

# WATCHMAN OF THE SOUTH.

Dedicated to the promotion of practical piety, the diffusion of religious and general intelligence, and the propagation of the distinctive tenets and institutions of the Presbyterian Church.

B. R. WREN, PRINTER.

WILLIAM S. PLUMER, EDITOR.

REAR OF RANDOLPH & CO'S BOOKSTORE, MAIN-ST.

VOL. I.

RICHMOND, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 1838.

No. 24.

The Office of the WATCHMAN OF THE SOUTH is at the corner of F and MAYO streets.

## TERMS.

The WATCHMAN OF THE SOUTH is published weekly on Thursday, at \$3 00 per annum, payable in advance, or \$3 50 if payment is delayed six months. All bank notes, current in any of the States where subscribers reside, will be received in payment for the paper. Virginia or United States bank notes will be a convenience to the Editor.

All Ministers and Elders friendly to the paper are authorized to act as agents. Promptness is confidently expected in all agents.

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## DIRECTIONS FOR PASTORAL VISITS.

AN ESTEEMED YOUNG MINISTER has written to us urgently asking for an original article on the subject of Pastoral Visits. Instead of this, we propose to give him the views of the pious Cotton Mather on the same subject. We trust our readers will all feel that they have an interest in understanding this subject, and not forget that if ministers ought to visit them, they ought to make their pastors welcome, and not hinder the profitability of their visits by idle conversation or otherwise. Our author says:—

You may resolve to visit all the families belonging to your congregation; taking one afternoon in a week for that purpose; and it may be proper to give previous notice to each family, that you intend at such a time to visit them. On visiting a family, you may endeavor, with addresses as forcible and respectful as possible, to treat with every person particularly about their everlasting interests.

First, you may discourse with the elder people upon such points as you think most proper with them. Especially charge them to maintain family prayer; and obtain their promise of establishing it, if it has been hitherto neglected; yea, pray with them, that you may show them how to pray, as well as obtain their purposes for it. You may likewise press upon them the care of instructing their children and servants in the holy religion of our Saviour, to bring them up for him.

If any with whom you should have spoken are absent, you may frequently leave one or two solemn texts of the sacred scripture, which you may think most suitable for them; desiring some one present affectionately to remember you to them, and from you to recommend to them that oracle of God.

You may then call for the children and servants; and putting to them such questions of the catechism as you think fit, you may, from the answers, make lively applications to them, for engaging them to the fear of God. You may frequently obtain from them promises relating to secret prayer, reading of the scriptures, and obedience to their parents and masters. You may also frequently set before them the proposals of the new covenant, after you have labored for their conviction and awakening; till with floods of tears they expressly declare their consent to it, and their acceptance of it.

Some of the younger people you may order to bring their Bibles, and read to you from thence two or three verses, to which you may direct them: this will try, whether or not they can read well. You may then encourage them to think on such things as you remark from the passage, and never to forget those "faithful sayings" of God. You may sometimes leave with them some serious question, which you may tell them they shall not answer to you, but to themselves; such as the following: "What have I been doing ever since I came into the world, about the great errand upon which God sent me into the world?" "If God should now call me out of the world, what would become of me throughout eternal ages?" "Have I ever yet by faith carried a perishing soul to my only Saviour, both for righteousness and salvation?"

You will enjoy a most wonderful presence of God with you, in this undertaking; and will seldom leave a family without having observed many tears of devotion shed by all sorts of persons in it. As you can seldom visit more than four or five families in an afternoon, the work may be as laborious as any part of your ministry.

My son, I advise you to set a special value on that part of your ministry, which is to be discharged in pastoral visits. You will not only do good, but also get good, by your conversation with all sorts of persons, in thus visiting them "from house to house." And you will never more "walk in the Spirit," than when you thus walk among your flock, to do what good you can amongst them.

In your visits an incredible deal of good may be done, by distributing little books of piety. You may, without much expense, be furnished with such books to suit all persons and circumstances; books for the old and for the young—for persons under afflictions or deserts—for persons who are under the power of particular vices—for those who neglect domestic religion—for sea-faring persons—for the erroneous—for those whom you would quicken and prepare to approach the table of the Lord—for those who are about to have their children baptised; and catechisms for the ignorant. You may remarkably enforce your admonitions, by leaving suitable books in the hands of those with whom you have conversed; you may give them to understand, that you would be still considered as conversing with them by these books, after you have left them. And in this way you may speak more than you have time to do in any personal interview; yea, sometimes, more than you would wish to do. By good books a salt of piety is scattered about a neighborhood.

Pastors, uphold and cherish good schools in your towns! And be prevailed upon occasionally to visit the schools. That holy man, Mr. Thomas White, expressed a desire, "That able and zealous ministers would sometimes preach at the schools; because preaching is the converting ordinance; and the children will be obliged to hear with more attention in the school than in the public congregation; and the ministers might here condescend to such expressions as might work most upon them, and yet not be so fit for a public congregation." I have read the following account of one, who was awakened by this advice to act accordingly: "At certain times he successively visited the schools. When he went to a school, he first offered a prayer for the children, as much adapted to their condition, as he could make it. Then he went through the catechism, or as much

of it as he thought necessary; making the several children repeat the several answers: but he divided the questions, that every article in the answers might be understood by them; expecting them to answer, Yes, or No, to each of these divisions. He also put to them such questions, as would make them see and own their duties, and often express a resolution to perform them. Then he preached a short sermon to them, exceedingly plain, on some suitable scripture, with all possible ingenuity and earnestness, in order to excite their attentive regard. After this, he singled out a number of scholars, perhaps eight or ten, and bid each of them turn to a certain scripture, which he made them read to the whole school giving them to see, by his brief remarks upon it, that it contained something which it particularly concerned children to take notice of. Then he concluded with a short prayer, for a blessing on the school and on the tutors."

While we are upon the subject of visiting, I would observe that you will not fail to visit the poor as well as the rich; and often mention the condition of the poor, in your conversation with the rich. Keep, sir, a list of them. Recollect that although the wind does not feed any one, yet that it turns the mill which grinds the corn, the food of the poor. When conversing with the rich, you may do this for the poor who are on your list. In visiting the poor, you will take occasion to dispense your alms among them. These alms, you will, with as much contrivance as possible, use as vehicles for conveying to them the admonitions of piety; yea, means and instruments of obtaining from them some engagements to perform certain exercises of piety. All ministers are not alike furnished for alms, but all should be disposed for them. They that have small families, or large interests, ought to be shining examples of liberality to the poor, and pour down their alms upon them, like the showers of heaven. All should endeavor to do what they can in this way. What says Nazianzen of his reverend father's alms-deeds? They will find that the more they do (provided it be done with discretion) the more they are able to do; the loaves will multiply in the distribution. Sirs, this bounty of yours to the poor will procure a wonderful esteem and success to your ministry. "Suadet lingua, jubet vita." It will be an irrefragable demonstration that you believe what you speak concerning all the duties of christianity, but particularly those of liberality, a faithful discharge of your stewardship, and a mind weaned from the love of this world; it will demonstrate your belief of a future state; it will vindicate you from the imputation of a worldly man; it will embolden and fortify you, when you call upon others to do good, and to abound in those sacrifices with which God is well pleased. Et sic exempla parantur!

