

**Memoirs of Mr. James H. Wood late surgeon, &c.; &c., to the dispensary and workhouse at Blackburn, Lancashire : who died December 30, 1814, aged 19 years including his conversion and happy death, &c.; &c; / by Thomas Wood.**

### **Contributors**

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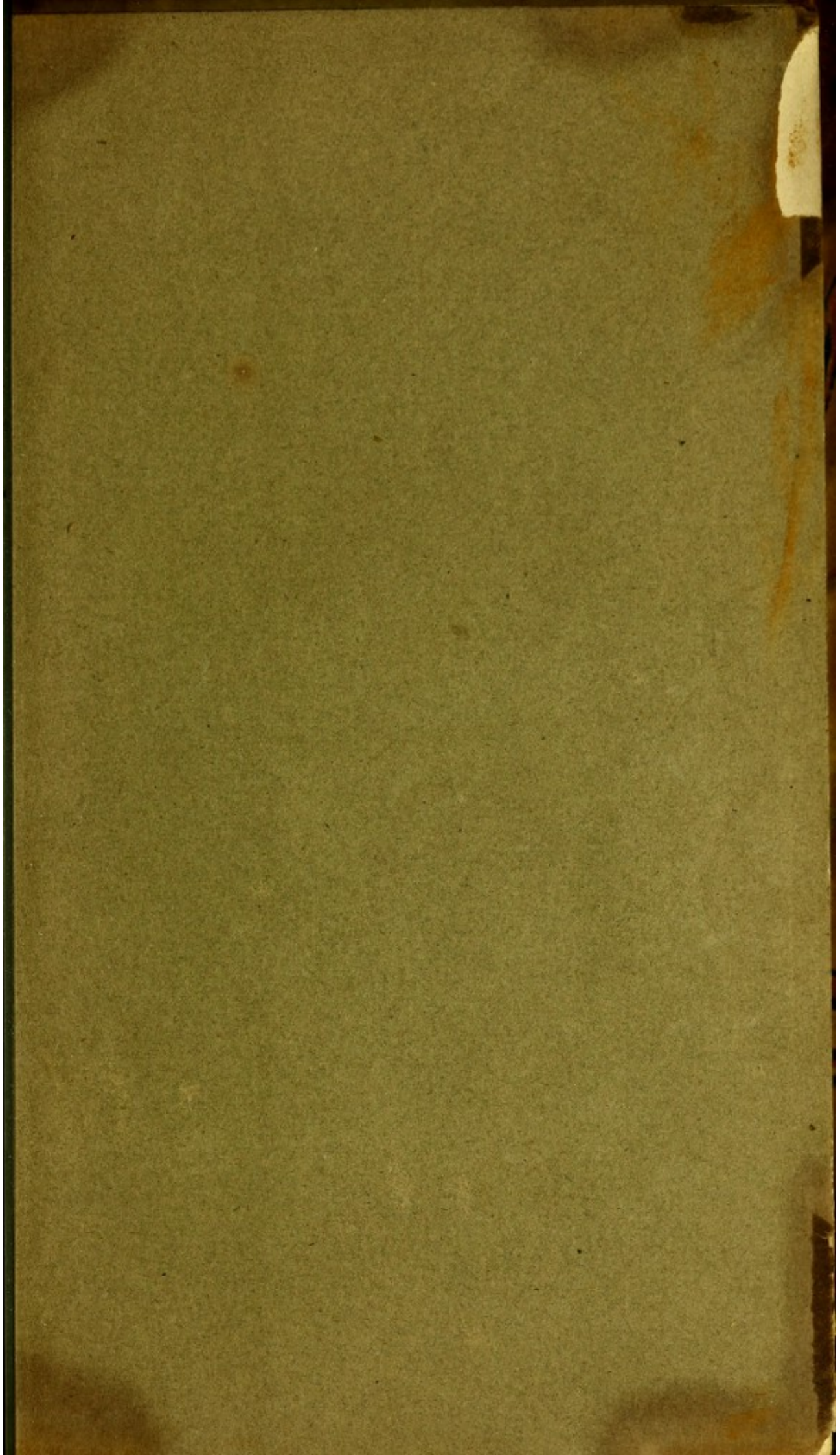
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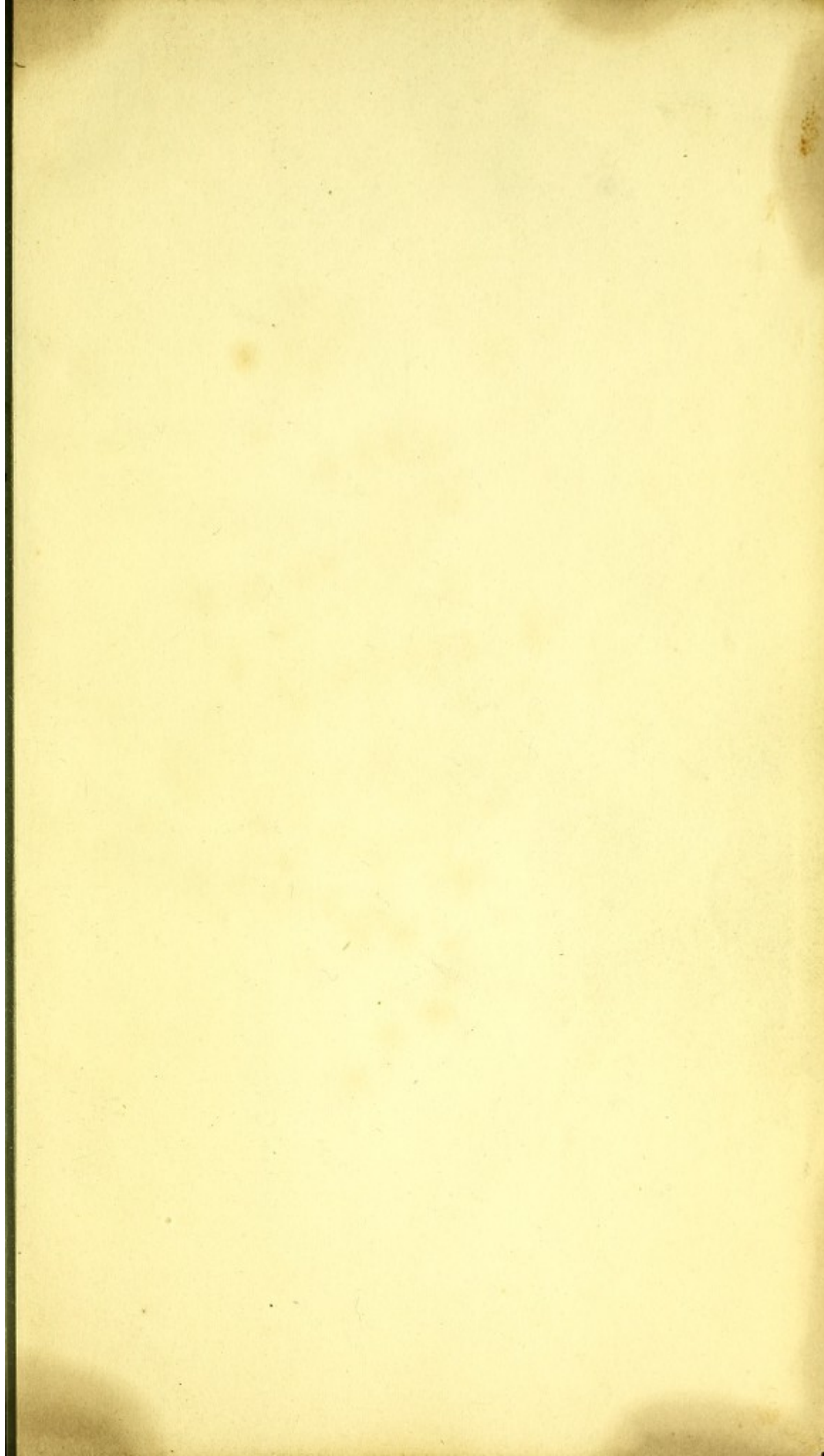
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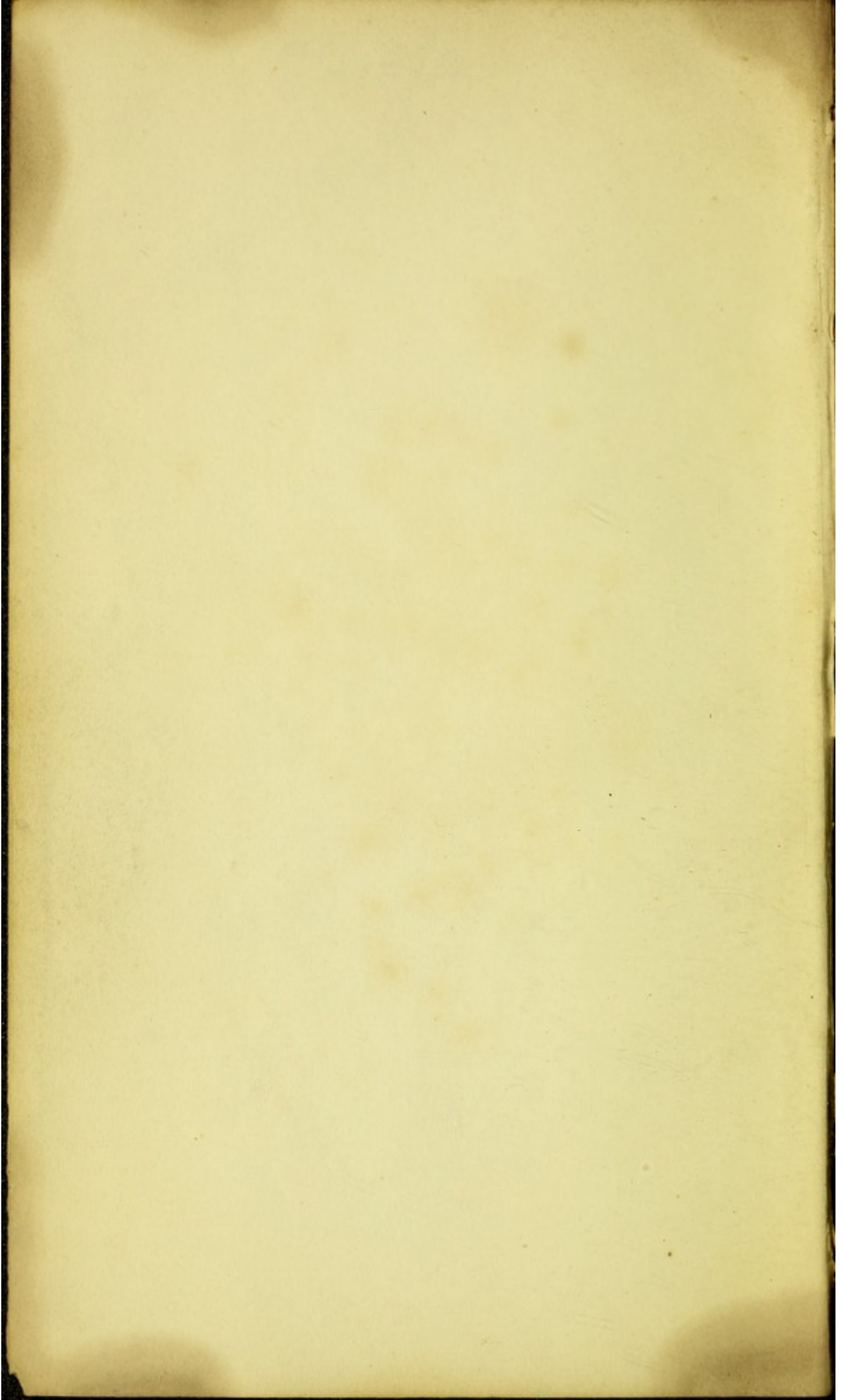
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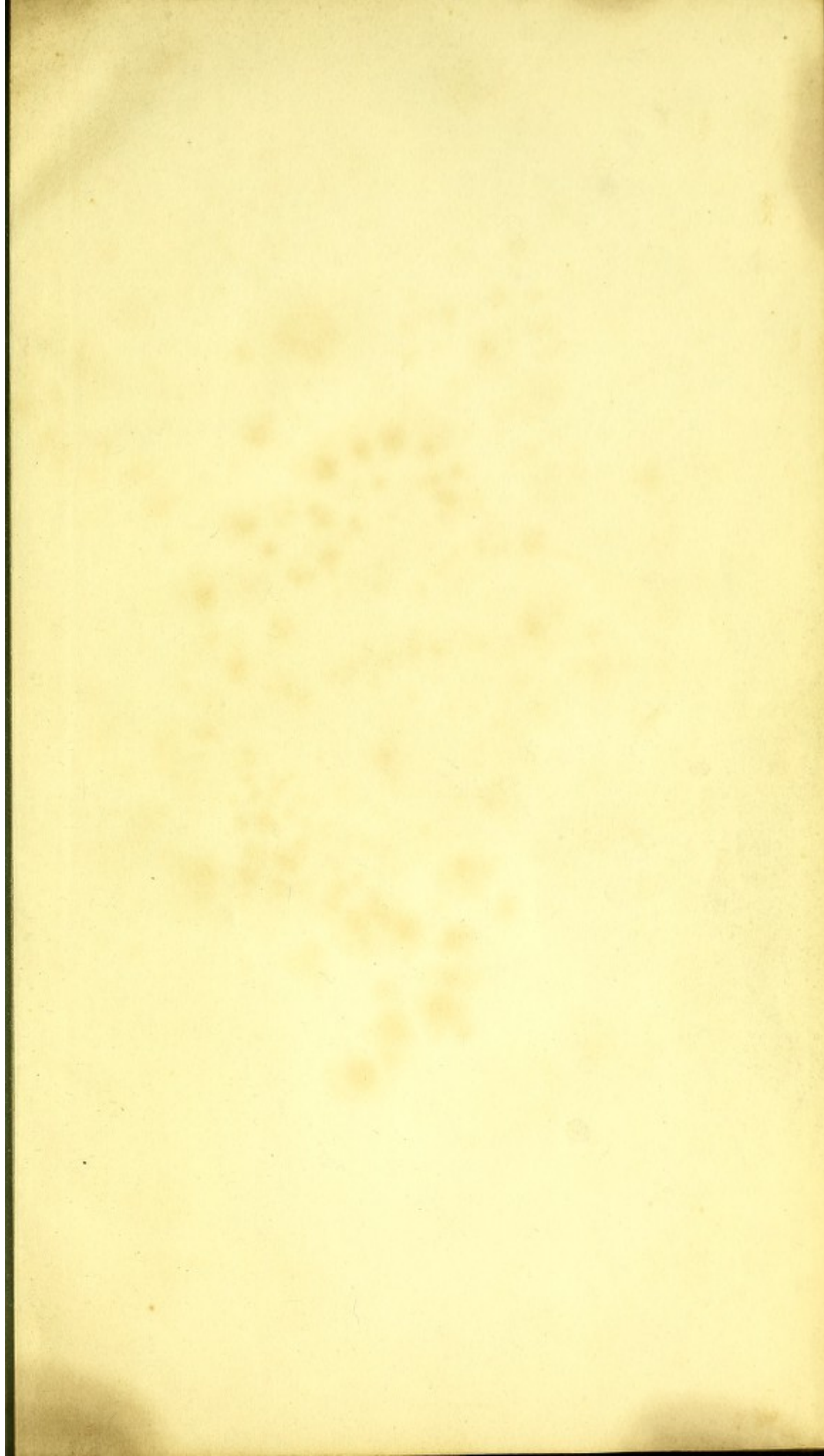
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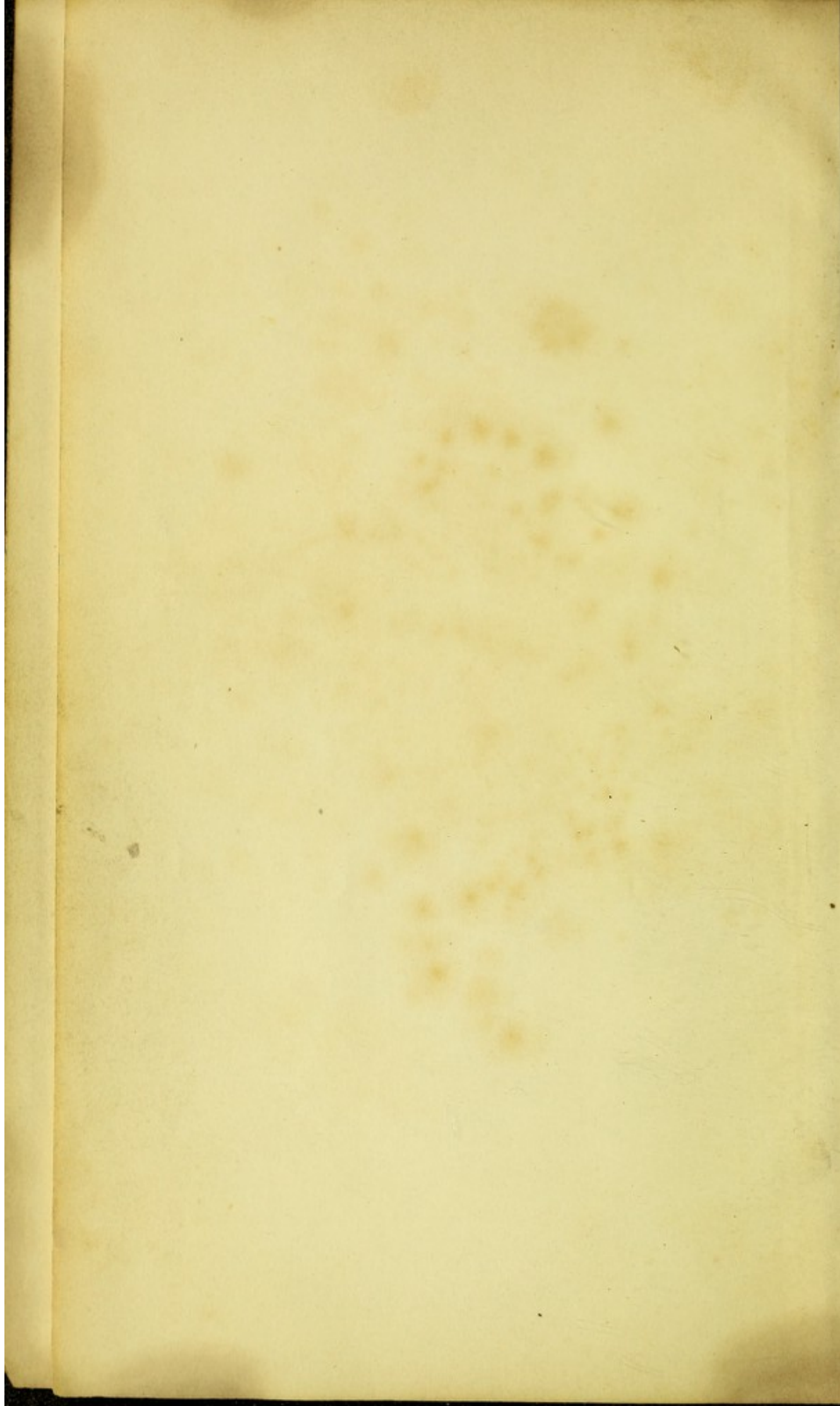
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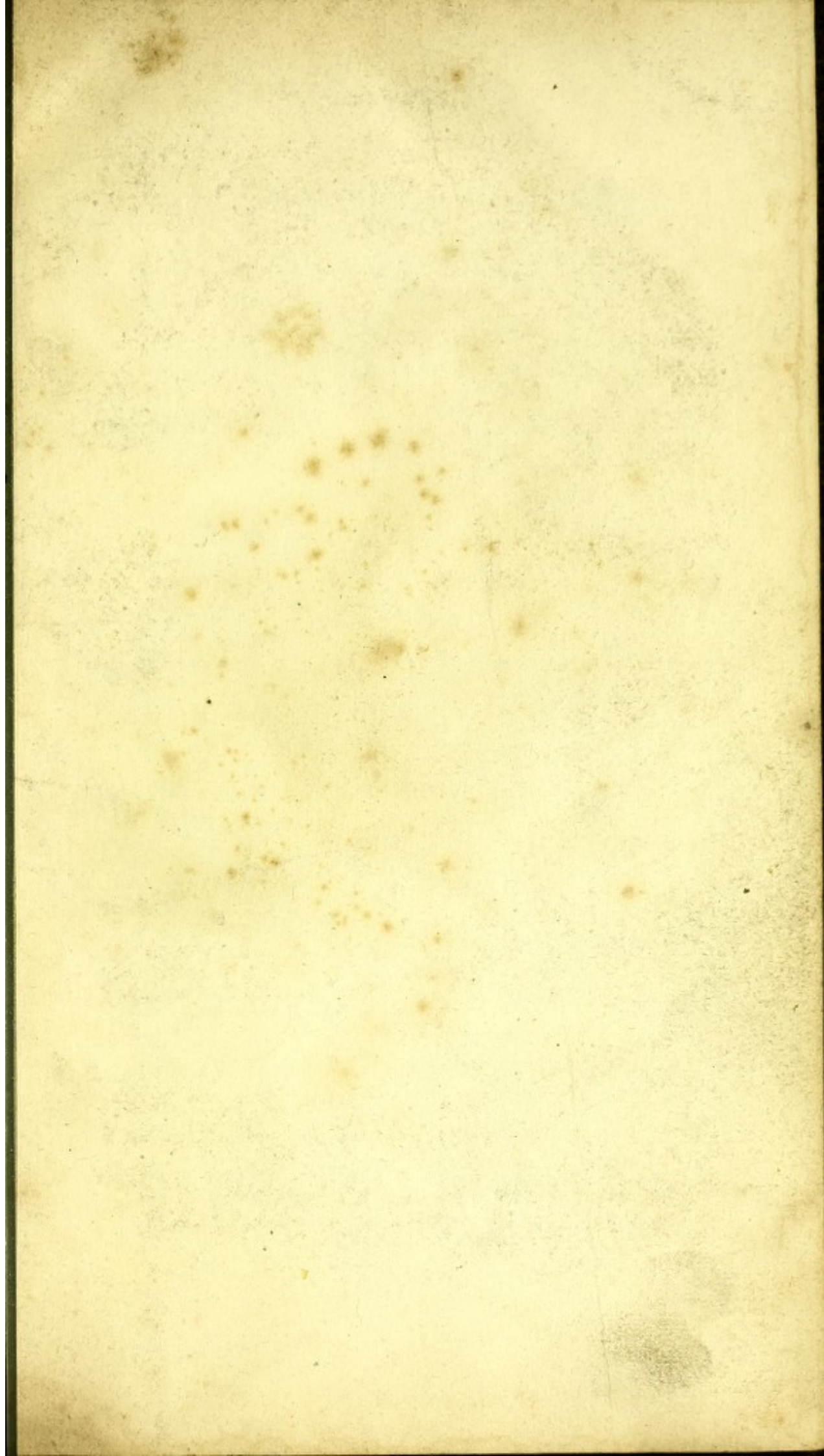














MR. JAMES HEMMINGTON WOOD,

*Late Surgeon to the Blackburn Dispensary.*

*Engraved by W. T. Fry from a drawing by J. Jackson.*

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# MEMOIRS

OF

*MR. JAMES H. WOOD,*

LATE

*SURGEON, &c. &c.*

TO THE

DISPENSARY AND WORKHOUSE,

AT

*Blackburn, Lancashire ;*

*Who died December 30, 1814, aged 19 Years :*

INCLUDING

HIS CONVERSION AND HAPPY DEATH,

*&c. &c.*

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BY THOMAS WOOD.

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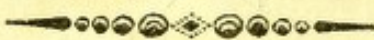
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THE SECOND EDITION.

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" A sickness that leads the way to everlasting life, is better than the health of an antediluvian." COWPER.

" It were profane  
To quench a glory lighted at the skies,  
And cast in shadows his illustrious close." Dr. YOUNG.



LONDON :

SOLD BY MR. BUTTERWORTH, 43, FLEET-STREET ; MR. BAYNES, 54, PATERNOSTER-ROW ; MR. KENT, 116, HIGH-HOLBORN ; MR. BLANSHARD, 14, CITY-ROAD ; AND BY ALL OTHER BOOK-SELLERS.

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1816.

of



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T. CORDEUX, Printer,  
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## PREFACE.

WHEN genuine piety has been vigorously exercised and remarkably displayed by departed relatives, biographical documents accurately stating this superlative excellence, are means admirably adapted effectually to promote the spiritual benefit of survivors and posterity. Names, titles, and estates, handed down in families from generation to generation, have frequently been made the subjects of eulogy, and caused descendants proudly to boast of the wealth and fame of their distinguished progenitors: but the cultivation of the mind in the right knowledge of divine things, the real possession of the "power of godliness," and a consistent exemplification of the doctrines and precepts of Christianity, immediately tend to form a character vastly superior, confer a dignity more highly exalted, and transfer an heritage not only of incalculable value, but of endless duration!

