

THE
DAY OF SMALL THINGS,
THE
PRECURSOR AND THE CAUSE
OF THE
DAY OF GREAT THINGS,
AND
NEVER DESPISED BY THE WISE AND THE GOOD.

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN "THE CHURCH OF THE COVENANTERS," IN THE CITY OF CINCINNATI,
BY THE PASTOR,

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"Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory? and how do you see it now? is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing? Yet now be strong, O Zerubabel, saith the Lord; and be strong, O Joshua, son of Josedech the high priest; and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the Lord, and work: for I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts."—HAGGAI.

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TO
ABRAHAM LINCOLN,
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,
HIS CABINET,
THE CONGRESS, THE JUDICIARY, THE ARMY AND NAVY, AND ALL WHO
SUPPORT THE WAR AGAINST REBELLION,
THIS DISCOURSE
IS MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,
BY
THE AUTHOR.

S E R M O N .

ZECHARIAH IV: 10. "Who hath despised the day of small things?"

The Bible is true to nature. There is no book in the world that so fully and truly unfolds human beings to themselves, as it. It is not more infallible even in its theology, the science of God, than in its anthropology, the science of man. It is not more perfect in the Divine recuperative system of Christianity which it unfolds, than in its descriptions of human weakness, depravity, impotency, diseases, follies, crimes, false estimates, and ultimately death; all which it affirms are the result of the secession or departure of our first parents, Adam and Eve, from innocency, from God and from bliss, by the breach of the covenant of Life, or of Works, which created the necessity for this supernatural provision and revelation. "My people have departed from me, the Fountain of living waters; and have hewn out to themselves cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." "How has the gold become dim! how is the fine gold changed!" To cure this propensity to revolt from God and his law, and to bring the prodigal child to his Father's house, the redemption which is by Jesus Christ is entirely adequate. The Holy Bible also instructs us that nothing is to be despised, except meanness, vice and immorality, with their incorrigible practitioners. In its light, no enemy, in the day of battle and war, or at any other time, is to be despised by him who would secure the victory. It evinces that all faith is in simplicity. It brings its attentive student into communion

with himself, with nature and with inexorable facts. Its voice is very loud, distinct and emphatic that, in all ordinary circumstances, man, in order to succeed in any work or enterprise, is to begin at the beginning—that if he does not lay the foundation well, he will never raise a permanent superstructure—that he is ever nobly and heroically to venture and dare for the glory of God, and for his own and others good—and that, if he would prevail in his enterprises, and bring forth “fruit to perfection,” he must by all means not “despise the day of small things.” And hence the indispensable necessity of this Book of books, to all the individuals, associations and varieties of our race.

Our text has reference to the work to be accomplished, upon the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity. Zerubabel was their leader in the State, and Joshua their leader in the Church. The second Temple had to be rebuilt. The discouragements were many. Their resources were not great. They had undergone a long and dreary captivity “in a foreign land,” where they hung their harps upon the willow trees, by the rivers of Babylon, rather than comply with the tantalizing request of their heathen captors, “Sing us one of the songs of Zion.” False brethren, traitors, did them more harm, than did all the heathen. “Sanballat the Horonite, Tobiah the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arabian, by all that was insidious and false, attempted to get Cyrus and Darius to alter their decrees in favor of building the Lord’s house which was at Jerusalem. The returned captives, the people of God, were but a small and feeble remnant. They had just returned from their seventy years’ captivity. But the set time for favoring Zion having come, God raised up adequate instruments for doing his work, and the voice of comfort and encouragement sounding in the ears of his servants, was such as could only come from himself. It invites to manly and heroic action. “Quit you like men.” He who despises “the day of small things,” at

least through his instrumentality, shall never see the day of great things. "For who hath despised the day of small things?" The question is not directly answered. It answers itself. But it is thus indirectly answered: However small the things may seem to be at present, "the hands of Zerubabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it; and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto you. For who hath despised the day of small things? For they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubabel with these seven; they are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth."

And now, after these introductory remarks, I submit the four following propositions, and proceed, looking unto God for ability, as briefly as may be, to their elucidation.

I. *The day of small things usually precedes, according to an evident and indispensable law of God, the day of great things.*

II. *Men, and even Christian men, are too prone to despise the day of small things.*

III. *Despising the day of small things is highly injurious to those who are addicted to such folly, and exceedingly offensive unto God.*

IV. *Instead of despising the day of small things, it is wise and dutiful to conclude that whatsoever has life and worth, however small or feeble its beginning may be, will grow and become great, as far as the law of its nature will permit, in all ordinary circumstances, if properly nourished and cultivated.* And,

I. The day of small things usually precedes, according to an evident and indispensable law of God, the day of great things. This is amply illustrated and demonstrated,

1. From the natural world.

But here I shall only give you hints, in order to stir up your attention to that which is every day passing around you, and may be familiar to every one. The whole of the vegetable, mineral and animal kingdoms of nature, elucidates and verifies this. The small seed cast

into the earth precedes and produces the waving and luxuriant corn. And the tall bush with its many gorgeous flowers, appealing to heaven alone during their brief but happy day; and expanded toward the sun, imbibing his light and heat, his purity and power, while diffusing their fragrance gratuitously all around them; demonstrates that the day of small things is not to be despised. From the small plant cometh the umbrageous and fruitful vine, The stateliest oak proceeds from the small acorn. The break of day precedes and produces Aurora, and she the morning sun; while he, waxing stronger and stronger, whatever clouds may obscure him, or storms set in, rejoiceth as a bridegroom to run his race, and faileth not, maugre all obstructions, to shine more and more unto the perfect day. The largest rivers have their origin in the smallest springs and streams, and these combined make the ocean. The elephant was once small and helpless. The lion, the monarch of the forest, was once so feeble that he could neither roar, nor rend, nor devour the prey. The eagle was once without pinions. The butterfly was but yesterday a loathsome, slothful and ugly creature. The most stalwart, learned and talented man that ever defied and conquered the enemies of his country; or navigated the ocean; or taught his age; or expounded and defended the faith; and the greatest monarch, or statesman, or mathematician, or philosopher, or astronomer; was, as Jesus himself, born of a woman, and lisped in helpless infancy. They all began to be, and needed to be nursed, protected, and taught. Our costliest jewelry was once in a misshapen state, imbedded in the mines. Our clocks and watches, apparently instinct with life, were first motionless pieces of wood and ore. So it was with the mariner's compass itself, which, true to the pole, now conquers Neptune in all his vast, watery and stormy dominions. Who, then, shall despise the day of small things, as they appear in the natural world?