Finally, After all the generous essays and labors to do good that may fill your lives, your people will probably treat you with ingratitude.—Your salaries will be meaner than those at Geneva. They will neglect you; they will oppress you; they will withhold from you what they have engaged, and you have expected. You have now one more opportunity to do good, and so to glorify your Saviour. Your patience, O ye tried servants of God, your patience will do it wonderfully! To "bear evil" is to "do good." The more patient you are under ill usage, the more you exhibit a glorious Christ to your people, in your conformity to your adorable Saviour. The more conformed you are to him, the more prepared you are, perhaps, for some amendment of your condition in this world, most certainly for the rewards of the heavenly world, when you shall appear before the Lord, who says, "I know thy works and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience."

It was said of Ignatius, "that he carried Christ about with him in his heart;" and this I will say, if to represent a glorious Christ to the view, the love and admiration of all people be the grand intention of your life; if you are desirous to be a star to lead men to Christ; if you are exquisitely studious, that the holiness and yet the gentleness of a glorious Christ may shine in your conversation; if in your public discourses you do with rapture bring in the mention of a glorious Christ in every paragraph, and on every occasion where he is to be spoken of; and if in your private conversation you contrive to insinuate something of his glories and praises, wherever it may be decently introduced; finally, if when you find that a glorious Christ is the more considered and acknowledged by your means, it fills you with, "joy unspeakable and full of glory," and you exclaim, "Lord, this is my desired happiness!" Truly, you then live to good purpose, you "do good" emphatically!

There was a worthy minister, whom the great Cranmer designed for preferment, and he gave this reason of his design—"He seeks nothing, he longs for nothing, he dreams about nothing, but Jesus Christ." Verily, such "men of Christ" are "men of God;" they are the favorites of Heaven, and shall be favored with opportunities to do good above any men in the world; they are the men whom the King of heaven will delight to honor, and they are the *Gaons* of christianity.

## GEMS FOR CHRISTIAN MINISTERS.

Let your constant aim be to humble the sinner, to exalt the Saviour, and to promote holiness.

Have blank books, in which note with your pen, the notable things which you meet with in reading.—*C. Mather.*

Let usefulness, usefulness to the souls of men, be your grand and perpetual aim.

*Dr. H. F. Burder.*

For the Watchman of the South.

DR. ALEXANDER'S LETTERS.—No. XV.

COUNSELS OF THE AGED TO THE YOUNG.

My Dear Young Friends:—  
XVIII. Cherish and diligently cultivate genuine piety. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."

Early piety is the most beautiful spectacle in the world. Without piety all your morality, however useful to men, is but a shadow. It is a branch without a root. Religion, above every other acquisition, enriches and adorns the mind of man; and it is especially congenial with the natural susceptibilities of the youthful mind. The vivacity and versatility of youth, the tenderness and ardor of the affections in this age, exhibit piety to the best advantage. How delightful is it, to see the bosoms of the young swelling with the lively emotions of pure devotion! How beautiful is the tear of penitence or of holy joy, which glistens in the eye of tender youth! Think not, dear young people, that true religion will detract from your happiness. It is a reproach cast upon your Maker, to indulge such a thought. It cannot be. A God of goodness never required anything of his creatures, which did not tend to their true felicity. Piety may indeed lead you to exchange the pleasures of the theatre and ball-room, for the purer joys of the church and oratory. It may turn your attention from books of mere idle fancy and fiction, to the word of God, which to a regenerated soul, is found to be sweeter than honey, and more excellent than the choicest gold; but this will add to your happiness, rather than

diminish it. We would then affectionately and earnestly exhort and entreat you, to "remember now your Creator in the days your youth." This will be your best security against all the dangers and temptations to which you are exposed; this will secure to you "the favor of God which is life, and his loving kindness which is better than life." Delay not your conversion; every day is lost time, which is not spent in the service of God. Besides, procrastination has proved ruinous to many. Eternity is at hand; the judgment day must be met, and how can we appear there, without piety? This is our only preparation and passport for heaven. Dear youth, be wise, and secure an inheritance among the saints in light. God invites you to be reconciled. Christ extends his arms of mercy to secure you. Angels are waiting to rejoice at your conversion, and to become your daily and nightly guardians. The doors of the church will be open to receive you. The ministers of the gospel, and all the company of believers, will hail your entrance, and will welcome you to the precious ordinances of God's house. And, finally, remember that, "now is the accepted time and the day of salvation."

XIX. Seek divine direction and aid, by incessant, fervent prayer. You need grace to help you every day. Your own wisdom is folly, your own strength weakness, and your own righteousness altogether insufficient. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." But if you lack wisdom, you are permitted to ask; and you have a gracious promise, that you shall receive. Whatever we need will be granted, if we humbly and believingly ask for it. "Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you." "Be careful for nothing, but in every thing with prayer and supplication; with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God."

Faith and prayer are our chief resource under all the various and heavy afflictions of this life. When all other refuges fail, God will hide his people who seek Him in his secret pavilion, and shelter them under the shadow of his wings. Prayer is essential to the existence and growth of the spiritual life. It is the breath of the new man. By this means he obtains quick relief from innumerable evils; and draws down from heaven blessings of the richest and sweetest kind. Possess your minds fully of the persuasion, that prayer is efficacious, when offered in faith and with importunity, to obtain the blessings which we need. God has made himself known as a hearer of prayer; yea, he has promised that we shall have, as far as may be for his glory and our good, whatever we ask. The most important events may be brought about by prayer. One righteous man, by fervent and effectual prayer, has been able to shut heaven and open it again. How often did Moses by his prayers avert the divine wrath from the people of Israel! That man who has access to a throne of grace will never want any thing which is really needful. "God will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." "But He will be inquired of by the house of Israel for these things that he may do for them." Banish, as most unreasonable, the idea that prayer is a dull or melancholy business. Such a sentiment must be invented by Satan; for it never could have been suggested by reason, or taught by experience. Intercourse with the greatest and best of all beings must be a source of exalted pleasure; and surely, man can have no greater honor and privilege conferred upon him, than to be admitted to converse intimately and confidentially with the God whom angels adore. "The expostions of every saint attests, that 'it is good to draw near to God;' and that 'one day in his courts is better than a thousand.' I need not be afraid, therefore, to counsel the young to cultivate the spirit of prayer, and to be constant in its exercise. 'Pray without ceasing.' 'Be instant in prayer.' It will not spoil your pleasures, but will open for you new sources of enjoyment, far more refined and satisfactory, than any which prayerless persons can possess. Prayer is the only method by which intercourse between heaven and earth can be kept open. Often, too, in the performance of this duty, a taste of heaven is brought down to earth; and the pious worshipper anticipates, in some degree, those joys which are ineffable and eternal.—Prayer will, moreover, be your most effectual guard against sin and the power of temptation.

"For Satan trembles, when he sees  
The weakest saint upon his knees."

