

TRACTS
OF THE
AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY.

General Series.



VOL. V.

PRINTED BY THE
AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY,
150 NASSAU-STREET, NEW YORK.

CONTENTS.

VOL. V.

No.	PAGES.
142. The Death-bed of a Freethinker, or the Last Hours of Hon. Francis Newport,	20
143. On Early Religious Education. By Rev. Daniel Huntington,	16
144. Conversion of President Edwards,	16
145. On Hearing the Word of God. By Rev. Robert Hall, A. M.,	16
146. Helps to Self-Examination,	8
147. The Gospel Ministry entitled to Support. By Rev. James Bennett, D. D.,	24
148. The Barren Fig-tree,	8
149. Christ Formed in the Soul. Addressed to the Young. By Rev. Philip Doddridge,	20
150. Memoir of William Churchman. By Rev. Thomas Sinclair,	16
151. An Important Discovery, or Temper is Everything,	8
152. The Sin and Danger of Neglecting the Saviour. By Rev. John Owen, D. D.,	20
153. The End of Time. By Rev. Isaac Watts, D. D.,	12
154. Memoir of Dr. Bateman, an eminent Physician of London,	12
155. On Universalism,	8
156. Search the Scriptures,	8
157. To the Parents of Sabbath-school Children,	4
158. Examine your Hopes for Eternity,	8
159. The Rewards of Drunkenness,	4
160. The Two Ends and the Two Ways,	4
161. The Rescued Brand,	8
162. Common Errors,	16
163. Thomas Brown, or the Sabbath-breaker Reclaimed,	4
164. Bethel, or the Flag Unfurled. By Rev. G. C. Smith,	16
165. True and False Conversions Distinguished,	12
166. Christ the Only Refuge from the Wrath to Come. By Rev. James Hervey,	8

No.	PAGES.
167. The Single Talent Improved,	4
168. To a Person Engaged in a Lawsuit,	8
169. Memoir of Mrs. Harriet Newell, Wife of Rev. Samuel New- ell, Missionary to India,	28
170. Simplicity in Dress,	4
171. Parental Faithfulness,	12
172. A Time to Dance,	4
173. The Cross of Christ,	20
174. Quench not the Spirit,	4
175. To Mothers,	8
176. The Well-conducted Farm,	12
177. Institution and Observance of the Sabbath,	20
178. Joy in Heaven over the Penitent,	12
179. The Way to be Saved,	12
180. The Swiss Peasant. By Rev. Cæsar Malan,	12
181. Duration of Future Punishment. By Rev. T. Dwight, D. D.,	16
182. To the Inhabitants of New Settlements. By Rev. Alexan- der Proudfit, D. D.,	12
183. On Repentance. By Rev. Jos. S. Christmas,	8
184. The Chimney-sweeper,	8

No. 182.

TO
THE INHABITANTS
OF
NEW SETTLEMENTS.

BY REV. ALEXANDER PROUDFIT, D.D.

BRETHREN, DEARLY BELOVED—"Mount Zion," by the believing Israelites, was emphatically pronounced, "beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth." In the temple, which there stood, were contained "the ark of the covenant; the mercy-seat;" the shekinah, or symbol of the divine presence; and "the oracles of the living God." Thither the faithful among the Jews solemnly repaired at their appointed seasons, and deemed it equally their duty and glory to worship their King "in the gates of the daughter of Zion." The royal Psalmist, when driven into the wilderness by the persecution of Saul, frequently cast a longing look towards the temple of his Father; "his soul thirsted for God, for the living God, that he might see his power and glory, as he had seen him in the sanctuary." He appeared to envy even "the swallow and sparrow," which had access to "the courts of the Lord of hosts," when he was excluded.

