, he may consistently *claim* from others, it undeniably becomes his duty not to *withhold* from them. In the intercourse of human life; in all the relations of society, political, religious, or domestic; no man has a right to demand of another; no man is under obligation to exhibit or perform towards another; any one office; any one attention; any one act; any one favour; which understanding, conscience, and the word of God, do not decide to be “true—decent—just—pure—lovely—of good report—virtuous—and praiseworthy.” Conduct, that will not stand this test; deeds, prompted by inclinations which rest on any ground inferiour to this; the rule of Christ, so far from enjoining, disclaims.

Again—the diversity of men's conditions originates a diversity of obligations. In similar situations, it may readily be admitted that, for the most part, obligations are similar. But every variety, or mutation, in the *one*, may well be supposed to induce a corresponding variety, or mutation, in *the other*. In this view, certainly, *you* may have a claim on an individual which *he* may not have on *you*. It may be proper for *you* to adopt one line of conduct towards *him*, and for *him* to adopt a *different*, and, it may be, *opposite* line of conduct towards *you*. Can you suppose that the father's treatment of his child, for example, is to be determined by a rule precisely the same as that which regulates a child's deportment towards his father? Are there no duties peculiar to the magistrate, with reference to the citizen; the advocate, with reference to the client; the pastor, with reference to the people of his charge; which cannot, in the nature of things, be required of the citizen; of the client; of the congregation? And, on the other hand, are not these under *special* obligations, altogether foreign to the respective conditions of the magistrate; the advocate; the pastor?

From what has been said we may collect that, in our treatment of each other, we are to regulate ourselves by a higher principle than blind inclination: that it is incumbent on us to act understandingly: conscientiously; and in obedience to the instructions of our holy faith: that we should pay a suitable respect to the relation which *we* may sustain to *others*; and that which *others* may sustain to *us*: that it is proper for us not only to abstain from inflicting on men those injuries which

we would deprecate in them towards us, but, also, to contribute as effectively to *their* comfort as we would expect *them* to contribute to *ours* : in a word ; that there ought to be an enlarged mutuality, as well in kind affection as in generous exertion.

When such a spirit animates the intercourse of man with man, the precept of Jesus Christ is obeyed : “ As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.” And, in effect, my Brethren, does not this golden rule amount to what an Apostle has denominated “ the royal law ;” “ Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself ?” — (*James 2.*)

It is no difficult matter to demonstrate that this precept is supported by reason and the nature of things.

By nature, all men are upon a perfect equality.— Divine Providence is pleased to introduce distinctions which, at first, have no existence. But these distinctions, when introduced, are few and unimportant, in comparison of the characteristics which remain common to all. All may not be alike wealthy ; all not alike outwardly honourable ; all not alike powerful ; all not alike ingenious ; all not alike scientifick : but all have intellect ; all have conscience ; all have bodily faculties ; animal properties ; passions, appetites, affections ; and all spiritual interests. On what plea, then, can we claim such a superiority over any of our Brethren, as shall exempt us from the law that imposes its obligations upon them ? How inexcusable that affectation of an inequality disavowed by nature, which is implied in our disregarding the precept in the text ? Do we boast

of our dignity, as human beings? But *they* are human beings. To be consistent, then; let us venerate the dignity of our nature wherever we find it. Or, on the other hand, do the injuries, or affronts, which we inflict, lose part of their atrocity in the circumstance that they on whom we inflict them are only obscure men? But still they are men. They may not be so elevated, or so distinguished, as we may be: but still they are men; men of like passions with ourselves. And let us ask ourselves this question; “Who made thee to differ” from these? Surely the superior advantages which we may possess should induce us to become ensamples to them in every benevolent disposition—in every generous action.

This is one source of demonstration. The precept of our Saviour is supported by reason and the nature of things; because, by the constitution of nature, *all men are EQUAL.*

But mankind, equal by the constitution of nature, derive a common existence from the same origin. “The rich and poor meet together; the Lord is the maker of them all.” (*Prov. 22.*) “He accepteth not the persons of Princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor, for they are all the work of his hands.” (*Job 34.*)—Hence that sentiment put into the mouth of Job; “If I did despise the cause of my man-servant, or of my maid-servant, when they contended with me; what then, shall *I* do when God riseth up? and when he visiteth, what shall I answer him? Did not he that made me, make him? and did not one fashion us?” (*Job 31.*)