XX. I CONCLUDE my counsels to the young, by a serious and affectionate recommendation to every one who reads these pages, to make immediate preparation for death. I know that gay youth are unwilling to hear this subject mentioned. There is nothing which casts a greater damp upon their spirits, than the solemn fact that death must be encountered; and that no earthly possessions or circumstances can secure us from becoming his victims, on any day. But if it is acknowledged that this formidable evil is inevitable, and that the tenure by which we hold our grasp of life is very fragile, why should we act so unreasonably, and I may say, madly, as to shut our eyes against the danger? If, indeed, there was no way of preparing to meet this event, there might be some reason for turning away our thoughts from immediate destruction; but if by attention and exertion, it is possible to make preparation for death, then nothing can be conceived more insane, than to refuse to consider our latter end.—How often are we called to witness the decease of blooming youth, in the midst of all their pleasures and prospects! Such scenes have been exhibited within the observation of all of you. Dear friends and companions have been snatched away from the side of some of you. The grave has closed upon many whose prospects of long life were as favorable as those of their survivors. Now, my dear young friends, what has so frequently happened, in relation to so many others, may take place with regard to some of you. This year you may be called to bid farewell to all your earthly prospects, and all your beloved relatives. The bare possibility of such an event ought to have the effect of engaging your most serious attention, and of leading you to immediate preparation. Do you ask what preparation is necessary? I answer, reconciliation with God, and a meetness for the employments and enjoyments of the heavenly state. Preparation for death includes repentance towards God for all our sins, trust in the Lord Jesus Christ and reliance on his atoning sacrifice, regeneration of heart and reformation of life; and, finally, a lively exercise of piety accompanied with a comfortable assurance of the divine favor. In short, genuine and lively piety forms the essence of the needed preparation. With this your death will be safe, and your happiness after death secure; but to render a death-bed not only safe but comfortable, you must have a strong faith, and clear evidence that your sins are forgiven, and that you have passed from death unto life. Be persuaded, then, before you give sleep to your eyes, to commence your return unto God, from whom like lost sheep you have strayed. "Prepare to meet your God." "Be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh."

Seek deliverance from the fear of death by a believing application to Him who came on purpose to deliver us from this bondage. With his presence and guidance we need fear no evil even while passing through the gloomy valley and shadow of death. He is able by his rod and his staff to comfort us, and to make us conquerors over this last enemy.

For the Watchman of the South.  
PROVERBS FROM MATTHEW HENRY;  
Collected from the original copy of "Henry's Exposition."

"It has occurred to the writer, many years since, (says Dr. Alexander,) that an excellent and useful little volume of choice sayings, might be collected from Henry's Commentary alone; and if any reader of this work should take the pains to make such a collection for his own use, or that of his children or friends, he would never have occasion to repent of his labor."

I have taken the hint, Mr. Editor, thrown out in this remark, to make such a collection for my own use; and with your permission, will circulate the same, through your columns, among my friends in general. To which if you will devote a portion of your paper, they will do, perhaps, as much good toward the "promotion of practical piety," as any other matter, occupying as much room.

To show the value of these proverbs, and to give some previous idea of their general character, we will introduce them with the following comment on them, from the same author.

"There is perhaps no one thing which gives a more distinctive character to this performance, (Henry's Commentary) than the weighty, pithy, pointed sayings, with which it abounds. Whether these apothegms were, generally, the production of the author's own ingenuity, or were collected from the common stock of English proverbs, current in his day, their value is the same to us.

"The ancients seemed to have understood, better than the moderns, the importance of the method of instruction by proverbs, or apothegms.

"It was considered by them the highest effort of wisdom to invent proverbs, parables, or fables, which, in few words, convey much meaning. Several of these, called by way of eminence the wise men of Greece, are celebrated for no other productions, but a few sayings which met with general approbation, and which passed into proverbs. The value of a stock of good proverbs to a nation cannot be too highly appreciated. These are kept in constant use and circulation, and are learned by all classes of people, without effort; and become the maxims by which life is regulated. Nothing is more common, when a man's judgment has been suspended for a while, than to come to a decision, by the recollection of some proverb or general maxim. Men are actually influenced by the knowledge which is present to their minds, at the moment when their purpose is formed, and this gives an advantage to apothegms over every form in which useful knowledge is treasured up. While other learning is like treasures hoarded up, which cannot always be put into circulation at a moment's warning, these are comparable to the current coin of a nation, which is always ready, and always in circulation. Perhaps a man might often be as useful to his country by inventing and putting into general circulation, a few pithy, pointed, moral or prudential maxims, as by writing an elaborate work on moral science, or political economy. It is a fact worthy of notice, that the peasantry or common people in some places, carry on their conversation very much by recollecting and repeating appropriate proverbs; and such people will be found to be more than usually discerning and prudent. In the instruction of youth, this easy method of furnishing and fortifying their minds, ought not to be neglected. A father who instils into his children a large stock of sound, practical, moral, and prudential apothegms, really leaves them a richer inheritance, than he is permitted for them as many jewels.

We have, moreover, the highest authority for this mode of instruction. The Bible is replete with apothegms of the most important kind; and one whole book, written by the wisest of men, contains nothing else but proverbs. Besides, many of our Lord's instructions were delivered in this form. \* \* \* The experience of our author's mind in composing such apothegms, or his diligence in collecting them, gives a peculiar stamp to his work, which distinguishes it from all other expositions; and ever will render it valuable as the repository of a most useful species of learning, not to be found in such abundance any where else." (Preface to the first American edition of Henry's Exposition.)

If many of these sayings of Henry do not fall strictly under the general acceptance of a proverb, they come very well under the head of prudential maxims; and are useful for the improvement of christian prudence and piety; and as this sort of "current coin" as well as the other, is getting scarce among us, (I mean precepts for practical religion) christians generally, will do well to draw from this old bank of exemplary godliness.

## CHAPTER I.

Prov. 1. Atheists are the greatest fools in nature, for they see there is a world that could not make itself, and yet, they will not own there is a God that made it. [How inconsistent they will own that some being made it, yet are unwilling to call that being God, but rather chance.]

2. He that feeds his birds, will not starve his babes.

3. Woman was not made out of man's head to top him, not out of his feet to be trampled upon by him, but out of his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected, and near his heart to be beloved.

4. It is the policy of Satan to send temptations by unsuspected hands, and their that have most interest in us, and influence upon us. [He sent one to Adam by his wife, to Job by his wife, and one to Christ by Peter.]

5. So we may say of the Africans and Indians, they have the gold, but we have the gospel.

6. Nitimer in vetium—we desire what is forbidden.

7. Sin is a brat that nobody is willing to own; a sign that it is a scandalous thing.

8. The wife is put under the dominion of her husband, and is not sui juris—at her own disposal; of which see an instance in the law. Numb. xxx. 6.

9. If Adam had not sinned, he had not sweat.

10. Man was made of common clay, not of Paradise dust. [Hence he should be humble.]

11. If we do not mind our business, we are unworthy of our being.

12. Nature even in its primitive state, left room for the improvements of art and industry. [Eden itself needed keeping.]