But surely the Gospel church, although she may appear externally more simple, is internally and spiritually more glorious. Here we have not the typical "mercy-seat, overlaid with gold," but we have the great antitype, Jesus the Divine Redeemer, through whose person and offices the Eternal God condescends to hold communion with his people, and they are emboldened to approach him with the confidence of children. We have not merely the books of

Moses, and the writings of the prophets—all that were enjoyed by the ancient Jews—but we have the whole canon of divine revelation completed: the New Testament, which sheds light and glory over the Old. We have not barely the paschal lamb, representing Messiah afterwards to appear, and to be offered a sacrifice for sin, but Jesus, “the Lamb of God,” as really incarnate, as already crucified, as having actually endured and accomplished all that was typified by Jewish sacrifices, or foretold by Jewish prophets; confirming the covenant by the blood of his cross, and thus sealing over to his ransomed offspring the promises of his Gospel and the inheritance of glory. We have not merely the shekinah, or symbol of the divine presence, overshadowing the mercy-seat, but we have the everlasting Father, spiritually present in the assemblies of his people. There he graciously dwells, enlightening their understandings, elevating their hearts, purifying their affections, and refreshing them with assurances of his love. “He clothes his priests with salvation,” accompanying their administrations with the power of his Spirit; and “causes his saints to shout aloud for joy.” “On the mountains of Zion,” the temple of his grace, he makes the dews of heavenly consolation to descend, supporting the drooping spirits, and “commandeth the blessing, even life for ever more.”

This is an imperfect representation of the privileges which attend the ordinances of God, and of those blessings which are often experienced by his children in the sanctuary of his praise.

What, beloved brethren, are your exercises, when you are now exiles from his temple, and deprived of those joys which are there to be expected? Do you occasionally reflect, with sorrow of spirit, on opportunities formerly enjoyed, when you were permitted to attend “the house of God with the voice of joy and praise;” when you sat down, from Sabbath to Sabbath, “under his shadow with great delight,” to hear from his servants the message of life,

and to mingle with your brethren in adoring the condescension and grace of the infinitely precious Jesus? Does it afford matter of humiliation and grief, that you are now doomed to spend tedious days and weeks afar off from the courts of your Father, destitute of that Gospel which might prove the power of God to your own comfort, and to the salvation of your beloved offspring? If such are the secret exercises of your hearts, permit me now affectionately to ask,

1. *How did you esteem and improve the ordinances of religion, when they were actually enjoyed?* Was it your care to cultivate the “incorruptible seed” sown in your hearts by the dispensation of the word? Were you often expostulating with the adorable Spirit to water it with his influences, and cause it to produce “the fruits of righteousness to the glory of God the Father?” Or were the tidings of great joy often heard with indifference, and attended merely as your own convenience might dictate? Jehovah is awfully jealous of his institutions, and frequently writes the sin of formal, careless professors in their punishment. Sometimes, in his displeasure, he removes them from the ordinances of his grace, or he removes the ordinances from them, and thus teaches them the worth of their privileges by the want of them. Such judgments were frequently denounced against a spirit of slumber in the Old Testament worshippers, and these judgments are no less threatened against the indolent, unprofitable professor, in every succeeding age. “What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?” saith God, enumerating the advantages of the Jews; “wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes? I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be trodden down; I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.” A message no less alarming was denounced by the Evangelist John against the church of Ephesus: “Remember, therefore, from whence

thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works ; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent."

2. *Examine, with deep solicitude, by what motives you were actuated in removing from a place where the institutions of the Gospel were enjoyed.* If the love of this world had an undue influence in producing this change, you have reason to apprehend the displeasure of God, for thus preferring your temporal interests to the eternal welfare of your souls. Parents often become discontented with their outward condition ; they consult the worldly prosperity of themselves and their families, without reflecting on their immortal concerns. Like Lot, as he looked over the plains of Sodom, they behold some other country, that it is fertile, and will probably afford great worldly advantages ; they perhaps too lightly break off their church connections, resign their church privileges, and go where the sound of the Gospel is rarely heard, and the waters of the sanctuary rarely flow.

But whether your removal from the privileges of the sanctuary was in any degree by your own fault, or not, let me remind you, that although you now enjoy not the opportunity of worshipping God in the devotions of the temple, there are various private institutions, which it is equally your duty and interest to improve.