2. From the moral world.

Whence has sprung the race of mankind? From a

single pair. Whence have arisen the mightiest and largest empires of the earth? From a single hut, to which others in the course of time were added, inhabited by untaught and simple savages. Whence have sprung the vast cities of our globe, from which nations sprang, and which, in turn, have governed them? They were small things in their origin. They were all, like all the useful and fine arts, founded on intellection and cogitation. Man built them. Were not Romulus, the founder of Rome, and Remus his brother, exposed in infancy upon the banks of the Tiber? Were they not suckled with the she wolf's teat? Whence sprang the British Isles, as a nation? Read their early history. Both the people and their kings before the conquest, and for a long time subsequent to the conquest, would now be considered among the simplest people on earth. What would they have been, and now be, without their invasions and civil wars? The storm agitates and purifies the stagnant pool, as well as the atmosphere. A nation, like a man, goes to ruin alike by inaction or perverted action. The sin of Sodom was "idleness and fulness of bread." Hence, in mercy, God rouses nations and churches, as well as individuals, from their ease and security. The wars of the Roses, the houses of York and of Lancaster, with the deeds of William the Conqueror who swore "by the splendor of God" he would subdue England, and make something out of her; all were necessary to her present power, stability, order and glory. Whence arose the determination, on the part of Christopher Columbus, to set sail for the discovery of a new world? Simply by finding a reed of an unknown species floating on the banks of the Azores. How was the art of printing discovered? By Costar making some incisions in the bark of the trees of Holland. Did not the fall of an apple from a tree suggest to Sir Isaac Newton the laws by which the whole physical universe is governed? Did not the bringing tyrannically back, by Charles the First, John Hampden and Oliver Cromwell, from the

ship, lying in the Thames, in which they had taken passage for the New World, in quest of liberty of conscience, soon ultimate in the revolution of the British empire for its good, and in bringing that same Charles to decapitation at Whitehall? Whence sprang the empire of all the Russias?—that colossal power of modern times. Until the days of Peter the Great, it was hardly of any account. That distinguished man went through the ship-yards of Europe in disguise, as he determined to make his country great, to learn the ship carpenter's trade, that he might introduce into it the science and the benefit of navigation? And look at the small origin of our own nation, "the land shadowing with wings, which is beyond the rivers!" She has become rapidly great, but more rapidly has been brought low, through the treason and rebellion of her own unnatural sons; but it is only that she may rise again higher than ever, and carry the blessings on the wings of her Eagle, far down toward the tropics, of the Anglo-Saxon blood, language, civilization, and the Christian religion. And were not all those voluntary associations, such as Bible, Missionary, Tract, Sabbath School, Colonization, Philosophical and Literary Societies, very little things in their origin? Did not the proud Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, commence, in England, by the Monks of Joffred, abbot of Crowland, and others, giving instructions, without libraries or buildings, in the open air? Was not collegiate education commenced in our own country, in log cabins? Did not the largest fortunes, the greatest commercial and other pecuniary establishments, and the most efficient and extensive influence, commence in small beginnings? But the instances of this are numberless, and I shall therefore forbear.

The subject, too, has an important bearing upon the formation of good moral and religious habits. These are not built up and established in a day. They grow by little and little. The same is true of the opposite. No man ever became a notorious villain at once. It is the man of guilt, that ultimately becomes the man of crime.

Let none therefore dare to despise the day of small things.

"Ill customs by unseen degrees arise,
As brooks make rivers, rivers swell to seas."

3. From the visible church.

As, however, I have said so much recently in another published Discourse, in relation to the low condition to which the church and cause of God are often reduced, I shall feel myself excused at present from entering minutely upon this branch of the subject. You know the germ of all Divine Revelation, in the first promise, and the whole of the church visible, were at first planted in a single family. But, lo, how they grew, amplified and spread! At first a little stream over which a child might step, or in which it might safely wade, the church gradually increased until, like a mighty ocean, she fills the whole earth with the knowledge, the salvation and the glory of God. The many, in her progress, despised, as they still despise, the days of her small things; but in this they were neither wise nor happy. God adds to his church in all ages such as he will save. Her existence is perpetual. She is all-conquering. All things are hers. And what flowers, and fruits, and blessings shall have been produced from the vine brought from Egypt, when it shall cover every mountain and valley of our earth—when all the glorious things spoken of her by her Planter shall be realized—when "the little one shall become a thousand, and the small one a strong nation"—and when "the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established upon the top of the mountains; and all nations shall flow unto it, that they may walk in the light of the Lord!" Our Lord Jesus, who "set us an example that we should follow his steps," did not despise the day of small things. "Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, the kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is sown it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that

the fowls of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof." "And another parable spake he unto them; the kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened."

4. From the growth and development of the new creature.

We can not reckon as among ordinary instances the conversion of the apostle Paul. In the full maturity of his age, he was struck down by the Spirit, "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," while on his way to Damascus, doing the work of an infuriated persecutor of the church of God. His case was extraordinary, and he could not forget either it or the circumstances by which he passed from death unto life. And yet even the beginning of his career, as a new creature, in the kingdom of God, was but a day of small things, in comparison with the day of great things, to which he ultimately attained. No man ever exemplified obedience more perfectly to the precept of his brother Peter, "Grow in grace," than he; and which he himself also inculcated upon all the churches, by every figure, and by his gigantic and sanctified intellect, his vast learning, his masculine and persuasive eloquence, and his plenary inspiration. "Go on unto perfection."

The matter stands thus, in the case of all the saved by grace. Regeneration is complete at once. Sanctification is progressive, and is never complete until death. The new creature grows. The old man dies. And when the former has gained the complete mastery, and the latter has perished forever, the saint has arrived at the stature of perfect manhood in Christ Jesus; and is received at death into the heaven of heavens, and to all the unutterable joys of the beatific vision. But in general it is a day of small things with the regenerated at their starting point, "toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." They have life which shall not end, but it is as the life of the new-born babe. They

have light, but it is as the early dawn. They have faith, but it is weak, and they want assurance. They have love, but it is too cold and languid. So it is with every other grace. Verily, these plants and lilies in the garden of God are now as delicate as they are living and beautiful. These "vines," planted by the right hand of almighty sovereign grace, "have tender grapes." The sons of God must fight their way through an enemy's country, to their home in glory. They must conquer themselves. So they do. First one bad passion and habit, and after these, others are overcome. They put off the old man, and put on the new. They "put off the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light." They put on Christ. Strong temptation sets in. They put on the whole armor of God, and resist the Devil. They become good soldiers of the Cross. The grace of their Captain, who was himself "made perfect through suffering, that he might bring many sons unto glory," is sufficient for them, and his strength is perfected in their weakness. He goes before. They follow at his feet. His armies conquer, and win, and wear the crown of glory. This is the day of their great things; and its sun shall never go down. In a word: is the hidden Christian life, in its gradual development, likened to the growth of the corn from the seed sown in the ground? There is "first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear." Is it likened to the various stages of human beings, from infancy to maturity? There is first the babe in Christ, then there is the young man, and then there is the father.

II. Men, and even Christian men, are too prone to despise the day of small things. This proposition is illustrated and demonstrated,

1. By a due consideration of the case of those who despise substances, and are enamored with, and eagerly pursue after, shadows.

This is original sin. "God made man upright, but he has sought out many inventions." Being "in honor," he

“did not abide.” Satan knew the weak side of Eve, She could be tempted to despise the day of small things; and to seek, rebelliously against God, the day of great things, by eating the forbidden fruit. “And the serpent said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: but of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die. For God doth know, that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; and gave unto her husband with her, and he did eat.” Just one little apple!