13. What God says of the first man, Solomon says of all men, that two are better than one, and we to him that is alone.

14. He that has a good God, a good heart, and a good wife to converse with, and yet complains that he wants conversation, would not have been easy and contented in paradise; for Adam himself had no more.

15. It is a dangerous thing to treat with temptation, which ought at first to be regarded with disdain and abhorrence.

16. To prevent our being uneasy at the restraints of religion, it is good often to take a view of the liberties and comforts of it.

17. Wavering faith, and wavering resolutions give great advantage to the tempter.

18. No condition will of itself bring contentment, unless the mind be brought to it. Adam was not easy, no, not in Paradise, nor the angels in their first estate.

19. When there is thought to be no more harm in forbidden fruit than in other fruit, sin lies at the door, and Satan soon carries the day.

20. The way of sin is down-hill; a man cannot stop himself when he will.

21. Those that have done ill, are commonly willing to draw in others to do the same. As was the Devil, so was Eve, no sooner a sinner than a tempter.

22. Though God knows all our sins, yet he will know them from us, and requires from us an ingenuous confession of them; not that he may be informed, but that we may be humble.

23. There is a strange proneness in those that are tempted to say they are tempted of God; as if our abusing of God's gifts would excuse our violation of God's laws. [If there is nobody else to lay their sins on, they will lay them on God himself—the woman that thou gavest me, she made me eat the fruit.]

24. Sinful friendships justly end in mortal feuds; those that unite in wickedness, will not unite long.

25. Had we known no guilt, we should have known no grief.

26. The happiest in the world have some allays to their joy, [akin to the old proverb every sweet has its bitter.]

27. The plaster is wide as the wound (sin;) blessed be God for Jesus Christ.

28. It is the will of God that we should, every one of us, have something to do in this world.—Parents ought to bring up their children to business: Give them a Bible and a calling, (says good Mr. Dodd); and God be with them.

29. That calling and that condition of life is best for us and to be chosen by us, which is best for our souls.

30. A charitable concern for our brethren, as their keepers, is a great duty, which is strictly required of us, but is generally neglected by us.—[Cain neglected this duty in regard to Abel: it applies here also to our christian brethren.]

31. Every creature is to us what God makes it; a blessing or a curse; a comfort or a cross.

32. It is an evidence of great hardness to be more concerned for our sufferings than for our sins.

33. It is better to fear and not sin, than to sin and then fear.

34. God has wise and holy ends in defending and protecting the lives of very wicked men.

35. The relieve of some sinners, and the patience that God exercises towards them, are often abused to the hardening of others in like sinful ways.

36. Grace does not run in the blood, but corruption does; a sinner begets a sinner; but a saint does not beget a saint.

37. God often takes them soonest whom he loves best; and the time they lose on earth is gained in heaven, to their unspeakable advantage.

38. Those whose conversation in the world is truly holy, shall find their removal out of it truly happy.

39. Signal piety shall be crowned with signal honors.

40. Professors of religion, in marrying both themselves and their children, should make conscience of keeping within the bounds of profession. The bad will sooner debauch the good than the good reform the bad. [Akin to the old English proverb, "vinegar will sooner sour sugar than sugar will sweeten vinegar."]

41. None lose the Spirit's strivings but those who have first forfeited them. S. D.

(To be continued.)

## DR. MILLER ON EARLY PIETY.

The following excellent letter was written (as the date indicates) many months ago. It was intended for publication in another form. Circumstances prevented its publication in the way first thought of. It is now given without addition and with slight omissions.

To the Rev. Wm. S. Plumer:

Reverend and Dear Brother:—In looking back on that portion of my life which I spent as a pastor, there are few departments of official duty which I contemplate with a deeper sense of deficiency than that which relates to children and youth. The truth is, unless parents and pastors set out with just impressions on this subject, (which was not my case) they will not be likely to gain them but by long and regretful experience; and it will only be when they are about to retire from the field of labor, that they will be really prepared to discharge their duty with adequate intelligence and zeal. I can truly say, that my impression of the importance of this subject has been growing deeper ever since I withdrew from the pastoral office; and that I deem it my duty to hold it up to the view of every successive class of candidates for the ministry in our Theological Seminary, as a matter more closely connected with the welfare of society, and the advancement of the cause of Christ, than can be easily stated in words.

The excellent Mr. Baxter, if I mistake not, has somewhere said, that "if parents really and truly did their duty toward their children, the public preaching of the gospel would not be the ordinary means of conversion." I will not be positive that he is right; but I am strongly inclined to concur with him in the opinion. The cases are so few in which even pious parents make any successful approaches to the full performance of their duty in this respect, that we cannot wonder at the melancholy history of many families which bear the christian name. And when to this, we add the comparative neglect of pastors and Church Sessions of the baptized children committed to their care, we can, surely, be at no loss to account for the failure of so many of them to recognize and ratify their baptismal dedication, when they come to age.

A large portion of all who are born die in infancy. With regard to all such, I will cherish, until the word of God forbids me, the delightful hope that they are saved;—not because I consider them as free from the taint of human depravity; but from the pleasing persuasion that they are washed and justified and sanctified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." But how many children die after they have survived the age of infancy, and when we can cherish no scriptural hope for them, unless they give evidence of piety! With what an overwhelming weight does this fact present the importance of early piety! Has this subject, after all that has been said and written upon it, engaged any thing like as much of the serious and practical attention of parents and ministers of the gospel as it ought to have done? I am firmly persuaded that it has not; that we are all utterly in fault with regard to this thing; and that when it shall be attended to with the deep solemnity, diligence and prayer, which its importance demands, an era of greatly increased light and glory will commence in the church.

No idea is more familiar, or more frequently repeated, than that children are the hope both of the church and of the state. Those who are now dandled on their mother's lap, are a few years

WATCHMAN OF THE SOUTH.

RICHMOND, FEBRUARY 8, 1838.

ADDITIONAL AGENTS.

- PITTSYLVANIA CO., Prince George co., Romney, James Garland, Esq., John H. Bate, Thomas B. White, P. M. NORTH CAROLINA, Rev. John M. Erwin. ARKANSAS, Rev. A. R. Banks, Dr. James H. Gilliam. ALABAMA, Dr. George Frierson, Hugh McCall, Capt. Hugh Wilson, Stephen Wright, Rev. B. Crawford. FLORIDA, D. Baker.

Will Stated Clerks be so kind as early to forward to us notices of the time and place of the meetings of Presbyteries?

WATCHMAN! WHAT OF THE NIGHT?

The night! the night! It has been long and dark and dreary, but never without a star. In the thickest gloom through which we have passed, hope always pointed to the coming day. The night! It is far spent. Even now the tints of morn appear.

