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LIFE OF JUSTIN THE MARTYR, CONCLUDED.

That the vulgar made Gods of the most brutish objects such as dogs, cats, wolves, goats, hawks, dragons, beetles, crocodiles, &c. &c.

This zeal in the cause of christianity, set a keener edge upon the malice and rage of his enemies, particularly that of the philosopher Crescens. He finding it impracticable to confute Justin by force of argument, determined to foil him by force of the secular arm. Marcus Antoninus the Emperor, was not more remarkable for his attachment to philosophy than to the most rigid superstition. He had been, from his youth, educated in the Salian College, and had there gone through all its offices in his own person. His opinions of the christians were, that their resolute and undaunted firmness in death, arose from mere stubbornness and obstinacy, rather than from a judicious and deliberate consideration of principles or expectations. Crescens found means to ingratiate himself into his favor, and soured his mind against Justin. Indeed the Emperor had been forewarned of this by Justin himself, having been publicly told by him, that Crescens, or some other of their titular philosophers, would lay snares to undermine, torment and perhaps crucify him.

He had given great offence to Crescens by the closeness of his arguments, and the severity of his reproofs for his wickedly and ungenerously traducing the Christians as atheistical and irreligious. Justin had told him, ' that he talked about

“The Israelites do not enter into covenant but by these three things, by circumcision, by baptism, and by a peace-offering”—*Talmud*.

“The Jews in old time did not enter into covenant but by circumcision and baptism”—*Gemara*.

“By three things the Israelites entered into covenant, by circumcision, baptism, and sacrifice”—*Maimonides*.

Again, “In all ages as often as a gentile will enter into the covenant and receive the yoke of the law upon him, it was necessary that circumcision and baptism should be used for him, besides sprinkling of the sacrifice, and if it were a woman baptism and sacrifice, according to Num. xv. 15 as to you, so also to the profelyte”—*Maimonides*.

And as to the origin of this practice, the Jews supposed that it took its rise at the time of the giving of the law on Sinai, and was authorized by this command “Go to the people and sanctify them to day, and to-morrow” (Ex. xix. 10) So Maimonides says, “Baptism was in the desert before the giving of the Law, according as it is said—thou shalt sanctify them.”

“He wants the rite of a Profelyte forever unless he be baptized, and circumcised”—*Gemara Babylon*.



FOR THE VIRGINIA RELIGIOUS MAGAZINE.



THE HISTORY OF JACK VINCENT.

Showing what a sad thing it is for parents not to train up their children in the fear of the Lord.

RIDING, not long since, past one of those places of vice and drunkenness, which are so numerous on our public roads, I heard the voice of distress. Though I have always made it a point not to stop at such houses, yet here, I thought, ought to be an exception to my rule. The calls of humanity should

never be neglected. I immediately alighted and went in. But such a scene of horror! Gracious Heaven! exclaimed I, to what miseries are the children of men exposed in this world!

There lay, on a dirty mattress, in one corner of the room, a sick man just on the verge of eternity. His body was emaciated to a skeleton. His visage was deformed with horror. His trembling lips, his distorted features, his wildly staring eyes, all spoke the anguish of his soul. Beside him sat a young female, I suppose about twenty years of age, upon whose countenance there was pointed a settled gloom, which indicated the deepest distress. She silently bended over a pale, sickly looking infant, which lay in her lap. It was the sick man's wife. Near the bed stood, leaning on a staff, a woman, whose face was deeply furrowed, and her limbs were decrepit with age. Her anxious countenance, her officious care, soon informed me that she was the mother to the son of sorrow, who lay on the bed. The only other person in the room was an old man, who exhausted by watching and fatigue, had fallen asleep on a narrow dirty bench—It was the father. My presence put a stop to the wailings which I had heard. As I entered, the dying man raised a hopeless eye towards me, and gave a groan which entered my soul.