This is also actual transgression. The small things of the service of God; tenderness of heart and scruples of conscience; the restraints of wholesome law in the family, the Church and the State, instead of insubordination; a cotton confederacy for the promotion of rebellion and self-aggrandizement; no work, and therefore no bread, because the business, although lawful, is too small and ignoble for me; and as the result, nothing wherewith to meet your just and necessary obligations. How small!! “Nothing to wear?” It is indeed a “day of small things” with such, while there is anything fine or costly to be sold in the stores. And, moreover, the living above instead of within the means, that we may have a day of great things, to the inversion of the rules of nature, of law, of providence, and of experience, however certainly it shall be followed by a day of small things; discontentment with, and unfitness for, the duties of our places and stations; having our “hearts, like the fool’s eyes, in the ends of the earth,” and always sighing after a change of circumstances, place and situation, where we would

surely do exploits; recreancy to every duty in civil affairs because they are too small for gentlemen, and aspirants for the highest renown, and for the accomplishment of our objects; setting the temple of liberty on fire, so as at least to consume ourselves in the fires of our own kindling; contempt and ridicule heaped upon all honest industry as the veriest slavery, that we may have a pretext for "holding unoffending men in involuntary bondage" as a great thing, or for pursuing the honorable avocation of the gambler or the blackleg; the misimprovement or the forfeiture of little portions of time, and of little opportunities, and the hardness and impenitency of heart, under the still small voices of conscience and the monitions of God; the neglect and rejection of the only way of salvation by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and all the instituted means of grace, as too small for our consideration, and much more for our acceptance of the one, or our observation of the other; saying with the distinguished leper of old, who was offended because the prophet would not heal him in a great and pompous, but in a little and simple, way, "Are not the waters of Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Why may I not go wash in them, and be clean?" ingratitude to God for all his mercies, saying of them, as the murmuring and rebellious Israelites of the manna, that they are "light food;" and the perpetual interrogation in relation to known and domineering sin, "is it not a little one?" while day by day marching onward upon "the thick bosses of the buckler" of Almighty God. These are specimens of the fruit of the despite of the day of small things! The little captive maiden, through whom the leper was healed, was a very small affair! The little Zoar will never become great!

Ah, my Christian brethren, what wasted talents and shipwrecked characters! what wasted fortunes and blighted hopes! what lack of high, legitimate and holy enterprise! what remissness in and desisting from well-doing! what dwarfishness in intellect, in learning, and in

piety! what anarchical and wretched States! and what secessionists in and without the churches, from their despising the day of small things! See then that you honor and improve that day. And "your fruit being unto holiness, the end" shall be to you "everlasting life."

2. By the attentive consideration of the case of those who aim at great ends, but despise or neglect the means by which alone they can be accomplished.

It is verily right to set our mark high, and to see that it be worthy. The man is as his object. If the archer shoot at the sun, although he does not hit it, he will shoot much higher than he who aims only at the ground. It ought to be the aim of every man to accomplish high and good objects. He is to be pitied whose hands can execute for the good of man, and the glory of God, all that he designed. "Howbeit thou didst well that it was in thine heart." It is better to soar with the eagle, as fellow-laborers with angels, and with God, even if there were danger of being lost among the stars, than to select our position with the swine in the mire. Cherish, and hope, and expect much from the hand of God. Plan wisely. Act vigorously. But see that you act. Redeem the time. Be economical, and a diligent improver of small things. Be awake. "Gather up the fragments, that nothing may be lost." Seek not to fall, but to rise, at least, by little and little. Trust in God, but not in princes, and do with your might whatsoever your hand findeth to do.

But there is a large class of men who expect great things, and will do little or nothing for their acquisition. These hold the day of small things in sovereign contempt. I do not speak of men as fallen into a state of sin and wretchedness merely, and who being made for happiness, by neglecting or contemning the simple means whereby it can only be obtained, fail of it: I do not speak of Christian men alone, who expect the eternal inheritance, and the incorruptible crown: but I speak of your men of fancy and imagination; of your speculators in every de-

partment of life; of your "builders of castles in the air;" and of all others—and their "name is legion," who in despite of the day of small things, cherish high hopes of renown and abundance, while, without the honoring of it, and the improvement of its humble things, by straining every nerve in the due use of adapted and honorable means, can never accomplish anything worthy of man, for themselves, the church, or the world. Contrary to God, who, except in the case of proper miracles, accomplishes his purposes, here on earth, by appropriate instrumentality, they would eat without working; they would be rich without industry or frugality; they would be renowned without cultivating character, or imbibing and developing the principles of true heroism and courage; they would be puissant without the gradual training of any manly or courageous attribute; they would be learned without "trimming the midnight lamp;" they would be famous at the Bar without the knowledge of science and literature; they would shine in the practice of Medicine with a sovereign contempt of the dead languages, and of the exact sciences; they would occupy the Pulpit without study, or giving themselves to reading; they would rule the Church and the State without ruling well their own houses, or maintaining mastery over their own spirits; and they would lead forth armies without natural military prowess, without a proper knowledge of military tactics, without the proper preparatory drilling of their troops, without concentration, and without design or plan: not to appear themselves "in the forefront of the hottest battle," but in the place of personal safety; and, all "powder, and pomatum," and effeminacy, to make the army of a Xerxes, if they had it, to flee apace before the foe; to make their soldiers "food for cannon;" and to overwhelm themselves and their bleeding country with disgrace. They despise the day of small things. Christians, be you not like them, neither imitate any of their ways.

3. By the impartial consideration of the conduct of those

who, if an individual, or a cause, or an institution, be popular and prosperous, and thus can do without their patronage, will not withhold from them their countenance and aid; but if it be otherwise, without any real diminution of their merits, will treat them with the utmost coldness, and the most sullen contempt.

It would seem, Christians, to be almost an insult to your understandings, much to elaborate this point. You are fully aware of its truth. All history and experience demonstrate it as a matter of daily observation. "Men will praise thee, when thou doest well unto thyself." "The rich hath many friends; but the poor maketh entreaties." The million will always flit around the prosperous and popular man, or cause, or institution, or nation, or Church, as the butterfly in the sun, around the expanded flower; who when the first wind of adversity blows upon them, become as scarce as the insects before the first frosts of Autumn. It is no uncommon thing to neglect, if not oppose, expanding, rising genius and talent; or a worthy cause, but not yet endorsed by the multitude; or an institution of acknowledged value; or a small Church; or a feeble and struggling nation; in order to see if they emerge from their day of small things, to a day of great things. If they do not, they will become the butt of scorn, ridicule and defamation. If they do, with trumpet tongues all will sound their praises, and contribute to them of their best influence and resources. This they call shrewdness—taking things as they find them, and as they will pay—driving the nail that will go—or if they at all acknowledge religion, following the leadings of Divine Providence! This has made martyrs and patriots few, and has filled the Church in her prosperity with hypocrites, and the best of nations, having high offices to fill, and large patronage to bestow, with the most dastardly traitors. This accounts for the fact that the proud professor of to-day, becomes, by a change of circumstances, the branded apostate and infuriated persecutor of to-morrow. This is an epitome of

the history of a Sharpe and a Landerdale, of a Judas and a Cataline. They make great and sudden transitions, but there is no change in themselves. A change of circumstances, to which they readily adapt their actions, demonstrates to all their absolute destitution of principle. "*Tempora mutantur, et nos mutamur cum illis.*" "And Hazael said, But what! is thy servant a dog that he should do this great thing? And Elisha answered, The Lord hath shewed me that thou shalt be king over Syria."