The night of our trials is, we trust, nearly over. The time of solid peace is not far distant. Nothing but very remarkable interposition of providence against us, or very criminal indifference amongst us threaten to jeopard the complete establishment of the principles of the Last Assembly. Let the friends of truth and order, therefore, be careful not to displease the Great Head of the Church, by any sin, especially by proud exultation. Perhaps no passage of scripture has more frequently been deeply impressed on our minds during the last eight months, as a seasonable warning to the orthodox party, than Proverbs xxiv. 17, 18: "Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth: Lest the Lord see it, and it dispense him, and he turn away his wrath from him." No sin seems to have met with sorer rebukes from God than this species of haughtiness. It may, to some, seem a little thing for Hezekiah to have showed the treasures at Jerusalem to the heathen, yet God thought otherwise, and sent dire punishment. Herod exulted in his heart when the people gave a shout, and said he must be a god to make so great a speech; and he was smitten terribly and died. Let us all beware of offending God. We have also our fears respecting the promptness of some of our orthodox brethren. Some will pretty certainly think that they may stay at home, because they only of all the orthodox will be absent. Some will probably vote for an orthodox man as principal to the Assembly, and then vote for a new-school man, or a professedly neutral man as his alternate. The principal may be detained at home, and the alternate will then go. Some will perhaps think they cannot bear the expense; and it may possibly be that some Presbyteries, after all that has been said, will not make timely and ample provision of the means. Some live far from the place of meeting; and a long and tedious journey is very alarming to many people. Some will fully intend to go until the day for starting shall arrive, and then their hearts will fail them. Some will actually start to the Assembly, but so late that they cannot arrive until after the great question is settled, if any accident should happen on the road to detain them one or two or three days. Thus it may come to pass that the enemies of sound doctrine and strict order in our church will have the majority and will triumph over us. Will brethren consent to such a painful and mortifying result? It is a painful and mortifying fact, that, notwithstanding the orthodox in our church have had an ample majority, during all this controversy, both of the ministers and elders in our connexion, yet they have been so remiss and dilatory, or otherwise unwise and criminal, that they have been actually out-voted in our General Assembly, or at best, ordinarily carried their points by majorities which were far from being cheerful. The last Assembly was an exception, it is true. But it was almost the only one for years.

We, therefore, say to all—"Do all your duty—be prompt—be vigilant—be sober—be firm—be humble—abound in prayer—look to God and sleep not on your posts, and, with God's blessing, our peace shall soon be as a river, and the disturbers of our quiet shall find that they have imagined a vain thing, in supposing that they could revolutionize and uproot our venerable institutions.

THE CHRISTIAN STATESMAN.—The first number of this journal reached us on Saturday last. It is a handsome sheet, well filled. It is edited by Rev. R. R. Gurley, and published every Friday morning, in the city of Washington, by Eiler & Bayne, at three dollars per annum. We doubt not but its character for elevated sentiment will be firmly established. We wish the editor much success.

In that fertile and rising state of Arkansas there are but two Presbyterian ministers. Young ministers! Look at this.

A friend from Rockingham, being in the city, has laid on our table a number of the "Student's Magazine," printed by the Blind for the Blind, at their institution in Philadelphia. It is a four sheet periodical, and is beautifully printed in embossed characters. We need hardly say, that no ink is used in printing for the Blind.

Question. "When you published that the vote of the Synod of Virginia, sustaining the Assembly, was 110 to 30, what vote did you refer to?" Thus asks a friend.

Answer. We referred to the vote on the preamble and resolutions offered by Mr. Maxwell, as a whole, on their final passage. We have recently been informed that the temporary Clerk of Synod made one mistake in the record, and that the vote ought to be recorded 101 to 31. It is possible there may be other errors, but we gave the vote precisely as the Clerks recorded it.

It is with unfeigned pleasure that we learn, by a letter just received from one of the elders of the dear church at Danville, Va., that the Rev. B. M. Smith, has accepted the call of that beloved people to become their pastor. The Lord bless him and them richly, and build them up unto his heavenly kingdom.

Question. "Do you really mean to charge \$3 50, if payment is delayed six months, as you say in your Terms?"

Answer. Unquestionably we do. We shall abide strictly by our Terms. Yet we would much prefer \$3 paid within six months to \$3 50, payable after that time. Our patrons will remember that all subscriptions are due in advance. Several hundred of our subscribers have remembered this. Will not all do the same? Persons taking our paper from No. 1, will not forget that if payment is delayed longer than to the close of this month, they will be charged an additional 50 cents.

LITERARY NOTICE.

We have received a copy of the Inaugural Address of Rev. Joseph Smith, A. M., delivered on occasion of his entrance on the office of President of Franklin College, New Athens, Ohio, June, 1837. It is a very interesting production, and contains, in a short space, more curious matter respecting the history of Colleges, Universities, &c., than we have ever seen in the same compass. Being a connected sketch, any one paragraph would give no just idea of the whole.

BIBLICAL REPERTORY.—We wish we could persuade every intelligent Presbyterian family to take this work. Every elder in our church ought certainly to have it. Its principles are unimpeachable respecting Southern institutions. Of Presbyterian institutions it is the most firm, enlightened and liberal defender that we know. Subscriptions will be received at Yale & Wyatt's bookstore, in this city, or at the office of the Watchman of the South.

We take great pleasure in acknowledging \$1, received from P. R., for the Virginia School in Greece.

BE YE HOLY.

Perhaps no form of religious error is more horrible than that which is Antinomian in its tendency. For ourselves we are free to say that we have never witnessed more dire effects on character than those produced by such views of the Gospel, as leave men to wallow in sin; and make Christ the minister of sin. If there be any error which we loathe more than all others, it is probably Antinomianism. It is pleasant to find how carefully all sound Calvinistic writers guard against this form of false doctrine. The following is taken from Bates' Harmony of the Divine Attributes, a book which ought to be more read than it is. The writer says:

Saving grace gives no encouragement to the practice of sin, for the principal aim of our Redeemer's love in dying for us, was "to sanctify and cleanse us, by the washing of water and the word." And accordingly all the promises of pardon and salvation are conditional. The holy mercy of the gospel offers forgiveness, only to penitent believers that return from sin to obedience; "we are commanded to repent and be converted, that our sins may be blotted out in the time of the refreshment, from the presence of the Lord." Acts iii. 19. And heaven is the reward of persevering obedience: "to them who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honor, and immortality, eternal life." Rom. ii. 7. There cannot be the least ground of a rational just hope in any person without holiness: "whoever hath this hope in him, purifies himself even as he is pure." 1 John iii. 3. By which it appears, that the genuine and proper use we are to make of the exceeding great and "precious promises," is, "that by them we may be partakers of the divine nature, and escape the pollution that is in the world through lust." 2 Pet. i. 4. Yet the corrupt hearts of men are so strongly inclined to their lusts, that they "turn the grace of God into wantonness," and make an advantage of mercy to assist their security; presuming to sin with less fear and more license, upon the account of the glorious revelation of it by our Redeemer. The most lives as if they might be saved without being saints; and enjoy the paradise of the flesh here, and not be excluded from that of the spirit hereafter. But grace doth not in the least degree authorize and favor their lusts, nor relax the sinews of obedience; it is perfectly innocent of their unnatural abuse of it. The poison is not in the flower, but the spider. Therefore the apostle propounds it with indignation, Rom. vi. 1. "Shall we sin, that grace may abound? God forbid." He uses this form of speech, to express an extreme abhorrence of a thing that is either impious and dishonorable to God, or pernicious and destructive to men. As when he puts the question, "is God unjust who taketh vengeance? God forbid." Rom. iii. 5, 6; and, "is there iniquity in God? God forbid." Rom. ix. 14. He rejects the mention of it with infinite aversion. Indeed what greater disparagement can there be of the divine purity, than to indulge ourselves in sin upon confidence of an easy forgiveness? As if the son of God had been consecrated by such terrible sufferings, to purchase and prepare a pardon for those who sin securely; what an inexpressible indignity is it to make a monstrous alliance between Christ and Belial?