“ God giveth to all life, and breath, and all things ; and hath made *of one blood* all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth.” (*Acts 17.*) As we have the same Creator—the same Heavenly Father—so have we the same earthly descent—the same fleshly parentage. Time has effaced the record of our lineage.— Separation has estranged the different branches of the great family from each other. Climates and political usages have varied the form, the complexion, and the condition, of its members. But we are all the offspring of that one Adam, who fell by sinning against God, and transmitted his nature, corrupted by the fall, through all the successive generations of his posterity, to be restored by “ the second Adam, the Lord from Heaven.”— Thus, having the same blood in our veins, is it more than becoming that we ~~should~~ reciprocate good offices ? that there should be amongst us a community of good wishes ? that we should descend from the imaginary eminences of an unnatural pride, and occupy an equal ground in interchanges of social and benevolent accommodation ? Thus, “ having all one Father ; one good and merciful God having created us ;” (*Mal. 2*) is it fit that we should “ deal ” iniquitously, or selfishly, ” every man against his brother ?” Is it fit that we should “ hide ourselves from our own flesh ?”

This is another source of demonstration. The precept of our Saviour is supported by reason and the nature of things ; because mankind derive their existence from one and the same origin : one, and the same, Father in Heaven : one, and the same, Father upon earth.

It is not more certain that the blood which circulates through the veins of every human being is derived from the same fountain, than that the same precious blood of the second Adam, the Lord from Heaven, is the fountain of redemption to all. My Brethren, I am not about to lead you into the mazes of controversy. I have no intention to trouble you with enquiries concerning the extent of Christ's atonement. These are unnecessary speculations. At least, for my present purpose they are unnecessary. It is sufficient for me to know that "God so loved *the world*, as to give for it his only be-gotten Son, that *whosoever* believeth on him should not perish but have eternal life:" that "God sent not his Son into the world, to condemn the world, but that *the world* through him might be saved:" that the nature worn by our Redeemer is the nature common to us all: that he has commanded the Pastors of the Church to "preach the gospel unto every creature:" (*Matthew* 28) that were I to visit the farthest region of this peopled globe, and salute the first of my species whom I should meet with the gladdening name and doctrines of Jesus, he would have a right to embrace that Jesus as his Lord; it would be his duty to receive and rest upon that Jesus as his Saviour: And, if, bidding him farewell, until we meet in Eternity, I were to shape my course to regions warmed by other Suns, and fanned by other breezes, and there address the same gospel to any other individual I should meet, the *same* would be *his* right; the *same* would be *his* duty. Allow me but this one principle of Scripture, and of common sense, and let who will debate.

My design in these remarks is simply this; to shew

that the Christian atonement is so far, and in such sense, universal, as to found for mankind an additional, and a very powerful, claim on each other's benevolence and charity; on each other's justice and equity. Ill, surely, does it become those, for whom, without respect of persons, the same great and free salvation is provided, to accumulate mutual wrongs and offences. By narrow, selfish, and partial, dispositions; by ungenerous and iniquitous actions; by doing as you would not be done by; or, by refusing to do what an exchange of situations would infallibly incite you to expect and demand of others; would you "destroy" him "for whom Christ died?" Would you interrupt that peace which the Redeemer bequeathed him? Would you bring *that* soul into danger, by causing it to offend, which professes, or is invited to profess, "the like precious faith with yourselves, through the righteousness of God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ?" (*2 Pet. 1. 1.*) Forbid it, every sentiment of gratitude to the Deliverer of Mankind! Forbid it, every ingenuous feeling of the Christian heart! Forbid it, every hope of that better country where Charity and Righteousness reign with the Redeemer on his throne!

This precept of divine wisdom I might exemplify in a variety of particulars. I might lead you to the lonely house of poverty; to the desolated chambers of the widow and the fatherless; to the sick bed; to the cells of the prison; to the far distant land where the exile wanders friendless and forgotten; to countless scenes of pain and grief and deprivation and necessity. I might ask you in imagination to make all this distress your own. I might call on you to apply, in all these

cases, THE MASTER'S words, "As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise." Your own sensibilities would aid me in enforcing compliance with this heavenly precept. It is a subject not easily exhausted ; but time, and the special duty of the evening, forbid me to enlarge on it. 'Tis not for the bodies, or the temporal wants of men, so much as for their souls, and their spiritual necessities, that we claim to night the operation of this rule. 'Tis not the poor and the miserable and the blind and the naked of this world who now say, as ye would that we should do to you, were we prosperous, and ye in wretchedness, so do ye to us. But 'tis the poor and the miserable and the blind and the naked of God's kingdom, and of nations devoid of that knowledge which is life eternal, who thus demand your pious consideration.