1. *Be attentive daily to peruse some portions of the sacred Scriptures.* Next to the Gospel preached, the Gospel diligently and devoutly read, has been usually effectual, through the Holy Ghost, for sanctifying and comforting the heirs of promise. In these lively oracles a full revelation of the divine will and our duty is afforded ; we are taught what man was originally, as formed by his Creator, "upright," and perfect in every part, made "after the image of God, in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness ;" we have also a discovery of that misery into which our apostasy has plunged us, that "all flesh have corrupted their ways," are alienated

from the life of God, and exposed to his wrath. While this inspired volume reveals our ruin by the first Adam, it also unfolds that mysterious, divinely gracious plan, which Jehovah in his love has devised for our recovery, through the sufferings of the "second Adam:" it exhibits the Son of God in his mediatorial character as adapted to all the wants and miseries of perishing man; as "bearing our sins in his own body on the tree;" as bringing in everlasting righteousness, to secure our acceptance with the Father; as "able to save to the uttermost" even "the chief of sinners," who have recourse to his mercy. These lively oracles bring also to view the future condition of all men: that the "wicked," they who know not God, and obey not his Gospel, "shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous," all who are washed in the Saviour's blood, and sanctified by his Spirit, and devoted to his service, shall be awarded to "life eternal." Such are the infinitely important truths which the Bible discloses, and which render it "worthy of all acceptance," and of our most diligent perusal. "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple: more to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold." Therefore, as you value your own souls, and the souls of your offspring, "let this word of Christ dwell in you richly." Be often reflecting upon it alone, and reading and repeating it in your families.

2. *Be careful to erect your altar to the Lord, and offer up your spiritual sacrifice morning and evening.* No arguments are necessary to show that this is a reasonable service; that it is a tribute of gratitude justly due to the God who formed and preserves you in a family capacity. It is incumbent on parents and masters, in whatever circumstances they are placed; but, if a comparison may with propriety be made, it appears more indispensable in your present situation. Being destitute of ministerial instruction, by visitation, or catechizing, or the stated preaching of the word, it

becomes you to aim at supplying this want by greater diligence in performing the private duties of religion.

It is an ancient remark, that every parent should officiate as "a prophet, and priest, and king," in the circle of his own family. It becomes him, as a prophet, to instruct them; to make them early acquainted with their guilt and pollution, with the necessity of "being born of the Spirit," and living by faith in Jesus for pardon and glory. As a priest, he ought daily to intercede for his family, acknowledging their iniquities, and looking by prayer for the communication of every necessary blessing. It is incumbent on him, as a king, to rule them in the fear of Jehovah, to maintain spiritual order, to correct whatever is irregular, and, like Abraham, "command his children after him to keep the ways of the Lord." Were all to whom the God of providence has intrusted the management of a family thus faithful; was it their chief solicitude to regulate the moral and religious conduct of their children and, "bring them up in the admonition of the Lord," how happy beyond description would be the result! We should less frequently witness a mournful ignorance in the rising generation; we should be less alarmed with the progress of those errors, by which God is dishonored, the glory of Zion obscured, civil order subverted, and the souls of men eternally destroyed.

Much may be done for the living God, and for the future interest of those young immortals who are intrusted to your care, by zeal and fidelity in your stations. But, if they are permitted to grow up without suitable instruction, and example, and discipline, what can be expected afterwards but irreligion, profligacy, and a wanton compliance with every prevailing opinion, however absurd and fatal; and in the end, without the extraordinary interposition of divine mercy, eternal exclusion from the favor of God? And tell me, ye parents who are neglecting the spiritual nurture of your children, is there nothing appalling, nothing melting in the apprehension of their never-ending destruction? Do

not your hearts recoil at the thought, that a son or daughter, dear to you as life ; one whom you have tenderly nursed ; for whose interest you rise early, and resign many comforts, and encounter innumerable difficulties and dangers ; whose opening powers you often behold with delight, and to whom you look forward as your support in old age ; that such a child should finally perish ; and perhaps, as it is dropping into the gulf of perdition, should fasten its eyes upon you in the horrors of despair, and charge its damnation to your neglect ? Read the following declarations, and tremble while you read them : “The curse of the Lord is on the house of the wicked.” “He will pour his fury upon the families which call not on his name.”