I was unable to speak—An awful silence prevailed in the room, which was rendered more dismal by the profane, noisy, vulgar mirth of a drinking party in the only other room of the house. The sick man, at length, with that extraordinary strength, which dying persons sometimes have, half raised himself up, stretched forth his arms, and exclaimed with vehemence, “O God! O God! I am lost forever! Save me! Pray for me! Hold me! I am gone!” Then sinking down, he gave a deep convulsive groan and expired.

The scene which ensued is indescribable. The wife, silent and immovable as a statue, was swallowed up in grief too mighty for utterance. The mother, in all the agonies of maternal distress, cried with the royal mourner, O my son! my

son! would to God I had died for thee! While the Father, starting from his homely couch, stared wildly about, with an air of distraction. The drunken wretches in the adjoining room, hearing this unusual cry, rushed tumultuously in, and seeing the lifeless body of the man, and the distress of the family, struck with remorse and shame, and terror, they hastily retired.

I endeavored to perform the offices of humanity to these afflicted people. And while I was thus engaged, there stepped in an old Gentleman, whose first appearance greatly prepossessed me in his favour. His countenance was placid; his eye beamed benevolence; and the very tones of his voice spoke the softness of his heart. Influenced by the principles of that religion which he professed, he had, with a parental tenderness assisted these poor, afflicted people. After administering that consolation which Christianity affords, and giving some necessary directions, Old Mr. Jervas invited me to his house. I gladly accepted this invitation; and from him I received the following narrative.

“Jack Vincent was born of honest, and respectable parents, in one of the neighbouring counties. They are professors in the Christian church, and are thought, by all their neighbors, to be truly pious people. Their principal fault, as far as I have known, is the indulgence with which they treat their children; and the neglect of ‘training them up in the nurture, and admonition of the Lord.’ To this, and nothing else, do I ascribe the unhappy life, and miserable death of the unfortunate young man, whom you saw expiring in such agony, a little while ago. Jack was the eldest son, and the favourite. He was, indeed, a lad of fine parts, and would have made a respectable and useful member of society, had he been properly trained. But neglect and indulgence ruined him. As soon as he began to utter his wants, his wishes were gratified without restraint. If Jack cried he must have a lump of sugar or a sweet cake to make him quiet. If a servant vexed him,

he was encouraged to strike him. Every thing was made to bend to his will. Thus every passion grew stronger by indulgence; so that I have seen him, (for I have always been very intimate in the family) by the time he was four years of age, upon being crossed in his inclinations, fall upon the floor, and rave, and cry, until what he asked for was given. But parents when they have thought proper to deny any thing to a child, ought never to yield to its importunity. My own rule, Sir, always has been, to speak to children with caution; to answer all their requests with deliberation; and when once I have given an answer, they never apply to me again on the same subject.

There was another thing, which was greatly injurious to Jack. I remarked, I believe, that he was a sprightly lad. His childish sallies of wit, as was very natural, greatly delighted his parents; and their weak fondness made them consider many of his little, mischievous pranks, as instances of his smartness. Thus cats, dogs, little servants, and every thing about the house, capable of feeling, were "*play places for his wit.*" His parents would, indeed, often reprove him for these unlucky tricks. But it was commonly done in such a laughing way, that the child could see plainly enough, that in their hearts they were not displeased. This, instead of checking, would encourage him to go farther. Many parents, in this way, act very unwisely. If a child does wrong and deserve reproof, it should be given seriously; but if he is doing right, why reprove him at all? Children have much more sagacity, at a very early age, than many people suppose. They know very well, when you jest, and when you are in earnest. And if you are in the habit of reproving them in a jesting way; they will soon get into a habit of disobeying you; and very possibly, of totally neglecting your commands. In this way poor Jack Vincent was greatly injured. He did not fear his parents; and constant indulgence, and unrestrained gratification of his desires, soon brought him to love to have his own way, better than he loved them. I observed before, that his parents are