Our nature is indeed at best mercurial. Common sense and sound reason are not very abundant in the world. Moral and Christian principle is still a rare commodity. Hence the sudden transitions that are made. "All men have not faith." Real excellence and moral worth are at a discount, in every place and age. The opposite are at, or above, par. How despicable was the church in Egypt to Pharaoh, and the surrounding nations! But after her miraculous exodus, she became an object of universal admiration. How basely and treacherously was David treated during the day of his small things, by Saul, his courtiers, and his subjects! And yet these same subjects and satellites crowned him their own chosen king with joy, with pomp and with shoutings, after the infatuated monarch, with his amiable son Jonathan, had perished upon mount Gilboa. What a base and appalling secession of these same Hebrews from his throne and his empire, when an Absalom, his unnatural son, and a most perfidious traitor, by flatteries, and false allegations and promises, stole away the hearts of the people! This furnished, too, a fine opportunity for the old, crafty statesman and counsellor, Ahithophel, to betray, and secede from, his master and legitimate sovereign; while giving his sage counsel to the rebels for his utter destruction, and at last falling into the pit of his own excavation. But when God pleads his own cause, the rebels, as rapidly as they departed or seceded, return to their allegiance, and rally around the king and his throne. How ineffably

despicable and contemptible were Mordecai, Esther and all the Jews, to Haman the son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, when his star was in the ascendant, through his own villainies; and the noble but obscure man, too proud to do him reverence whatever might betide, "sat in the king's gate," patiently waiting to see what the Lord his God would do for himself and his people, and against such a worthless, sycophantic, malignant, treacherous, ambitious, painted and glittering imposter! But when in the holy, wise and overruling providence of God, Haman is hanged upon his own gallows; when the Jews are delivered from the plot he had laid for their utter extermination, and the whole is turned round to their advantage and glory; when Mordecai's day of small things, is exchanged for his day of great things, and he is elevated to the place of his adversary, next to the potent throne of Ahasuerus, even to "see the face of the king," while during the whole of his wise administration of the affairs of the extended empire, he continued to "wax greater and greater;" "many of the people of the land became Jews: for the fear of the Jews fell upon them." How sudden was the transition, on the part of the barbarians, at Melita, from the denunciation of Paul as a murderer, in the day of his adversity, to the affirmation that he was a god, in the day of his prosperity! What a short interval between the shout, "Hosanna to the Son of David; blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord," and that wild vociferation in relation to the same Divine Personage, "Crucify him! crucify him! not this man, but Barabbas!" But I forbear. Study all history with reference to this. The day of small things may not with impunity be despised. Principle and wisdom will always be superior to the immorality and the blunder.

4. By the careful and attentive consideration of even the saints of God themselves, who, by reason of the weakness of their faith, are very liable to despise "the day of small things."

It would be pleasant to me, and perhaps profitable to

you, to descant at large upon such a fertile theme as that which is now brought before our attention. But it is not necessary. The saints while in the body are in a state of imperfection. They are too prone to murmurings, repinings and discontentments, instead of to giving of thanks in everything, even for "the cup of cold water;" and while they aspire after a seat with their Redeemer on his throne, more durable than the adamant, and the "eternal inheritance, which is incorruptible, undefiled, and which fadeth not away," they are often found mourning as those who have not the sun. Instead of looking at the bright side of the dispensations of their God,—at "the Bright and the Morning Star,"—and not wearying "in well-doing, knowing that in due season they shall reap if they faint not;" they are too often found with their hands hanging down, and their knees feeble. Instead of accepting gratefully and submissively the conditions of their lot, and rendering, like Abraham, steadily, however great the self-denial, "the obedience of faith" unto their Lord and Redeemer, at all times, and under all circumstances, and being strong and of good courage; they not unfrequently indulge in morbid melancholy, and in sinful complaints and fears, when they ought to boast their souls in God. Grace reigns. Our enemies, temporal, spiritual and eternal, are numerous and cruel, but the very God of peace is able to bruise them under our feet. Little faith, little grace, little joy, little love, little rays of the countenance of your God, so that they be genuine, are not to be despised. Occupy with thy talents, O Christian, till the Lord come. The tabernacle of God is with men, although Zion has not, as yet, put on her beautiful garments. Liberty has not perished, although there be treason in her camp, and rebellion against her just authority. God lives. His kingdom shall come. Press forward. Now is your salvation nearer than when you at first believed. Say not, as Jacob, "all these things are against us," nor with David, "I shall one day perish by the hands of Saul."

Court not chastisement for your discontents, and your not knowing "the day of your merciful visitation." Improve time as it flies, in preparation for eternity. And what though all time be the day of small things in comparison with eternity? your great things in the "better land" are in a state of reversion for you. Boldly advance. Before you is the crown.

III. Despising the day of small things is highly injurious to those who are addicted to it, and exceedingly offensive unto God.

This proposition is illustrated and demonstrated,

1. By a proper view of the ignorance and folly from which such despite proceeds; and which are immeasurably increased by its indulgence.

This must be so, if what we have advanced upon the first topic of this Discourse, in order to evince that a "day of small things usually precedes, according to an evident and indispensable law of God, a day of great things," be true and incontrovertible. And who shall dare to dispute the thousand massive and suggestive facts, found in all history, which demonstrate this truth? But still there are not a few who, alike injuriously to themselves and dishonoring to God, do actually, as if they were shut out from all knowledge and experience, despise the day of small things. These look for great results, but overlook or despise the genesis of things. They would avoid serious evils without rendering prompt and timous obedience to the direction, *Obsta principiis*. They seem not to know that small things are the pivots upon which the world, and all its affairs and revolutions, turn; that the laws which govern the universe, and move its machinery, are small and simple; that God "hangeeth the earth upon nothing;" that Joseph was sold for a slave by his envious brethren, to the Ishmaelites, and that he lay in a prison, in Egypt, for his incorruptible integrity, under false charges, his feet "hurt with fetters," until "the king sent and loosed him, even the ruler of the people, and

let him go free, making him lord of his house, and ruler of all his substance," empowering him "to bind his princes at his pleasure, and teach his senators to understand wisdom;" that Moses was not only an exposed babe in the ark of bulrushes, on the river Nile, before he "was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and mighty in words and deeds," but that subsequently he "was forty years a stranger in the land of Midian," before he received his commission to emancipate the Hebrews, and lead them through the Red Sea, to the land of promise; that Saul, the son of Kish, went to seek his father's asses, and found a kingdom; that David was first a shepherd, and then a king, for God "brought him forth from following the ewes great with young, to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance;" that John the Baptist "was in the deserts until the day of his showing unto Israel;" and that the rulers of both the church and the nations have come out of prison to reign. Or if they do know these things in the letter, they are to them of no practical utility, and they deny them in their hearts, their life and their conversation. In every crisis, they act as if they never knew the day of small things to be followed by anything happy or great. And this their way, also, "is their folly." It is, moreover, their sin. It incalculably grows by its indulgence. Those who are accustomed to it become murmurers and drivellers. Time and opportunity are nothing in their hands. They "see not when good cometh, but are like the heath in the wilderness, and dwell in a salt land and not inhabited." They limit the Holy one of Israel, who made the universe out of nothing, who is able to raise the dead, and whose blessing alone "maketh rich" without the addition of sorrow. Thus dishonoring him, his soul departs from them, or at least he hides his face from them "until they acknowledge their offence;" and then they are blessed and prosperous through his might and his mercy. For "them that honor him, he will honor: but they that despise him shall be lightly esteemed."