Yes, my brethren ; among those for whom Christ died there are multitudes destitute of the ordinances of his gospel : Among those whose nature the Redeemer wears, and in whose wants and wretchedness he sympathises, there are multitudes destitute of the light of his gospel.

There are multitudes destitute of the ordinances of the gospel.

These ordinances are the believer's consolation. They are his strength. They are his soul's nutriment. Without them his faith languishes ; his hopes become obscured ; his charity depressed and contracted. No person acquainted with the constitution of our nature

can be ignorant of the power of habit. It was to preserve the habit of religion in the soul, that God has been pleased to institute means of grace, outward rites, and the solemnities of the sanctuary. He has commanded his ministers to preach the gospel, with diligence and earnestness, in season and out of season. He has required the people not to forsake the assembling of themselves together ; and has led them to regard a famine of his word as the sorest affliction with which they can be visited. We doubt not that he may keep the vital spark unextinguished in the elect bosom, however remote from the sacramental institutions, and even from the sound of the preacher's voice. But when is it that you behold this vital spark bursting into a blaze of fervent piety, bright devotion, and powerful zeal—a flaming sacrifice of love, acceptable to God, and diffusively useful to mankind ? Is it not when this vital spark is fanned by the breath of social prayer and praise—by the commingled hosannahs and hallelujahs of adoring crowds ? Is it not when the heart and the conscience are quickened by the enunciation of saving doctrine in the words of integrity and soberness ? Is it not, when sitting together at the same table, of a once expiring, but now living and triumphant, Lord, believers keep the feast of charity, with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth ?

The ordinances of the gospel are of peculiar importance in the eye of the *Christian* PARENT. The offspring of believers are the children of the Church. It is *her* high and interesting province to watch over their ripening graces ; to feed them with wisdom and under-

standing ; to caution them against the seductive influence of a world which lieth in wickedness ; and to establish them in the knowledge and love of the God of their Fathers. The experience of ages has tested the indescribable value of that maternal care of the Church which extends her catechetical instruction to the young, and exercises over their tender age a salutary, though gentle, discipline.

I feel happy in the recollection that I am addressing a people highly favoured of the Lord ; a people surrounded by a light of no common splendour ; a people possessing line upon line, and precept upon precept ; a people in the midst of whom the ministry of reconciliation is ably, faithfully, and painfully, accomplished ; while Temples of the living God, in almost every avenue of this great city, throw open their gates from day to day, to receive the repenting sinner ; the humble suppliant ; the anxious enquirer ; the fervent adorer. But, for a moment, imagine your situation to be the reverse of what, happily, it is. Imagine the gates of these temples to be closed. Imagine that ministry of reconciliation to be silent ; the lips of prophecy to be sealed ; the glad tidings of life and immortality heard no longer, or rendered unimpressive by frequent and protracted intermissions of publick instruction. Imagine your children growing up untutored by the Church ; aliens from her holy culture and discipline ; exposed to the enticements of sinners ; the tempting invitations of pleasure ; the power of Satan ; the deceitfulness of the heart ; the combined influence of all those evil principles which operate but too successfully on our fallen nature, and against which the

young and the inconsiderate are, in general, peculiarly averse from struggling. You know something of the doctrine of Christ. You know something of the value of his blood. You know that, without faith in his name, there is, *ordinarily*, no salvation; and that, without the frequent hearing of his name, this faith, generally speaking, must be weak and sterile. You cannot, therefore, but deplore the perils to which the destitution of evangelical ordinances exposes your rising hopes—that offspring dear to you as your existence. You cannot but look forward with painful apprehension to the possibility of their ultimate and everlasting defection from the ways of God.

That a state of things not remote from what has been imagined may exist, I call *you* to witness, O vales and mountains of my country, untrodden for successive years, with but few exceptions, by the feet of those who bear the ministry of peace! Desolate villages, rarely responsive to the social acclamation of praise to the Saviour God! I call *you* to witness, congregations, once fair and promising; now enfeebled and impoverished; or broken and dispersed! I point *you*, my Brethren, to many of our frontier settlements, and to not a few in the interior, where the outward privileges of the gospel, so influential on its inward graces, are interruptedly, if ever, enjoyed.