And this abuse of grace is pernicious to men. If the antidote be turned into poison, and the remedy cherish the disease, the case is desperate. The apostle tells us, "those that do evil that good may come thereby, their damnation is just." Suppose a presuming sinner were assured, that after he had gratified his carnal vile desires, he should repent and be pardoned; yet it were an unreasonable defect of self-love to do so. What Israelite was so foolhardy as to provoke a fiery serpent to bite him, though he knew he should be healed by the brazen serpent? But it is a degree beyond madness, for a man to live in a course of sin upon the hopes of salvation, making the mercy of God to be his bondage, as if he could not be happy without them. An unrenewed sinner may be the object of God's compassion, but while he remains so, he is incapable of communion with him here, much more hereafter. Under the law the lepers were excluded from the camp of Israel, where the presence of God was in a special manner; much more shall those who are covered with moral pollutions, be kept out from the habitation of his holiness. It is a moral delusion for any to pretend that electing mercy will bring them to glory, or that the all-sufficient sacrifice of Christ will atone God's displeasure towards them, although they indulge themselves in a course of sin. The book of life is secret; only "the Lamb" with whose blood the names of the elect are written there, "can open the seals of it." But the gospel that is a lower book of life, tells us the qualifications of those who are vessels of mercy, they are by grace prepared for glory; and that there can be no benefit by the death of Christ without conformity to his life. Those who abuse mercy now, shall have justice forever.

COMMUNICATIONS.

For the Watchman of the South.

A DEFENCE

OF THE ACTS OF THE LAST GENERAL ASSEMBLY CONCERNING THE FOUR SYNODS.

(Concluded.)

Mr. Editor,—I think I have shown very clearly, (in my last communication,) that it was entirely right and proper for the last General Assembly to declare, as it did, that the Four Synods were "out of the ecclesiastical connexion" of our church, at least so far as the Congregational churches within them were concerned. And indeed I cannot help thinking that if all the churches within them had been of that order, (as a large majority of them certainly were,) no one could have been found among us hardy enough to question the perfect correctness of the proceeding against them. But it seems that some of the churches within them, (I know not how many,) were properly if not purely Presbyterian; and this fact has furnished our agitators with ample materials for clamor and crimination, which they have not failed to improve to the utmost. Indeed they have made it the basis of their favorite and most fallacious accusation, that "the General Assembly, by disowning the Synods, has actually put all the Presbyterians within them out of the church, without a trial, and even without a charge against them; in violation, of course, of the plainest principles of our constitution." Now, on this point, I am free to admit, and indeed ready to maintain, that by the constitution of our body, as I understand it, no member of our community can lose his citizenship in it, except by dismission, at his own request, or by excommunication, by the Session, for some offence duly charged and properly proved against him; and if it could be made to appear that the General Assembly has impaired or impeached this principle, I certainly would not write another word in defence of it.

But I deny that it has done any such thing, in any manner whatever, and in any the smallest degree. For, in the first place, it is entirely plain that the mere act of disowning the Synods, did not necessarily involve or imply any proceeding whatever against the individual members of any church within their bounds; but manifestly left them to continue to enjoy all their rights and privileges as Presbyterians, within their respective congregations, as fully and freely to all intents and purposes whatever, as aforesaid. Thus they had, and have at this moment, their right to the sealing ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper, to the instruction and visitation of the pastor, and elders, and the counsel and admonition of their brethren, as truly and thoroughly as ever. They had, moreover, and have still, a perfect right to join any other churches of our denomination in any other part of our country, and upon the same terms with any other Presbyterians in our connexion. I know it has been said that they can only apply to other churches as aliens; but this is evidently a mere mistake, for they certainly may apply as citizens, with their certificates, and it will be the duty of other churches, I conceive, to admit them, of course, as usual, on such papers. Or if the Sessions of other churches should choose to examine them a little, (coming as they would from a suspected, if not infected, district,) that is obviously no more than they might fairly do, under circumstances, in the cases of any other applicants coming from any other churches in our connexion. In short, I think it entirely plain that the disowning of the Synods did not alter or affect their state as individuals; but left them all, truly and properly, members of the church.

I beg leave to illustrate my idea on this point by an imaginary case, which I will make exactly in point. It has been held by some of our jurists that our Federal Government has no right, under the constitution, to establish a colony for any purpose whatever; and without stopping to examine the opinion just now, allow me to take it for granted for my present purpose. Suppose, then, Congress, forgetting its limited powers, should undertake to establish a colony, on some island or other, and pass an act, (or Plan of Union, as you may call it,) creating a provisional government (of the crudest character) for the management of it. Citizens from all parts of our country resort to the new plantation, and settle in it; and strangers from all parts of the world come in and join them, upon the most free and easy terms. The colony, of course, grows rapidly in its population, and appears to be flourishing very finely. By and by, however, after some years, it is found that disorders and dissensions, of various kinds, have arisen among the inhabitants, (growing chiefly out of the mixture of our countrymen and those foreigners together,) and Congress is called upon to interfere, and keep the peace. But what shall it do? At first it thinks of sending out a commission to restore order, with power perhaps to proclaim martial law. But this is a sad and troublesome course to take, and likely to do little or no good; and it hesitates about adopting the measure, when an able and acute Virginian, jealous of state rights, and strict construction, starts the idea that the act of Congress establishing the colony was unconstitutional, and, therefore, null and void from the beginning; and thereupon proposes to the body that it should forthwith abrogate all acts and parts of acts concerning the said colony, and leave it to itself. The proposal pleases, and Congress, accordingly, declares the colony out of our connexion, or, in other words, "free, sovereign, and independent." Now what, I ask, is the condition of those islanders who were truly and properly citizens of our country, and some of them perhaps recent emigrants from our different states? Can any one think, for a moment, that the disowning of their colony has disfranchised or outlawed them; and are they not all clearly free to come or return into any part of our Union—even to our fair city of Richmond itself—and not as aliens, but as citizens—as soon as they like?

Now it is entirely plain, that if declaring the colony independent, in the case supposed, does not put any of our fellow-citizens who are in it, out of the state, (as I suppose all will agree,) so, by a parity of principle, declaring the Synods out of our connexion did not put our fellow-Presbyterians within them out of the church. And, indeed, I may add, that the General Assembly took care to "exclude" such a "conclusion," by expressly stating, in its third resolution, that in declaring the Synods out, "it was not its intention to interfere with the duties and relations of private Christians in their respective Congregations."