2. By a just estimate of the pride and arrogance from which such despite proceeds; and which it inconceivably augments and confirms.

These—pride and arrogance—are first manifested toward God, in their refusal to observe, or in their contempt of, “the doing of his hand.” His works of nature, providence and grace, they do not properly understand, estimate and admire. They may theoretically admit that he has produced great results from small and, of themselves, inadequate causes! “Behold,” say they, “he smote the rock; but can he give his people bread?” “Can God prepare a table in the wilderness for us?” It is a day of small things!!! Even through God we can do nothing, except the things be greater. The “cities are great, and walled up to heaven. The sons of the Anakim are there.” “The land is indeed good. But we were but as grasshoppers in their sight, and so we were in our own.” “We can not conquer Canaan; come, let us make ourselves a captain, and return to Egypt.” This is the language of pride and arrogance against Jehovah, by the despising of “the day of small things.” Better to have said with Caleb, who “followed the Lord fully,” “all these things are as stated: but let us go up at once, and possess it, for we are well able to overcome it. Only rebel not against the Lord, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us: their strength is departed from them, and the Lord is with us: fear them not.” These are the notes of a heroic faith.

And as to man, those who despise the day of small things extend their pride and arrogance to him. “There is a generation, O how lofty are their eyes, and their eyelids are lifted up!” As Goliath of Gath scorned the stripling David, so do the despisers of that which is not already great, rich and noble, mock at “the useful toil, the homely joys, the destiny obscure,” and “the short and simple annals of the poor”—at honest industry and praiseworthy enterprise—at all benevolent institutions—at all the schemes of the Church—and at all that would glorify

God, and bless the world. Have not the high mountains of pride, arrogance and ambition, of atheism and infidelity, and of godless political power, always looked askance upon the *little* hill of God, his eventually all-conquering church? Was not the building of the second temple tantalized thus, by the men "beyond the river?" "Even that which they build, if a fox go up upon it, he will even break down the stone wall thereof." "What," said the captain of the ship at New York, to the distinguished and successful Missionary, Morrison, "do you depend upon for benefiting the Chinese?" "Upon God," was the laconic and sublime reply. And this proud and arrogant spirit grows by its exercise. "Evil men and seducers wax worse and worse." "Be ye not mockers, lest your hands be made strong."

3. By reflection upon the effectual barriers which it raises, to the proper and faithful use of our talents.

Every rational being has, in this state of moral discipline, which is preparatory to the giving an account of his stewardship at the general judgment, one or more talents committed to his trust, by the Judge of "the quick and the dead;" and he is responsible to him for their improvement, whether the talents be one, or two, or five. His command to all is, "Occupy till I come." But we learn from the parable of our Lord, that the slothful servant, to whom but one talent had been given, deeming it too small, did not put it to usury, but went and "hid it in a napkin." And when he was called to an account, he presented it as it was when he received it, without gaining any others by trading with it. What was the result? It was taken from him, and given to him who had made his five talents ten, by putting them to a proper use; and the commandment was given, "Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Every man has some influence. "One sinner destroyeth much good." "One poor man," when "a great king came against it, by his wisdom delivered the city." Do your duty in

your place. Act for your age, your country, your race; the Church, your kindred and yourself. Spread your fleece. The dew will descend. Plow and sow in hope: The summer and the bounteous autumn will come. The "little cloud, like a man's hand," will blacken the heavens; and your furrows will be mollified and fertilized from the "river of God,"—the clouds,—“which is full of water.” Put your shoulder to the wheel of everything that is worthy. Maintain the truth. Defend the right. Contend for and uphold liberty. Propagate the Gospel, the cause and the kingdom of God. But if you would use your talents aright, and be honored and successful in your labors, do not despise the day of small things. “The Lord will hasten it in his time.” “One shall chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight.”

“In pride, in reasoning pride, our error lies;
All quit their sphere, and soar into the skies.”

There is perhaps no error more common nor more fatal; than the despise of the day of small things. Those who fall into it will never do or be anything worthy. It is the bane alike of the individual and of society. Men are poor and useless all their days, both in the secular and religious walks of life, because they will not take hold of the little, and honorably and vigorously endeavor to make it great. They ought to take a lesson from the inferior creation. “Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise.” “There be four things which are little on the earth, but they are exceeding wise: the ants are a people not strong, yet they prepare their meat in the summer; the conies are but a feeble folk, yet make they their houses in the rocks; the locusts have no king, yet go they forth all of them by bands; the spider taketh hold with her hands, and is in king's palaces.”

4. By a calm, candid and thorough examination of its utter inconsistency with true patriotism and genuine Christianity; its leading to sinful and destructive courses; in prompting the scorner of the little unscrupulously to

run after the great; its diametrical contrariety, in all respects, to God's estimate of, and regard for, the day of small things; and its being, therefore, most dishonoring, provoking and hateful to his Majesty.

I say the despising of the day of small things is inconsistent with true patriotism. This may be obvious. For what is patriotism? Is it not that deep-seated and burning love of country, which prompts the patriot, especially in the day of her adversity, when her treasury is robbed by the malfeasance of men in office; when her forts and arsenals have been seized and stolen; when the black flag of rebellion has been unfurled, and her very existence is threatened and imperilled, while she is taken unawares, and is not in a state of readiness for a prompt, vigorous and successful defense; when her nakedness is exposed, and she lies low in the dust, and all from the long-premeditated and concocted, treasonable secession of her own sons; and when she is everywhere blasphemed; to rush to her rescue at the cannon's mouth, on the tented field, determined that the flag that has floated so proudly and nobly over him, as the emblem of many and great blessings to the past, to the present, and to countless millions of the future, shall not be disgraced, but gloriously and victoriously unfurled in the obliteration of treason and rebellion against it; and that, while leaving, it may be, the lucrative place, and station, and family, and home, and friends, he will sacrifice his life and his all in the just quarrel of his native or adopted land, in hope that her day of small things may be followed by a day of great things—greater than she ever expected or witnessed: or who, if his country be threatened with invasion, by a foreign foe, with the same self-immolating devotion, rushes to the frontier for her defence. All less than this is treason, or akin to it. “He that is not for us, is against us.” In the day of her prosperity, a nation will not be wanting in hosts of professed patriots; but it is in her lowest condition that true patriotism shines forth like the morning. There were many of those whom

Nebuchadnezzar carried captive to Babylon, who were loud in their professions of patriotism at home, but who were guilty of sinful compliances with the idolatrous customs of their captors, and would not avail themselves of the proclamation of Cyrus, by returning to their fatherland. These were always traitors, and not patriots, at heart. These despised the day of small things. To this there is an allusion in the text. But the faithful toward their God, were patriotic toward their country. So it is always. Hear their language: "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. If I forget thee, O Jerusalem! let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy." And when the time of their deliverance drew nigh, we hear them saying, "Thou shalt arise, O Lord, and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favor is come, yea, the set time is come. For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favor the dust thereof."