Imagining yourselves then, to be thus circumstanced, imagine, farther, a people within your knowledge, and with whom you have an intercourse more or less frequent; a people exalted to Heaven in point of religi-

ous privilege ; possessed of means to help you ; enjoying blessings and advantages, in things spiritual, which they have the power to extend to you, but *do not*, although sufficiently apprized of your necessities and your helplessness. Would you not accuse them of unchristian selfishness ? Would you not say to them, why hide yourselves from your own flesh ? Why destroy your brethren for whom Christ died ? Would you not look for commiseration and relief ? You would ; and justifiably too : and none would have a right to condemn the voice of your complainings against those who should repulse you. You would ask, and the answer would be heard at the day of judgment, how dwelleth the love of God in that heart which pitied not the sheep scattered without a shepherd ; which withheld the bread of life from them that were ready to perish ?

Here, then, apply the Master's precept ; " As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise."

I have been thus long in insisting on this duty of building up the walls of Jerusalem, repairing her breaches, and cultivating her waste places, because I consider it to be of no inferiour importance in the Missionary scheme.

But, if there be multitudes destitute of the ordinances of the gospel, there are multitudes, yet farther, *destitute of the* LIGHT OF THE GOSPEL. This is a fact too obvious to require evidence. But what is the gospel ? What is its light ? What is there peculiar in it,

that makes it a pre-eminent blessing to society and to individuals?

It were easy to shew the benign influence of the gospel upon the civil and social intercourse of men. It bestows a conciliating polish upon human manners. It excites and cherishes an inward benevolence which generally expresses itself in outward courtesy. It smooths the asperities of passion ; qualifies the collisions of interest and feeling ; reduces the pride of the scornful ; moderates the irritation of the impatient. It makes the superior condescending ; the inferior respectful ; the equal just, generous, friendly, and sincere. It throws a certain dignity around the relations of life. It imparts an interest to domestick scenes. It elevates the wife to her proper station in the husband's respect. It secures to the child a double portion of parental care. It forms the heart to sympathy, to pity, and to kindness. It is the nurse of freedom ; the leveller of iniquitous distinctions and partialities ; the most powerful spring of patriotism ; and prolific source of liberal action.

Waving, however, considerations of this nature, for the present ; I will take a higher ground in asserting the excellence of the glorious gospel of the blessed God.

The gospel is a most perfect system of religion ; embracing all the salvation, and all the desire, of a soul awakened from the sleep of indifference, and excited to seek after God. It communicates every needful information respecting the nature, character, perfections, and

ways of him who made us. It instructs us in the purest and most acceptable worship of him. It affords a system of practical holiness, embracing every excellence, and excluding every appearance of moral obliquity. It provides for our natural incompetency to that which is good through the grace of the Holy Spirit. It assures us that, if we seek this grace, we shall find it ; if we ask for it, we shall receive it. This divine help, not more clearly promised than liberally imparted, gives might to the feeblest resolution, and lays the tempting “ powers of iniquity ” vanquished at our feet.

Above all—the gospel, finding man a guilty creature, makes provision for his pardon, upon terms just and reasonable in themselves, and honourable to God. Remission of sins to the penitent presents itself on every page of the evangelical covenant. The most atrocious offences leave no stain which genuine contrition shall not obliterate. Seventy times seven fold guilt cannot damn the soul that bends to the dust in holy penitence. *Not* that repentance possesses any thing in the nature of satisfaction. This is no doctrine of the gospel. On the contrary, it is the highest recommendation of the gospel that it reveals *that* “ one sacrifice for sin which perfects forever those who are sanctified.” Once has *this* been offered, and there remains *no other*. And it is this very sacrifice that makes repentance acceptable with our merciful judge. “ The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.” “ If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous ; and he is the propitiation for our sins ; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.”

The gospel of the Son of God brings life and immortality to light. Where revelation is unknown, darkness and doubt hang over the grave. Or, if men apprehend that they may exist in other regions, it is that they may enter upon occupations and pleasures altogether unsuitable to the dignity, and inadequate to the wants, of an intellectual being. But our holy faith discloses, to a sufficient extent, the condition and pursuits of men hereafter. It speaks of a period when dead sinners shall arise to shame, contempt, and tortures : of a period when the mouldering ashes of the just, quickened by the spirit of Almighty God, shall “ awake, and put on their beautiful garments ; ” when “ the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself. ” It speaks of a blackness of darkness reserved for the wicked ; of an everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, ^{and} from the glory of his power, to which the ungodly, and the iniquitous ; the blasphemer, and the oppressour ; the idolator, and the murderer ; are alike irreversibly condemned. It speaks of a rest which remains for the meek and uncomplaining victims of human pride, resentment, treachery, and oppression, in the bosom of the Redeemer ; an eternity of perfect and unmixed enjoyment.