3. *Be particularly careful that the Sabbath of the Lord be sanctified in your dwellings.* No divine ordinance is introduced with greater solemnity, nor enforced by weightier considerations. There is no religious institution to the observation of which richer blessings are promised, nor against the violation of which heavier judgments are denounced. “If thou call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable, and honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words ; then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord, and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father ; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. But if you will not hearken unto me to hallow the Sabbath-day, and not to bear a burden, then I will kindle a fire in your gates, and it shall devour your palaces, and it shall not be quenched.” Remember, however, Christian parents, it is not sufficient that you yourselves cease from secular pursuits, and occupy that day in the duties of religion. The Lord God has given commandment concerning your children and household : “Thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, that is within thy gates.” Great vigilance is therefore requisite, not only for keeping

your own hearts, but for directing the conduct of those who are under your charge. Besides, you are more exposed, while destitute of the public ordinances, to waste that day in idleness, or amusements; and therefore greater watchfulness must be exercised. Those who have no sanctuary to attend, almost necessarily become fatigued with unvarying exercises at home; and, without special vigilance, yield to a spirit of sloth, or amuse themselves by improper visits and recreations. Thus the holy Sabbath is profaned, the most high God provoked, and wrath is ultimately brought down on families and nations.

In order to prevent the Lord's day from appearing a *weariness*, it may be proper occasionally to vary your services. Besides the time occupied by individuals in secret devotion, it may be expedient to call your families together for reading portions of the Scriptures, or some practical writings; for repeating psalms or hymns, and uniting in songs of praise. Were the hours of the Sabbath judiciously distributed in this manner, that sacred day, instead of appearing a *burden*, would become your delight; it would be rendered, through the divine blessing, an important means of your progress in holiness, and a pledge of that rest which all the redeemed shall hereafter enjoy in the heavenly world: your own souls would be comforted and edified; your houses converted into little sanctuaries "for the Holy One of Israel;" and your children trained up for usefulness in this world, and salvation in the next.

4. *In all your devotions, whether secret or social, spread before a compassionate Saviour the desolate condition of your settlements.* Be importunate with Him, "who is head over all things to the church," who "hath received gifts for men," that he would send you "pastors according to his own heart, who may feed you with knowledge and understanding." Tell him, "that the harvest is plenteous, and the laborers" so "few," that thousands around you are "perishing through lack of knowledge;" tell him of your

own necessities, of the necessities of your families, and others; and "give him no rest, until he have mercy upon you," by sending you the stated administration of his word.

Again; after you have been thus importunate with a prayer-hearing God, communicate your desires to the ministers of religion, and to our missionary societies. Let the cry from Macedonia, which reached the ears, and melted the heart of the apostle, be wafted with every breeze from your moral wilderness: "COME OVER, AND HELP US." If there was a famine of bread or of water among you, could you securely slumber? Would not the alarm be instantly spread through every part of your settlement? Would it not be the subject of painful solicitude to individuals, and of conversation with each other, when you occasionally meet? And is there nothing alarming in the famine which you already feel; a "famine of the bread of life and the water of life;" of those ordinances which are usually honored for the salvation of men?

Be exhorted also to improve, with becoming diligence, the labors of those missionaries who occasionally visit you: receive them with all readiness, as "the messengers of our churches, and the glory of Christ;" invite them to your houses; cherish them with your conversation; ask an interest in their prayers, and give them an interest in yours, that their hearts may be encouraged, and their "labors of love" crowned with success; especially, wait with respect and affection upon all their public administrations among you: let not a single sermon which they preach, nor a religious conference or prayer-meeting which they appoint, be neglected, when it is in your power to attend. Consider the privations to which these servants of Jesus are necessarily subjected, the toils which they endure, and the expense at which they are supported by the friends of Zion, from a solicitude for your welfare; and will it not appear proper, that you continue "instant in season and out of season," in attending to their instructions? "How beauti-

ful, upon the mountains, are the feet of him who bringeth good tidings; who publisheth salvation" to perishing sinners?