thought to be pious people. Somewhat impressed with the advantage, and necessity of a religious education, they frequently attempted to give their son that instruction, which they believed to be important; but this was quite a painful thing to the child, and they were so foolishly fond, as to neglect their duty, because the performance of it crossed his inclinations. The hope, which so frequently soothes both the love and vanity of parents, that their children will, after all, *turn out well* was cherished by them, to the neglect of those endeavours, which alone can lay any rational foundation for hope in such a case. Jack, however, was put to learning his catechism, but instead of learning it, he would be out, hunting birds nests, playing marbles, or engaged in some other childish sport. So that the *Sabbath was Jack's chief play day*. He was often then, to be seen rambling from one plantation, to another, with half a dozen little negroes at his heels, from morning till night. After much trouble, however, he was prevailed upon to get his catechism, so that he could say it to the minister; and this was thought to be enough. His parents indeed persuaded themselves, that this was all that they could do. Many parents, are on this point strangely mistaken— But I ask your pardon, Sir, said Mr. Jervas, I was to give you the history of Jack Vincent, and I find that I am continually digressing to other people. I begged him, however to go on: assuring him that I was highly entertained with these occasional remarks; that I considered them as the result of long experience, and observation; and that they made his story more interesting— Well, replied he, smiling, I am an *old man*, and must talk, I suppose, in an *old man's way*.—Parents then, I remark, are often strangely mistaken in this point. I have met with many, who think that they have done their duty, if they have taught their children, when very young, to repeat the Lord's prayer, and a year or two after to repeat the catechism. If in addition to these things, they take their children to church, when it is convenient, they wonder what more is necessary; and are surprised that they do not walk in the paths of piety. It we

do no more than this, however, very little is done.—But to return to Jack Vincent. He was indeed, sometimes required to go to church ; but when there, he was permitted to sit or stand, to go out or come in, just as he chose. Thus he was instructed in nothing valuable, either at home or abroad. And he soon became the disturber of whatever congregation he happened to be in. Jack at first went out of church, merely because he hated confinement, and his parents excused it, because it was hard upon a young thing like him to be confined so long. But this threw the lad into the very worst company to be met with in our country. The most loose, idle, vulgar, fellows in the world, are those who go to church for no purpose but to behave amiss. Whether it is pure wickedness which leads them to *glory in their shame* ; or stupidity, which leads them to suppose that this is *smart and clever*, I know not. But such there are, infesting almost every place of public worship, in this part of the country. What a pity it is, that parents will suffer their children to act in this way ! And how sad the case, is, when parents themselves set the example ! As to my knowledge is frequently done. When Jack fell in with this set he rapidly grew worse. He soon lost that modesty, which is the last fortress of youth. For when a young man becomes incapable of blushing, I generally consider him as hopeless. And when I heard Jack Vincent, reply, “ I dont care,” to a companion of his, not so graceless as himself, who reproved him for swearing, in the presence of a grave and respectable clergyman, I gave him up as ruined. It was unfortunate for Jack, that among those companions, who frequented the corners of churches in time of public service, he fell in with Tommy Lowrey. He was the son of parents, who had a greater reputation for piety, than any other persons in the neighborhood. But they were of that mistaken class, who suppose that religion requires a sad countenance, a melancholy air, and perpetual sighing. These honest people were determined to train up their children, in the paths of virtue, and piety : and were continually giving lectures to Tom. But this, which is in itself

a very good thing, was done in such a way, as to have the very worst effect in the world. Deep, heavy sighs, were uniformly the prelude to religious conversation with their children. And whatever they said, was spoken with such a gloomy, forbidding countenance, and a tone so melancholy, that the child was frightened almost to death. Religion, instead of being represented in its own lovely colours, was shown in the gloomy garb of superstition. In this way, Tom soon contracted the most mortal aversion to all religion, and to all religious instruction. And while his pious, but mistaken parents, were endeavoring, in their way, to impress his youthful mind with the fear of his Creator, he was often employed in meditating future schemes of mischief, to be communicated to Jack Vincent, and to be accomplished together with him. With this companion, Jack constantly associated. And as Tom's mind was much more hardened than the other's, by his constant resistance to parental admonition, he was always foremost, in the wicked pranks of childhood: and the more deliberate villainies of riper years.