But it may be said, that declaring the Synods out of our connexion, necessarily implied the declaring of the churches within them out also, and, if so, the members of the churches must have been declared out too. But to this I answer, in the first place, that the disowning of the Synods, did not necessarily imply the disowning of the churches within them; for the churches, I suppose, or many of them, existed, and were even formed into Presbyteries, before those Synods were erected. Of course, the declaring of the unconstitutional acts erecting those Synods null and void, did not affect the churches, as such, but left them in their former, or actual state. I am aware, however, and frankly admit, that this does not appear to have been precisely the idea of the General Assembly itself; for it has added, I see, immediately after the words in the third resolution which I have just quoted, these others: "but only to declare the relation of all said Synods, and all their constituent parts, to the body of the Presbyterian Church in the United States;" and these words, I acknowledge, do seem to show that it considered that declaring the Synods out would necessarily be declaring the churches, as "constituent parts" of them, out too. But be this as it may, it is certain that if these words taken by themselves would imply that the churches were declared out, yet taken, as they should be, in connexion with the words which soon follow them, it is apparent that the General Assembly intended to discriminate, as bound, between the Congregational churches which it supposed declared out, and determined to leave so, and the Presbyterian churches which it supposed would naturally go out along with them (as they had been linked together with them, under the Plan of Union,) but which it desired to retain. For the fourth resolution provides "that all such churches and ministers" (that is, "which are strictly Presbyterian in doctrine and order,") "as wish to unite with us, are hereby directed to apply for admission to those Presbyteries belonging to our connexion which are most convenient to their respective locations." It is obvious, then, that if the first sentence implies that all the churches were out of the connexion, yet the last, which must be taken with it, excepts the Presbyterian churches among them from the full operation of the exclusion, by inviting them to "unite" (not return as our opponents would have it,) with the church again. Thus these Presbyterian churches are manifestly regarded and treated as sections of an army which have been cut off from the main body by the fortune of war, and have thus lost their actual connexion, but not their right to connect themselves with it; and which are, therefore, directed, and invited, to "unite" with other divisions of the service, at proper points.

But say, if you will, that the General Assembly certainly declared the Presbyterian churches out of the connexion; it still does not follow that it declared the members of those churches out of the church. For suppose the General Assembly

of our Commonwealth (now in session,) should abrogate or annul the charter of our city of Richmond, (as, the city being a public corporation, it has a right to do,) will any one say that that would put the corporators of Richmond out of the State? Certainly not. But neither, then, did the act of the General Assembly of our Church, declaring the four Synods, and the Presbyterian churches within them, along with them, out of our connexion, operate to put the members of those churches out of our Church.

But, waiving all this, and granting all that our opponents can possibly ask, to wit, that declaring the churches out of our connexion was necessarily declaring all the members of them out too—that is out of our connexion, or out of the Church in that sense—still I contend that they are only out while they choose to continue so; and the moment they choose to unite with any other churches in our connexion, they will be in again—and so in too, as if they never had been out. For by the jus post-limiti, as it is termed, or right of post-limitium, if any subject or citizen of a nation at war, happens to fall into the hands of the enemy, and afterwards makes his escape, and returns within the limits of his own land, he is immediately in again as a citizen of right, and restored at once to his former state. And why may we not adopt and apply this beautiful principle of law to the case before us? Why may we not regard our Presbyterian brethren within the four Synods, as only out by misfortune, and so entitled to come into our connexion again, as always members, whenever they please? And I may add that it is evidently the more proper to do so, because, as Grotius finely remarks, the right of post-limitium itself, has, in modern times, been superseded among Christians, (and even among Mahometans,) by that larger and more liberal sense of the social relation which Nature (enlightened by sacred scripture,) has taught mankind.

I have thus shown, as I think, that the General Assembly has not put any member out of the Church—at least in any sense of the phrase that can justly involve it in blame. And all, I suppose, may now see, that the whole objection of our opponents to its proceeding against the Synods on this score, when fairly analyzed, is reduced at last to a mere point of punctilio which a Spaniard could hardly see, and which any honest and intelligent Presbyterian may, very properly, disdain to regard.

But it may still be asked by some, why was it necessary for the last General Assembly to declare the four Synods—and all those churches along with them—out of its connexion at once? Why could it not defer the work of reform to "a more convenient season"—to another session at least—when it might have had clearer light upon the subject, and done more ample and accurate justice to all concerned? To this I answer, that, being a constitutional body, and charged by the constitution itself to maintain its inviolate, it was bound, by its duty to its constituents, to do it at all events. It was not at liberty, indeed, to wink for a moment at the flagrant violation of the fundamental law which it had now, at last, discovered had been committed by former General Assemblies, whose acts were not binding upon it; and when it had ample evidence before it, that the continuance of that violation would only aggravate and multiply all the evils which it had already produced. It could not, then, fairly delay the discharge of its duty on this point. Nor could it properly transfer that duty to another and succeeding assembly. For could it be sure, indeed, that that succeeding assembly (which would have been composed, in part, of unconstitutional elements,) would be like-minded with itself, and "naturally care" for the constitution of the church? It owed it, therefore, I must think, most clearly, to itself, to the Presbyteries which it represented, and to all the churches which it had been ordained to bind together in harmony and peace, to liberate itself, and them, from the disastrous and disgraceful consequences, misnamed the Plan of Union—and all its consequences—at once—entirely—and forever.

I might add, too, if I chose, that besides the gross and scandalous breaches of order which were rife within the bounds of those four Synods, there were errors of doctrine and practice also, so serious and so inveterate that, in all probability, they would have defied the discipline which they demanded; but as the General Assembly itself, having adopted the wiser expedient of declaring the Synods out of its connexion—and so beyond its jurisdiction—very properly declined afterwards to inquire into those evils; I shall pursue the same course, and leave them to the care and caution of those whom it now concerns—and may become—to correct them.

I have now finished what I had to submit in defence of the acts of the last General Assembly concerning the four Synods; and have fairly and fully vindicated them, as I trust, from all the objections which have been urged against them. Indeed I must say, on examining them most minutely, as I have done, I have been truly gratified to find that there is really nothing in them to condemn, and hardly any thing that can need to be excused. And it certainly is a matter of honest pride to me as a Presbyterian, to see—and, I hope, to have shown—that they have been based throughout upon those well-established principles of polity, and constitutional law, which have been recognised and sanctioned by the best and wisest jurists in our state and country.

In closing my remarks, therefore, I cannot but express the confidence which I feel, that all who are really attached to our connexion—in heart as well as name—will rally around the Presbytery and Synod, (as indeed they are constitutionally bound to do,) in sustaining those acts of the General Assembly, with their cordial and cheerful support. And I will add, that, believing as I do, that the great Head of the Church, in his divine wisdom, suggested to his servants in that venerable body the measures which have been pursued, I cannot doubt for a moment that he will crown them with his blessing; and that all of us who are now espousing and aiding the cause of truth and order, shall reap the reward of our labors of love in the increased, and still increasing, peace and prosperity of our Church—to the end of time.