Distinction, that has not piety for its basis, shines only like the glow-worm in the copse, which by its feeble ray cannot aid the progress of a weary and benighted traveller, whose tardy steps are rendered painfully dubious by the intervention of sur-

rounding darkness: while that which is constituted by "pure religion, and undefiled before God and the Father," is characterised by a refulgence, that, diffusing its rays in every direction, renders the hallowed path of prescribed duty delightfully luminous.

True religion, whether considered in relation to individuals, or as conveying illumination and presenting motives to those who are strangers to its renewing influence, is an invaluable blessing. Wise instructions and affectionate admonitions, given by persons who "died in the Lord," have been transmitted to succeeding generations, and, through the powerful aid of the Holy Spirit, rendered beneficial. Their fervent addresses to the throne of grace have been answered, and their pious examples have excited to a diligent imitation. The amiable dispositions and exemplary conduct of true Believers in Christ, exhibit the transcendent purity and transforming energy of the Gospel, and thus stamp a reputation upon the Sacred Writings, which gives them an undoubted claim to our profound veneration and most implicit confidence.

Instances of sound conversion, in their effects upon others, are *corrective*. They powerfully work upon the passion of shame, where moral causes are allowed to operate, and thus contribute to make bad persons good, and good persons better. As

a deformed object is never more conspicuous than when placed near to one that is beautiful; so vice appears more odious when contrasted with Christian virtue. The rational choice, and commendable demeanour of pious men, when impartially considered, have a tendency to rouse the conscience of a practical sinner, which, on receiving new light and vigour, will reprove him for his folly and wickedness.

Examples of living faith, active love, blooming hope, and triumphant joy, have a wonderfully *al-luring influence*. The charms of religion thus offered to view, are, to a mind seriously disposed, irresistibly attractive. Having gained our esteem, and interested our affections, they, by degrees infusing their ascendant power into the soul, transform it into the same likeness. As the magnet not only possesses an attractive virtue, but also communicates its properties to the iron with which it comes into contact; so the religion of our adorable Saviour, by its invitations and promises, duties and rewards, does not only captivate our hearts, but likewise conveys its qualities into us. Though the injunctions of the Gospel bind our conscience, yet examples being more conspicuous, are attended with an instant effect. In the precepts, we contemplate religion as in dead pictures; but in the



tempers and actions of pious christians, its verities are set forth with life and motion. Who would not sooner learn to write from a fair copy before him, than by the best verbal instructions that can be given?

It is evidently on this principle that "the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance." God, for his own honour, watches over their names, and by his providential care preserves the memorial of them. We, as instruments in his hands, should endeavour to prevent the recollection of such characters from becoming extinct in this world, for our own advantage, as well as the benefit of mankind. They are brilliant lights, adorning the moral firmament, among which our Saviour's example shines as the sun in his strength.

Respecting the succeeding Pages, the Author can conscientiously say, that, according to his best judgment, they contain nothing but what is strictly true: only he can add, that the conversion of his beloved Son, and its happy results, would admit of still higher colouring. In the whole course of his ministry, he never saw a more scriptural change effected, nor ever beheld a more triumphant death! What he here communicates to the Public, has the sanction of several competent and most credible witnesses. The Chapters added, being connected

with the design of the Narrative, serve to illustrate and impress it upon the mind of the Reader. And the very correct likeness prefixed, shews the external form of the deceased, before disease had reduced his system, and affliction brought him within the precincts of death.

The motives in which this work originated, and under the influence of which it was conducted, will, in the opinion of the Author, always justify the attempt. His intention was, to extol this abundant grace thus freely manifested in Christ Jesus, and thereby induce others, especially young persons, in early life, sincerely and ardently to seek the same salvation. Testimonies of approbation have been received, from various respectable sources, communicated by letter, as well as delivered *viva voce*; and the attestation of intelligent and pious persons, ranks, in point of importance and credit, next to that of the Divine Being.

In addition to human testimony, though valuable, the Author feels inexpressible satisfaction in being able to state, that in numerous instances, both in the metropolis, as well as in various other places, the perusal of this Manual has been peculiarly attended with the divine blessing. This is an invaluable remuneration, which, though desired

and anticipated, could not be ascertained till the experiment had been made. To Him, who worketh in man both to will and to do of his own good pleasure, be ascribed all the glory!

The rapid sale of the *first edition* of this work, is a circumstance highly gratifying to the Author, and has induced him to revise the whole with great care, as well as to enlarge several parts. He has also added a few interesting Notes, so that he hopes the present *edition* will deserve still more the public esteem. The little pieces of Poetry, that are not distinguished by inverted "commas," he is responsible for, with the exception of one, page 25. The sentiments of Dr. Jortin on another occasion, are perfectly congenial with those of his own: the following Memoirs "are designed, slight and imperfect as they are, for the service of TRUTH, by one who would be glad to attend, and grace her triumphs: *as her soldier*, if he has had the honour to serve successfully under her banner: or, *as her captive*, tied to her chariot wheels, if he has, though undesignedly, committed any offence against her." May the God of all grace continue to accompany this effort to do good to others, especially the rising generation, with his effectual blessing.

*London, June 1, 1816.*

# MEMOIRS,

&c.

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JAMES HEMMINGTON WOOD was born October 24, 1795. Parents rejoice at the birth of a child, viewing the little stranger with emotions of affection, gratitude, and joy. Seldom do they, at that season, dwell on future probabilities, being chiefly impressed with the present interesting scene, and engaged with passing events. Prescience is not the prerogative of man: if it were, his presumptuous anticipations would frequently distract his lively imagination, and the poignancy of his feelings wound the sensibility of his heart. Human life is a diversified scene, which can only be correctly understood as circumstances give developement to principles, and character is formed on the basis of habit.

Divine Providence is a consolatory theme, extending its benign influence from infancy to manhood, from riper years to decrepid old age; present in all situations, concerned in all events, and exercised to promote the welfare of the numerous objects of its superintendence. So that parents, in behalf of their beloved offspring, may always

repose confidence in the wisdom, power, and goodness of the Supreme Being.

The progress of intellect during the season of infancy, in acquiring ideas of things, through the medium of the senses, on philosophical investigation, affords entertainment, and excites surprize. The subject of these pages, very early evinced an active mind; particularly when he came into the actual possession of the powers of articulation, and of physical strength, by means of which he could gratify his curiosity in inspecting a variety of surrounding objects. At this age, it is requisite that the eye of vigilance in parents or guardians should be constantly awake, to prevent danger or harm arising from things presented to the senses, and which raising an affection or emotion in the mind, would impel it to the trial of dangerous experiments. A perambulation of this nature had nearly proved fatal to him. The house in which he resided was in a street, to which a tanner's yard was appended; and one day, rambling to that situation, he fell unperceived into one of the pits. A providential interference was perceptible in his deliverance, he being discovered by a person only on his emerging to the surface. If this person had not been in that part of the yard, or cast an eye towards the pit at that moment, he would suddenly have sunk, and probably to rise no more! Attentive observers of an over-ruling providence, have frequently met with striking instances of the almost hair-breadth escapes of their children from the grasp of death, which constrained them gratefully to acknowledge,

and religiously adore, the hand of God, conspicuously displayed in effecting such deliverances.

Intellect conferred on man is an invaluable endowment, demonstrating his affinity to the Father of spirits, and exalting him far above the beasts of the field. Possessed of members and faculties, he emerges into life; but is as destitute of knowledge to direct him in the right way, as he is of physical strength to render him independent on foreign aid. The doctrine of innate ideas is a false hypothesis, and therefore justly exploded. If the necessary means of improvement were withheld, the human mind would be like the garden of the sluggard, full of noxious weeds. Man, through the medium of his senses, acquires knowledge; yet if left to himself, he would remain awfully defective. He is, no doubt, very much the creature of circumstances; his local situation, and peculiar connections, influencing the tone of his habits. The human soul is a spacious field, which requires cultivation: a wall of discipline must be raised as a preservative from danger, and the ground prepared, before the seed of instruction be thrown into the prolific soil; and even then it is necessary that heavenly influences be imparted to give effect to human efforts. Where the arts and sciences, and the Christian religion flourish, there a new sort of life appears, rational, active, and beneficial: on the contrary, in countries deprived of their salutary aid, there the inhabitants live in a condition of comparative insignificance, sluggish inactivity, and intellectual and moral death.

The knowledge of God is the most desirable acquisition, and the highest improvement of the human mind. Literature and science are commendable, ornamental, and useful; but the knowledge of God has connected with it—salvation, happiness, and heaven. The natural and moral perfections of God—the relations in which he stands to his creatures—the Trinity of Persons in a Unity of Godhead—Christ in his person, divine and human nature, and work of mediation—the Holy Spirit in his personality, divinity, gifts and graces—the original depravity of mankind, and the introduction of sin into the world—the obligation and extent of the moral law—the terms of our reconciliation to God, and acceptance with him—the nature, necessity, and importance of regeneration, or the renewal of the soul in the image of God—the duty of practically obeying all the divine precepts—the nature and certainty of future rewards and punishments—and the everlasting duration of the joys of heaven, and the torments of hell,—are subjects of individual concern, and of unrivalled importance. These theological doctrines are not only suited to the capacity of man, but also adapted to his moral state and condition, as he stands connected with Adam and Christ; and, on the knowledge of which, his peace and happiness essentially depend.\*

As soon as the rational powers possess moral ca-

\* See the Author's "Thoughts on Sunday Schools; shewing the Importance of Knowledge to the Lower Classes of Society."

capacity, religious instruction should be imparted, and every effort made to cultivate and enrich the mind in the knowledge of divine things. Hesiod prohibits the teaching children any thing before they are seven years of age: while Chrysippus maintained, that in the short life of man there could be no time well afforded to be lost. The ancient Jews began early to teach their children the knowledge of the Scriptures. Solomon says, "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it." The same sentiment is contained in Horace, where he observes, that "the cask will long retain the flavour of that with which it was first filled." At the same time it is proper to notice, that he taught the Romans, in a form of public and solemn devotion, to look up to Heaven for influences from thence, to form their youth to the love and practice of virtue. The doctrine of divine aid is fully stated in the Sacred Writings, and its necessity urged in the strongest terms.

His parents discovered in him a docile disposition, and a retentive memory. He listened to instruction with considerable attention, and would frequently make pertinent remarks, and ask interesting questions. He manifested a degree of pleasure in attending the house of God, and behaved with decorum during public worship. Expressing a wish to associate with a few religious persons, assembled to promote their mutual improvement in faith and holiness, he was frequently indulged, and evinced a disposition favourable to piety.



From the unqualified state in which man comes into the world, and the important duties he has to perform while in it, arises the necessity of *education*. This has a strong claim to the attention of parents, whose anxieties are increased in proportion as they consider the future welfare of their offspring. It has been remarked, that young persons are destined for another world, and the beginning of life is with them the commencement of their journey thither. And as it is impossible to say what they may need on the road, parents should exert themselves, as far as in their power, in qualifying them for prosecuting it to advantage. Human nature, without the salutary aid of literature and science, may drudge on in some menial employment; but the acquisition of these is requisite for occupying situations of respectability and usefulness.\*

Hence his parents, conscious of their responsibility, resolved to place him under the care of masters fully competent to cultivate his understanding, and who would at the same time be attentive to his morals. Being sent to different schools in the course of his education, he was several times subjected to a change of teachers. At Whitby, a pious master superintended his studies, who ini-

\* Among the ATHENIANS a remarkable law was enacted, enjoining that those children who had not been brought up by their parents to some employment or business, should not, in case they were reduced to want in their old age, be obliged to keep them, which all other children were required to do.

tiated him in the elementary principles of the Latin tongue. And such was the amiable disposition of his young pupil, and aptitude to learn, that, in a conversation with a friend concerning him, he said, "He might have been born without sin!" At Hull, he possessed considerable advantages at an academy of eminence, where his literary progress was very satisfactory. At Huddersfield, where he continued several years, he made considerable advancement both in mathematical and classical learning. Here he entered on the study of the Greek; and also acquired a knowledge of the French language. At Manchester, the late Rev. John Gresswell, at the College, instructed him more fully in the Greek; and also began to teach him the rudiments of the Hebrew language. At this town, he also acquired a knowledge of anatomical drawing, under the tuition of an able artist.

Those who were practically employed in teaching him, perceived that his mind was equal to his work. By application, he could speedily surmount almost any difficulty, however great. Considerable strength and compass of mind have frequently been discovered in him, when, by indulging too long in some innocent recreation, he had only a very limited time remaining, during which to commit to memory parts of some of the Latin poets; or some other task assigned him. The great facility with which he performed these and other exercises, was often cause of astonishment. He could also occasionally indulge in sloth, and then would meet with reprehension. His sprightly mind, and predilection for

youthful amusements, would sometimes betray him into school-boy imprudencies, which had to receive correction by the chastisement of repentance.

His literary education was conducted chiefly with reference to the medical profession, which was entirely his own choice. This might originate in the death of the eminently pious and highly respected Mr. Nathaniel Aspden, surgeon, at Blackburn, which happened while he resided there. The insertion of a short sketch of his character, in this place, it is presumed will not be deemed an improper digression.

Mr. Aspden received his classical education at Clithero, under the tuition of the Rev. T. Wilson, author of an Archæological Dictionary, highly approved by Dr. Johnson; and was initiated into the medical profession by Dr. St. Clare, of Preston, in Lancashire; after which, he completed his professional studies in London. When he entered into practice, he was not only fond of gay and fashionable life, but as a proof that he was an entire stranger to religion, one day when attending a pious woman, on seeing a Testament and a Hymn-Book near her bed, he threw them aside, saying to her, "you will never be better while you have such books about you." On observing his aversion to true godliness, and believing it very improper for persons of his profession thus to deprive the afflicted of the means of divine consolation and support, she lifted up her heart to God in prayer for him, entreating that he would give him to see himself, and the necessity of applying to Jesus

Christ, the infallible Physician, to be healed of all his moral diseases.

Not long after, he was deeply convinced of sin by the Spirit of God, became a real penitent imploring mercy, and in his conduct exhibited indubitable proofs of a gracious change of heart. He now saw the utility of the Gospel, and felt an ardent wish to share in its benefits. The tidings of an all-sufficient and willing Saviour, were to him as a refreshing shower to parched land; and he heartily entered into the views and spirit of genuine Christianity. He did not rest on the surface of things, nor content himself with a superficial knowledge of Christ, but dug deep, and laid the foundation of his salvation upon the Rock of Ages.

The world, with all its empty pageantry, was now under his feet; he was no longer emulous of its riches, grandeur, or pleasures. By grace he happily escaped the pollution that is in the world. And, as a man of reflection and feeling, who has himself narrowly avoided the awful danger to which others are exposed, sincerely pities their condition, and wishes their deliverance; so he was well aware of the wretched state of unregenerate persons, and earnestly desired and fervently prayed for their conversion to God. His zeal for Christ, in confessing him before men, and attempting to advance his interest, was proverbial. This proceeded from an enlightened mind, and was the flame of holy, humble, fervent love, which excited him to diligence, and inspired him with fortitude in so good a cause. When engaged in his profession, his

conduct was almost unexampled. He not only administered relief to the bodies of his patients according to his utmost skill and experience in practice, but also endeavoured to be useful in promoting their spiritual welfare. And his "labour was not in vain in the Lord." He received many answers to prayer: persons were awakened to a sense of their sinful state, and converted to God, by his instrumentality, one of whom was his aged mother.

When reduced by consumption, and near death, he said, "The Lord is very good, I feel him near." Expressing himself as having "received a large foretaste of future glory," he added, "Help me to pray and praise." Soon after his language was, "The Lord passes by indeed, and blesses my soul. What an amazing support it is to the body, as well as the mind! What should I do now without religion? O bless the Lord!" With great confidence he frequently said, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit doth rejoice in God my Saviour." To a friend he said, "These are blessed words of our Lord—'Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you:'"—and added, "It is glory! it is all glory!" He knew that a real christian is born from above, that heaven is his native country, and that dying to him is only going home. About three hours before he breathed his last, he thus expressed himself, "I know I must die: I know I love God: I know I love Jesus Christ: and I know I am going to glory." About half an hour before his departure, he urged, with great exertion and uncommon pathos,

the necessity of having our robes washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb; and then said, "They who are so washed, will be admitted through the gates into the New Jerusalem: but all who finally neglect this, will be lost for ever." This was his dying testimony to the truth of Christ's atonement, and necessity of its application. His whole trust was in Him to the last, testifying with great joy, that *his blood cleanses from all sin.*

The removal of this burning and shining light from his numerous friends, and public usefulness, by a premature death, it is reasonable to suppose would cause much painful feeling, and sincere regret, which would be expressed by mutual condolence, and respect for the deceased. He was therefore for a considerable time, the subject of conversation in circles of social intercourse; and young James, being sometimes present on those occasions, might, from such interviews, receive an impression favourable to that profession; for, while in that town, he very frequently repeated, "I will be a Doctor:" from this he never deviated, and would often feign attempts at surgical operations.

His parents, wishing to be directed in the selection of an employment for him, were, by his early predilection in favour of that profession, led to consider it as an intimation not to be disregarded; in consequence of which, though they reasoned with him, they never attempted to dissuade him from the choice he had made. As the fixing on a profession, or business, is an important step, that much of the happiness of human life depends upon;

and, when taken wrong, is productive of much uneasiness and perplexity; the supreme Governor of the world should be consulted in so weighty an affair, by imploring in earnest prayer his kind and seasonable interference. When parents have applied to the throne of grace, for the wisdom that is profitable to direct, in order to maintain a consistency of character, they should also carefully notice, and faithfully follow, providential intimations and openings, which, when afforded, will be attended with evidence sufficiently discernible to attentive observers. In connexion with the direction of providence, the inclinations of children should be consulted, and, as far as circumstances will allow, and prudence dictate, indulged. Perhaps, by some parents pursuing a contrary measure, the unhappy conduct of thousands of children may have been occasioned. When inclination and capacity are previously consulted, then it is reasonable to expect, that application and success will follow: and *vice versa*.

The period having arrived for his acquiring professional knowledge, his parents looked round with considerable anxiety for a suitable situation. When correct sentiments operate, they lead to cautionary measures; and produce a disposition for inquiry, which ardently wishes to be guided in the right way. Their influence generates in the heart a feeling, which, though peculiarly attentive to the interests of domestics, is not forgetful of the welfare of society. His father, in his inward thoughts, reasoned in this way: "As my son has made choice of

this profession, and as the safety of patients much depends on the ability of practitioners, in justice both to him and the public, it is my imperious duty to commit him to the care of a professional man of accredited skill and extensive practice." By a train of circumstances, he was directed for information to the late Benjamin Gibson, Esq. *Vice President of the Literary and Philosophical Society of Manchester, and Surgeon to the Manchester Infirmary*; in consequence of his professional eminence, and a commercial connection existing between some branches of the two families. Mr. Gibson strongly recommended the Manchester Infirmary, as affording to the young student advantages almost unequalled; and at the same time intimated, that he himself had no objection to take his son as his pupil. In a few days after this interview, Mr. Gibson wrote to his father, then in Liverpool, the following letter, which clearly states the advantages of the situation now offered.

" Manchester, April 23, 1809.

" DEAR SIR,

" I have made inquiry respecting the fee for an apprentice to the Manchester Infirmary, and find it is two hundred guineas. The institution, however, will not want an apprentice for a year or two. If you conclude to place your son under my tuition, he may have a very excellent opportunity of attending the pharmaceutical department, and the mode of dispensing medicines, by giving the apothecary a fee of five guineas. By this means he



will be put upon a level with the apprentices, as far as respects that part of the profession; whilst he will be much more at liberty than they, to attend to the general practice of the house. In conformity with the communication, which I made to you, when in Manchester, I should wish your son to be with me for three years; he would then be properly grounded, and might go to London for a season. Afterwards, I should be happy to continue him as my pupil for a year longer, without any additional fee. I may observe, that in addition to the other advantages, to be derived from our Infirmary, a good medical and surgical Library, (to which the pupils have free access, and there see the journals and all good new publications,) is none of the least. If I can give you any further information upon this subject, it will give me pleasure.

Believe me, dear Sir,

Yours truly,

B. GIBSON."

On receiving the above letter, he resolved to accept the offered proposal, and pursue the plan suggested; and in August following, placed his son under Mr. Gibson. On removing to Manchester, he was peculiarly gratified, because he could have his son in his own house, and consequently under his eye. The anxieties of religious parents, respecting the souls, as well as bodies of their children, are inexpressible. Inward depravity is frequently called into action by external circumstances. Hence parental solicitude is awakened, suspicion on vari-

ous occasions excited, and assailing fears cause agitation and distress. Not to feel, would argue a stoical apathy, and want of proper affection; yet, no doubt, sometimes, the active imagination needs chastisement and restriction, for having, in its frequent excursions, been the mischievous instrument of creating unnecessary alarm, and raising apprehensions unsupported by the evidence of facts. It is true, there often exist causes for uneasiness, when parents can find repose alone in piety and prayer, whose redress at the sacred throne is not a deliverance from sorrow, but a mitigation only, by receiving grace proportioned to the day of trial.

His father having frequent interviews with Mr. Gibson, usually made inquiry respecting the professional progress of his son; when he always received at least satisfactory information, and sometimes such as gratified his warmest expectation. When his son had been favoured for about two years and a half with the kind attention and able instruction of that celebrated practitioner, (during which time he often attended him in visiting his private patients, and saw him perform several very interesting operations) he was deprived of any further assistance from him, by his much lamented death.

This affecting event produced feelings that were energetic and lasting, not only in a few domestic circles, among his relatives and friends, but which laid hold on the public mind, and could result only from a deep consciousness of highly departed worth, and a serious privation sustained by survivors. A

coadjutor in the healing art, a Physician of considerable eminence, thus expressed his sentiments on the character of the deceased, before his mortal remains were committed to the silent tomb.

“On Tuesday, the 3d instant, died, at the house of his father-in-law, Laurence Peel, Esq. of Ardwick, Mr. Benjamin Gibson, one of the surgeons of the Manchester Infirmary. Though cut off at an early period of life, yet he had long enjoyed such a share of the public confidence, as is seldom bestowed, except on greater length of days and more matured experience. By nature he was liberally endowed with gifts, that peculiarly fitted him for a profession, in which excellence can only result from the union of great delicacy of the bodily senses with strength and sagacity of intellect. These endowments he had improved, by an ardent and persevering study of the branches of science more immediately connected with his vocation; and he united to them a gentleness and urbanity of manner, arising from the most humane feelings, which while they led to all due sympathy with his suffering patients, never interfered with the steady execution of his professional resolves. But it was not only by the successful practice of what he had learned from others, that Mr. Gibson was distinguished. Influenced by an honourable ambition, he aimed at the higher object of extending the usefulness of his profession, and of rendering it, in some diseases, a more perfect instrument of relief. The discoveries, which his talents enabled

him to make, he freely communicated; for no man ever more cordially despised empirical conduct, whether manifested by the ostentatious display of knowledge, or by its illiberal concealment. Consistently with this part of his character, he employed himself, at a period of his lingering illness, when the vigour of his mind still survived the wreck of his bodily strength, in bequeathing to the world his improvements in the treatment of some of the diseases of the eye, in the cure of which he had been singularly fortunate. This work, united to his general eminence as a surgeon, has procured him much more than a local reputation; and will deliver his name to posterity as the improver of an art, which, while living, he adorned by his high attainments; by enlarged views of its objects and dignity; and by the benevolent extension of its relief, with an equal hand, to the poor and to the affluent.”

W. H.

*Manchester, March 7, 1812.*

The Muse also, touched by the mournful event, produced

ELEGIAC LINES,

*To the Memory of the late Mr. GIBSON, of Manchester,  
Surgeon.*

AND hark! the notes of death ride on the gale,  
 And now in air are lost, now louder swell,  
 The toll repeating marks the awful tale,  
 And strikes on every heart the mournful knell.  
 Say then, does Virtue mourn the fatal stroke,  
 Or Science weep some not unfavour'd son,

Too certain there, each sad foreboding spoke,  
For GIBSON'S self the mortal race has run.

Knew ye him not, ye wretched, and ye poor?  
For you he's toil'd through many a live-long day,  
For him pale misery op'd the dreary door,  
And death disgorg'd his half devoured prey.

Heart-rending sighs announce the general gloom,  
While o'er affection's cheek the rushing flood  
Deplores with ardent grief his early doom,  
Born to be great—great for the general good.