There was another thing very injurious to the young person of whom I am giving you an account. A lad of his sprightly turn was, you may suppose, very fond of amusements. And there was not a *horse-race*, a *muster*, or a *court*, but Jack must go. Here he fell in with many bad companions, and into many wicked courses. At first he was shocked to see a man rolling in the dirt, as drunk and as filthy as a beast: it wounded him to hear the profanity, which is so frequently heard in our court-yards. But he soon became reconciled to these things. By drinking drams at his father's (for though old Mr. Vincent is a very sober man, yet he unfortunately keeps up the bad custom not only of drinking drams himself; but also of suffering his children to do so too) by this bad practice, I say, poor Jack soon began pretty highly to relish the taste of good liquor. *Musters* and *courts* were proper places to indulge this liking. And by the time that he arrived at the age of fifteen, he was sometimes seen reeling in the court-yard. As Jack was what is called a *jolly fellow*, he must make one in every loose party,

that was formed in the neighborhood. His presence was the animating soul of these companies of dissipation. It is true that he did not finish his career, without many lashes, and sometimes terrible alarms of conscience. I remember once, returning from a muster in a drunken frolic, he proposed riding a race with one of his foolish companions; the proposal was instantly accepted, and the unfortunate youth was thrown from his horse, and taken up for dead. The near prospect of death frightened Jack; and he very solemnly promised that he would never ride another race, or drink to excess again. For sometime, he behaved very soberly; attended church; and seemed often to be greatly moved. Every body hoped that Jack Vincent would become a christian. But alas! these hopes were soon nipped in the bud. His fatal attachment to the bottle ruined him. In an evil hour, he was overcome by temptation. And every serious impression was erased. In addition to all these things, some wicked companion put into his hands some of the low, coarse publications against christianity, which have so much abounded in the few years last gone by. Jack had not now one single principle which would preserve him from the gulph of ruin, which was opening before him. He had never been instructed in the evidences of christianity; so that the falshood and futility of the common place objections to our religion were not at all perceived by him. And even if this had been the case, he had plunged so deep in vice, and was so determined to indulge himself, that to *disbelieve* was now, in a certain sense, necessary to his peace. He therefore, greedily drank in the poison. Then indeed his ruin was certain. He that fears not God, does not regard man. He that feels no dread of futurity, has but feeble motives to restrain him from vicious courses. Jack however, had learned the modern *cant* about *priest-craft* and *superstition* and *reason*, and he thought himself mighty wise indeed! At every public place, he had around him a throng of giddy, thoughtless wretches, who laughed at his buffoonery, and drank the liquor with which he was ever ready to supply them. Thus he went on

as the scripture saith "waxing worse and worse;" Corrupt himself and corrupting others.