This Tract is prepared as a remembrancer of truths in which you have probably been often instructed; and it is designed as a memorial that, although absent in body, there are friends of Jesus with whom you were once acquainted, who, as it were, yet present with you in spirit, earnestly desire your consolation and peace; and who, although the relation which formerly existed between you and them is dissolved by your removal, still affectionately regard your spiritual and eternal welfare. I cannot conclude without again reminding you, in their name, of the privileges which you enjoy even in your present situation, and seriously and affectionately urging you to improve them. Although denied the pleasure of statedly entering the "gates of Zion," or testifying, at the sacramental table, your devotion to Jesus, and affection to his dear followers, yet you have access to the Scriptures, which you may daily consult for direction and comfort. "This is the more sure word of prophecy, to which you do well to take heed." But, while the Bible in your houses is an unutterable privilege, recollect also, that it greatly increases your responsibility; and, if neglected, must eternally aggravate your torment beyond what language can express. "Search the Scriptures," therefore, for in them "ye have eternal life;" and in reading them, receive, as your only portion, that Saviour of whom they testify. Like Mary, sit, with all humility, at his feet, relying upon him for pardon and peace, for spiritual light, and life, and joy, until "you receive the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls."

Permit me also again to entreat you, while excluded from the house of God on the Sabbath, to maintain the "church in your respective houses," by the performance of family religion morning and evening. This duty, devoutly discharged, will supply in some degree the want of sanc-

tuary privileges; it will have a tendency to impress the consciences of your children with a sense of their dependence on God, and prepare them for attending, with more profit, the public ordinances, when you may hereafter enjoy them. But if you live without the form of godliness; if you sit down to the bounties of Providence without acknowledging their author; if you habitually retire to rest in the evening, and resume your labors in the morning, in the neglect of family devotion; I must regard all your pretended anxiety for the institutions of the temple as empty hypocrisy, as insult and mockery to a heart-searching Jehovah. He who is not constrained, from a principle of respect to the authority of God, to worship him in private, would not, from proper motives, worship him in public, was the opportunity enjoyed. Besides, what answer can you render him who has "written to you the great things of his law," and commanded you "to teach them diligently to your children; to talk of them, when you are sitting in the house, and walking by the way; when you are lying down, and rising up?"

And now, beloved brethren, let your consciences testify, whether those whom God once placed over you to watch for your souls, and on whose ministrations you were accustomed to attend, did not faithfully urge you "to seek first the kingdom of God;" to aspire not after the profession merely, but the power of godliness, as your happiness, and honor, and interest; whether they did not aim at persuading you, that the gain of a world could not materially profit, with the loss of your souls, and of the great salvation. "My heart's desire and prayer is," that the admonitions of those men of God may not be forgotten, in your present separation from them; that their influence may not be destroyed "by the cares of this world," or the artifices of the great adversary of your peace. Many of you who once listened to the voice of the ministers of Christ, shall see their face no more in the flesh; but all that was formerly spoken, and

all that is now written in these pages, is transcribed in the records of heaven; and if slighted, must appear as additional evidence to justify the Judge in pronouncing your final condemnation. And, ah! shall those who were once set over you in the Lord, see upon his left hand any one of you, to whom they have stood in the most tender and endearing relation of a pastor? and whom they have often instructed "in the things which belong to your peace;" or to whose hands they have given the bread and the wine, the consecrated symbols of his own body and blood? Shall they hear any one of you, in the anguish of despair, "calling upon the mountains and rocks to hide you from the face of him who sitteth upon the throne," whom they have so frequently exhibited to you as *mighty* and *willing to save you*? Must they lift up their voice, saying, AMEN, to that sentence which, louder than a thousand thunders, shall burst upon the Gospel despiser, DEPART FROM ME, YE CURSED.

Thou Holy Spirit, Jehovah, who art by office the applier of the redemption of Jesus, bring to the recollection of the readers of these pages every truth which has been either spoken or written in conformity to thy will; by thine almighty energies upon their hearts, cause life to accompany these instructions, and render them effectual for alarming, or reclaiming, or confirming; and to thee, thou divinely gracious Comforter, with the eternal Father, and the coëqual Son our Saviour, shall be ascribed the undivided honor, both in time and through eternity.