Oh! lost too soon, yet not unknown to fame,  
Thy worth, enroll'd on science' clearer page,  
Honour shall wait upon thy much-lov'd name,  
And mark, distinguish'd, mark her youthful sage.

And ah! his soul's philanthropy not small,  
Warm with benevolence, to none confin'd,  
Ne'er on him vainly did affliction call,  
His heart capacious beat for all mankind.

Ah! let no sculptur'd stone's emblazon'd praise,  
Surround his tomb with meretricious glare,  
For him no poet weave his pompous lays,  
Exalt his virtues, or his honours share.

The marble's proud inscriptions fade away,  
Unsparing time shall moulder them to dust,  
But thou shalt flourish in eternal day,  
Thron'd in the hearts unfading of the Just.

Heroes and statesmen blind the vulgar eye,  
And panegyric marks their splendid doom,  
Dreaded they live, and unlamented die,  
Or curses follow to the silent tomb.

To thee, a nation's tears were surely due,  
Millions might weep, where thousands pour their  
cries,

Yet honour'd shade, accept their homage true,  
Our sighs shall waft thee to thy native skies.

Yes, let the voice of simplest truth attest,  
Plain be the line, and hallow'd be the word;  
Whilst every heart shall weeping speak the rest—  
Reader, lament, here GIBSON lies interr'd.

*March 28, 1812.*

ALFRED.

However, this great loss, as it concerned his pupil, was very ably supplied by Mr. Gibson's intimate friend, Mr. Ransome, surgeon to the same Infirmary, who generously offered to take him under his own care, till the third year should be completed. He had also the advantage of attending a course of Lectures on Anatomy and Physiology, delivered by Messrs. Ransome and Ainsworth, in the spring of 1812.

While he was thus prosecuting his professional studies, his father perceived in him an increasing disposition unfriendly to piety, and a reluctance to submit to the restraints of moral obligation. Young gentlemen of fashion attracting his attention, he was emulous to appear like them. In proportion as he indulged this propensity, he also wished to participate in some of their pleasurable amusements. But during the two years he was pupil to Mr. Gibson, being under parental inspection, and subject to domestic regulations, he was prevented acting as he otherwise would have done; though, at the same time, it evidently appeared, that the curb of authority was frequently very irksome. However, on his parents removing to Stockport, being no longer under the family roof,

but a boarder in another house, he did then, considering himself more at liberty, though he knew it wrong, frequently visit the theatre. This conduct, being in direct opposition to his religious education, and the voice of parental instruction and example, had a powerful tendency to blunt in him the edge of moral feeling.

Some of his sincere and hearty religious friends, being aware of the impropriety of his demeanour, anxiously wished, considering the absence of his parents, to give him advice and caution. When accidentally meeting him, they would in the most friendly manner ask him to their houses; but these invitations he very rarely accepted, being conscious that his actions would not bear the test of scrutiny, and afraid lest he should have to pass the ordeal of examination: yet, at the same time, he felt a high regard for those who thus offered him their friendship, and his parents had most earnestly intreated him to keep a constant intercourse with them. So much was he under the influence of shame and fear, that, on perceiving certain persons at a distance, he would purposely take another road in order to escape their notice.

“ O power of guilt, you fear to stand the test,  
 Which virtue brings!  
 When guilt is in its blush of infancy  
 It trembles in a tenderness of shame;  
 And the first eye that pierces through the veil  
 That hides the secret, brings it to the face.  
 Guilt is the source of sorrow, 'tis the fiend,  
 'Th' avenging fiend, that follows us behind  
 With whips and stings.”

By indulging in the vain, delusive, and destructive pleasures of the world, an effect was produced accompanied sometimes with considerable chagrin; for, on seeing new books, which he wished to have in possession, he was embarrassed between the claims of his understanding, and the gratification of his passions.

The nature of sin, and the conduct of sinners, are much the same in every age: the former is deceitful, and the latter are deceived by it; they catch the alluring bait, are taken by the hook, and drawn by the avowed enemy of souls into destruction. No person makes choice of evil as evil; sin can never be chosen for its own sake, but would be shunned and detested, did it not assume another name, and make fair promises of advantage to those who entertain it. If it were to appear in its own naked deformity, its monstrous form would produce terror, and its solicitations be rejected with abhorrence. But disguising itself, even by putting on the garb of virtue, it gains admission into the human heart. Thus *pride* is called neatness and decency, and passes for a consciousness of a person's own worth, or a due regard to his rank or station in life. *Covetousness* calls itself by the name of economy, and palms itself on the world for prudence in the management of business or domestic affairs. While *prodigality* claims the regard due to liberality, generosity, and a contempt of riches. *Drunkeness* passes under the disguise of good fellowship, or a cheerful enjoyment of life. *Revenge* takes the title of justice, is



designated a brave spirit, displaying itself as the guardian of honour and rights. And so concerning all other sins, they appear not in their own form and colour, but in the name and attire of some virtue, and thus gain a more easy admission into the soul.

Sin probably is the most fatal to youth when it is contemplated as yielding *pleasure*. God has made great and precious promises to such as devote themselves to his service: but these chiefly respect the happiness of the future state. Whereas sin offers the good things of this life, saying, "He that loves pleasure, let him walk in my ways. The rewards of religion are future, far out of sight, and may or may not be: but I give present enjoyments. In obeying the precepts of religion, you must deny yourselves, mortify your desires, and abstain from all that is agreeable: but in following my directions, you may gratify the desires of your hearts, and act in all things according to your own will." These are the promises which sin makes, when attempting to seduce unwary youth, and by which the ruin of many is easily effected: while the reproach and misery to which immoral practices lead are concealed, such as loss of character, bitter reflections, and terrors of conscience.

When the evil of sin is extenuated and lessened, youth are apt to view it as nearly harmless. The common enemy of mankind represents it as much less dangerous and hurtful, than God in his word, and ministers of the gospel, tell them it is. This subtle deceiver insinuates, What hurt is there in

intemperance, in eating and drinking a little too much? What evil in gratifying the natural desires of the flesh? If no man is injured by means of that, where is the harm? What is the evil of persons, who are close confined all the week, taking a little pleasure on the Lord's-day?—But, alas! youth frequently forget, not only the admonitions of their parents, but that God, who is holy and jealous, of great power and majesty, has strictly prohibited these things, and that to disobey and rebel against him, must be attended with imminent danger. Sin has turned the angels out of Heaven—our first parents out of the Garden of Eden—the world into a dreadful deluge—and Sodom and Gomorrah into a heap of ashes. It has spoiled the beauty of the animal creation, and rendered the earthly Paradise a desolate wilderness. It has introduced pain, disease, and death into this abode; and is the cause of famine, pestilence, discord, war, rapine, murder, and all other evils. It is this only that provokes the merciful and gracious God to anger, causes him to visit men with his judgments in this life, and with everlasting burnings beyond the grave.

Hence we see to what danger youth are exposed! They begin, as Archbishop Tillotson observes, with *lesser sins*. There are certain rudiments of vice, in which they are first entered; and then they proceed by degrees to greater and fouler crimes. After they have been some time initiated in lesser sins, by the commission of these they are *prepared and disposed for greater*; such as lay waste the con-

science, and offer more violence to the light and reason of their minds. When they have proceeded so far, they then begin to *put off shame*. And when this curb once falls off, there is then but little left to restrain and hold them in. After this they may come to *approve their vices*. In process of time, their wills put a false bias upon their judgment. Then it is no wonder if they *boast* of their sins, and *glory* in them. When arrived at this degree of wickedness, they commonly proceed to *draw in others*, and so make *proselytes* to their vices. Then it is usual for them to *hate reproof*, and resist the *means* of recovery.

“O what a Crocodilian world is this,  
 Compos'd of treacheries, and insnaring wiles!  
 She clothes destruction in a formal kiss,  
 And lodges Death in her deceitful smiles;  
 She hugs the soul she hates; and there does prove,  
 The greatest tyrant, where she vows to love,  
 And is a serpent most, when most she seems a dove.” }  
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Connecting the commission of sin in this world, with the punishments of it in a future state, parents should, in a diligent use of all proper means, endeavour to guard their offspring against walking in the way of transgressors, that they may finally escape the just recompence of evil.

On leaving the Manchester Infirmary, his father thinking him too young to visit the metropolis, accepted a situation for him to be an assistant to a Surgeon in extensive practice in Yorkshire, with a respectable salary. This medical practitioner, after

making full trial of his professional talents, wrote as follows to his father:—"Your son, I am happy to say, is a very promising youth, and, I have no doubt, will some day be an ornament to his profession; his abilities seem very good, and his mind is devoted to his profession. Whenever he has attended in the obstetric art, he has given the greatest satisfaction."

After continuing in Yorkshire about six months, he resigned that situation; but a few days previous to his leaving it, by being called out on a rainy night to visit some patients in the country, he caught a severe cold, which was soon attended with a considerable degree of inflammation; to check its progress recourse was had to frequent bleeding, in consequence of which, his strength was much reduced. To this cold he attributed, as the originating cause, the consumption with which he was afflicted.\*

On leaving his situation in Yorkshire, he was elected Surgeon, Apothecary, and Man-midwife to

\* "I am convinced," says a Physician, "that the instability of our climate is the occasional cause, or rather its immediate effect *a cold*, to which the frequency of consumptions in this kingdom is chiefly to be attributed." Judicious remarks on the causes of consumption, are deserving attention, and, upon persons enjoying the blessing of health, should operate so as to produce a prudent care of themselves. A person, on being asked by the *Rev. JOHN WESLEY* the state of his health, replied, that he had only taken a little cold. "What!" said *Mr. WESLEY*, "would you have the plague?" Intimating that a cold is almost as fatal as the plague.

the Dispensary and Workhouse at Blackburn, in Lancashire. After resting at home a fortnight, he proceeded to that town. He entered on his new situation with a degree of confidence, believing he should be able to fill it to the satisfaction of the inhabitants of the place, and with advantage to the poor.

When he had been there a few weeks, it appears that his health was considerably improved. In a letter to his father, he says, "I have been much better in health since I was last in Manchester, and think the consumptive symptoms have left me. I have no cough, and do not spit any, which I attribute to my regularity." It seems that his affliction, at this period, was attended with some good moral effect, for he adds, "I know not how soon I may be cut off, but hope I shall *repent* ere that time comes."

To neglect a religious obligation, in expectation of discharging it at a future period, is a bold and daring presumption, and from which have often resulted the most fatal consequences. When God gives space for repentance, time should be assiduously improved, in a diligent use of the appointed means of grace.

In another letter written soon after, in reference to his own spiritual state, and the satisfaction that his conversion to God would afford his parents, he says, "Remember me in your daily prayers; and rest assured that a time will come ere long, when your happiness, as well as that of my dear mother, will be greatly augmented." This prediction was

afterwards truly verified. He now evidently thought about divine things, in a manner he had not previously been accustomed to do; and knew well, that he was altogether unprepared to meet God as his Judge.

In a letter to his father, dated Sept. 9, 1813, he says, "The next Sunday I shall have been here three months: it appears as but a week or two since I came. Mr. B. has given me an invitation to an operation for *Paracentesis Abdominis*, which of course I accepted. He expects another for the stone either this or next week. I am particularly happy in informing you, that I have not lost one patient since I came hither. I have had a deal of Typhus fever, &c. and some very narrow escapes."

In another letter, dated October 31, 1813, he says, "I agree with you perfectly in opinion, respecting my being circumstanced as no other young man of eighteen years old. I am particularly anxious to establish myself soon. My late worthy master, Mr. Gibson, always told me that I should be able to live independent at thirty years of age; and many of his sentences are very stimulating to me. At the same time rest assured, that I feel very thankful for this situation, having a salary attached to it of more than a hundred pounds a year. All that I now want, in addition to what I have acquired is, at the expiration of the stipulated time here, to attend the Lectures in London, &c. and then to commence business for myself. I have a peculiar satisfaction in stating, that I have only lost

two patients since I came hither; the one of a dropsy, and the other of OLD AGE!"

He was very anxious to succeed well in his profession, and accordingly industrious in collecting knowledge from the works of the most celebrated and successful practitioners, in addition to the advantages of his own medical education and practice, as his papers abundantly shew. His prospects were indeed very flattering, and he was as ambitious to excel.

His cough having returned, he adds, "The air here is too keen for my cough; but I hope I shall be able to get through the winter." Towards the end of December he writes, "I trust I shall begin with the New Year to lead a new life: but I have promised so often, and never fulfilled my promises, that I shall say no more on this subject, till I have actually begun to perform part of them. Since I saw you, I have grown upwards of an inch in height, and am some pounds heavier."

He now perceived the treachery of his own heart; also that no confidence is to be placed in an arm of flesh. Peter said to Christ, "Though all men forsake thee, yet will not I," and intended keeping his word; but in an hour of temptation and danger, awfully revolted. The language of divine inspiration on this point is, "When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that thou hast vowed. Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay." *Sin-*

*cerity of intention* is requisite in religious engagements, but only divine grace can give it a *practical effect*. A conviction of the necessity of the grace of God to aid human action, should always accompany vows of piety made to him; and, in a dependence upon his assistance, they should be performed. Probably, for want of attending to this, many have been foiled in their religious attempts, and consequently discouraged. "My grace is sufficient for thee," is an assertion that should never be forgotten, and always regarded. "When I am weak, then am I strong," may appear problematical to some persons, but is a language well understood by those who have been initiated by the Holy Spirit into the science of salvation.

His consumptive symptoms at this time rapidly increased, so that on the 6th of January, 1814, he says, "I am sorry to inform you, that to-day is the first time I have been out of doors for the last week. The air is so keen, and the weather so severe, that combined they hurt me much. I do nothing but cough from morning till night. The last week I lived chiefly on wine and water. If I do not get better fast, I must resign my situation, for I cannot really attend to my patients as I ought. Mr. C.'s young man officiated the last week for me. As soon as the snow gets off the ground, and the frost ceases, I intend going into the country, to some farmer's house for a week, and see if that will do me any good."

He soon removed into the country, and on the 26th of January wrote as follows:—



“Your last letter was forwarded to me at Mr. Hulme’s, Stretford, where I have been upwards of a fortnight for the benefit of my health. Mr. C. and Mr. H. attended me before I left Blackburn rather more than a week, during which time I never ventured out of doors. As soon as was proper, they insisted on my leaving Blackburn; and have officiated conjointly for me ever since.

“Yesterday I met Mr. Ransome, who very kindly gave me a pressing invitation to attend his Lectures (*gratis*): this I thought very handsome. I asked his opinion about myself; and he advised me to come and live with you in Kent, thinking it preferable to the Isle of Man. He said he had always found the South to be of the most service to *consumptive habits*.

“By the time you receive this, I shall be at Blackburn again, trying to do the best I can. I hope, with a little of Mrs. D.’s kind nursing, I shall be enabled to keep my present excellent situation a little longer: *but God only knows what a day or an hour may bring forth!* I wish I could say, *that I am prepared for a change*, however sudden! Mr. Keeling is kind to me: his advice is that of a friend.”

The sentiments contained in this last paragraph are of great importance, and evidently occupied his mind. Expectations of secular advantages are sometimes suddenly blasted, and soon wither away. “In the midst of life we are in death.” But we know not the *hour* of our dissolution! This awful event is among the “secret things” which “belong to God;” but concealed from those whom it immediately concerns, and for wise reasons and pur-

poses. Our duty, however, connected with our highest felicity, is plainly pointed out by our blessed Saviour, who says, "Be ye ready: for in such an hour as you think not the Son of Man cometh." Our destiny is with Him who "has the keys of hell," *αδης*,\* the *invisible world*, "and of death," the passage into it. An interest in Him gives us a title to heaven, and a conformity to Him qualifies us for the enjoyments of that glorious abode: these blessings we should strenuously endeavour to secure.

"Blackburn, February 13, 1814.

"You see plainly that I have not been able to stand the work here during the winter season. I have been a month away in the country, and above a week before I went I could not do any thing, being confined to the house: and now that I am returned I cannot manage above half my work, and have to employ another Surgeon to assist me. When at Manchester, I asked Dr. Henry and Mr. Ransome their opinions; they perfectly agreed that I should remove to a warmer climate, and recommended the South of France. My disease (consumption) is only in its first stage, and by proper means my health might be restored to its former

\* "Our *English*, or rather *Saxon* word, *hell*, in its original signification (though it is now understood in a more limited sense) exactly answers to the *Greek* word *Hades*, and denotes a *concealed* or *unseen place*; and this sense of the word is still retained in the *eastern*, and especially in the *western* counties of England; to *hele* over a thing is to *cover* it." KING'S History of the Creed, Chap. iv.

vigour. I am particularly to avoid North winds, spirits, &c. &c. I live almost on milk, and take water porridge to breakfast. As soon as the weather is warmer, Mr. C. says I must take a trip to the Isle of Man, Madeira, or Lisbon. A sea voyage is often of great benefit. Now I cannot think of asking the Practitioners here to do my work any longer than this month: so that I cannot tell how soon I may resign. There is now a rumour that I am incapable of discharging the duties of my station. I wish much to have it said, that I was Surgeon to this Institution for a year at all events, and to continue here till June 21, 1814. Then I shall have three months in which to recruit myself, the expiration of which will be in October, the time when the Lectures are given in London; and I think I can manage to attend some of them. Perhaps I am building castles in the air. Let me have a large sheet filled with your advice, concerning my resigning, &c. I do not wish to resign, if I can avoid it. I have been here just eight months the 21st of this month.

“My cough is very troublesome in the night, I cannot get much sleep; and I sweat so profusely that the sheets have to be aired every day. If I should leave here—but I shall have your opinion soon. I should not like to die from home.”

His projects at this period, as to the certainty of their completion, were evidently attended with doubt in his own mind. Anxious to advance in professional pursuits, he laid his plans, and antici-

pated their successful results: but, at the same time, indisposition suggested the probability of their never being realized; and also conscience uttered its voice, respecting the expediency of attending to spiritual and eternal concerns.

*“ Blackburn, March 17, 1814.*

“ I am nearly a complete Anatomical Skeleton. Mr. Keeling will be with you, and as he has been with me about ten days ago for a fortnight, he will be able to give you a little information respecting the state of my health. I only stir out in the middle of the day. Some days I am better, and some days worse, and often think I should not be able to perform a journey as far as Deptford. I am obliged to have a horse to ride upon to the patients that Mr. H. cannot visit. It is a very sickly time, and every Surgeon has enough to do to mind his own patients. We have snow on the ground, and the frost I think is as intense as at Christmas. When the Spring comes, I hope I shall be better.

“ When my brothers are grown up, (if I should not live to see it) tell them that their brother James, when only 17 years old, was Surgeon, Apothecary, and Man-midwife to the Blackburn Dispensary and Workhouse, and had been previously Assistant to a Surgeon for nearly six months. They may challenge England to produce another person of the same years in such an important situation! Tell my dear brother John the same, if I should not live till his return from the East-Indies.”

This is the language of an aspiring youth, whose ability for his years was considerable: but it cannot altogether be deemed ostentatious, as it was given in a communication to his father, and intended to act as a stimulus on the minds of his brothers. Persons further advanced in life, it is presumed, will not feel disposed to censure him for highly estimating his situation, connected with his qualifications to fill it at so early a period of life: but rather allow him the palm, considering he displayed it that he might rouse the energies of his brothers to laudable emulation.

He was very much exercised in his mind, from an ardent desire to hold his situation, and the infirm state of his health, which rendered him incapable of performing professional duties.

*“ Blackburn, March 30, 1814.*

“ With respect to my general health, it is no better. This country being so hilly, renders it naturally more keen. My lungs are so remarkably tender, that if I go into a room where any one is smoking, I cough incessantly; I may truly say for half an hour. A country that is level would suit me better.

“ If I were to leave Blackburn in September, I should be in time to attend the Lectures; and afterwards could practice near Manchester, till I was old enough to pass Surgeons' Hall. I was thinking of resigning about the beginning of August, and then going to the Isle of Man for a month or so.

“ If I get up in the night, I sometimes sweat so profusely, that I am just as if I had been over head in water: then I go to a patient, and frequently wait for some hours in a damp cellar, with bad windows. You must recollect, my patients are paupers.

“ I cannot expect the Surgeons to attend my patients, in Midwifery, &c. and miss their own—yet it has been the case repeatedly. Therefore there is no alternative but resignation. I really wonder how they have done my work so long: I can hardly look them in the face.

“ Mr. Keeling will leave Manchester for London on Easter Tuesday, so you will soon have his description of my health, manner of living, &c. I lived on milk and bread during the time he was here, and cannot say when I last tasted animal food.

“ To the kindness of Mrs. D. I am much indebted: I may, I think, say, that she has been as a mother to me. Mr. Keeling will satisfy you on that head likewise. Every thing I have the least idea of liking, is immediately provided, whether I eat it or not.

“ The Yearly Meeting will be in the course of a week or two, at which time I must give in my resignation. Observe, I have to stay three months after resigning; three months notice is according to appointment. Therefore should be glad to hear from you soon, before I do resign.”

Resignation was a circumstance he contemplated with painful feelings, and a task he was reluctant

to perform: but a sense of duty impressing its necessity, he proceeded according to its authoritative dictates.

“ *Blackburn, April 8, 1814.* ”

“ My resignation is ready for delivering in next Monday, Easter Monday, the 11th of April. It merely states, that through the several months of indisposition that I have had lately, I am unable to attend any longer to the duties incumbent on my situation; and that the patients have been attended by my friends Mr. C. and Mr. H. for some months; in consequence of which I now give them three months notice. Mr. D. will introduce my resignation to the meeting. Every thing that he, and his motherly wife could do, they have done for me. He has spared two days this week to take me out into the country, a few miles, and says I must go to Preston to dine to-morrow. I have fancied myself better this week: still I never move without my top-coat.

“ Were I to stay till the end of my fifth quarter, I should lose the benefit I am intending to get by my resignation; because then I should continue till the latter end of September, the time when cold weather is setting in. Upon the plan I have laid down, I shall be here a month or six weeks in my fifth quarter.”

When he had apprehensions that through indisposition he should not be able to perform the duties of his profession at Blackburn, he fixed his eye on

another situation, where, on recovering his health, he intended to commence business for himself. Respecting secular things, his usual method was to view them in all their bearings, and with considerable acuteness, as will appear in relation to a situation. Having been invited by numerous kind relatives to establish himself in the neighbourhood of Flixton, in a letter to his father he says: "Either Stretford or Cross Street, which is a mile further on the Alteringham road, is a desirable situation. They are surrounded by Flixton, Carrington, Urmston, Eccles, Barton, Patricroft, Chorlton, Northern, Sale, &c. &c. The journies are but three or four miles in extent, which is a great object in practice. It is a situation that would not be very fagging, and the journies would pay well. It is near my friend Mr. Ransome's, in any case of urgency, and he would allow me to attend any particular operation at the Infirmary, &c. The country is level, and the air is not so keen by a great deal as at Blackburn: and I think it would suit me better than living in a town full of smoke."

Soon after writing the above, he rode over to Winton House, to visit his kind friends Mr. and Mrs. Knight, whom he highly esteemed, and whose tender solicitude for his recovery sensibly affected his mind. He also went to Flixton; and after a few days, thinking himself better, he and a convalescent cousin took horse exercise, and enjoyed themselves very much in visiting several of their relatives, whose kindness he ever afterwards remembered with pleasure.



After continuing there about three weeks, as he was unfit to attend to the duties of his profession, his cousin Miss Ann Wood and her brother, prevailed on him to accompany them home to Liverpool: this was in the beginning of May. They sailed to Runcorn, where they spent the evening; and the next day before noon arrived at Mount Pleasant, where he resided about two weeks. He perceived that the sea air increased his cough, and he appeared not so well as when in the country.

While here, one evening, a pious friend called, and on perceiving the state of his health, conversed much with him on the necessity of preparing for a change, which he thought would inevitably take place in a short time. He replied, that he had recently thought more about the salvation of his soul than ever he had done at any previous period.

On this friend leaving the house, in a serious conversation with his cousin, he said, "I must prepare for another world." She said, Preparing for death will not hasten your dissolution, you will only then be fit to live. With the expression and tone of a real penitent, he replied, "I have been a wicked sinner; I have broken most of the commandments, and am much afraid that I have sinned the day of grace away." She said, The enemy of souls very frequently suggests that idea to an earnest seeker of salvation; but God will never refuse to accept those who come to him in sincerity and truth. He conversed much that evening, and was very candid in confessing his former follies and sins; from which it evidently appeared that he now

viewed eternal things in a light he had not done before, and felt their vast importance.