This is the language and character of true patriotism and genuine Christianity. These can not be dissevered. Whatever is inconsistent with the former, militates against the latter. She teaches her votaries to buy the truth, whatever it may cost, and to sell it for no price. Her commandment is, "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil." She pronounces their damnation as just who say, "Let us do evil that good may come." She disowns as her votaries, those who believe and say, "It is of the Lord to save by many, and not by few." And she also pronounces a malediction upon those who, in "the day of small things" of a righteous nation, would not come up to its aid. "Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty." But she lauds and blesses the patriots of that severe day of trial. "Zebulon and

Naphtali were a people that jeopardized their lives unto the death, in the high places of the field." "Blessed above women shall Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite be, blessed shall she be above women in the tent;" because with her own hand she slew Sisera, the chief conspirator of that ancient confederacy against God and righteousness.

And, O brethren, does not the scorner of the day of small things, when they are good, and simply because they are *small*, with a witness, unscrupulously run after the great, however contraband, simply because they are *great*? Your own observation and experience, even apart from the uniform testimony of Scripture and history, enables and entitles you to give one unequivocal and univocal affirmative response to this. Let our jails and penitentiaries, our courts of criminal and other jurisprudence, our gallows-trees and our hemp, our locks and our keys, our bolts and our bars, our piracy on sea and our rebellion on land, our ruined reputations and our broken hearts, our shipwrecked fortunes and our desolated homes: let one part of our population covered with rags and sores, and soliciting alms from the passer-by; and also a distracted and divided Church, with "distress of nations and perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring";—vouch for the truth of this. Let earth and ocean, let time and eternity, tell the unmingled misery and destruction resulting from despising the day of small things.

But there is no aspect in which this want of taste and of heart, of knowledge and of judgment, of discernment and of conscience, so ungainly, foolishly and repulsively appears, as in its being in direct contrariety, in all respects, to God's estimate of, and regard for, the day of small things; and its being therefore most provoking and hateful to his Majesty. And is not this established beyond gainsaying or refutation, by the constitution of the heavens and the earth, with all that in them is; by the whole of Divine Revelation; by the whole history of the Church and the world; and by all the works of God,

whether in Providence or in grace? All men admit it. It is the burden of their regrets, that, knowing the worth of small things, they fatally despised them. "We knew our duty, but we did it not," is the language of the remorse of the prisons of time, and of the prison of eternal wo. And "who knoweth the power of the anger" of an insulted and provoked God against this? He leaves the victims of this delusion to "eat of the fruit of their own doings." They judge and walk contrary to him, and he must be their adversary. "With the pure thou wilt show thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt show thyself froward." His genesis secures the flowers and the fruitage. Despise not the day of small things. "He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much; and he that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much."

IV. Instead of despising the day of small things, it is wise and dutiful, at all times, and under all circumstances, to conclude, that whatever has life and worth, however small and feeble its beginning, will grow and become great, as far as the law of its nature will permit, with the blessing of God, if properly nourished and cultivated.

This proposition receives its illustration and demonstration,

1. From the fact that we have to do with the *character* of things, and not with their *number* nor their *size*.

It is cheerfully admitted that there is no necessary, intrinsic merit in anything merely because it is small or solitary. It may be so, and at the same time rotten, or poisonous, or useless; or if it be within the sphere of morals and social life, a "root of bitterness." Things are not necessarily bad or contemptible because they are great and numerous; neither are they necessarily good or praiseworthy because they are few or small. The evil and folly consist in honoring and accepting the one, and in despising and rejecting the other, simply on account of their number and size. The wise man, Solomon, hath said, and even the Indian knows the truth of

the aphorism, "a living dog is better than a dead lion." But the despiser of the day of small things seems to have arrived at the opposite conclusion. This reminds one of the sage who refused a letter for his master, at the Post Office, because it was too small for the price, although its contents were of the deepest interest to him and his affairs, and stole a large one for him which was addressed to another person! and of "Scholasticos," who is said, in the "Jests of Hierocles," to have declared that he was ashamed to bury his own child before such a large multitude, because it was so small! It is then the *character*, and not the *number* and *size* of persons and things, that determines their value. Gideon's three hundred select soldiers accomplished more on the field of battle, than millions of cowards would have done, in an undisciplined, unofficered, unprovisioned, unequipped, and demoralized condition. All that we have previously advanced evinces the absurdity and fatality of going merely for size and numbers, without due regard to their condition and character. We need not, therefore, here much enlarge the list of specifications or instances. Is not a small numeral figure before a few cyphers better than the same figure without any cyphers after it, but with a number indefinitely large before it? Besides, when numbers and size are the basis, the day of small things is despised, whatever their character, value or vitality, and God Almighty takes his departure. The child is small, but healthy and promising. Its ways, its sports, and its speech are weak and puerile. But that prattling child may yet be a David or a Cromwell, to lead forth the armies of liberty to a glorious conquest over the foes of his country; he may sing with a Milton or a Cowper; he may sweep the seas in the service of religion and patriotism, of the numerous, malignant and sworn enemies of his country, with a Blake, a Nelson, or a Conde; he may thunder from the sacred desk with a Knox or a Luther; he may write, and with his pen expound the oracles of God, with a Calvin and an Owen; he may rule

in wisdom and righteousness over a free and willing people, with a Clinton or a Washington; or, if need be, he may wear the crown of martyrdom in the cause of God and of humanity with a Cameron or a Cranmer. One way or another, he may be destined to work revolutions in favor of human progress, and the glory of the Highest. Despise not then the day of his small things. Avaunt! avaunt! for ever, be the ignorance, the folly, the smallness, the unfaithfulness, the baseness, the unprincipledness, the fatuity and the stolidity, that would do it. "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things."

2. From the fact that we have to do with the *principle* of things, and not with their mere external *appearance*.

This, like all the others here adduced, is a momentous fact. Man is to prefer and to prize principles before appearances. The former are real, invaluable, unchangeable, abiding and eternal. The latter are shadowy, empty, mutable, fleeting, evanescent, and often deceptive. But the despiser of the day of small things, is guilty of preferring appearances to realities, and prudential and circumstantial considerations to living and life-giving eternal principles. Such an one is always either very unintelligent, or weak, or unprincipled. But the latter quality usually predominates. He is an unprincipled man. Whether acting in church or State, he is a mere politician. Regard to principle would never induce him to vote with a virtuous minority. He goes with the multitude. His partisans and colleagues are the strongest. Whatever the cause or the crisis to be advocated or heroically met, he never braves the current in the hour of need, but always sails with the stream. He prefers Belshazzar to Zerubabel, and Babylon to Jerusalem, unless the tide should turn in the opposite direction. O how soon this would convert *him*; *his* principles would immediately undergo a radical change! He courts the rich in the day of their prosperity, but does not know them if