ZENAS.

For the Watchman of the South.

REVIVALS OF RELIGION.

No. IV.

All genuine revivals are produced in connection with evangelical truth. That error and fiction have no power or tendency to promote conversion or sanctification need not be proved. It is alike plain that some truths, such as mathematical truth and the truth of profane history, are alike powerless in subduing the heart. But not all religious truth, nor even all revealed truth, is suited to inspire hatred to sin. To the peculiar doctrines of the gospel is reserved the high honor of subduing the heart, and binding the soul to the throne of God. The only apparent exceptions to this doctrine, are, first, That any part of revealed truth may be employed for awakening the soul, and the law is always used to impart "the knowledge of sin." While this is true, yet but little is done towards a man's salvation when he is merely alarmed and convinced of sin. The work of salvation, of purification, and justification, is subsequent to these fears and these convictions. The other apparent exception to this doctrine is, when the soul seems to receive holy comfort from expressions not found in the Bible. Thus hope and joy seem to have been communicated to Bunyan's mind from a verse in the Apocrypha. "Look at the generations of old and see did any one trust in the Lord and was confounded? Eccles. ii. 10. This passage Bunyan supposed to be in ca-

hence, to be the leaders and guides of society; to modify and regulate our social habits; to form our laws; to fill our pulpits; and to give, under God, a character to the community. Is it possible, then, to measure the importance of the character they shall bear, and of the principles and habits in which they shall be trained up? Is it possible to estimate the importance of their being, from the earliest dawn of reason, imbued with those sentiments of heavenly wisdom, which alone can prepare them to act their part with acceptance to God, and with real benefit to their fellow-men?

It is also acknowledged, by all who have experience on the subject, that religious instruction imparted, and serious impressions made, in childhood and youth, are more apt to take root in the mind, and ultimately to bring forth fruit, than when communicated at a later period. In tracing the history of pious individuals, it will be found that by far the greater number became so in early life. This has been, in all ages, so eminently the case, that an old divine of great wisdom, fidelity and experience was accustomed to say from the pulpit, "Those who have enjoyed the means of grace, administered in an enlightened and faithful manner, from their youth, and have passed the age of forty without piety, have much reason to fear that they will never obtain it." There is a fearful weight in this remark. Those who harden themselves against the Gospel offer in early life, when the mind is comparatively tender, and when the cares of the world have not yet taken a full possession of the heart,—will probably go on and die in a state of worldly impotence. And even when the principles of a pious education have failed of making their due impression in youth, in how many cases, after a little advancement in life, and subjection to its disappointments and hardships, have parental instruction, and parental tears risen up, as it were, like an armed man before the guilty wanderer, and been made, by the blessing of God, to conquer his reluctant heart. Examples of this kind, plainly shew what parental duty is;—to pursue with unwearied perseverance, even in the most unpromising cases, a system of humble, affectionate, prayerful effort to bring the youthful mind into subjection to the obedience of Christ.

Surely if pastors laid to heart as they ought to do, the important bearing of fidelity to children and youth, both on their own ministerial usefulness, and their personal comfort, it would engage far more of their attention than it commonly does. The more diligently and affectionately they attend to the young in their respective congregations, the more likely will they be to win their hearts to the Saviour, and to build up the church with the most solid and durable materials. The more faithfully they instruct the rising generation around them in divine things, the more effectually will they prepare them to understand, and profit by their own ministrations from the pulpit. Again; there is no avenue to the hearts of parents more direct and unobscured than affectionate and well-directed efforts to promote their children's welfare;—and perhaps it may be added, there is no medium of approach to parents themselves, whether saints or sinners, for the purpose of extending either instruction, reproof or exhortation to them, more likely to be successful, than through their children. I have known examples of this of the most impressive character. I once knew a large and amiable family, in which, however, there was no religion. The pastor of the congregation to which they belonged, had repeatedly spoken directly to the parents themselves on the great subject of religion, without the smallest apparent effect. But he was particularly attentive to their children, and had set his heart on winning them to the Saviour. One day, after addressing the children directly, and very solemnly, in the presence of their parents, he added in a very earnest and tender manner, "O how much do these dear children, and these precious souls, need your prayers. I had a simple sentence was the arrow which, by the grace of God, was made to reach the hearts of both the parents. Their instantaneous reflection was: "Alas! we have never prayed for ourselves, much less for our beloved children." A few days afterwards their habitation became a house of hope and of prayer. On another and similar occasion, the word which was made to operate as "a two-edged sword," was the following in substance—"Dear children, listen to the voice of the Saviour now, while your spirits are warm, and your hearts tender, and while the cares and labors of the world have not yet made your feelings callous. See how many, when they reach middle and old age, appear scarcely to have a feeling left for those great realities which once occupied many of their serious thoughts!" The parents in this latter case, had repeatedly had the thought addressed directly to themselves, from the sacred desk; but when it was addressed to their children, in their presence, in the stillness and tenderness of a parlor interview, it was made happily effectual.

Had I a voice, then, capable of reaching the remotest bounds of Christendom, I would lift it up in exhortation to parents and ministers, and say—Set your hearts on the promotion of EARLY PIETY in the children and youth committed to your care. Let it engage, with PECULIAR INTEREST, your daily studies, and your daily prayers. Parents! if you love your children, be intent, and let them see that you are EARNESTLY INTEND on their eternal welfare. Begin as early as possible, and never intermit your diligence. Ministers! if you love immortal souls; if you love the church of God; if you desire to bind the hearts of parents and of children to your persons and your ministry, for their spiritual benefit; if you desire to build up the cause of Christ in the most effectual manner, let there be no delay or intermission in this most interesting work. Satan begins early to enlist youth into his service. Set yourselves with your whole strength to rescue them from his power, and train them up to God. Keep a catalogue of their names, residences, &c. Review it often with attention and special prayer. Notice them pointedly and affectionately in your daily walks and visits. Catechise them diligently. Make them familiar with our excellent and authorized "form of sound words." Explain with parental simplicity and condescension what you attempt to teach them. Guard against every thing austere or repulsive in your mode of instruction. And follow all your efforts for their benefit with earnest and constant cries to God for success. Then may you hope that a blessing will follow; and that in the great day you will be permitted to present a multitude before the throne, and to say—"Behold, Lord, here am I, and the children thou hast given me!" May the Lord, my dear brother, bless you! Such is the wish and will be the prayer of

Yours affectionately, in the best of bonds,  
SAMUEL MILLER.  
Princeton, March 7th, 1836.

Six.—The exceeding sinfulfulness of sin is manifested, not so much by its breaking through the restraint of threatening and commands, as by its being capable of acting against light and against love.—Rev. J. Newton.

How shall he communicate knowledge with his lips, who hath not a treasure of it in his mind?  
Gelling.

The husbandman doth not more constantly go forth with his spade, to perform his daily labor in the field, than the minister is to go and dig in the mine of Scripture.—Gurnall.

Christian pastors should retain the character, and cherish the spirit and habits of a student, when the name is laid aside.