God, by his Holy Spirit, strives long with children who have had a religious education. He produces conviction in their breasts, and will not suffer them to go on securely in their evil ways, appearing reluctant after many provocations to depart from them. The Holy Spirit strives with all, but especially with the offspring of the righteous. They are born in God's house, and he does not cast them out till after numerous transgressions, but exercises great patience towards them. He checks them in their sinful ways, calls on them to repent, return, and live, and by his Holy Spirit whispers good counsel and useful instruction to their souls. And if the Holy Spirit at last depart from them, it is not till they have long resisted and grieved him, quenched his sacred inspiration, sinned against the light of their own conscience, and have obstinately given themselves up to the government of their own fleshly lusts and inordinate appetites.

The people of God were now the only associates he wished to have. Understanding their religious character, he rightly appreciated their moral worth. Being affected with the state of his own soul, he was prepared to receive their friendly advice. He felt interested in whatever had a relation to his own case. His ears were open to the voice of instruction, and his breast was the seat of painful solicitude. He no longer startled at the presence of pious persons, nor attempted to escape the glance of their eyes. No: his heart being under the influ-

ence of divine impressions, its anxieties and pursuits were changed.

His precarious state of health led him to the contemplation of death: yet the prospect of dissolution was attended with dread. Respecting dying, he thus expressed his sentiments: "If I die, I should like to die at Flixton, and be buried in the same grave with my sister Maria. There is something very unpleasant to me, in the idea of the manner we must lie after death, and the thought of the body being deposited in the earth." Death is undoubtedly the greatest natural evil, and its approach has often been viewed with inexpressible horror. Mécænas, in Seneca, would rather live afflicted with many diseases, than die. And Homer reports of Achilles, that he would rather be a servant to a poor country clown in this world, than be a king to all the souls departed. Though many are of the same way of thinking, yet that does not evince their wisdom, nor protract the hour of dissolution. The frequent consideration of death, though it is one of the most necessary and prudent things in life, is nevertheless what most men neglect, and put away from them as a melancholy speculation. There is no glass less looked into, than that of their own mortality; they studiously shun such thoughts, as if they could exempt themselves from being mortal, by forgetting that they are so.

"Fools that we are!

Never to think of death and of ourselves  
At the same time! as if to learn to die  
Were no concern of ours."

But what reason can they give for such behaviour, or how can they justify it by the rules of prudence? Supposing death to be an enemy, and the most terrific of any we are afraid of in this world: yet, surely, the looking through a perspective on the motions of an enemy, does not accelerate his approach! It only assists us to put ourselves into a more complete state of readiness to receive him. Therefore no one has any just cause to dislike the contemplation of death: unless such as are determined to live in practical impiety, and neglect the important concerns of a better world. Though to penitents death assumes a frightful aspect, occasioned chiefly by a dread of punishment beyond the grave, arising from the guilt of transgression abiding on their minds: yet, by applying to Jesus, who invites them to come to him, and obtaining "redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace," they will be saved from the wrath to come, and have a delightful foretaste of eternal life.

On leaving Liverpool, he went back again to Blackburn: from which place he thus writes:—

*Blackburn, May 30, 1814.*

"Last Thursday week, a Surgeon was appointed to succeed me. He has been Physician's Clerk to the Manchester Infirmary for the last eight months, and is well recommended.

"You wish to know the state of my health, and I can hardly tell you it. I have vomited and spit blood, and have had a continued bowel complaint

for nearly four months, which you know is very weakening. My clothes hang on me like sacks. I get thinner every day. If I go up stairs to my bed-room, I am obliged to sit down for some time to regain my strength before I can undress myself. I never expect now to get better, and think my time will not be long in this world. I had some idea of coming to see you all; but my kind cousin, Miss Ann Wood, made me give up all thoughts of it: she says, I could not travel so far, and should die on the road.

“When at Flixton, I often hobbled to the church-yard, and thought that ere long I should lie near my much-lamented sister Maria. Oh that I was prepared for so awful a change! I have not the least desire for worldly things or acquaintance; still I do not feel that earnestness for prayer which I should. I sometimes think that I have sinned my day of grace away: having had so many opportunities, and still refused them all. *Pray for me.* Write me a long letter, and give me some instructions, for I plainly perceive that I am going headlong to hell. I want a greater desire for prayer.\* I shall stay here till next Friday, when I think of going to Flixton again: but I cannot tell what may happen before that day.”

\* St. AUGUSTINE mentions as a vanity of his youth, that he prayed to God for help against some particular sins, to which he was strongly addicted; but should have been very sorry if his prayer had been answered, because he was reluctant to part with them. *Ora et labora*, was the motto of an Emperor; and to our prayers, we should add our endeavours.

On receiving the above letter, his father, under the influence of painful impressions and alarming fears, unwilling to lose a moment of time, wrote to him the following spontaneous feelings of his heart:—

“ *Deptford, June 2, 1814.*

“ It is with much concern of mind that I now address you. I hoped all along that Providence would raise you up again to the enjoyment of health: but now, alas! my fond hope languishes, and I consider you to be near the eternal world. My inmost soul feels unutterable things on your account: if you were washed from all your sins in the blood of Christ, I should feel more reconciled to your dissolution; yet, even in that case, the separation would be very afflictive.

“ O my James, it is true, you have sinned, and that with a high hand; but, if you despair of mercy on that account, and consequently do not pray for salvation, that is the most effectual way to perish. Unbelief is the ruin of the soul. Our Saviour says, ‘ He that believeth, shall be saved; and he that believeth not, shall be damned.’ I am sure there is salvation for you; the mercy of God has not left you. If you will seek, you shall surely find the pearl of great price. Jesus Christ shed his most precious blood for you, and is this moment interceding for you in heaven. God has been very gracious to many of your dear relatives, and he will look upon you in mercy, if you will seek his face. I do earnestly beseech you to pray with all your heart, that he will, for the sake of what Christ has

done and suffered for sinners, give you genuine repentance, a godly sorrow for your sins, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; without which, you cannot be saved. And the Holy Spirit must enable you thus to repent and believe.

“How awful would your destruction be! Thousands of prayers have been offered up to God for your salvation. You have heard many Gospel sermons. The Spirit of God has often touched your heart, even while I have been conversing with you about your soul, and exhorting you to flee from the wrath to come. I hope now at last you have begun in earnest to pray for yourself. Lose no time, for you know not what a day, a night, or even an hour, may bring forth.

“The Lord Jesus beholds you as the purchase of his blood, and waits to bless you with pardon and peace. Behold him by faith, and endeavour to cast your soul upon him. He died for sinners, for the chief of sinners, consequently for you. O come, do not despair, but trust in the Lord. He has pardoned crimes as numerous and aggravated as yours. *His blood cleanses from all sin.*

“I beg you will request the Ministers to visit you, and give you their advice and prayers; and tell them the state of your mind freely. I am particularly busy, or would come immediately to see you. I hope God will spare you till I have got over my present engagements, which will be in about two weeks from Sunday next, and then I fully intend leaving home, and seeing you in the flesh once more. Meanwhile I shall not fail to write,

and give you the best advice I can; and I beg you will write to me as often, and as explicitly as possible. I have often read your letters with peculiar pleasure, and hope you will, while you can, indulge me with more; and particularly mention the state of your soul, and what is your hope of heaven. Your dear mother intends leaving Deptford in the morning, for Flixton.

“O my dear, dear James, I cannot express the feelings of my heart. O God, be pleased to give my James an interest in thy blessed Son! Wash him from all his sins in his precious blood! If his affliction be unto death, mercifully prepare him for thy right hand! Give him a praying, a believing, a tender, a loving heart, and fit him to join his departed relatives before thy throne.

“But one resource remains—to Jesus fly  
 With eyes full streaming, and a broken heart:  
 Thy stains his blood shall purge—his Spirit guide  
 Thy feet into the way of perfect peace.  
 Thus ready for that dreaded, wished-for hour,  
 Through death’s cold shades thy soul shall fearless pass  
 To some bless’d region, till the awful trump  
 Proclaims the dawn of that eternal day,  
 In which with JESUS thou shalt ever reign.”

“My heart and my eyes are full. What, a child of mine *go to hell!* God forbid! for the sake of Jesus Christ, who came into the world to save sinners, even the chief. God be with your spirit: Amen.”

On the evening of the day he arrived at Flixton, he received his father’s letter, which caused him to



weep very much. "My poor father!" he exclaimed. Then addressing himself to his cousin, he said, "This letter is too much for me:" and giving it her to read, added, "This is an answer to one I wrote while at Blackburn: I thought it right to tell my father my real state of health."

His mother leaving home immediately, hastened with all possible speed to attend him: and if, on seeing him, any immediate danger should be apprehended, his father was to follow. He soon announced her safe arrival.

*"Flixton, June 7, 1814.*

"My dear mother arrived here yesterday. She thinks that with a little proper nursing, I shall be able to travel as far as the Metropolis: I am glad to have it in my power to say, that I have ceased spitting blood, but my bowel complaint continues. Since I came to Flixton, my appetite has been much better: but the winds continuing North-east, make it very cold. I have no pain in my chest, and can lie on either side: but my bowels are dreadfully and constantly griped. My dear mother thinks there will be no occasion for you to come down at the time you proposed, unless I grow worse, of which you will be duly apprized.

"Your letter I read with much concern, and hope that God will both hear and answer prayer. I am more anxious for my future welfare than ever I was; yet find that I sin daily, but when alone my thoughts are all about my Maker. I do not like the company of any but the righteous: the wicked

I abhor. I often think, when alone, that if God had not been pleased to afflict me, I should never have thought of prayer; and if my affliction had not been of such duration, I do not imagine I should ever have attempted to flee from the wrath to come. Surely Providence sees good it should be so. God's will must be done; and I trust all things will work together for some good and wise end. Pray for me; for 'The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.' I hope the thousands of prayers that have been offered up for me, have been heard; and that God of his infinite goodness will look with tender compassion on me, and write his pardon on my heart. Oh that my sins, which are as numerous as the hairs of my head, were all pardoned! This is my chief desire and sole aim. I sleep better in the country."

God frequently corrects the children of many prayers, when they go astray from the ways of his commandments: following them with successive rebukes till he bring them to serious reflection, and they turn their feet to his testimonies. Thus he announced to David, that he would deal with his children, if they forsook his law, and kept not his commandments. "If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless, my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my righteousness to fail." The Psalmist himself had know-

ledge of this display of divine goodness and manner of procedure, gained by a practical process. "Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept thy word." Providential chastisements brought him to the right consideration of the nature and tendency of his actions: the happy result of which was, he turned his feet to the sacred testimonies. When idolatrous Israel, the seed of faithful Abraham, said, "I will go after my lovers, that give me my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, mine oil and my drink:" God replied, "I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and make a wall, that she shall not find her paths." She answered, "I will go and return to my first husband; for then was it better with me than now." But one of the most remarkable instances of this kind on record is that of Menasseh, the son of pious Hezekiah, who proceeded to an uncommon degree in wickedness. God brought the Assyrian upon him, who "took him among the thorns, bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon." It appears that he perceived a divine agency in this occurrence: for "when he was in affliction, he besought the Lord his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, and prayed to him." The Apostle touches on this point in a very interesting manner. "We have had fathers of our flesh, who corrected us; and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness."

*“Flixton, June 14, 1814.*

“I have begun to take some Port Wine, and think this last week has altered me much for the better; so much so, that, if I continue as I am going on, I shall soon be able to undertake a journey as far as the Metropolis. The Rev. Thomas Dowty often comes to pray with me. He has prayed for me once in the chapel.”

About this time, on returning with his cousin, Mr. Samuel Wood, who was also indisposed, from a little excursion on horseback, he was asked respecting the way they had been. He answered, “We have been taking a ride along the side of the church-yard: I thought it would impress a solemnity upon our minds, for in all probability we must soon lie in similar places.”

“The Man how wise, who, sick of gaudy scenes,  
Is led by choice to take his fav’rite walk  
Beneath Death’s gloomy, silent, cypress shades,  
Unpierc’d by Vanity’s fantastic ray!  
To read his monuments, to weigh his dust,  
Visit his vaults, and dwell among the tombs.”

The serious contemplation of death, is conducive to the attainment of the highest wisdom; and the inspection of a sepulchral enclosure, abounding with the spoils of “the king of terrors,” serves to give it a practical effect.

At this period, he very frequently employed a considerable portion of time in reading the Sacred Scriptures, being anxious to understand the way

experience are very great, but I hope they are for my good."


His mother accompanied him to Winton House, to which earthly paradise, especially to the family resident there, he was sincerely attached. He frequently spoke of Mr. and Mrs. Knight in terms of the warmest gratitude.

*"Winton House, June 29, 1814.*

"I am certainly considerably better, and think, by the 24th of July, I shall be able to leave this country for Deptford, God willing. Mr. Ransome advises me to go South as early as possible. I think I am able to bear the fatigue of a journey to London in the coach, only my very worthy friend, Mrs. Knight, will not let me leave the strawberries. We are with her at present, but shall leave on Wednesday. She is very kind, and shews us every civility imaginable. I believe I am much better: I certainly improve every day. I shall go to Blackburn soon to settle my affairs. On the 21st of July, I shall be free from my situation: a period which will soon be here."

On Wednesday morning, July 20, he left Manchester, and, after resting one night on the road at Birmingham, on Friday morning, the 22d, arrived at Deptford, much less fatigued with the journey than was expected. He was considerably gratified at being once more under the family roof, and embraced his relatives with much tenderness and affection.

After a little rest, he made excursions on horseback to Blackheath, Shooter's-Hill, Woolwich, &c. &c. and was much gratified with the objects and rural scenes his new situation afforded. But the weather being very warm, he was so affected by it, that several times he wished he had not come South till nearer winter. He rode to Rotherhithe to hear his father preach, and, after dinner, accompanied Mr. Jennings to the little temple in his garden; at which meeting he was so edified, that, on returning home, he said, if his strength increased, he should like to attend there.



*His Tour to France.*

His parents having determined on an excursion to France for the benefit of his health, on Wednesday, August 17, they entered on board the Kilvington, Captain Willmott, at Rotherhithe, that they might have a longer voyage, than they would have had by crossing the channel from Dover; and on Friday, the 19th, landed at Calais. As there was a rough sea, and the vessel laboured hard, he was extremely sick, which, though it was almost too much for his feeble strength to endure, they were glad to see, expecting salutary effects would be produced by the operation of this painful cause; and, indeed, his appetite was much increased.

The novelty of the place, manners of the people, as well as the trial and exercise of his French, were not without their uses; but the disposition for gam-

bling, so evident among the soldiers, and the lower class of people, excited in him considerable disgust.

The weather being extremely fine, on Sunday 21, being favoured with the company and kind attention of Captain, and Mrs. Willmott, they travelled in a hired coach to St. Omer, thinking they should spend the day as profitably on the road, as in Calais; and as the journey was a work of mercy, and not of pleasure and amusement, they concluded themselves justified in so doing. Nay, Calais presented nothing on the Lord's-day but what was calculated to produce pain and grief in a reflecting mind—shops open—business transacted—groups of persons gambling—dancing in the vicinity—and play-bills on the walls announcing the theatre to be open in the evening. These scenes must shock the feelings of moral persons enjoying health: but much more those of a person sinking beneath the weight of affliction, and expecting soon to enter the eternal world.

The various objects, and picturesque views on the way to St. Omer, afforded matter for remark and profitable reflection. Soon after leaving Calais, they saw persons kneeling on the ground, and, on looking to the left, perceived a priest carrying the host to a dying person. The coachman, and the attendant behind, descended and prostrated themselves. As they proceeded, husbandmen were at the plough, and, though the season was late, persons were making hay. Farmers were travelling on horses with sacks under them, as if going to market. Carts and waggons, some loaded with

turf, were frequent on the road. Several houses built of wood and mud, and without glass windows, presented a miserable appearance. Men were at work in the turf ground at La Hart. In the inn at which they called, upon one of the top shelves there was something in the shape of a pope's mitre, made of the pith of rushes, which, as the landlady said, being taken to the church once a year, and there touched by some relics, was the means of blessing the family all the ensuing twelve months. The country was delightful, and the crops of corn were large. Most of the windmills were at work. Six gaming tables were standing near the road in the open air, and a large assembly of men and women round them. A man and woman were at work among the flax. Three priests were sitting in their canonicals, near the road, at the door of a public-house. Tobacco was growing on each side the road. Several persons were employed in reaping corn. A church on the right-hand had many crucifixes fastened on its walls, and others suspended on poles over graves in the yard. A fair was held on a river on the left-hand, and several boats on it were covered with white cloth. At the entrance of St. Omer, a person asked them for passports, but on being told they had none, and were not going to Paris, he allowed them to proceed. Near a large church in St. Omer, several families were engaged at cards; and, in the street, some young females were handling the dice. Such were their Sunday entertainments! In another street, a priest, attended with



a numerous retinue, was carrying the host to a dying person. In the procession, there were four lamps, singing boys, several official men, and a train of women. As they moved along, persons in the street, and in houses, instantly fell on their knees, prayed, and continued in that posture till they were passed.

A report prevailed in the city, that the church, St. Berliu, being filled with persons destined to be guillotined for their attachment to the family of the Bourbons, fell in on the first person being taken out and killed, and destroyed thousands of others, whose bodies still remained under the rubbish. It had been a fine edifice, but the walls are expected to fall soon. Some other churches had been converted to secular uses.

The large church now occupied, which has a telegraph on the top of its high tower, presented a very affecting scene. An old man, who attended to conduct strangers, and explain to them different objects, in addition to noticing several images, pictures, and relics, affirmed, that, prior to the Revolution, this church contained gold and silver images, and other articles, to the amount in value of six or eight millions! Soldiers having used this church for Barracks in the reign of Buonaparte, had wantonly injured many parts near the altars, and defaced the marble sculptures and paintings; but those places which had been reserved for hay, provender, &c. were in much better preservation.\*

\* The following passage of a Sermon, preached in the Cathedral Church of Notre Dame, at Paris, by Father

At the commencement of the Revolution, many private families were assassinated by order of the ruling authorities: though the murder of neigh-

Beauregard, thirteen years before the Revolution, is a clear proof, that the approaching catastrophe, proceeding from the perversion of principles, was foreseen by some who deprecated that awful event.

“Yes, it is at the king,”—said Father Beauregard—“at the king, and at religion that the philosophers aim their blows. They have grasped the hatchet and the hammer; they only want the favourable moment to overturn the altar and the throne.—Yes, my God! thy temples will be plundered and destroyed; thy festivals abolished; thy sacred name blasphemed; thy worship proscribed. But what sounds, great God, do I hear! To the sacred canticles which caused the vaults of this temple to resound with thy praise, succeed wanton and profane songs. And thou, infamous deity of paganism, impure Venus, even thou darest advance hither, and audaciously, in the place of the living God, seat thyself upon the throne of the holy of holies, and there receive the guilty incense of thy new adorers.”

So literally was this prediction fulfilled, that in the same Cathedral, about sixteen years after, the ignorant and wicked disciples of the philosophers worshipped the goddess of nature in the person of a naked common prostitute.—It was amidst the cries of liberty, equality, or death, and during the opinion that “death was an eternal sleep,” that the prophetic exclamation of Father Beauregard was fulfilled to the very letter. In that very metropolitan church of Notre Dame, was a naked prostitute invested with the title of “goddess of nature,” by a wretched rabble who had driven the philosophers from their seats, the king from his throne, and would have expelled virtue from the face of the earth. See Dr. ADAM SMITH’S *Wealth of Nations*, Vol. I. p. 19—29.

bours might produce alarm and consternation in others, yet they durst not interfere, lest they themselves should suffer the same fate. It was thought that some of the houses still shut up, had their walls marked with the blood of the victims.

On Monday, a more particular survey of the city was made; when, from the few persons seen in the streets, it appeared far from being populous; and probably not more than two-thirds of the houses were inhabited. A kind of melancholy seemed to sit on the countenances of the citizens; who appeared inactive for want of sufficient motives to rouse their dormant energies. The market-place was visited by a few military men, and small groups of other persons. The shops seemed to contain but few articles of merchandize. Several booksellers were called upon, but not one of them possessed a complete copy of the Holy Scriptures; and only one had a few copies of the New Testament, in Latin. Some of them indeed did not appear to know the Scriptures; for when asked for them, they offered different religious books, and intimated that they knew nothing of any other.

From St. Omer, they travelled to Cassel, which, being a very elevated situation, commands an extensive prospect. On the road they saw several images on the walls of houses, which they imagined represented certain saints, who were deemed intercessors, and addressed by the respective families. They visited General Vandamme's house, and walked over the excellent grounds belonging to it: he

was expected to arrive at Paris in about a week. In the stables there were several fine horses, waiting his arrival at home. In his mansion the Cossacks found 50,000 francs, and plundered it of all its valuables; but did no injury to the inhabitants of the town. The people expressed a strong attachment to the English. At a barber's shop, near the church, two of Buonaparte's Eagles being perceived, were purchased of the owner.

On leaving Cassel, they proceeded to Dunkirk, and met with comfortable accommodations at the Hotel du Nord. The following morning, before breakfast, they visited the church, a part of which had been demolished by the English; so that a street was made between the tower and the body of it. On entering it, they saw several candles burning *en plein jour*, and some females at their devotions; while, on the right-hand, a female was sitting at a stall of candles, busy knitting, which gave an occasion for a *jeu d'esprit*. On visiting the booksellers' shops, they could not meet with a copy of the Holy Scriptures; but found several good books in English, which, from their appearance, had been long on hand.

From Dunkirk, they returned through Gravelines to Calais. Here they witnessed the ceremony, performed by the Mayor, *gens de guerre*, *gens de condition*, laying a stone, with an inscription on it, opposite to that part of the pier where Louis XVIII. landed, when on his way from England to the throne of his ancestors. The shape of the king's foot had previously been cut in the flag on

the pier, where he set it on leaving the ship and going on shore.

The market-place, on certain days of the week, presented a very interesting scene, abounding with provisions of all sorts, and at remarkably low prices. But one description of articles on sale was preferable to all the rest: copies of the New Testament, sent from England, were exhibited on several stalls! Not exposed by regular booksellers only, but by others, dealing in a diversity of commodities. Thus persons coming from the country, or residing in the town, had the Scriptures presented to their notice: an effect produced by the operation of that God-like institution, the British and Foreign Bible Society!\*

The parents of the subject of these Memoirs, who expected this tour would have had a good effect on his health, towards the end of the journey found that the fatigue of travelling and heat of the weather, had produced in him considerable lassitude and languor. After resting a few days, his father having engaged lodgings at Arque, near St. Omer, the son, his mother, and Mrs. Willmott, in company with Major Stuart, proceeded in the packet for that village; and he returned home with Captain Willmott, to attend to the duties of his pastoral office.

\* A pious military officer, averred to the Rev. WILLIAM PALMER about thirty years ago, that, while on a tour in France, he saw several persons of the Roman Catholic persuasion burned to death, for no other offence than that of having the Holy Scriptures found upon them. What a pleasing contrast!

France was now viewed in a new light, and the arrival of a letter from that country was anticipated with considerable solicitude. In a few days the following came to hand.

“ *Arque, Sept. 3, 1814.* ”

“ My dear Father,

“ We arrived here on Monday morning, being obliged to stay all Sunday night in St. Omer. The packet did not get in till dark, and on account of the barriers being shut, no conveyance whatever could we procure: and if it had not been for the polite attention of Major Stuart, our embarrassments would have been much greater. He, his lady and daughter, residing at St. Omer, have favoured us with a visit. Our landlady is remarkably clean; she rises at five o'clock in the morning, and retires at nine at night. Recently, a number of soldiers, as they passed through St. Omer, cried, *Vive l'Empereur!* The military seem attached to Buonaparte, and often say, “ Long live the Emperor, and the Bourbons for three days ! ” The servant of this house calls out the same, and the mistress has two casts of his face and body. Twelve months ago there was not a man resided in this village. The women, I understand, were used brutally by the Prussian soldiers, who remained here some time. They turned them out of their beds, &c. into the street, and occupied their houses.

“ We shall expect an immediate answer, and that you will inform us of your voyage, and of every particular since your landing on English ground.

England is far before France: I wish we were safe in Deptford. The wickedness of the people here disgusts me much. The first thing they do on a Sunday morning is to salute the image of the Virgin Mary, when they suppose she makes them promise to spend all the money they have at the approaching fair, and dance, and sing, &c. I wish there was a Protestant chapel here. I find that I am going backwards instead of forwards with respect to my soul.

“ There is no post at Arque. The farmers inquire for their letters once a week at St. Omer. Major Stuart informed us of this, and was kind enough to remedy the inconvenience, by allowing our letters to be directed to his care. He receives his every day, and will either send or bring ours himself as soon as they come to hand.”