Such, my Brethren, as you well know, is the gospel : such the grace which you have received ; and, I will hope, have not received in vain.

But suppose yourselves to be without the knowledge and guidance of this holy faith. Suppose your-

selves to be aliens from the commonwealth of Israel ; strangers from the covenants of promise ; without God in the world ; without Christ ; and without hope. Suppose yourselves in ignorance respecting points of the most awful moment ; wandering in the gloom of superstition ; filled with all unrighteousness ; unto every good work reprobate ; sojourning in a wilderness of sins and pains and griefs and diversified wretchedness ; a region of the shadow of death, on which the Sun of righteousness has never yet arisen with healing in his wings ; a desolate abode of horrors, unvisited by God's consoling spirit. Suppose yourselves placed on the connecting point between time and eternity ; the vital current fast ebbing away ; the night-clouds of death gathering around, pregnant with all the miseries of suspense and dreadful surmise ; about to present your disembodied spirits before the Judge of quick and dead, followed by works of envy, hatred, malice, and uncharitableness—works of vengeance, cruelty, and treachery—works of impiety and inhumanity.

Go to the wilds of the roaming Savage, and confess that I have not required of you to suppose vain things. In *his* habitual disregard of temperance and of truth ; in *his* selfishness and cunning ; in *his* indiscriminate and pitiless murder of old age, infancy, and beauty ; in his vile and miserable life ; and in his brutish death ; confess the deplorable state of nations not evangelized.

Suppose yet farther, then, that, not very remote from your wretched habitations, live a people who can

communicate to you a reforming knowledge ; a doctrine which is according to piety : who can guide you to the true object and right manner of religious worship : who can teach you sobriety, justice, and godliness : a people possessed of a religion, the lively faith of which would succour you with supernatural strength drawn from the highest heavens ; which would tranquilize your consciences with the assured hope of pardon ; and disclose to your departing spirits a better and a nobler world, where “ grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life.”

To a people possessed of a treasure like this, and indisposed to admit you to a participation of it, might there not be imputed a principle the reverse of Christian charity ? Might they not be reminded of the participation of all men alike in the nature assumed by the “ *Word*” when he was made flesh and dwelt amongst us ? Is it not a permissible enquiry, how dwelleth the love of God in that heart which pitied not the benighted Heathen ; which suffered any within its reach to perish for lack of *that* knowledge which is life eternal ? The enquiry is not only permissible, but pertinent: and a voice from the bosom of the clouds of judgment ; from the midst of the thunderings and lightnings of the last day ; will answer—He who loveth not his Brother, loveth not *me*.

Here, *agam*, then, apply the Master’s precept ; “ As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.”

My Brethren ; the connection of what has been said with the business immediately before us is so ob-

vious that I am in doubt whether I ought to detain you by one word more from the execution of your liberal devisings. Allow me simply to remind you that you are called this night to minister to the consolation of believers, and the conversion of Infidels ; the consolation and relief of christians, destitute of the means of grace : the conversion and amelioration of Pagans, immersed in error, darkness, impiety, and vice. You are called to the honourable distinction of being workers together with God, in the in-gathering of his Elect. We ask you not to relinquish your peaceful homes—the domestick charities—the blandishments of social life—that you may encounter the anxieties ; the hardships ; the opposition of a mission. We beg you to deduct a portion of the bounties you receive at the hand of a magnificent Providence, and transfer it to those who are desirous of forsaking their homes—of divorcing themselves from those charities and blandishments ; of enduring this opposition ; these hardships and anxieties ; that they may “ preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.” (*Eph. 3, 8.*) We invite you to bring, this night, to the altar, a sacrifice well pleasing to God ; an offering honourable to yourselves ; a gift that may be everlastingly profitable to the souls of myriads.

Should you find reason to believe, on a dying bed, that, by the holy benefaction of this night, you had effectually carried the Christian salvation to but *one* soul which, otherwise, had perished, would it not take from the bitterness of death ? Would it not give confidence to the hope of glory ?

O Saviour, in that eternity, where the Spirits of the Just see thee as thou art, grant *us* but the *memory* of these deeds of love ; and be the *honour* of them *thine* !

FINIS.