they are reduced, as is often the case, to poverty. He swears allegiance to a nation, and fills its offices, that he may the better know its small things and its great things, in order that he may the more effectually betray, and raze it to its deepest foundations. He enters the Church, and covenants with God and his brethren to seek not his own things, but the things that are Christ's; but it is soon discovered that "loaves and fishes" are his object; that he fears not God, nor regards man; that he cares not what cause shall sink or swim, so that he shall be somewhat; and that, all worthless, pretentious and incompetent though he be, like Diotrophes, he may have "the pre-eminence." He abandons the church of his fathers, of his birth and his baptism, which suckled him at her breasts, and dandled him on her knees, and to which he is indebted, under God, for being anything, although approving her principles and position as superior, and unites himself to another, whatever her creed or her order, because she is more wealthy, fashionable and influential. He would never thank and magnify God, with the returned captives from Babylon, in the day of their small things, that the Church has a remnant left to escape "for a little space," through the grace shown her from the Lord her God; that "he gives her a *nail* in his holy place," that her God may enlighten her eyes, and give her a little reviving in her bondage; that he gives her such a reviving as that she should rebuild the house of her God, and repair the desolations thereof; and that he gives her "a *wall* in Judah and Jerusalem."* This is strange language to him. He can not, for he does not wish to do it, because it would not comport with his policy and his interests, understand it. He leaves the denomination in which he has been reared, after swearing to uphold and propagate its doctrine and its order, and maintain fealty to it, and render obedience to its authority "in the Lord," because it is too small and unpopular, and joins another which, to be large, has embraced human slavery,

*Ezra ix: 8, 9.

with other organized sins, in her bosom; and yet, when God shall square the account with those churches that have done this, and those that have not, and with the oppressors of the earth, it shall be found according to the assurance of our Lord Jesus Christ, "the faithful and true Witness," that "the first shall be last, and the last shall be first." He asserts, too, as a salvo to his conscience, and an apology to his judgment, that there are principles which can not now and here be applied, however good and suitable they have been there and yonder; that orthodoxy is Scotch or Genevan theology; not knowing, if he be candid, that theology is of no country, but from God for all the nations; and that, as fluids glide into the fissures of the rocks, and by congelation expand them, so the truth in Christ shall, as it has done to the empires and systems which have finally passed away, upheave and abolish the whole kingdom of Satan, under all its forms, and "make all things new." And whether on the Bench or anywhere else, he believes not, nor acts upon, the principle: "*Fiat justitia, ruat cælum*," "let justice be done, although the heavens should fall."

Your despiser of the day of small things is, moreover, inordinately ambitious. Whether he strut through his little obscure village, or act in a small society, secular or ecclesiastical, the object of his duplicity and his aims is the circumvention and government of his neighbors and equals; or whether he occupy a high place in any influential department of life, his maxim and motto are,

"This world's mine oyster,
Which I with sword will open."

He would not be a pirate upon the high seas, nor a burglar, nor a petty thief, nor a highway robber, nor a cowardly assassin, upon the land, although his principles, motives and character are in unison with all of these; but, like Haman of old, who "thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone," and sought, by one stroke, to destroy both himself and all his seed, he aims at the destruction of the whole of a great, free, Christian and Protestant

nation, to which he has, again and again, sworn to be true and faithful, alike in adversity as in prosperity, in order that he may ascend to empire. Perfectly unscrupulous, he is reckless of consequences. He would rather die than be second, law-abiding and subordinate. He will convulse and rend any society, civil or religious, under the sun, for his own personal aggrandizement. The monitions of the past, from the mighty fallen, he will not heed, but still presses onward to ruin. The counsel of Cardinal Wolsey to his successor, Lord Cromwell, to the favor, the caprice, and the murderous violence of Henry the Eighth,

“Cromwell, I charge thee fling away ambition;
By that sin fell the angels,”

he contemptuously spurns and rejects. He was born to govern and command. He knows that if the waters be agitated, the lighter substances will always rise to the surface. Appearances with the dear people are sufficient for him and his ends; principles he has long since renounced and abjured. And for my part, were I in civil power, I should place the highest price upon the head of any such character, and you know I mean Jefferson Davis, his colleagues, and his leading fellow-traitors and rebels, and hunt them, like wild beasts, over every sea and ocean, mountain and valley, island and continent, of earth, until they should be brought to condign punishment. Slackness, timidity, mercy, or procrastination, in such a case, would be unjustifiable and unpardonable crime. Let sound principles be held fast, and vigorously carried out, and appearances will soon fall into their proper place. The decapitation of the leaders in treason and rebellion, will, as hitherto, be always found mercy to their dupes, as well as to the nation whose utter destruction they have sought.

3. From the fact that we are bound at all times to believe that the cause of truth and righteousness, of liberty and Christianity, which is the cause of Christ and the Church, however low at times it may be reduced, must

eventually prosper and prevail, not only locally, but over all the earth; and to rejoice for the consolation.

This is the faith of genuine Christians and true patriots; and in anticipation of the glorious consummation of its objects, "they rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." For this purpose "the Son of God was manifested in the flesh, that he might destroy the works of the Devil." He has virtually and really done this by his death: he will actually and completely do it in his state of highest exaltation. To this all that is in God, in his decrees, his providences, his covenants, his predictions, his promises, the instrumentality of his church, the influence of all whom he selects, to the ends of the earth, for doing his pleasure, the prayers of the saints, the wrath of man, the loyalty of heroism, the treason of cowardice, schisms in the Church, "wars and rumors of wars" in the state, perfidy, secession from moral and constitutional obligation, rebellion against lawful authority, the suppression and obliteration of these, defeats, victories and all the events of time, tend with more than mathematical precision and accuracy, under the infallible direction of him "that liveth, and was dead," our glorified Lord and Savior, the Messiah. Yes, heaven, and earth, and all the nations shall be shaken, "that those things which can not be shaken may remain;" and "until he come, whose right it is to reign." Matters under his empire, which is universal, from the least to the greatest, do not go by chance, but by established law and immutable counsel. And he will not only abolish the empire of darkness, but establish his own "large and great dominion from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth." All on the earth shall worship him. "All who descend to the dust shall bow unto him." Then "the saints shall possess the kingdom," and crown Messiah Lord of all. "All kings shall fall down before him; all nations shall serve him. Then the church of his love and his purchase shall "arise and shine; her light having come, and the glory of the Lord having risen upon her." Then "the nations

shall learn war no more." For he having saved the children of the needy, and broken in pieces their oppressors, will secure, as is promised, that "in his days the righteous shall prosper, and abundance of peace, as long as the moon endureth." This, and infinitely more than this, as foreshadowed by the Sacred Oracles, is neither apocryphal nor hyperbolical; but is yet to be witnessed upon and over this our ball of earth. "For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations."

And in that happy day, for which "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now," the day of millennial glory, when "every plant which our Heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be plucked up" from the moral soil, and the "wilderness shall be as Eden, and the desert as the garden of God," how cheering will it be to look around upon the beautiful and entrancing scene, and to look back through the long and comparatively toilsome and dreary past, to survey the day of small things, from which this day of great things has been educed. Let none, then, despise the day of small things. For "there shall be a HANDFUL of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth."

4. From the fact that we are, even in their day of small things, more especially, to espouse the cause of the race, of the Church, of a nation wronged, and whose main influence is on the side of human prosperity, liberty and religion; and, as we have opportunity, of every benevolent, literary, scientific and Christian institution; and to employ our best influence for their prevalence and their glory.