“ *St. Omer, Sept. 12, 1814.*

“ My dear Father,

“ Your letter I duly received: it gave us all that pleasure which it is not in the power of man to describe. There is not one ass that has a colt in this neighbourhood, so I can get no milk.

“ The great fair began at Arque, as usual, on Sunday.\* My mother and Mrs. Willmott, excited

\* In the *sixth* century, the Christian Sabbath began to be greatly neglected in FRANCE; also the nation at the same time suffered very considerably from an invading enemy. A council was summoned, in which the strict observance of the Lord's Day was strongly recommended; and, among other things, the members gave it as their

by curiosity, walked through it: I did not. Thousands and thousands of people came to it from all the adjacent parts. There were mountebanks, stalls of fruit in abundance, and dances, as well as drinking and smoking. In our back yard, people played at skittles, and in the house at cards. It presented a most awful sight! They smoked to such a degree the last night, that I never slept, but coughed incessantly till morning; when I could scarcely move, on account of the violence of a pain in my side. I thought I must have been bled and blistered. However, we procured an ass to take me to St. Omer, where I am at present, at the house of Monsieur de Croix. I thank God, I am better since I came hither.

“ Since I left Arque, there has been a battle between some soldiers and peasants, in an hotel there—the cause was a girl—the result, the death of two soldiers, and several wounded. The soldiers fought with their drawn swords, and the peasants with pots, glasses, tables, chairs, &c.

“ The fair lasts five days, and then, on the Sunday following, they finish it with a great entertainment. The inhabitants of the village work like

unanimous opinion, that the profanation of the Sabbath had brought upon the nation the many and sore calamities it then laboured under. It would be well, if the present inhabitants of that unhappy country, would now recognise the existence of the same evil, as connected with the judgments inflicted upon them, and pursue similar measures of *confession* and *reform*!



slaves, and live on two meals a day, saving all the money they can till this feast, when they spend every *sous*. In short, Arque is a little hell. We all long to tread British ground. We intend fully returning with the Captain, for we are miserable here.

“ In this house, where I now live, besides father and mother, there are five daughters and a son. They cannot speak a word of English. They are, what is called in France, a pious family: notwithstanding which, immediately after dinner on a Sunday, the children play at something like dice.

“ Children in France live very abstemiously; they eat vegetables and dry bread. In this house they take one cup of coffee after dinner. They never have tea; and for supper take one cold roasted apple and a piece of bread and butter.

“ Bernadotte was once a barber in this town; so I am told by an attorney who lives next door, and knew him.”

In the last letter his father wrote, he expressed a wish, if consonant with the feelings and views of his afflicted son, that he would spend the winter in the South of France. However, he declined any further trial of the salubrious air of that country, the interests of his soul having the preponderance in his mind; and on Sunday night, September 25, arrived at Deptford.

He appeared now more reduced than when he left Kent: the means employed having been at-

tended with no salutary effect. However, deep seriousness was evidently depicted in his countenance, he being much concerned about the salvation of his soul. On being interrogated respecting the state of his mind, during his residence in France, he replied, "I found a great want of prayer there: I should have experienced the blessing of pardon by this time, had I been at home." The use of the appointed means of grace is necessary, to promote spiritual improvement; and intercourse with pious Christians, is a valuable privilege. Sick persons visiting distant places for the benefit of their health, are in considerable danger of suffering loss concerning their souls. Great caution is necessary in new situations, especially where the people are living without the fear of God, regard for the Christian Sabbath, and attention to divine worship.

A few days after his return from France, being seized rather violently with his bowel complaint, he was much alarmed respecting his eternal concerns. Being under the weight of guilt, he was unprepared to meet God; and feeling the sting of death, he dreaded its approach. He hated sin, and was truly humbled on account of his past transgressions, which effects were produced by the operation of divine grace upon his heart; but being, at the same time, a stranger to inward peace, and confidence in God as reconciled to him through the blood of Christ, death assumed a formidable aspect, and eternity presented nothing but what administered terror to his imagination.

“ Faith builds a bridge across the gulph of death,  
 To break the shock blind nature cannot shun,  
 And lands thought smoothly on the farther shore.  
 Death’s terror is the mountain *Faith* removes ;  
 That mountain-barrier between man and peace.  
 ’Tis *Faith* disarms destruction ; and absolves  
 From ev’ry clam’rous charge the guiltless tomb.”

But not having this *faith*, he was surrounded with darkness, and the subject of tormenting fear.

Being anxious to obtain knowledge of divine things, a part of the Rev. John Fletcher’s “ Appeal to Matter of Fact,” was read to him : after listening with serious attention, he expressed his approbation of the work, by saying, “ I never before heard the fallen state of human nature so clearly described ;” and intimated, that the language was excellent. Soon after, at his request, his cousin, Miss Ann Wood, read to him Mr. Fletcher’s admirable “ Address to such as inquire, What must we do to be saved ?” This was indeed seasonable ! never was food more suitable for a hungry man, than this “ Address” was adapted to the state of his mind. Being graciously prepared to receive its affectionate appeals to the heart and encouraging exhortations, the effect produced was discoverable in an observation made by him : “ How very plain and pointed the pious and amiable Author is ! I think that work worthy to be written in letters of gold !”

About this time, being in a reclining posture, it was intimated that he lay uneasy. He replied, “ I shall soon have an easier bed of rest :” thus expli-

citly asserting his approaching dissolution. Understanding the animal economy, he had but too evident proof that his system was rapidly declining. The great change in his appearance, being contrasted with his blooming countenance and active vigour in October, 1813, he replied, "Yes; but I prefer my present state of health, and the relish I have for divine things, to my former strength of body, and ignorance of the way of salvation."

A short season after this, at an early hour, he was in an agony, both of body and mind. He thus describes it: "I cannot express what I felt. I thought, how miserable I should be, if, after all, I should be refused admittance into heaven." When heaven is anxiously desired, in connexion with remission of sins, and holiness of heart, there is every prospect that it will be obtained. That glorious abode is the inheritance of *saints* only, entailed on them alone that are *accepted* in the Beloved, and *sanctified* by the Spirit of truth and holiness. Men of impure minds sometimes contemplate heaven merely as a refuge from hell, and express a desire to dwell there after this life, from a wish to escape that punishment to which their sins expose them in a future state. But if it were possible that such persons could gain admittance into heaven, without the requisite qualification of holiness, they would then be incapable of living there with any satisfaction. It would be a prison to them, and all its glorious realities would act upon their unregenerate hearts as so many inexpressible torments. The awful disparity between the ob-

jects and faculties, would render the celestial world a scene of perplexity and torture; the society, employments, and happiness, being excessively disagreeable to human nature while in a depraved state.

On relating his painful solicitude respecting future blessedness, he was asked, Do you find no ray of hope in the Scriptures? He replied, "There are many passages, the meaning of which I do not comprehend." In the spirit of genuine simplicity, he frequently asked for the explication of certain passages, particularly in Isaiah, the prophecies of whom he was peculiarly fond of reading. He made anxious inquiry concerning *faith*, this being prominently exhibited in the Scriptures, and enforced by the most powerful motives. Perceiving that salvation is connected with faith, he wished by this means to obtain that valuable end. Saving faith is not merely an *act of the understanding*, but a right *disposition of the will* effected by the operation of the Holy Spirit, receiving and embracing the Lord Jesus Christ, and outwardly evidenced by obeying his righteous commands, as well as imitating his perfect example. This faith is the spring and principle of divine life in the soul, and designed to support and invigorate all the other Christian graces. It is certain, that all *moral duties* have the most firm and lasting foundation, when they are built upon a belief of the distinguished *doctrines of Christianity*; and are most likely to be regarded, when recommended on *christian principles*, and enforced by *christian motives*.

Infidels treat *faith in Christ* as an unnecessary thing: they imagine that what they call natural religion is sufficient for salvation; and, therefore, by their scheme, endeavour entirely to supercede the Gospel. Let us suppose, however, for the sake of argument, that, in such a country as this, the main branches of our duty to God and man are discernible by the light of reason: yet, are they so where the light of divine revelation never imparted its glorious rays? Have not deists adjusted, refined, and improved their notions of morality, by the Christian revelation? And is it honourable in them to resist a system of religious truth, from which they have derived so many benefits? But whatever notions of morality modern infidels may pretend to have, it is evident that very few, if any of them, after renouncing the Scriptures, conscientiously regard the duties of either table of the Law. Nay, it is certain that they generally, when divested of the restraints of the Christian religion, run to the utmost lengths of licentiousness and immorality.\* If we could suppose that our obe-

\* *Bishop HORNE*, in his Sermon on Psal. xxxiv. 11, mentions the following fact, as related by *Davies* in his *Life of Garrick*. A servant, who had made the improvement that might be expected from hearing the irreligious and blasphemous conversation continually passing at the late *Mr. Mallet's* table, where it was his place to wait, took an opportunity to rob his master. Being apprehended, and urged to give a reason for this infamous behaviour, "Sir," said he, "I had heard you so often talk of the impossibility of a future state, and that after death there was no reward for virtue, nor punishment for vice, that I was

dience is equal to the requirements of the moral law, then, in that case, the whole complexion of religious obligation would assume a different aspect. But, as we have forfeited all just claim to the favour of God, and eternal life, he may certainly dispense mercy on such terms as he judges honourable to his own infinite perfections! And, as he has appointed that we should approach him, only in and through the Lord Jesus Christ, also given us an undeniable evidence of such appointment, how can we hope for acceptance any other way? If we were truly sensible of the vast importance of our own salvation, we should humbly and thankfully receive it on those terms; especially as we are assured, that, if we do not, our unbelief and disobedience will be deemed such an affront offered to divine wisdom and goodness, as will inevitably expose us to the terrible resentments of inflexible justice.

One morning, between the hours of three and six or seven o'clock, he perused fourteen chapters of Isaiah. He read and prayed much in the night season. Being apprehensive that his time was short, he attached a great importance to the fleeting moments, endeavouring to improve them as they passed away, in acquiring religious knowledge,

tempted to commit the robbery." "Well but," replied the master, "had you no fear of that death which the laws of your country inflict upon the crime?" "Sir," rejoined the servant, looking sternly at his master, "what is that to you, if I had a mind to venture that? You had removed my greatest terror; why should I fear the less?"

and seeking the favour of God. Time should always be rated according to its uncertainty, and the importance of the work we have to perform while it lasts. Were that the case, early rising would be more frequent, and salvation more speedily secured. Sleep, though necessary, should not be indulged to excess. A person who sleeps eight hours in twenty-four, lies in the image of death twenty years in sixty: the right consideration of which greatly affects a reflecting mind.\* Morning devotion is very beneficial. The mind is calm, and free from distraction. God owns an early hour: hence we should cheerfully and regularly consecrate it to his service.

Arise my soul! 'tis God commands—  
 And work with head, and heart, and hands;  
 Let all thy powers in worship join,  
 And all thy service be divine.

Obedient bow before thy Lord,  
 And search with care his written word:  
 Gain understanding from above,  
 And largely share the life of love.

Thy various duties to fulfil,  
 And answer all thy Saviour's will,  
 In active toil thy moments spend,  
 Till action in reward shall end.

\* "In every year there are 8766 hours. If we allow the greatest half for sleep, and necessary attendance on the body, and take but 4000 hours for our work and business of consequence, how poor an account can most men give of all these 4000 hours in every year! Not one hour in *seven*, not one in *ten*, is ordinarily devoted to God and the purposes of religion."—SHOWER on Time and Eternity.



In the exercises of reading the Scriptures, meditation, and prayer, powerful impressions are made upon the mind, invaluable blessings received, and beneficial effects follow.

While the family was at the chapel one evening, he was seized with a difficulty in breathing, and a violent fit of coughing: when, on his cousin expressing her fears that he was worse, he said, "I am very ill. If God would only pardon my sins, I should not care how soon he took me to himself." She asked, Have you no desire to recover? He replied, "If I have, it is for the sake of the family!" Nature, when oppressed with a load of affliction, under which it is sinking down into the grave, may claim the privilege of intimating a wish to be released: but this desire of death, probably, is only lawful, when a person has reason to apprehend his usefulness is at an end, and that he can be no longer serviceable to God and his generation; and, even in that case, it must be attended with entire submission. It is not more natural to fear death, than it is to desire the period of suffering.

On Sunday, Oct. 23, he was much engaged in the contemplation and pursuit of divine things. Being secluded from public worship, his views of it coincided exactly with those of the Psalmist, when an exile: "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts!" A particular subject impressing his mind, he said, "I should like to hear my father preach from these words, 'Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.'" On a difficulty being sug-

gested, he attempted to remove it, by saying, "I might sit in the vestry, and have a fire."

The same evening, while attending family worship, he was much affected, and wept considerably. The languishing state of his health excited a painful feeling of sympathy in those present, and a regard for his spiritual welfare increased into a most anxious concern. Prayer was the result of powerful emotions, the warmth of glowing ardour kindled by a coal from the heavenly altar, and accompanied with the voice of sighing grief, and the meltings of copious tears. His soul appeared as in a state of convulsive agony, deeply penetrated with the arrows of the Almighty, and painfully struggling for life and peace. An expectation was entertained that he would then enter in at the door of mercy, and taste that the Lord is gracious. However, though he was so much affected, he did not receive a sense of pardon.

Maintaining his pursuit for salvation, he requested his cousin to read several chapters in Isaiah. The promises held out in the Scripture to sincere penitents arrested his attention, and, for some time, were the subject of conversation. He viewed these as containing the blessings he wanted; and considering them as having the veracity of God for their support, he was much encouraged to look for their accomplishment. He said, "I never expect to recover." On her asserting, that all things are possible with God, and that, perhaps, when made happy, he would restore him to health, he replied, "I feel, and have done for some time, that, re-

specting my recovery, I can say, *Thy will be done*; but I ardently wish to know my sins forgiven." This was the evening preceding his birth-day. He frequently expressed an expectation, that, during this month, he would probably become the subject of a spiritual birth. On her saying, Only believe, and yours is heaven; he answered, "I do not doubt the willingness of Christ to save; but I do not know *how* to believe." Though he understood the mediatorial character of Christ, and had a lively conviction of the necessity of receiving remission of sins through his blood, yet he was much perplexed respecting the way of faith, or how to believe so as to obtain salvation. She asked, Have you given up all that would prevent your receiving Christ? He replied, "Yes: I feel a want of the pardon of my sins above every other thing." And he earnestly sought this blessing with many tears.

One day, continuing in bed rather longer than usual, his mother went into his room, where she found him weeping very much, so that he had literally "watered his couch with his tears." His Bible and Hymn-Book were laid beside him: these he consulted as his counsellors in retirement, and used in aid of devotional exercises.

A penitent, in reading the Sacred Volume, has an eye chiefly to Christ, its most prominent subject. The Scriptures are emphatically a revelation of Christ, who is the way without error, the truth without falsehood, and the life without death. They testify of the dignity of his person—the greatness of his love—the merit of his death—the prevalence

of his intercession—the efficacy of his grace—the freeness of his salvation—the extent of his dominion—and the durability of his kingdom; which are points peculiarly interesting to a person convinced of sin, and earnestly seeking to obtain mercy. We should highly value the Scriptures, read and meditate on them, that we may get acquainted with the glorious excellencies of Christ, the nature and magnitude of his undertaking, the beneficial results of his performances, the relations he bears to fallen man, and his suitableness in all things to our condition. To be duly instructed in the whole method of human redemption by him, and the way of eternal life through him, is an attainment of vast importance. The “Holy Scriptures are able to make us wise unto salvation,” but it is only “through faith in Jesus Christ” that they are so. Their energy is the effect of divine operation: by means of the Word, God enlightens, quickens, regenerates, and renews sinners. “Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth.” “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.” It is thus that the Scriptures are rendered “spirit and life,” and made “the power of God to salvation.”

Towards the beginning of November, the Rev. Joseph Taylor, from Canterbury, called, and, being introduced, had a conversation with him. Mr. Taylor, in a letter to his father, thus describes it. “I felt for him as soon as I saw him, and secretly wished for a private interview. Finding that he

himself desired it, pleased me much. When with him alone in his room, I found his mind open, and his heart tender. He told me how he was, and wept while telling me. In prayer, his mind and heart were engaged. He wished me to call again soon, and told me that he wanted to feel always what he felt sometimes. We both were affected so as to be scarcely able to speak, and parted hoping to have another affectionate interview on earth."

Nov. 11. He went to London with his father, to consult Dr. Hamilton. On his return, his mother requesting to know the result, he replied, "The Doctor informs me, I am more likely for death than life." In the Journal of his health, he has this note—"Dr. Hamilton gives me more spiritual advice than medical." Well it is for a patient when his Physician fears God, and gives suitable advice respecting the soul as well as the body! He is indeed a Physician of great value. At all events, when a Practitioner is aware that the disease of his patient will soon terminate in death, he should at least communicate information of this, to prevent the influence of a delusive hope of recovery, and, which is frequently connected with it, neglect of preparing for a better world.\*

\* A Minister of Jesus Christ, well acquainted with the circumstances of a recent fact, very unlike the conduct above stated, has transmitted to the Author the following account.—A Gentleman of the corporation of —, when upon his death-bed, requested the attendance of the *Rev.* Mr. R. a pious clergyman of the Establishment, to give him instruction and assist his devotion. While Mr. R. was en-

Nov. 12. From this day he never left his room; and, being much alone, had time for private meditation, and other religious exercises, which he assiduously improved. He entered on retirement with

gaged in this important work, and performing it in a faithful and conscientious manner, by shewing him the necessity of evangelical repentance, and pointing him to "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world," his Physicians were announced. Instead of conducting themselves with decorum on so solemn an occasion, they expressed their astonishment at Mr. R. for intermeddling with their patient! After this worthy minister had withdrawn, these medical practitioners assured the dying gentleman, that they had no doubt he would do very well, that he had lived a sober and honest life, and that there was no necessity for him to discompose and distress his mind. When leaving the house, one of them was heard to say to the other, "Poor d—v—l, it is almost over with him!" *Les murailles ont des oreilles.*

The writer of a paper, inserted in a popular periodical work, observes—The want of piety in the medical profession has almost become proverbial, both in ancient and modern times. This is the more to be regretted, considering the abundant opportunities which those in this profession enjoy. Some happy exceptions have, however, been made by the grace of God.—Within a short time, the pleasing intelligence has been received, that no fewer than 18 medical students, in the college of Edinburgh, have formed themselves into a praying-society. What a large prospect of usefulness is thus presented!

*Evangelical Magazine, June, 1815.*

The Author has been credibly informed, that Dr. OLINTHUS GREGORY'S very excellent "Letters on the Evidences, Doctrines, and Duties of the Christian Religion," have had a most salutary effect on the minds of several young medical students in that city.

a view to his spiritual improvement; though recommended by his Physician, to secure a proper temperature of air. In this seclusion he could truly say,

“ I'll spend the silent hours in vows to thee,  
 Nothing shall come betwixt my God and me.  
 No other image shall my soul employ,  
 No earthly pleasure, no unholy joy.  
 From all the charms of sensual objects free,  
 My spirit disengag'd shall spring to thee.  
 The whole creation I at once resign,  
 I ask no more, be thou, great God, but mine!  
 'Tis thou alone shalt fill my thoughts, to thee  
 All my desire in its full height shall be.  
 Be thou my portion, my eternal lot,  
 And be the world in every form forgot!  
 In silence, undisturb'd with pomp and noise,  
 Let me be swallow'd in immortal joys;  
 Full in my view place all the bliss above,  
 The scenes of pleasure and eternal love;  
 From op'ning heav'ns let streaming glories shine,  
 And thy sweet whispers tell me thou art mine!”

Nov. 13. He says—“ I have found my mind much refreshed by reading Mr. Stevens's Life, in the November Magazine; as well as Brooks's Precious Remedies against Satan's Devices.” On being asked, if he was advancing in divine things? he answered, “ I do not feel at this present time so earnest altogether as I was a short time ago.” On an intimation being given, that, probably, the confinement was injurious to his mind, he replied, “ Oh no, the different transactions which so very regularly transpire, make the time pass sweetly and much too soon away.” He read several parts of

the Rev. John Newton's Works, and was well pleased with some of his Hymns; particularly the candid manner in which he has published to the world, what a sinner he was previously to his becoming religious.\*

He was generally much affected when family worship was conducted in his room, as well as when his father prayed with him alone. Nov. 14, he says—"My father had prayer in my room this morning, and sung *a couple of sweet verses.*" His face was often bathed in tears on such occasions. Peculiar liberty in prayer was experienced by those who engaged in that solemn duty. With an eye to this, Nov. 16, he says, "My father prayed in the morning in earnest."

Mr. Jennings favoured him with several calls, for which he was very thankful. Nov. 19. He observes,

\* The following remarkable instance of the christian humility of the late excellent Minister of St. Mary Woolnoth, was recently communicated to the author.—A young Clergyman, visiting the Rev. JOHN NEWTON when on his death-bed, expressed considerable regret at the prospect of losing so eminent a labourer in the Lord's vineyard. This venerable servant of God replied, "I am going before you: you will come after me by and by: when you arrive, old acquaintance will lead you to inquire for me; and I will tell you, the most likely place to find me, will be *at the feet of the thief of the cross!*" Surely he had learned this important lesson at the same school, in which St. Paul was instructed, who says, "I am less than the least of all saints," and, respecting sinners, "I am the chief." In the view, esteem, attachment, and pursuit of a real Christian, CHRIST IS ALL!



“ Mr. Jennings came to see me, and exhorted and prayed with me.” Though much engaged in commercial transactions, yet, prompted by motives of benevolence and usefulness, he repeatedly devoted an hour to this labour of love. The introduction of an intelligent, judicious, and pious friend, to a person penitent and in a dying condition, is highly expedient, and attended with beneficial results: also his prayers and advices so afforded, serve afterwards to excite a grateful recollection in the minds of survivors.

Nov. 20, was a season of peculiar interest. The operations of divine grace upon the human heart are progressive. In proportion as divine light shines into it, and the renovating principle prevails, the voice of conviction is heard, and the duty of obedience secured. Then evil habits are subdued, improper attachments relinquished, and all impediments in the way to salvation surmounted. This is a period of manly decision and christian conquest. After remarking, “ My father prayed and sung with me,” he adds, “ This day I make a sacrifice of every thing to God !” Here was a triumph of grace over nature ! Every thing was laid down at the foot of the cross !

He went on much in the same way, reading the Bible, Hymns, Mr. Fletcher’s Works, Baxter’s Practical Works, &c. &c. and weeping and praying, till Monday morning, Dec. 19, respecting which, in the Journal of his health, he says, “ A time ever to be remembered with gratitude to my Redeemer !” On the Sunday evening, his father preached on

those words, "Sirs, what shall I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." The subject very much excited his feelings, and the divine blessing rendered the Sermon useful to a large and serious congregation. Under the influence of the sentiments contained in that discourse, he, with his family, visited his son on the Monday morning. While engaged in prayer, the Spirit of supplication in an unusual manner was given. Tears and sighs, became powerful advocates for the soul of a returning penitent; while he wrestled in prayer, and wept aloud in an agony of distress. Prayer was protracted to a considerable length, for all present seemed determined not to let the Lord go without a blessing. The season was truly consecrated from above. Faith, mighty faith was called into exercise, and the same Lord Jesus Christ, who saved the jailor, was graciously and powerfully present. As soon as the family had retired, and while his father, who continued with him, was exhorting him to look to Christ for present salvation, the Spirit of faith was imparted, and he instantly, with ravished eyes, and glory beaming in his countenance, exclaimed, "Father, I do believe that Christ will save me! He *does* save me! I do believe, Father, I do believe! Bless the Lord, O my soul! Christ is mine, and I am his! My sins are all forgiven, freely forgiven for Christ's sake!" His inward experience bore ample testimony to the truth of those words of the Apostle, "There is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk

not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Tears of joy streamed down his pale cheeks, while his tongue was astonishingly eloquent in rapidly uttering the loving-kindness of his God.

" Touch'd by the cross, we live, or *more* than die ;  
That touch, with charms celestial, heals the soul  
Diseas'd, drives pain from guilt, lights life in death,  
Turns earth to heaven, to heavenly thrones transforms  
The ghastly ruins of the mould'ring tomb."

His conceptions of Christ were greatly enlarged, and redemption, through his blood, occupied his whole heart.

In a short time afterwards, he sent for his sister Eleanora, who possessed faith in Christ before him, and in a rapture of joy exclaimed, " Eleanora, we shall all meet in heaven now !" His sister attended him during his breakfast, when his divine consolation was so great, that he continued in the delightful exercise of blessing and praising God. This extacy of joy remained for hours. On his mother going into the room, he saluted her ; and on her saying, You now view the world and things in a different light : he replied, " I have long done that."