In the mean time, however, Jack fell in love with a girl in the neighborhood: a handsome, good natured, thoughtless young thing, who was captivated by his lively insinuating manners, and easy address; and who resolved to marry him, contrary to the warm remonstrances of her parents. This is not the first girl, that I have known ruined in this way. Few will grow wise by the experience of others. Easy manners, gaiety, and wit, with young, thoughtless females, supply the place of sober habits, religious principles, and all those solid qualities which are necessary to domestic felicity. Jack, indeed, promised that he would forsake his evil courses, and live a life of sobriety. And she, foolishly enough, trusted his promises; influenced no doubt, by a secret hope, that she would have power over him sufficient to reclaim him entirely. If he loves me, said she, as I am sure he does, he will certainly try to make me happy. I will soon convince him, that I shall be miserable, if he persists in the practices which it is said he follows, and he will do so no more. But it is running a dreadful risk to calculate in this way. Poor Fanny! how miserably has she been disappointed. They were married: and for a few weeks, every thing seemed to augur well. Jack kept sober; set about business: declared that he was quite happy, and his wife exulting in the fancied realization of her hopes, could not help boasting to her mother the prudence of her choice. But better experience soon taught her that though "*Young folks think old folks to be fools, yet Old folks know young folks to be fools.*" Jack rode out one evening, and was to return in the course of two hours. But the appointed hour arrived, and he did not appear. Nine o'clock came, but no Jack was to be seen. His wife became impatient and anxious. She started at every sound, expecting her husband. But she had to spend a sleepless night alone. He did not return until the following evening. The affair was this: In

his ride, he met with some old companions, who insisted on his joining them in a little frolick which they had just planned. At first he gave a positive denial: but was at last prevailed on to alight, and take one drink of *grog*. "Surely," said he, "though I have promised not to drink too much, *one glass will do me no harm.*" Without much difficulty, he was persuaded to take a *second*; and then a *third*; until he became quite warm. Cards were then introduced. Jack got into a contest with a profest gambler, who dexterously wrought upon his feelings, while he was quite enflamed. He betted largely; lost—raised his bet—and lost again—until before morning came, he had lost a thousand dollars. To a young man just beginning the world, this was a very serious loss. Though he had been most scandalously cheated, yet Jack was a *lad of too much spirit*, not to pay his debts of *honor*. His property was sacrificed to satisfy the demands of the gambler. You can imagine, better than I can describe, how these things distressed his wife. All her tow'ring hopes of happiness were humbled in the dust: and she saw inevitable ruin hanging over her. One would have supposed that this severe stroke would completely check the unhappy man; but it only accelerated his fall. The first step in vice always renders the second more easy. Jack was induced now to venture farther than before, in order to make up his losses. "Fortune will, certainly change" thought he, "before long—I will not always have bad luck." Thus did he go on, still losing, and still deluding himself with the vain hope, that by some lucky stroke, he would recover what he had lost: until in less than a year, his property was totally gone, Want stared him in the face; and he had recourse to deep drinking for relief. His feelings were sometimes wrought up to a pitch of indiscrible horror. His wife brought him a son—but this event, so pleasing to most parents, only served to heighten his distress. He had intailed want, infamy and misery upon his child. The presence of this infant, and the woman he had so greatly inju-

red, rendered his home intolerable. I have seen him sometimes, with a perturbed countenance, and haggard looks, stealing along some unfrequented path, to the little tavern, which we have just left, where he would spend day after day in intoxication. A few weeks ago, he attempted to commit self-murder; but in the moment of executing this dreadful design, his principles of infidelity failed him; and his whole frame was so dissolved by terror, that he only gave himself a slight wound. In the agonies of a condemned soul, he flew to the tavern, where he drank such a quantity of ardent spirit, as threw him into violent convulsions. His constitution was before broken by intemperance, and he never recovered this shock. As death approached, however, the solemn truths of religion burst upon his mind with irresistible energy. The consciousness of having blasphemed his Savior: ridiculed that religion, which only can pluck the sting out of death; and renounced the only foundation of human hope, filled him with agony. I endeavored in vain to turn his attention to a crucified Redeemer. Despair had taken hold of his soul; and he sunk under the stroke of death: in the horrible manner, which you have just witnessed. His parents, you see, are cut to the heart, with the dreadful end of their darling son. The affliction comes the heavier, because they have much to reproach themselves with. How keenly must parents feel, when, seeing the son of their love die the death of the sinner, they feel the consciousness of having neglected the precept of scripture "*Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.*"

Thus ended Mr. Jervas—And I sincerely wish that parents may take warning by the awful fate of the unhappy Jack Vincent, and *Bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.*

PHILO,