This is the day pre-eminently for laying hold. They need it. A little countenance, a modicum of favorable influence, or a small benefaction, may now do more good

than much afterwards. Here, too, "the honor lies." The founder of an institution of benevolence, of literature, of science, of a sect or of a nation, has more renown in all the succeeding ages, than those, however great, who have merely built upon his foundation. What are all his successors to Washington, whose venerable and majestic portrait now seems to weep over the rebellion that is abroad, and "the abominations that are done in the land;" except one who should restore the nation in its integrity and union, with peace and quietness, upon the basis of increased liberty and righteousness: for which there is at present such a golden opportunity? The despiser of the day of small things would never wear these garlands: neither would he be a reformer, or martyr, or missionary; but is fitted only for being the chairman in the assembly of dastards, scorners, charlatans and quacks. He has neither faith in man, in himself, in principle, nor in God, to be anything else.

But we would not, Christians, detain you here, as the discourse is already sufficiently prolonged, and as you are well instructed and established in this truth. But as one of the most efficient modes of instruction is teaching by example, I shall close by bringing before your attention a few illustrious instances, in which the truth stated above shines forth most refulgently and gloriously, to the heap-
ing of blessings upon the Church and the world, and to the great honor of God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. And methinks your minds have been full, and your hearts thereby inflamed, during this discourse, of reminiscences of your own forefathers, the British Covenanters, who played the men in the day of small and hard things against perjured and debauched tyrants, in defence of the ark of Liberty and Religion; in avenging the quarrel of a broken covenant, and a persecuted Kirk; and for the redemption of all the nations of the earth. This is right. Cherish their memory. But dwell not upon their example alone, in the premises. I also direct your attention to Moses the son of Amram, who turned his back upon

Egypt in her glory, and espoused the cause of his brethren, the Hebrews, in their day of small things. Harken to the encomiums pronounced upon him for his worthy conduct. "By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward." The history, moreover, of the returned captives, is a notable instance of this. And look at the stand of Elijah against Ahab and Jezabel, the prophets of Baal, and his apostate brethren and countrymen. Ponder well the history of Daniel, and the three Hebrew children, those noble Non-conformists and Dissenters, in youth, and in more advanced years, upon the plains of Dura, in the province of Babylon. Not the rewards nor the wrath of the king Nebuchadnezzar; not their being cast into the fiery furnace, "heated seven times hotter than it was wont to be heated;" not the fears of being cast into the den of lions, could make them depart in their day of small things, from their God and from his worship, and comply with the idolatrous customs around them, or render obedience to unrighteous and tyrannical decrees. Their bodies were captives, but their souls were free. Their consciences could not be gyved. God, too, signally, even miraculously, testified his approbation of their piety, decision and heroism. The fire did not burn them. And as to the lions, says Daniel to Darius, out of their den, "My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths." Consider the manner in which the cause of Christ was espoused by the primitive Church, and has ever since been carried forward toward its day of great things; and you will be satisfied that it is in the day of their small things that the Church, a wronged but worthy nation, and every good institution, or project, or person, should be specially acknowledged, aided, supported and defended. When Jacob is small he shall

arise, not by might, nor by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord.

“And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae, of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets: who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, and turned to flight the armies of the aliens.”

Truly the day of the small things of these witnesses and worthies, was illustriously the precursor and the cause of the day of great things for the Church of God, and for all the nations. “And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise; God having provided some better things for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.”

CONCLUSION.

1. *Recapitulation.*

We have seen, Christians, in the progress of this discourse, which now draws to a close, that the day of small things usually preceeds, according to an evident and indispensable law of God, the day of great things; and that this is amply illustrated and demonstrated, from the natural world, from the moral world, from the visible Church, and from the growth and development of the new creature. We have farther seen that men, and even Christian men, are too prone to despise the day of small things; and that this proposition is illustrated and demonstrated by a due consideration of the case of those who despise substances, and are enamored with, and eagerly pursue after, shadows—by an attentive consideration of the case of those who aim at great ends, but despise or neglect the means by which alone they can be accomplished—by the impartial consideration of the conduct of those who, if an individual, or a cause, or an institution, be popular and prosperous, and thus can do without their patronage, will not withhold from them their countenance

and aid ; but if it be otherwise, without any real diminution of their merits, will treat them with the utmost coldness and the most sullen contempt—and by the careful and attentive consideration of even the saints of God themselves, who, by reason of the weakness of their faith, are very liable to despise the day of small things.

We have still farther seen that despising the day of small things is highly injurious to those who are addicted to it, and exceedingly offensive unto God ; and that this proposition is illustrated and demonstrated by a proper view of the ignorance and folly from which such despite proceeds ; and which are immeasurably increased by its indulgence—by a just estimate of the pride and arrogance from which such despite proceeds, and which it inconceivably augments and confirms—by reflection upon the effectual barriers which it raises to the proper and faithful use of our talents—and by a calm, candid and thorough examination of its utter inconsistency with true patriotism and genuine Christianity ; its leading to sinful and destructive courses, in prompting the despiser of the little unscrupulously to run after the great ; its diametrical contrariety, in all respects, to God's estimate of, and regard for, the day of small things ; and its being, therefore, most dishonoring, provoking and hateful to his Majesty,

I have finally shown that instead of despising the day of small things, it is wise and dutiful, at all times, and under all circumstances, to conclude, that whatever has life and worth, however small and feeble its beginning, will grow and become great, as far as the law of its nature will permit, with the blessing of God, if properly nourished and cultivated ; and that this proposition receives its illustration and demonstration from the fact that we have to do with the *character* of things, and not with their *number* nor their *size*—from the fact that we have to do with the *principle* of things, and not with their mere external *appearance*—from the fact that we are bound at all times to believe that the cause of truth and righteousness, of liberty and Christianity, which is the cause of Christ and the Church, however low at times it may be reduced,

must eventually prosper and prevail, not only locally but over all the earth ; and to rejoice for the consolation—and from the fact that we are, even in the day of their small things, more especially, to espouse the cause of the race, of the Church, of a nation wronged, and whose main influence is on the side of human progress, liberty and religion, and as we have opportunity, of every benevolent, literary, scientific and Christian institution ; and to employ our best influence for their prevalence and their glory.

2. *Encouragement.*

The individual who is right with God can not be conquered. “Who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?” “If God be for us, who can be against us?” “Nay, in all these things,”—the array and insurgency of all possible evil against us,—“through him that loved us.” “See, I have this day,” Jeremiah, “set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to build, and to plant. Thou therefore gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee: be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them. For behold I have made thee this day a defenced city, and an iron pillar, and brazen walls against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, against the priests thereof, and against the people of the land. And they shall fight against thee; but they shall not prevail against thee: for I am with thee, saith the Lord, to deliver thee.”

The encouragement is to our nation. Now is the day of her small things. She lies low in the dust. But her little army shall become the greatest. The feeble efforts to crush rebellion in the bud, shall be followed by a victory that is more than conquest.

I speak words of encouragement to the church of God. The bush burns, but it can not be consumed. All the glorious things spoken concerning her shall be realized. “The mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it.” Then the vine brought from Egypt covers our globe. AMEN.