That evening he requested his sister and cousin, to take tea with him in his room. His cousin congratulating him on being exalted to the dignity of a child of God, and made an heir of the inheritance of the saints in light, he shook hands with her, and burst into tears of joy. " Bless God ! Bless the Lord !" he frequently repeated, adding, " This is

the happiest day of my life." He joyfully participated in the rich blessings emphatically expressed by the evangelical Prophet as peculiar to the Gospel dispensation—"O Lord, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortest me. Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation." During tea, he referred to several Hymns he thought excellent, and which he desired to be read. He conversed much on the mercy and goodness of God: remarking, "With what freedom can Christians converse together on the love of God!" and, "What a glorious place heaven must be, where the inhabitants are all holy!"

Concerning what had happened in the morning, he said, "During prayer, I pleaded and wept till I could weep no longer; and, after the family, with the exception of my father, had left the room, I instantly was enabled to believe. I always was much attached to him, but now his presence does me good. He is almost more than human to me. Now his prayers are answered in part. He has done every thing in his power for me: he could do no more." He blessed God several times for his affliction, and said, "I have now no fear of dying!" Evinced the genuine spirit of gospel simplicity, humble and artless as a little child, he observed, "I must now go on till I am made entirely holy, and I hope God will not suffer the enemy to tempt me. My father tells me, I am but

now beginning to enjoy the divine life." He perceived a difference between the removal of guilt from the conscience, by the virtual application of the atoning blood of Christ; and being "sanctified wholly," by the energy of the Holy Spirit.\*

\* ARCHBISHOP USHER, the year before he died, said to a friend, "I must tell you, we do not understand what *sanctification* and the *new creature* are; it is no less than for a man to be brought to an entire resignation of his will to the will of God, and to live in the offering up of his soul continually in the flames of love, as a whole burnt offering to Christ; and how little (said he) are many of those who profess Christianity, experimentally acquainted with this work on their souls."

HAMMOND, in his "Marrow of the Church," says, "I would advise persons to be cautious of confining the Spirit to primitive times, lest they confine heaven to primitive times, and so miss of it themselves; for, indeed, there is no going to heaven without receiving the Holy Spirit.

"The principal difference between Heathen morality and vital Christianity, I take to be this; the one is the effect of natural reason refined, the other is the work of the Holy Spirit in the soul.

"The denial of the possibility of feeling the comforts of the Holy Spirit, is not only unscriptural, but also unphilosophical. The soul is the seat of life and perception in man, and by consequence must itself be endued with sensibility and perceptibility; if therefore God is pleased to make any impressions of pleasure or comfort upon the soul, the soul will have a real sense and perception thereof. But how irrational, as well as irreligious, is it to assert, that the soul is the spring and source of all sensation and perception, but yet incapable of feeling divine joys and spiritual consolations! It is true indeed, spiritual sensation or feeling is as different from bodily, as the soul is from the body, nevertheless the one is as real as the other."

He asked his cousin, if she had read his father's publication, entitled, "A Letter to the Rev. John Grundy, containing Strictures on a Sermon delivered by him before an Assembly of Unitarian Ministers, at the Unitarian Chapel, in Lincoln?" \* He read a part of it, which he said had given him considerable light on the doctrine of the Trinity, and had proved of great benefit to him. His master, Mr. Gibson, had read this pamphlet several times, and as frequently sent his thanks to the author, saying, He had derived considerable advantage from it: which might be an inducement to his pupil, especially when under divine impressions, to peruse it with particular attention. The doctrine of a Trinity in Unity forms the basis upon which the whole system of Christianity rests. Not that the economy of human redemption by Jesus Christ has given existence to this prime article of our faith; for the three Subsistencies in the Divine Nature, are the radical and essential constitution of the Godhead; but this leading truth gives to the religion we profess, all its impulsive power, characteristic importance, and restoring energy. To err, therefore, in this fundamental truth, would be as injurious to piety, as laying the foundation of a house upon the sand, would be destructive of its superstructure.

The happiness he enjoyed was such, as the words of our Saviour, spoken to the woman of Samaria,

\* His father wrote this Letter at the solicitation of a worthy friend, a Clergyman of the Church of England; a second edition of which has been published.

at Jacob's Well, very significantly express. "Who-soever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst: but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." He could not suppress his feelings, and said, "Oh, how happy I am!" and burst into tears: adding, "How instantaneous the change was!" On receiving the Spirit of wisdom, and revelation in the knowledge of Christ, he entered fully into the spirituality and benevolence of the Gospel, and consecrated all his powers to God. He said, "I thought this morning, that I should prefer being a Minister to my own profession." It is not unusual for new converts, even to imagine that they are called to be preachers of righteousness. Though no one who has not the love of Christ in his heart, is properly qualified to preach the Gospel; yet every person enjoying this love is not called to fill the sacred office: there is a divine call to this work, distinct from Christian experience, though not separate from it.

He intimated, an idea had frequently impressed his mind, that the spirit of his late sister Maria was near him, and, to his imagination, fluttered around him as he lay in bed. We know very little of the laws and government of the other world. From the nature of spirits, we conclude they are active: and from the influence of holiness and love upon Christians in time, we are led to believe, that the souls of those who have departed this life, and are now with the Lord, are perpetually employed in worshipping him, and executing his commands.

If, therefore, any of these happy spirits should receive a commission to visit this world, they certainly would execute it with alacrity and delight; and, more especially, if directed to attend a relative, according to the flesh, who, being washed from all moral defilement in the blood of the Lamb, and, through the progress of disease, was just on the point of leaving time, and entering into a glorious eternity.

Dec. 20. Tuesday. This morning he informed his father, the effect produced on his mind, in consequence of believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, and receiving a sense of pardon and salvation through his blood, was such, that, if strength would permit, he could go through the streets of Deptford, and proclaim the happiness he enjoyed. He now expressed a desire to live, that he might make known to others what God had graciously done for him; again observing, "If God were to spare me, and restore me to health, I would be a Minister, and not a Surgeon." He enjoyed great peace and love.

In the evening, on being asked a question respecting the state of his mind, he replied, "Very happy:" and added, "I am writing to my friend Mr. Keeling: this will be good news for him." He requested to have read to him that Hymn,

"When quiet in my house I sit,  
 Thy book be my companion still;  
 My joy thy sayings to repeat,  
 Talk o'er the records of thy will:  
 And search the oracles divine,  
 Till every heart-felt word be mine."



The whole hymn was read, and several others. On hearing that Hymn which begins,

“ Happy the souls, that first believ’d,  
To Jesus and each other cleav’d;  
Join’d by the unction from above  
In mystic fellowship and love:”

He said, “ That is an excellent Hymn ! Frequently, before my conversion, when I read these Hymns, particularly those which treat on the happiness of a soul in the possession of the love of Jesus, I cannot express how I felt.” Putting his hand to his breast, he observed, “ Then I felt I had not happiness here.” When speaking of the goodness and mercy of God to him, with tears streaming from his eyes, he exclaimed, “ I cannot refrain from blessing and praising God for this instance of his loving kindness to me !\* He has completely removed the sting and fear of death from me !” A flood of tears prevented him from proceeding.

Dec. 21. Wednesday. To his father he mentioned the patience with which the Lord had blessed him; intimating that, in his present situation, he felt content, and saved from all murmuring. This state of mind was the pure result of divine operation; and without this, it can never be enjoyed. Human nature, unless assisted from above, is not competent patiently to endure the trials of life, and the sorrows of mortality. Patience supposes, that,

\* “ If,” said AUSTIN, “ the whole sea were ink, and every blade of grass a pen, we could not fully describe the love of Christ.”

in this world, we are in a state of suffering, but under the influence of a lively hope. If we had no evils to bear, there would be no need of this grace; and if there were no good in reversion, to be enjoyed after the termination of those evils, we could not exercise it. Patience is not a stupid insensibility to what befall us, as if all the passions of human nature were useless, or as if men were stoics, incapable of being impressed with the weight of afflictions: this would be to despise the chastening of the Lord. Nor is it a rash and daring hardness of spirit, that bids defiance to all evil, and is stubbornly resolute to withstand any calamity that may happen, as if we could force human nature to act contrary to its own laws: this would be to harden ourselves against God; and whoever did so, and prospered? Nor is Christian patience a mere natural fortitude of temper to bear up under oppressing circumstances; which is sometimes advantageous to men, and at other seasons attended with disadvantage, according as it is managed; this is not properly a virtue, but rather a mechanical effect of the natural constitution of the body, and of a peculiar construction of the animal spirits. Nor is Christian patience an heroic bravery, resulting from principles of philosophy, manhood, and honour, prompted by selfish pride, and fondness of applause among our fellow-creatures: this rises no higher than the splendid achievements of some of the heathens, while they were without Christ. Neither is Christian patience an enthusiastic resolution, as if there were a proper merit in suffering

and bearing afflictions: for this is no more than some persons of extravagant professions have been raised to, by the warmth of their own imaginations. But, genuine patience is a divine grace, implanted in the soul of a true Christian, by the Spirit of God, in the day of his regeneration, in the exercise of which he is enabled to bear with submission and composure heavy afflictions.

His cousin, Mr. Charles Wood, Solicitor, from Manchester, having arrived, he was much pleased to see him. They conversed on a variety of subjects. On Mr. Wood asking him some questions concerning France, he replied, "It is a wicked place," and shook his head. That country, as viewed through different mediums, assumes a diversity of colouring. When viewed in the light of divine revelation, it presents a vast desolation, effected by the triumphs of bold infidelity over evangelical truth, and blind superstition over enlightened reason.

Dec. 22. Thursday. He enjoyed sweet peace and divine consolation; and employed some hours in writing to a few of his relatives, feeling anxious to communicate to them tidings of what the Lord had done for his soul. He conversed much on several religious subjects. On his cousin, Miss Ann Wood, mentioning London as a situation many persons are attached to, he replied, "I wonder that any Christian should prefer such a place of bustle. Oh, how I should like a small house in the country, situated among a few Christian friends:" and intimated, that, if he should be re-

stored, he would live a retired life. When enjoying health, and destitute of piety, he was partial to the variety and bustle of a town; but now, his disposition and views being entirely changed, he much preferred the sweets of solitude, and intercourse with God.

On his father passing by the door of his room, he remarked, "My father now comes to see me with very great pleasure. It was a good thing for us children, that he ever became a Minister of the Gospel; for, if he had not been serious, he would have allowed his offspring to attend places of amusement, which might have been hurtful to their future happiness." He told his mother, with great frankness and heart-felt sorrow, that he had attended the theatre, and other places of fashionable resort; and acknowledged, how highly criminal he had been in having thus attempted to deceive his parents, and acting contrary to their prohibition. He considered himself, on that account, as very reprehensible; and severely censured such exhibitions, as destructive of the principles and morals of youth. Many Novels, Plays, and Romances, are so full of infernal poison, written with so much subtilty, painting the worst vices in the most pleasing colours, that they seem to have been inspired by the great deceiver and enemy of mankind. How dangerous then must it be to see these represented, when rendered engaging by soft music, beautiful scenery, pleasant voices, and a just and agreeable action! These things dissolving the mind in pleasure, leave it quite unguarded; and the fatal poi-

son entering at every sense, diffuses itself through the whole soul. Persons so affected, are indisposed for the duties of the closet, and the house of God; and many, to quiet their consciences, or render their hearts callous, as a *dernier* resort, have attempted to take refuge in the dogmas of infidelity, and horrors of scepticism.\*

Dec. 23. Friday. After family prayer in the morning, he observed to his father, "If my strength

\* The late Rev. JAMES HERVEY being one day on a journey, a lady, who happened to be in the same carriage with him, was expatiating in a very particular manner on the amusements of the stage, as being, in her esteem, superior to any other pleasures. Among other things she said—there was a pleasure in thinking on the play, before she went; the pleasure she enjoyed when there; and the pleasure of ruminating on it, when in her bed at night. Mr. HERVEY, (who sat, and heard her discourse without interrupting her) when she had concluded, said to her, in a mild manner, that there was one pleasure more, besides what she had mentioned, that she had forgotten. What can that be? said she, for sure I included every pleasure, when I have considered the enjoyment before-hand—at the time—and afterwards. Pray, Sir, what is it? To which Mr. HERVEY, with a grave look, and in a manner peculiar to himself, answered, "Madam, it is the pleasure it will afford you on a death-bed." A clap of thunder, or a flash of lightning, could not have struck her with more surprize. The stroke went to her very heart; and she had not one word more to say, but seemed quite occupied in thinking on his words. In short, the consequence of that well-timed word was, that she never went any more to the play-house, but became a pious woman, and a follower of those pleasures which would afford her satisfaction on her "death-bed."

had been sufficient, I should have disturbed you in the night, by praising God. My soul was inexpressibly happy: bless the Lord!\* I have such power, that I could talk to any one on divine things: all shame is gone. I often think that God has answered your prayers for me." Such, indeed, was the religion of the first Christians, which rendered them undaunted in the service of God, and fearless of the persecuting rage of their enemies.

Having written part of a letter to a highly esteemed relative at Manchester, he said to his cousin, "I cannot dictate in form, I must now write the sentiments of my heart freely." She intimating her intention to write to a brother and sister, he said, "Do, and tell them this glorious news, which surely will do them good. Tell them also, they have a father and a mother in heaven; as well as a brother: this will, I know by experience, touch them to the quick. It did me, I could not withstand it."

He talked much on the impropriety of believers intermixing with the people of the world, particu-

\* The late Rev. Dr. BUCHANAN, for whose extensive travels and literary productions, the Christian world has often expressed its gratitude, in the latter part of the year 1792, acknowledged to a friend, that he had been in great heaviness through the former part of the year; but recently it had pleased the Lord to reveal to him more of Christ than he had ever before experienced, insomuch as for some nights to interrupt his sleep, and to give a tincture to his dreams. This testimony, from such a man, in favour of the manifestation of Christ to the soul of a Christian believer, is highly important!

larly those who are weak in faith. This sort of conduct is highly imprudent, and has often been attended with injurious consequences. Experimental religion draws a line between real Christians and unconverted persons; and, when any pass over it, they venture upon unhallowed ground. Pious persons are authorized to follow Divine Providence any where, and may then look up with confidence for protection and support: but, if, of their own accord, they should make the ungodly their associates, they would soon imbibe their spirit, and resemble them in their actions.

Prayer being peculiarly his delight, he said, "Every time my father prays with me, I feel a rapture of joy, and a renewal of my happiness." On his cousin saying, that, as his father would be at Woolwich on Sunday, during his absence Mr. Palmer could pray with him: he replied, "Yes, for I have not much strength to pray. Mr. Palmer is a good man, and I like him to converse with me alone. I frequently offer up short prayers to heaven, and pour out my soul in ejaculations while I am sitting on my chair: Mr. Taylor requested me to do so."

Dec. 24. Saturday. This morning his countenance was a faithful index of the serenity and happiness of his mind. He conversed much respecting his late gracious change, saying, "How good the Lord has been to me in sparing me so long, while many are launched into the eternal world, with little or no affliction. Bless his holy name; I never expected to see this month: he has not only length-

ened out my days, but made me happy in his love. If I should be spared till warm weather come, I would pay my uncle Warrener a visit: I have written to inform him of my late conversion. I was thinking, if God should restore me to health, and I should ever fall away, Oh what an awful thing that would be! I shudder at such an idea. The Woods are a highly-favoured family: many of them are gone to glory."

Genuine piety not only produces a correct way of thinking, but gives to the passions a right tone of action. His sentiments and feelings were in exact harmony with the words of St. John: "The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you: and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him. And now, little children, abide in him; that when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming." In the evening, when his sister Eleanora attended him, he was very sleepy, and wondered how he should be so. He asked her many questions respecting the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, when an interesting conversation took place on that subject.

Dec. 25. Sunday. He was truly happy during this morning. On his father saying, that this would be the happiest Christmas-Day he had ever enjoyed; with a heavenly smile on his countenance, he replied, "It would," and heartily praised the Lord. Having heard the singers in the street, op-



posite to the house, early in the morning, he was asked how he liked the singing and music? He replied, "It sounded very sweetly in the night season." He talked on the general custom of singing so early on Christmas-Day morning, and supposed it was intended to hail the heavenly Visitor. He conversed much on the wonderful plan of Redemption by the Divinity assuming Humanity, and of the love of God to fallen man, in providing such a precious Saviour. He spoke of the awful abuse of this day, by the gay part of the community; and regretted that this season, particularly this day, should be so generally appropriated to feasting and worldly amusements, instead of serious devotion. He observed, how different his views were of it from what they had been, and how joyful a season it now was to him. Surely there cannot be a greater incongruity, than celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ in the manner many persons do! As if this Christian festival gave a license for indulging in acts of gross intemperance and licentious pleasure, they precipitately throw aside the curb of restraint, and, prompted by appetite and passion, wantonly move in circles of dissipation and carnal delights. And can such unholy dispositions and contaminating intercourse be reconciled to the immaculate purity and spotless innocence of our adorable Saviour, or to the benevolent and interesting design of his coming into the world! The Volume of divine inspiration informs us, "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." And again, "Thou

shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins."

He said, "The last evening, while sleeping in my chair, I imagined that my cousin Samuel Wood was sitting on the bed beside me; and, on awaking, I was much disappointed at not finding him there. A thought immediately struck me, that Samuel and I should soon be together in eternity. And how astonished he will be to meet me in Heaven! To be sure, he will not wonder there, knowing the goodness of God. He sought the Lord in health; and I hope to meet him in glory.\*

His cousin read to him part of the second volume of Mr. Fletcher's Portrait of St. Paul. He observed frequently, "How awful a thing it is, for those who have not experimental religion, to stand up and preach the gospel!" He well understood the difference between religion and morality, the one occupying the heart, and the other expressed

\* According to a letter recently received, this beloved Relative, who, being consumptive, had gone to Madeira for the benefit of his health, died there, Dec. 21, 1814, about two o'clock in the afternoon. He was interred on the 23d, in the British Burial-ground, by order of HENRY VEITCH, Esq. British Consul; and two of his Majesty's ships hoisted colours half mast high, and fired minute guns, as a mark of respect. So that when this dream happened, he was dead and buried; and if the spirit of a departed saint be permitted to visit a happy relative approaching eternity, this dream might be the effect of such a cause. They were particularly intimate in their affliction, died within nine days of each other, and no doubt are now together in the happy regions of eternity.

in the life. He also clearly perceived the necessity of ministers possessing the experimental knowledge of Christ: without which, their character would be inconsistent, their ministry defective, and their responsibility alarming.

At his request, those of the family that were at home, dined with him in his room. During dinner, the Christmas festival was mentioned, when he said, "This is the happiest Christmas-day I ever had;" and, with tears of joy, added, "Bless the Lord, it is a happy one." He was much pleased with having the family to dine in his room. At tea, Mr. Palmer proposed lending his cousin the Rev. Thomas Taylor's Festival Sermons to read, while the family attended the service in the chapel. She read the Sermon on the Nativity, also that on the Holy Spirit, and with both of these he was well pleased.

After supper, he requested Mr. Palmer to pray with him, which was preceded by singing a few verses of a hymn. He had previously observed, that it was a pleasing sight to him, to see the family unite in singing hymns, and offering up their praises to heaven. He thought singing was a more lively manner of devotion before prayer than reading: at least, that the whole family appeared to be more engaged in singing—particularly when any seemed to be inattentive to what was read.

When surrounding the family altar, reading the Scriptures is a necessary and important duty; many advantages resulting from it. At the same time, singing is an exercise not only congenial to the activity

of young minds, but adapted to years of maturity and discretion. This is a duty established by divine authority, and the manner of performing it is prescribed. To render it pleasing to God, we must sing "with grace in our hearts," or "with the Spirit." Humility, faith, love, hope, joy, all must be in exercise, and then those who are engaged in it will be spiritual while thus employed. We must "sing with the understanding;" to do this it is requisite that we possess much divine light, inward experience, and sound judgment. The understanding must go along with the voice; for we can never be rationally and piously affected with what we do not understand. This is what the Apostle recommends, in order to the right discharge of this duty: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom;" and then immediately adds, "teaching, and admonishing one another in Psalms, and Hymns, and Spiritual Songs." Likewise, this duty must be performed to the Lord, according to the apostolical injunction, "Singing and making melody in your hearts unto the Lord." The glory of God should be the ultimate end in all our actions, especially those which are purely religious; and by singing his praises as we ought, we glorify him.— This is a very profitable exercise, serving to exhilarate our spirits, affect and raise the mind, and stir up the Christian graces into a lively exercise. It is calculated not only for a time of joy, but also for a season of grief. In this duty we may give vent to our sorrow. It afforded David much support under oppressive troubles, as may be perceived

in his Psalms. Paul and Silas, when in confinement and bonds, were much refreshed in this duty. Many pious persons in their afflictions have found it a source of consolation. Luther used to sing away his fears, and sing up his confidence in God, when placed in perilous circumstances.—This delightful exercise approximates nearest to heaven. It is the only ordinance of this world that will be continued there, and is the constant employment of holy angels and glorified spirits. So that this excellent duty of singing, when the whole assembly join together in one voice, and with one accord to exalt the Lord their God, and make his name glorious in the earth, is an excellent emblem of heaven.

Dec. 26. Monday. This morning he was so weak, that he could scarcely bear the fatigue of being dressed, and soon lay down again. He told Betty, the servant maid, that he believed God was now about taking him to himself. The family came into his room, and while Mr. Palmer addressed the throne of Grace, he appeared to be deeply engaged in blessing and praising God with all his feeble powers. He desired a portion of the Scriptures to be read. On being asked, If he had any choice? he replied, "Look for Christ exhorting to patience." His sister Eleanora read 2 Cor. v. He said, "That is sufficient at once; read little at a time, and then meditate." Soon after, his cousin begun to read Romans viii. and, when she had got to those words, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be

compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us," he appeared to be in such an extacy of joy, that she was too much affected to proceed.

About two o'clock, he was seized with what he afterwards called a kind of fainting fit; but which, at the time, he thought was the agony of death: he appeared to be dying. His mother called in Mr. Palmer, and the family; when he saw them, he smiled, but could not speak. While they were thus standing around his bed, expecting his immediate dissolution, Mr. Palmer said, My young friend, some are called to *do* the will of God, and some to *suffer* it; I think yours is the suffering part. "Oh," he replied, (for now he could speak) "Oh, but the glory hereafter! the glory hereafter!" Mr. Palmer prayed; after which, in a few minutes, he, turning himself on his back, said, "I think I shall not die yet." His younger brothers and sisters standing round his bed, looking chiefly at his sister Jane, he thus addressed them, "Be good children, and, Remember your Creator in the days of your youth."

As a messenger had been dispatched to Woolwich, to request his father to return home immediately, on his entering the room, he asked his son how he was? who, with a feeble voice, answered, "Father, I am going to God!" Being soon after interrogated by a cousin, resident in London, respecting his health, he returned a similar answer, "I am going to heaven." Understanding that this relative had lost a sense of his acceptance with God, he exhorted him to seek the Lord. On his father

mentioning, that there was a great deal of mercy in his own case; he very emphatically exclaimed, "A narrow escape!"

His mother and cousin attended him during the night. When taking a little tea, alluding to the fit, he exclaimed, "'Tis strange! 'tis strange!" How did you feel yourself? his mother inquired. He replied, "I can scarcely tell how I felt: I thought myself dying: my teeth seemed to be closed fast together; but I think it must have been only a kind of fainting fit; and yet I was perfectly sensible."

Dec. 27. Tuesday. Early this morning his father prayed with him, and his mind was very happy in the Lord. The evening before, he being extremely weak, singing was omitted: but now he said, "At family worship this morning we will sing that Hymn,

"I'll praise my Maker while I've breath,  
And when my voice is lost in death,  
Praise shall employ my nobler powers:  
My days of praise shall ne'er be past,  
While life, and thought, and being last,  
Or immortality endures."

On his father mentioning Dr. Hamilton, and asking if he should send for him? he answered, "It would be of no use; but, you can inform him how I am, and then let him come if he judge it right. You may tell him how happy I am, and that I expect soon to be with my blessed Saviour. O what a mercy it is that there is a Saviour! If I

had more strength, I could give more glory to God: but, when I exert myself, my cough is increased. What a blessed thing it is that I have not salvation to seek, when I have scarcely any strength to pray. O, how thankful I am! I was much disappointed yesterday when I did not die: my prospect of heaven was glorious!" On seeing his father much affected, he said, "Father, do not grieve: consider what a vile sinner I have been; and I am now going to heaven. Mercy! Mercy! I know I shall go to heaven. I once thought death very terrible; but I do not find it so. I have no desire to live: I am almost too happy to live."

What a salvation! The grace of God was abundantly displayed in him! He was delivered from the entanglements of sense, saved from the guilt and pollution of sin, and, contemplating death, could say,

"Hail! blessed Messenger of peace!  
 Now kindly sent for my release;  
 Though newly fledg'd, I long to fly  
 With vigour to my native sky;  
 Oh! aid my struggles to escape,  
 While heav'nward thus my flight I shape!"

What a contrast between this state of mind, and that of dying infidels! Hume, after mixing poison in his historical compositions, to injure the minds of his readers, could, during his last moments, in the presence of his old companions, indulge in pleasantries about Charon and his ferry-boat. A lamentable instance of hardness, infatua-



tion, deistical bravery, awful trifling, and profane contempt of God! On the other hand,

“The chamber where the good man meets his fate,  
Is privileg'd beyond the common walk  
Of *virtuous* life, quite in the verge of heav'n.  
You see the man; you see his hold on heaven:  
Heaven waits not the last moment, owns its friends  
On this side death; and points them out to men;  
A lecture, silent, but of sovereign pow'r,  
To vice, confusion; and to virtue, peace!”

While thus triumphant, in joyful hope of soon entering through the gates into the celestial city, his body was so very weak, that it was thought he would not live till night: which induced his father to decline dining with a select number of ministers and friends. The Rev. Joseph Wilson, and Mr. Jennings, prayed with him. The family stood round his bed for some time, expecting the flame of life would almost instantly be extinguished by the hand of death. He laboured hard for breath, suffered much, and sweat profusely. His final hour seemed to have arrived. Profound silence was sometimes observed, but when he appeared to be actually leaving the world, this was interrupted by involuntary sighs, and grief, which vented itself in a profusion of tears. However, in the evening he revived a little; and, though very feeble, was much engaged in prayer: he continued so, when awake, during the night.

Dec. 28. Wednesday. This morning, on his father mentioning the efficacy of the blood of

Christ, when virtually applied to the soul, he exclaimed, "A wonderful plan for redeeming lost souls! By faith I see, as it were, the blood issuing from his wounds." Mankind, in consequence of having broken the moral law, are liable to everlasting misery. The punishment of the future state is proportionable to the evil of sin: that punishment which is proportionable to the malignity of sin, can be no less than the everlasting wrath of Almighty God: and the product of everlasting wrath, is the sinner's eternal death, torment and misery consummated in hell. Christ is our glorious Redeemer, who, in his person, is God-man. He was man, that he might have something to offer; as God, he could neither obey nor suffer: he is God, that he might give an infinite value and efficacy to his obedience and sufferings. He is God in our nature, without controversy. Only Christ, who is God as well as man, could bear the curse of the broken law, so as not to sink under it. He had the punishment due to us, the transgressors of the law, inflicted upon him, and he sustained the very same pains and miseries, which we had incurred, as near as the nature of the case would admit. He suffered as the substitute and surety of sinners, whence arises our interest in the merits of his death. He is said to have "given himself a ransom for all," or, "his life a ransom for many." Where the original word *λυτρον*, translated *ransom*, not only answers to the Hebrew word *בִּפְרֵי*, *copher*, by which the Jews were accustomed to express a propitiatory sacrifice, and which the Seventy have

rendered *λυτρα*; but the preposition here is very pointed and emphatical—he offered himself to God, not only *υπερ* for our benefit, but *αυτι* in our room and stead. We were the guilty criminals, who deserved to die; but he put himself in our place, our iniquities were laid upon him, and “he bore our sins in his own body on the tree.” In his sufferings and death we see what we should have undergone, if he had not become our sacrifice. Now faith, as it has Christ for its special and immediate object, is exercised on him as “the Lamb of God,” slain to “take away the sin of the world.” Considered as Mediator, faith leads the soul to approach God only in his name, and to expect audience and acceptance through him. As our High Priest, faith depends upon him for the expiation of guilt, and discharge from the obligation to punishment. And both these views of him, touch the springs of gratitude in the heart, and kindle there a flame of holy love.

His father, having received the following excellent letter from Dr. Hamilton, read it to him, which corresponded exactly with his experience and prospects.

“*London, 28th Dec. 1814.*”

“My dear Brother,

“I rejoice at the riches, the glory, the eternal peace, that your dear son has an assured prospect of soon obtaining. Happy, thrice happy youth, who, in a few days, will be where the weary are at rest, and where the wicked cease from being

troublesome; a salvation from positive evil, and the possession of all possible good. Glory, glory to the Lord! Tell your son, not to reason, only believe: not to look back, but only forward, in faith and hope. My love to your son and family, and am,

“ My dear Brother,

“ Affectionately yours,

“ JAMES HAMILTON.”

Dec. 29. Thursday. This morning he was very happy in the Lord, but suffered a great deal. He never complained, and only once said, “ It is hard work.” On his father saying, that the end would be glorious; he replied, with a countenance almost heavenly, “ Yes!” He again repeated, “ I never understood the operations of the Persons in the Trinity, till I read your letter to the Rev. John Grundy.”

A little before twelve o'clock, being extremely weak, he turned his face, beautified with a ray of approaching glory, and said, “ I thought I was gone!” His father replied, And were you glad? His affirmation was a kind of transport.

He often regretted the absence of his brother John; and knowing that his end was near, said, “ Give my love to my dear brother John, and tell him I hope to meet him in heaven; also, the same to my dear brother Thomas.”

Looking up, and putting his hand to his heart, he said, “ The good news from heaven causes me to rejoice!” His father, observing him joyful in

the Lord, said, "I think you are very happy to-day." With a countenance indicating a near approach to immortal joys, he emphatically answered, "I am!"

At night, as his mother and cousin were conversing about him, thinking him asleep, his cousin said, The end of life is accomplished in him. Hearing this, he, lifting up his hand in triumph, exclaimed, "Glory! glory!" Heaven seemed to be full in his eye, and its glories to penetrate his heart. When Christ, salvation, or future blessedness, was mentioned, his soul was at once raptured. His passions and tempers, like the cords of a well-tuned instrument, were in harmony with the celestial state.

Dec. 30. Friday. About three o'clock this morning, his father, feeling his mind deeply impressed with the nearness of eternity, connected with a qualification for seeing God, conversed freely with him on this subject. In the course of an hour, he repeatedly prayed with him; when, truly, "the Spirit of glory and of God rested upon them." The world of glorified spirits seemed unveiled, and the Lamb sitting in the midst of the throne present to the eye of faith. His son prayed as in an agony, wept much, and evidently entered into a higher state of salvation. This was a near approach to heaven! They listened to the music of the spheres; and, as it were, heard "the voice of harpers harping with their harps."

Soon after this remarkable season of divine condescension, and abounding grace, on his father

saying, "A brand plucked out of the fire!—You will escape to heaven!" He lifted up one hand, as an indication of firm confidence, and assurance of hope. On his father saying, Christ will have the whole glory of saving you from sin and hell, to a state of acceptance and holiness, and at last to heaven; he would have replied, but could not; as a substitute for words, he lifted his hand. In a few moments he appeared to be attempting to articulate, "I have finished the work thou didst give me to do!"

Having regained the power of articulation, he said to his father, "Mr. Fletcher's Address to earnest seekers of salvation, has been made a great blessing to me." This excellent little work was to him, as the cooling stream to the chased hart. Recollecting a dream, which his father once read to him, respecting the awful death of a hackney coachman in London, whose wife sported with his apprehensions of going to hell, he said, "You once told me of the coachman's wife not believing." It appears that the relation of this dream made an impressiou upon his mind, which had continued to this period.\*

\* A common hackney coachman, had a most remarkable dream not long since, which is as follows:—He dreamt one Saturday evening, that he was out with his coach, plying for a fare; and being engaged, he had directions given him where to drive. As he was carrying his passengers, he thought he was called to ascend an exceeding steep hill; and when he reached the summit, he found the declivity of the hill still more troublesome.

With considerable emphasis, he said, "It is wrong to feast on a Sunday, and have company: but I did not think so before I was enlightened. Thou shalt not make thy belly thy God. We are not so much to mind food and raiment, as to live to the glory of God." Divine illumination is a

However, with great difficulty he got down, and as he proceeded, he arrived at a pair of great iron gates, wide open. When he had passed them, he found himself in an uncommonly dark and gloomy place, in which were vast crowds of people dressed in mourning; all of whom, by their countenances, seemed to be in a very pensive state of mind. Hereupon he stopped, and asked one of the persons, what place that was? He answered, It is hell. Hell! (said the coachman) I have had more frightful ideas of hell than this appears to be: if this be hell I shall not be under such fearful apprehensions of hell as formerly. On this the person informed him, that hell was not so much outward, as it was inward; and, as a proof of this, he opened his waistcoat and shewed him his heart, which was in a flame of fire. This shocked the coachman to a great degree; but the person proceeded to inform him, that his case was not singularly shocking; for all whom he then saw were in the same condition; (and added) if he would accompany him, he should see worse than that. Here the coachman refused; and in great confusion and consternation attempted to return; but, to his great surprise, the person, in conjunction with others, caught hold of him, and refused to let him go, unless he would promise to come again. After he had used every effort to free himself, to no effect, he at last promised, if they would let him go, he would certainly come again at twelve o'clock. Upon this condition they let him depart, and he drove off in haste. When he was got out, he awoke in great horror of mind. He then awoke his wife, and related the whole to her; but she treated it with ridicule,

medium, through which things are seen accurately. While irregular passions darken the understanding, moral depravity warps aside the judgment, and conscience is not allowed to utter its voice; the Lord's Day is not regarded as holy, but often devoted to journies of pleasure, sensual indulgence, and contaminating intercourse. Lamentable it is, that numerous instances of such ignorance and depravity exist in this highly favoured Christian country. In proportion as these practices are allowed and pursued, by individual persons, or large communities, God, being offended, takes up a quarrel, and recompenses vengeance. The history of Europe, during the last twenty years, presents a very affecting comment on this subject!

Though he was in full possession of his intellect and soon went to sleep again. But the poor man slept no more; and in the morning said, he was afraid he should die and go to hell; and desired his wife to seek for some man to go out with the coach that day, for he could not; and refused to eat or drink any thing. Hereupon his wife took fire, and used him with rough language; and went among her acquaintance, ridiculing his fancy, and said her husband was going to hell at twelve o'clock. This passed on, and the man got worse in his mind, till the clock struck twelve; when his wife damned him, and said, It is twelve o'clock, and you are not yet gone to hell. With that he replied, Hold your tongue, for I am going; and immediately fell down dead. This the person related to the minister, the Rev. Mr. W. who communicated it to me as certain, and subjoined, that the wife was then almost in a state of distraction.

SIMPSON'S Discourse on Dreams and Night-Visions, page 58—60; and WILLS'S Spiritual Register.



tual powers, yet, on account of corporeal imbecility, he could not pursue a long train of thinking or reasoning on any subject. He said, "Yesterday I attempted to contrast heaven and earth: how sin entered into the world, pardon of sin is obtained, and a preparation for glory secured; with the state and privileges of the heavenly inhabitants—but could not manage it." His father replied, The kingdom of God is within, and from the love of God now shed abroad in your heart, you are acquainted with the nature of the happiness of heaven. He answered, "They are alike."

His former days of vanity and sin frequently occupied his thoughts, and as freely were made the subject of his animadversion. He said, "I often think of the amazing precipitancy with which ungodly persons proceed in the way to hell!" By the impetuosity of their irregular passions and inordinate appetites, they are carried forward into practical impiety, inconsiderately exposing themselves to the displeasure of God, and the vengeance of eternal fire. He exercises mercy in sparing them, calls on them in the affecting language of intreaty, and, when they turn a deaf ear to his voice, tenderly expostulates, "Why will you die?" Well it is when persons on the brink of perdition, opening their eyes, see the flaming gulph beneath; and, by a speedy retreat, escape its endless torments!

12 o'clock. Such was the elevation of his mind, and the expansion of his views, respecting future felicity, that he found himself incapable of expres-

sing his enjoyments and prospects. He appeared to have attained a degree of happiness approximating the light and glory of the heavenly state; only his spirit was still resident in the earthly house or tabernacle of the body, and held by the chains of sense, and fetters of mortality. Having found the central point of intellectual bliss, he expressed the fulness of his present happiness; and, being ready for his departure, in an extacy of joy anticipated his entrance into the celestial abode.\*

On his father saying, that he would much rather have his children happy in Christ, than see them raised to the dignity and possessions of princes: he, understanding the import of the remark, with great emphasis replied, "To be sure! How glad those are who have religion, when their relatives are saved in the Lord!" However endearing the ties of nature may be, those of grace are much superior! Where only a natural connexion exists among relatives, there may be reciprocal affection, mutual sympathy, and pleasing intercourse; yet, being destitute of a heavenly birth, and filial relation to God, they are entire strangers to the honours, riches, consolations, and prospects granted to his children. "That which is born after the flesh is flesh; and that which is born after the Spirit is spirit." "Ye are not in the

\* On the last day of the life of the learned, useful and amiable PHILIP MELANCTHON, being asked by his son-in-law, if he would have any thing else? he replied in these emphatic words, *aliud nihil—nisi caelum*, i. e. nothing else, but heaven!

flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you." Real Christians are the children of God by grace and adoption, brethren to Christ, members of his mystical body, heirs of heaven, are travelling in the narrow road, under the same guide to glory, and have a joyful hope of living together in their heavenly Father's house for ever! Hence we see on what principle it is, that pious persons are anxious for the conversion of their relatives, and the nature of their rejoicing when that is effected.

Dinner being mentioned, his father said, You will soon eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God: Christ is the tree of life, and the bread of life. Looking up towards his everlasting home, he answered, "He is." He could truly say,

My immortal soul looks up,  
 To Thee her rest and joy;  
 Object of her only hope,  
 Of bliss that ne'er shall cloy;  
 Sick of earth, she soars above,  
 And longs to break her hated chain,—  
 Pants to reach the throne of love,  
 And perfect freedom gain.

In the afternoon, he mentioned the gracious season which he had with his father, at three o'clock in the morning. The hour so favoured by indulgent Heaven, had left an indelible impression upon his renewed heart. That happiness, which constitutes the bliss of disembodied spirits before the eternal throne, he expressed as his own; though

for a short period divided by the narrow stream of death, from the pleasures arising from their society.

About six o'clock, though the tide of life seemed to be ebbing apace, yet the cup of his consolation appeared to overflow. In the fulness of his sufficiency in Christ, he said, "I am particularly happy." On his cousin intimating, that his bodily struggles were hard to bear; he replied, "All is well: I feel no sin." On her expressing a hope, that all his relatives would meet him in heaven, he returned an ardent wish that it might be so.

His happiness, from the time of believing in Jesus, and receiving a sense of the pardoning love of God, was like the abounding of a river, which, as it rolls along, being swelled by adjacent rivulets from the vallies, and springs from the mountains, at last overflows its banks. He never looked backward, but urged on in his spiritual course; and the nearer he approached its end, the more were his prospects enlarged, and his consolations increased. He was anxious that others should partake of his joy. To his sister Eleanora, he said, "I wish you had been with me the last night; I had a deal of pain, but was very happy." She said, Heaven is yours. Smiling, he replied, "Yes." His cousin repeated two favourite lines of his,—

" 'Tis almost done, 'tis almost o'er,  
We soon shall meet to part no more."

To which he gave a smile of approbation. Having entered fully into the spirit and views of faith, any suggestion comporting with his feelings and pros-

pects, evidently produced a correspondent effect upon his mind, which he immediately and significantly expressed.

The wheels of nature now seemed to be weary, and moved along very slowly. The springs of action were ready to break, and all the vital functions to cease. Perfectly collected, he exerted his remaining energies, in a considerable struggle for breath. Having recovered a little, he said, "Righteousness shall prevail!" and, in a while after, "Come, Lord!" And soon after this, about half past eleven o'clock, raising one hand in joyful triumph, and lifting his longing eyes to heaven, without a sigh or groan, he breathed his last: when his happy spirit took its flight to the heavenly world, there to contemplate and adore his exalted Redeemer and Saviour, and be the companion of holy angels and glorified saints, for ever.

What angels feel, no tongue can tell,  
When on their heavenly way,  
Leading a soul, escaped from hell,  
To everlasting day!

To the new child of wond'rous grace,  
Now sav'd through Jesu's blood,  
They speak the glories of the place,  
Its grandeur, and its God!

Thus his race on earth was soon finished, and an early heaven gained. He has left friends to mourn their loss, while the celestial inhabitants have joyfully received him as their happy associate. He is

removed from occupations, emoluments, and snares, in this world; to employments, possessions, and safety, in the heavenly country. He has gained a compensation there, which infinitely exceeds what the whole range of sublunary affluence affords. And though separated from parents, brothers, and sisters, and other valuable relatives and friends; all the inhabitants of his new situation are not entire strangers. The spirit of a deceased and affectionate sister, would probably be his companion to the skies, or gladly hail him to her more early heaven, and a participation of its unspeakable enjoyments. Nay, his pious ancestors, among whom are some who were eminent and successful Ministers of the pure Gospel of Jesus Christ, no doubt, would claim kindred to his spirit, and become his instructors in the knowledge of the peculiarities of the residence, which they have long enjoyed. Knowledge even there is progressive, as well as happiness.

“ O! if to fields of never-fading light  
 A sigh may come, where peaceful spirits dwell,  
 Return one moment to my aching sight,  
 Then, for a little, gentle shade, farewell!

I come apace—nor long I wait behind;  
 Short is the journey to our kindred clay:  
 Soon shall we meet, and parting never find,  
 And death and sorrow vanish both away.”

The lamp of life being thus extinguished, his father, as soon as his mind could command sufficient resolution, had to perform the affecting task of an-

nouncing to his relatives and friends the demise of his son. Among the letters written on this occasion, was the following one, sent to the grandfather and grandmother of the deceased.

“ To Mr. John Hemmington, Halifax, Nova-Scotia.

“ *Deptford, Jan. 3, 1815.*

“ Very dear Parents,

“ At present ours is a suffering lot: yet it is the appointment of infinite wisdom, and an effect of ineffable goodness. HE who had a prior claim to our dear Hemmington, has resumed his right, and taken him home. On Friday evening last, the chariots of Israel were dispatched, and, at half-past eleven o'clock, conveyed their charge to the skies.

“ Though his attachment to relatives had recently received additional strength, yet, when the period of removal came, fixing his eyes on the heavenly country, and waving his hand in joyful triumph, he willingly surmounted all the obstacles of mortality, and hastened away. Nay, so far from cherishing any reluctance to obey the divine mandate, he, with a countenance divinely irradiated, even anticipated approaching dissolution. His lively affections had sometime previously ungrasped their hold from sublunary objects, and delightfully fixed on God his Saviour, as the only source of substantial and permanent happiness; so that to him dying was the way to his heavenly Father's house, and eternity the completion of his most ardent wishes.

“Disease has reduced his mortal part to a mere skeleton—for here nature spun her last thread; but he is still lovely, even in the midst of the ravages of death. The active spirit has left depicted on his pale and emaciated face, evident traces of that glory which animated its flight. He is now separated from us; and only the vital piety of which he was made a happy partaker, can ensure a re-union where he now is. Heaven, undoubtedly, has increasing allurements, in proportion as it receives our dear relatives. Jesus is its refulgence, and the infinite fountain of everlasting felicity to all the saints in light; yet glorified spirits, in that celestial region, I apprehend, are never totally divested of those social affections which arise from kindred endearments:—nay, I think it reasonable to suppose, that they are considerably improved. So that the knowledge of each other, mutual intercourse, and reciprocal affection, will be more perfected, and afford purer delights in that luminous abode, than while dwelling in houses of clay.

“Were ignorance to cover the understanding, and moral depravity disorder the passions, the complexion of the present event would change its aspect. A youth of large capacity, liberal education, professional eminence for his years, and favoured with enlarging prospects before him, has been arrested in his progress by affliction, and removed by the relentless hand of death! Here humanity feels, affection melts into tears, and disappointment would repine at the severity of the dispensation. But faith, comprehending this mea-



sure, justifies the divine procedure, and sees that a soul has escaped from the evil to come. He has secured an inestimable treasure, which is not subject to fluctuating uncertainty, nor the rapacious hand of daring villany. He has early gained *eternal life*, at a period when youth are generally most remote in their views and desires from attending to a future world. Indeed, we may very truly say, that he, however young, has lived long and well, who, at the approach of death, is found ready to depart and be with Christ: and that the heavenly Paradise, its inhabitants, exercises, and enjoyments, are infinitely preferable to human life, in its highest elevation of grandeur, occupation, wealth, or applause.

“ On Thursday, about noon, we intend depositing his mortal remains in a vault, in sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection to immortal life.”

“ Suns that set, and Moons that wane,  
 Rise and are restored again :  
 Stars, that orient day subdues,  
 Night at her return renews :  
 Herbs and flowers, the beauteous birth  
 Of the genial womb of earth,  
 Suffer but a transient death  
 From the Winter's cruel breath :  
 Zephyr speaks ; serener skies  
 Warm the glebe ; and they arise.  
 We, alas ! Earth's haughty kings,  
 We, that promise mighty things,  
 Losing soon Life's happy prime,  
 Droop and fade in little time.  
 Spring returns, but not our bloom,  
 Still 'tis Winter in the tomb.”

A little before and soon after finding acceptance with God, such was the desire of the subject of these Memoirs to proclaim his goodness, and be useful to others, that he employed a part of his time and strength in writing the following Letters; to which, some of the Answers are subjoined.

He wrote to a Brother at school, who was more than a hundred miles from home, and for whose welfare he felt considerable solicitude: from which letter the following is an extract.

“ To Master Thomas Brady Wood.

“ *Deptford, December 16, 1814.*

“ My dear brother Thomas,

“ As your dear Mother is sending you a small parcel, I send you these few lines and a purse of mine. I am so ill at present as to be confined to my room, and am very weak. Take care how you spend your money; do not lay it out foolishly, but in things that will be of use to you. Attend to your learning: strive to get on. Never quarrel with any of your school-fellows. But above all, omit not to say your prayers—pray to God. Never forget that he always sees you, whatever you are doing: mind this. God bless you. And that you may be a Minister, is the earnest prayer of,

“ My dear brother Thomas,

“ Your ever affectionate brother,

“ JAMES HEMMINGTON WOOD.”

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“To the Rev. William Warrener, Selby, Yorkshire.

“*Deptford, December 21, 1814.*

“My dear Uncle and Aunt,

“I believe this is the first letter I ever wrote to you; but, “Glory to God in the highest!” it is one that will give you joy, when I tell you that last Monday morning, about half past nine o’clock, I found *peace with God!* a time ever to be remembered. The happiness I experienced the whole of that day I cannot describe. Although I am confined to my room, yet the Lord is not confined—no, he makes it like a little heaven below. Bless his holy name. It is very uncertain whether I shall live to see another year, I am so reduced. Thanks be to God, I shall finish this well. Oh! when I think of his kindness, long-suffering, and mercy towards me, I could weep from morning till night. As soon as I received that peace which passeth all understanding, I thought if I got better, I would not be a surgeon, but a Minister. And my anxiety was so great to declare what the Lord had done for me, the most unworthy and vilest of sinners! that, if strength would have admitted, I could have taken the bell-man’s bell and declared it through the town. ‘Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name!’

“If I should live till the next Spring,\* I intend coming to see you; but my prayer is, *the will of God be done!* Now that I am become one of his

\* This disease is peculiarly attended by flattering symptoms, which often raise temporary glimpses of future convalescence, in those afflicted with it.

own children, I am sure he will do what is best for me. I rely upon him, either for life or death; I have a full confidence of being saved. Oh, blessed hope! This is a source of great happiness to my dear parents, sisters, and our old servant Betty. I must conclude, with best love to cousin, and accept the same yourselves, from,

“Dear Uncle and Aunt,

“Your truly changed nephew,

“JAMES HEMMINGTON WOOD.”

“To Mr. Thomas Keeling, Manchester.

“*Deptford, December 21, 1814.*

“My dear Keeling,

“I am no better in body, but considerably weaker and thinner; yet, blessed and praised be the name of the Lord, my soul is better. I have found the Pearl of great price. ‘Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name.’ He has been merciful to me, or I should long since have been cut down as a cumberer of the ground. When I review my sins, I wonder, and am lost in astonishment, that he should have dealt so bountifully with me, the vilest of sinners! I can truly say, that mercy is his darling attribute, and judgment his strange work.

“As an arrow shot from a bow, even so sudden and quick was the change in my heart. I instantly exclaimed to my dear father, who had been praying very earnestly for me, and was just risen from his knees, *I do believe!* and such was my inexpressible happiness during some hours, that I did no-

thing but bless and praise the name of the Lord for his loving-kindness, long-suffering, and patience. Oh, bless God! I have such a desire for prayer and praise, that I am quite happy: there is no other happiness.

“ This is a source of much joy in our family. Oh!

“ 'Tis mercy all, immense and free,  
For, O my God, it found out me!”

Of the happiness my dear father and mother experience on this account, you may be able to form some idea. Oh, that you were here to participate of my joy.

“ The old year is nearly finished, and it is very probable that I shall never live to see the new one; but, blessed be God, I shall finish the old year well. I find I am but just beginning to live, my eyes are only just opened; I was quite blind, but now I see. Oh, Keeling, this is a glorious time, and a time that you, most likely, from my careless manner of living, little expected to see.

“ Tell those of my companions, to whom it will not be casting pearls before swine, of the goodness of God towards me! Tell them I am not *afraid* of entering another world; for I am fully convinced, that all my enormous sins are pardoned, and that, when I die, I shall enter into that heavenly kingdom, where none but the righteous shall be.

“ Oh, my dear Keeling, if we experience such great happiness here, what must we do when in company with angels, prophets, and martyrs, all praising God and the Lamb! Oh, what a blessed sight!

“ There we shall see his face,  
 And never, never sin;  
 There, from the rivers of his grace,  
 Drink endless pleasures in.”

We never can praise him sufficiently.

“ Probably you will spare time to answer these few lines, which my pen has transcribed just as they have left the heart. It was on Monday morning last, that I found this peace which passeth all understanding. That you and I may meet in the world to come, is my ardent wish. God bless you, and preserve you from every evil. May his Holy Spirit descend upon you frequently, and that you may have many refreshing seasons, is the desire of,

“ My dear Keeling,

“ Your changed friend,

“ JAMES HEMMINGTON WOOD.

“ N. B. Do not forget to tell those Christians—Heap, Foster, &c. of these glad tidings. Remember me to them in Christian love.”

ANSWER.

“ *Manchester, Dec. 27, 1814.*

“ My very dear Friend,

“ I have only just time to acknowledge the receipt of your very affecting, though blessed letter; and do assure you, that the perusal of it almost (that is for a moment) overcame me. May the everlasting benediction of God rest upon you; may your love to the Saviour increase yet more and more; and may your last moments be the most blessed of your life. What a glorious prospect

you have in view—even eternal felicity! I should like to see you, but, as it can answer no purpose, I will not think of it; only let us cherish the pleasing hope of meeting in a better world.

“Mrs. Bayley\* purposes reading your letter in the young people’s meeting to-morrow night, and I have no doubt, but it will be attended with much good.

“I cannot give you advice, you have your good father with you, who is eminently able to assist you in your devotions. Have the kindness to present my Christian love to him and your mother, together with the rest of your good family. It would give me *great* pleasure to hear from you again. May the Lord of heaven be with you, and sanctify you wholly here, and hereafter bless you in glory.

“I am, my very dear Wood,

“Your’s in Christ Jesus,

“THOMAS KEELING.

“*P. S.* I love the Almighty, I think, more since I have got your letter, because he is so faithful in answering prayer. I have not forgotten you before Him. God bless you. Farewell.”

His regard for the writer of the above letter was very sincere: he held him in high estimation as a constant friend to his spiritual welfare.

\* MRS. BAYLEY is the widow of the late Rev. C. BAYLEY, D. D. minister of St. James’s, Manchester, whose labours were much owned of God, to the illumination and conversion of sinners, and edification of believers.

“ To Mr. Thomas Wood, Manchester.

“ *Deptford, Dec. 22, 1814.*

“ My dear Cousin,

“ Since my return from France, I have been gradually getting weaker and thinner, and have been confined for about the last two months to my bed-room. It is not likely that I shall ever see the new year. Oh, cousin! I am ready to die any moment, and am confident of going to heaven. Oh, what a happy thing it is to feel no fear of death! When our sins are pardoned, the evidence is so clear and quick, that it can be no other than the powerful effect of a divine Spirit, viz.—the Holy Ghost. Now, my dear cousin, let me intreat you to seek after this happiness with all your heart. God’s promises are sure. What he has promised he will fulfil. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved! Pray without ceasing, till this heavenly end be accomplished. Read the Rev. John Fletcher’s ‘Address to earnest Seekers of Salvation:’—it was that, I think, that roused me! Remember, you have a father and mother, a brother Joseph, and a brother Samuel, very near all meeting each other again, before ‘God and the Lamb.’ Why should not you strive to enter in at the straight gate! That would be an awful sentence, if you should not repent, ‘Depart ye cursed into the lake of fire and brimstone, prepared for the devil and his angels!’—Do not delay to repent, till you are seized with some sickness; that is just like mocking God. Repent *now*. God says, ‘Now is the accepted time.’ The Saviour invites



you, saying, 'Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' Only pray for God to grant you faith to believe that his dear Son died for you: only believe this, and you shall be saved. He is always willing and ready: he is patient, long-suffering, and merciful, or I should, long since, have been cut down as a cumberer of the ground, and my immortal soul would have been in hell. You see how great his goodness and mercy are in preserving us hitherto, while thousands have been cut off around us in their sins! Oh, blessed and praised be his name for ever and ever: he has been merciful to me! I can now say with the Poet,

'Tis mercy all, immense and free,  
For, O my God, it found out me!

'O Death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?'

"Now, my dear cousin, I must conclude, it being my earnest request, living, as well as dying, that you pay attention to these few lines: do, cousin, 'For in such an hour as we think not, the Son of Man cometh.' My dear parents and family, desire to be kindly remembered to you. Love to inquiring friends. God bless you. From,

"My dear cousin,

"Your real loving cousin,

"JAMES HEMMINGTON WOOD."

After he had written the above letter, he put it among his loose papers, where it remained till his decease.

## ANSWER.

“ To Miss Ann Wood, Deptford.

“ *Manchester, January 5, 1815.*

“ Dear Sister,

“ I was surprised to hear of cousin James’s departure from this vain and transitory world: although I was in some degree prepared to be apprized of it, but not so soon. Brother Charles informed me, that it was not likely he would remain with you long. Well, he is gone to a happier world, to his Redeemer and Saviour, and is now singing hallelujahs before the throne! No doubt, it will be a great loss and grief to his parents, to be deprived of so promising a son, a youth whose natural abilities were rarely to be met with in the present day. But, alas! we must submit: Providence orders all things for our good; for, in the midst of life, we are in death. It will give great satisfaction to his parents, to see he died happy! Time presses me, or I would have said more. My kind respects to my cousins.

“ I remain, in haste,

“ Your affectionate brother,

“ T. WOOD.”

“ To the Rev. Joseph Taylor, Canterbury.

“ *Deptford, December 24, 1814.*

“ Dear Sir,

“ You will, I have not the least doubt, be glad to receive the information contained in this epistle. The last Monday morning, about half past nine o’clock, I found *peace with God!* My dear father

had just been performing family prayer, and was talking with me at the time about salvation. Oh, I can truly say, I am a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new! I have no fear of death. I know my sins are forgiven. Oh, how happy I sometimes am! I cannot express myself! My dear father and mother, and family, are happy on my account. They present their respects and Christian love along with me.

“ From, dear Sir,

“ Your changed friend,

“ JAMES H. WOOD.”

The following unexpected letter having just come to hand, from a gentleman in whose house he boarded, and whose pupil he was for several years, throws additional light on his early genius and literary progress.

“ *Beaulieu, March 11, 1815.*

“ My dear Sir,

“ The late domestic incident, I perceive in the Magazine of this month, to have taken place in your family, I and my wife feel sensibly for; not merely because we have a peculiar esteem for the parents of the deceased; but because he also had endeared himself to both of us, by his long residence under our roof.

“ It would add nothing to his felicity, (now in the mansions of the happy) to write any highly fraught encomiums on the dear departed youth,

nor would it be compatible with my own inclination, neither have a tendency to reverse the decrees of Providence. Yet, it cannot be unpleasing to hear it averred, and that without exaggeration, by him who had the peculiar care of his education, for several years previous to his embarking in profession, that, of the multiplicity of pupils who have, at various periods, been placed under his tuition, none are equally entitled to his peculiar esteem. Not only, because he had a precocity of intellect, a clear and vigorous perception for his age, and was indefatigable in his application to attain literary science; but also, because he was, by nature, favoured with a tractable turn of mind, an open and generous disposition, a contempt for all meanness, an aversion to join in those mischievous cabals, so peculiar to school-boys in general, and a pleasing, polite address for his years, as well as an engaging deportment, which invariably secured him the esteem, not only of our friends and connexions, who were in the habit of visiting us, but of all to whom he was personally known.

“ I do not mean to imply that, because he did not enter into all the juvenile follies of his school-fellows; he was one of those parasites who would betray the confidence reposed in him, by a fellow student, merely to ingratiate himself into the good graces of his master: that would have been repugnant to his nature, and a breach of which, I know, he was not susceptible. All meanness was foreign to his mind. I myself could have placed the most

implicit confidence in him, in matters of real importance, though so young.

“ But, notwithstanding all those native and pleasing accomplishments, time has proved him to be only the scourge of affliction, and the son of mortality; and now his perishable remains are consigned to that dreary receptacle, which is daily glutting with relentless avidity, on the victims of that dread king of terrors, whose fatal shafts are indiscriminately levelled against the whole animate creation. This, to a mind destitute of those consolations afforded by the Gospel, carries in it something awfully impressive; while, at the same time, it tends to exalt those rational faculties which are embued with a love of God, and an unshaken faith in Christ. And this, I have no doubt, has been a source of great consolation to you and dear Mrs. Wood, under the late severe dispensation.

“ With what vehemence of oratory, with what pathos of diction, nay, with what persuasive eloquence, without uttering one word, does the lamented stroke admonish us not to entwine our affections around any object in time. Here we see a promising youth, on whom, but a few months ago, the alluring prospects of temporal aggrandizement began to dart their vernal rays with increasing splendour, now transplanted from his temporal to his eternal habitation, to the inexpressible regret of all his friends, who had formed exalted expectations of his future utility in professional life. His vacated sphere of action may justly bemoan that

skilful head, and those dextrous fingers, which have been so often successfully exerted to rescue victims of disease from the threatening jaws of death. But what a consoling reflection, to surviving relatives, that, though his destined career is blasted in the bud, he had happily weaned his affections from temporal allurements, and, through Grace, rendered himself meet for eternal enjoyments.

“ Mrs. M. joins me in love to yourself, Mrs. Wood and family.

“ I remain, your’s affectionately,

“ GEORGE MILNER.”

The subject of these Memoirs having repeatedly mentioned his sister Maria, the following thoughts may not be unacceptable to the reader.

MARIA WOOD was born May 5, 1800, and died November 22, 1810. Her early childhood, like a beauteous dawn, was portentous of a luminous day. Her features were pre-possessing, and her countenance bloomed with health. Being strong and active, she had every appearance of rising superior to physical impediments, and protracting her stay in this world. Her mental capacity was large, and her genius fine; and she was no less industrious in improving her mind. She took delight in reading, and a new book afforded her considerable gratification. Her affection for her parents, and brothers and sisters, was almost proverbial. As she was of a tender and kind disposition, so she was greatly beloved. She took a sincere pleasure in attending the means of grace, and behaved with

religious propriety in the house of God, paying particular attention to the minister she was hearing.

However, though amiable and promising, she was not permitted to continue long below the skies. By an inscrutable Providence, she was removed hence in a few days! She was at school November 17, 1810, and that day week was interred! A typhus fever suddenly extinguished the lamp of life; and, from the nature of her disease, it became necessary soon to commit her remains to the silent tomb.

During her affliction, a physician and an apothecary, of great professional eminence and integrity, attended several times a day, and evinced considerable anxiety to prevent her falling into the grasp of death: but continued and well-directed effort was all unavailing! At the commencement of her sickness, her father had a presentiment that this would be the case; yet he believed it his duty to employ the best means for her recovery.

Under a great pressure of suffering, she never once complained: but frequently expressed the most ardent affection for her parents. Seeing the necessity of the *heart* being engaged in the duty of prayer, she even exhorted her sister, Eleanora, on that subject. Being deeply convinced of her need of divine illumination, she very emphatically said to her father, "I want understanding: O father, I want understanding: what shall I do? tell me." The evening before her departure, her father perceiving that she was much engaged mentally, interrogated her respecting it; when she answered,

“ I was praying and praising !” and mentioned several other things, all of which indicated that her prospect was glorious.

Soon after her interment, her sister Eleanora had the following dream, which it may not be improper to insert, because it produced a powerful effect on the mind of her brother, who is now with God.— She dreamed that she saw her sister Maria going across the street towards the house of a pious neighbour, accompanied by a train of angels, engaged in singing hymns. Maria, on seeing her, immediately clasped her in her arms, saying, “ You must go with the people of God, and live to him.” Eleanora asked her, if she would call on her father and mother, and whether she would like to live here below? She, with the rest of her angelic associates, answered, “ Oh, no ! it would give them trouble.” Maria also said, “ That her brother James was to be affectionate and obedient to his parents, or he would never come where she was : that if any of the family were to die, she should welcome them as her grandfather did her ; and that her heavenly Father had put a crown upon her head, as a token for her sufferings.” After saying these things, she led her sister to a most beautiful place, which she called an earthly Paradise, the walls of which sparkled like silver. In this retreat they walked together on moss. The rest of the garden was adorned with the most splendid and fragrant flowers. Respecting this delightful inclosure, displaying a perfection of vegetable excellence, and abounding with odori-



ferous sweets, Maria said, "This is not to be compared to the place where I reside!"

On this dream being related to the family, every ear was attentive, and every eye suffused in tears. For only a little time previously, Maria was one of eight children, who, like olive branches, surrounded the table, under the paternal roof; and she, highly esteemed, was selected from among the rest, as the victim of disease, and the first in the family that received the arrow of death. But James, being mentioned by name, was impressed by this, as a message sent from the other world, and of a nature calculated to excite alarm in his mind. It is probable, not only that this was deposited in his memory; but also, that it reached his heart. At any time, when his sister's death was mentioned in his presence, he was in general much affected. And previous to his own dissolution, she not only occupied his thoughts, but was often the subject of his conversation.

The following lines are a tribute of affection to the memory of this amiable young female.

And is thy soul, my dear Maria, fled!  
 And is thy body number'd with the dead!  
 Thy painful conflicts, short, but great, are o'er;  
 And mortal pains shall ne'er afflict thee more.  
 Thine earthly course with haste thy feet have run,  
 And finish'd soon their race below the sun:  
 With great delight the hallow'd path they trod,  
 That leads to wisdom, holiness, and God.  
 Thy lips did often with the assembly join,  
 In prostrate prayer, and singing hymns divine:  
 Thy willing ear received the welcome word—  
 Of Christ, thy suff'ring and triumphant Lord.

Thy shining virtues still thy worth impart,  
 And stamp thy name upon a father's heart:  
 His mem'ry does thy lovely image hold,  
 More precious far, than mines of massy gold;  
 A mother's tears, sad orators! can tell  
 How good the child that she could love so well.  
 Thy name shall live, though not in sculptur'd stone,  
 To be rehears'd by ages not thine own;  
 In the bright annals of eternal fame,  
 Where none are written but of *pious* name.



REASONS ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE DIVINE GOVERNMENT,  
 IN RELATION TO THE PREMATURE DEATH  
 OF YOUNG PERSONS.

Having now traversed a scene, which, it is presumed, has presented objects of peculiar interest, and is replete with important instruction; surely, after this, we shall feel disposed to make a pause, and indulge ourselves in suitable reflections.

When Death, that lordly monarch and mighty robber, breaks into our houses, and with irresistible force tears away part of our flesh, spoiling us of our dearest earthly enjoyments; snatches a lovely child from the enfolding arms and affectionate caresses of an indulgent mother, or cuts down a youth, who, like a spreading cedar, was of great promise, neither regarding innocency of nature, usefulness of life, nor beauty and strength; but renders dim and then closes the lively eye, spreads over the most engaging countenance a mortal paleness, stops the breath, congeals the purple flood of

life, and turns a thinking and active creature into a cold lump of clay—we may then ask, Is there nothing to administer comfort to us in such mournful circumstances? Is there no one to alleviate our sorrows? If we turn to our friends they will tell us, that death has taken away those who were dear to them. If we have recourse to history, we shall be informed, that thus it has been since the beginning, and that his empire has lasted already more than five thousand years. And if we consult philosophy, all that it offers is, that thus it is necessary it should be—they who are born must die—such is the human frame, made of perishing materials, that mankind must necessarily dissolve into their first principles, and return to the dust. What little satisfaction there is in all these answers!

The removal of young persons by death is a dark dispensation of Providence, which, in its first appearance, is apt to perplex our minds. However, Christian parents, living in the exercise of faith, are assisted to penetrate the gloom, and assign reasons for this conduct of the divine government, which have a powerful tendency, when in such trying circumstances, to enable them to possess their souls in patience, and live in the spirit of humble submission and devout resignation.

The *sovereignty* of the Divine Will may, and ought to satisfy our minds respecting this dispensation. God having created all things, is the natural Lord of the creation. His dominion being absolute and uncontrollable, extends to all things both in heaven and earth. “He doth according to

his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth. Behold, he taketh away, who can hinder him? who will say unto him, What doest thou?" He made man, and has a right to dispose of him at his pleasure. We are his, and not our own; and may he not do with his own what he pleases? He claims the sovereignty of life and death as his own prerogative. "I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand." This is always a reason why we should be silent under providential dispensations, and satisfied with his disposal of us and ours, considering that he acts according to the direction of infinite wisdom.

This perfection of *wisdom* is always exercised in the removal of young persons, from this transitory life to another world. As the descendants of Adam, we are born mortal, and under the sentence of death. This is the state of fallen man, and the consequence of that original denunciation, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." St. Paul considers death as the unavoidable effect of sin. "As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." The seeds of mortality in our nature tend to a dissolution of our bodies. For having violated the law, the sentence of death has been passed upon us; and the execution of it in some period is ascertained, "It is appointed unto men once to die." But the season of dying is not declared by the divine law, for reasons advan-

tageous to mankind in general, and to individual persons in particular: this is reserved as a secret in the Divine Mind, and requires the aid of infinite wisdom in appointing the most proper period for removing persons from this state of trial, to one of retribution. And it is highly reasonable to suppose, that the only wise God fixes on a season for this purpose, which, all circumstances considered, is the best, and which we could not but approve, if we knew the whole of them. It is because we are sometimes perplexed to account for the utility of what God does, in taking away our relatives, that we find a difficulty in prevailing with ourselves to believe it is the most judicious plan that could be pursued, and imagine another time would have been better. Yet it is an unquestionable truth, that as the righteous God cannot do an unjust thing, so being infinite in wisdom, he cannot err in what he does, but acts in the best manner according to existing circumstances.

It is then our wisdom to live resigned to the will of God, leaving this matter with him, to do "that which seemeth him good." Things are sometimes involved in great obscurity, so that we find it difficult to account for them. "Clouds and darkness are round about:" his ways are often in the deep, but are always equal; and we ought to justify God in all his dealings with us, and quietly submit to his will. Our belief of the wisdom, equity, and goodness of Providence should be strong, and dispose us on every event to reverence and adore it. Surely these properties of the divine government

are sufficient reasons why we should acquiesce in it. While in this world, we are subject to a variety of afflictions, in any of which the principal rest we can obtain for our minds arises from the consideration, that every thing is under the control of Him who is infinitely wise and good. This will give a smooth face to the roughest event, and answer objections in the most involved appearance of things, which we cannot solve any other way. We cannot better consult our own comfort, as well as our duty, than by casting anchor here—that whatever God does is well done.

When young persons, possessed of real piety, are taken away by death, it is in great *mercy* to themselves, a mark of distinguishing favour conferred on them, though, to their parents, it occasions inexpressible grief, and is viewed as a lamentable privation. God sometimes does this, that they may not share in the calamities he is about to bring upon a nation, place, or family, where they live. In this sense the prophet says, “The righteous is taken away from the evil to come.” In that case, he is safely landed in a better world, before the impending storm displays its terrors. It is certainly an act of kindness in the Divine Being, to deposit his peculiar treasure out of the reach of danger.—However, since sin entered into the world, it has been a scene of anxiety and trouble. We enter it crying, and, while travelling the journey of life, emptiness and vexation of spirit appear written in legible characters upon surrounding objects, of which every traveller has his share,

Many have their passages embittered by lingering diseases and distracting pains, by seeing which, their tenderest relatives have been brought to prefer death for them, rather than life. And how much are some pious people harassed with the temptations of Satan, and the vile conduct of the wicked; from all which, death is a perfect and perpetual release.—They have also the earlier admission into heaven, and to the society of “the spirits of just men made perfect.” They are with Christ, which is far better than being in the present state. They improve more on leaving this world, in knowledge, grace, and felicity, than they would have done here, if they had lived to the age of Methuselah. For the remaining years of life in time, they receive an ample compensation in the glories of heaven, and the blessedness of eternity. And if the King of Glory calls some of his servants sooner than others, from meaner stations in his house below, to his immediate attendance above, this can be no act of unkindness to them. It is certain, the sooner they are admitted to the heavenly world, the more advantageous it is for them. And they are so fully satisfied with the exchange of earthly friends and comforts, for the celestial society and enjoyments, that they by no means would wish to return, and reside again with the dearest relatives and best connexions upon earth. It is true, they are prevented executing any wishes, purposes, or designs, entertained of future service, for promoting the glory of God in this world: but these, no doubt, will be as graciously accepted as if they had

been favoured with the most convenient opportunities for accomplishing them. David's intention to "build a house for the name of the Lord God of Israel," though not allowed to perform it, was pleasing to him, who thus expressed his approbation, "Thou didst well that it was in thine heart." In this case, the will is accepted for the deed. When the execution of the good purposes which were in the hearts of pious people is prevented by death, He, who is a Judge of the sincerity of their intentions, will "accept" the "willing mind."

It is highly probable, that some amiable young persons have been taken away from this world, as a *rebuke* to their parents, for excessive indulgence, extravagant opinions, and fond expectations, respecting them. The inordinate kindness of parents, who set their hearts too much on their children, may, by this conduct, contribute towards their removal. When children engage their affections more than God, and become objects of confidence and hope, they are made idols and images of jealousy; and then, no wonder, if he, in his just displeasure, take them away, when they had the least expectation of his doing so.

"Our dearest joys and nearest friends,  
The partners of our blood,  
How they divide our wav'ring minds,  
And leave but half for God.

The fondness of a creature's love,  
How strong it strikes the sense!  
Thither our warm affections move,  
Nor can we call them thence."



This cannot be done without the aid of divine grace. Conscious of this, we should earnestly address God for his assistance.

“ Turn the full stream of nature’s tide :  
 Let all our actions tend  
 To thee their source ; thy love the guide,  
 Thy glory be the end !

Earth then a scale to heaven shall be,  
 Sense shall point out the road ;  
 The creatures all shall lead to thee,  
 And all our joy be God.”

Historians inform us, that the renowned Gustavus Adolphus, the celebrated patron of the Reformation, in the midst of his victories and success, said, He believed God was about to lay him aside by death or otherwise, because the eyes of all Europe were upon him, and their expectations raised to so great a height. This great prince fell in the battle fought on the plains of Lutzen, in 1632 ; and is supposed to have been treacherously slain, either from the intrigues of cardinal Richelieu, or by the hand of Lawenburg, one of his generals.

The death of our dear kindred is calculated to produce in us an affecting conviction of the *vanity* of the world, and to cure us of an inordinate fondness for life. We often hear lectures on the vanity of the world, and frequently see instances of it in our own connexions ; yet, commonly, are but little moved till it come close to our own case, and we feel the lesson, as well as hear it. “ Vanity of vanities,” says the royal Preacher, “ vanity of vani-

ties; all is vanity." All earthly things whatsoever, riches, honours, pleasures, without God, and abstracted from him, are vanity. They are not only vain, but vanity in the abstract; and one abstract is here added to another, "vanity of vanities," and this is doubled or repeated again, "vanity of vanities:" all is most vain, extraordinarily vain, vain to the highest degree of vanity. All within the power and compass of created nature cannot make any man truly happy, all the things of the world are utterly insufficient to this purpose; they are not suitable to the nature of the soul, which is an immaterial, an immortal spirit; they cannot answer its necessities, being depraved, guilty, and miserable; it requires pardon, holiness, and happiness, and the world cannot supply these wants. Nothing below, or beside God, can meet the nature, capacity, duration, and state of the soul. And what mode of instruction is better adapted to convey this important subject to the heart, than when our dearest relatives are taken away from us by death, and become resident in the world of spirits? In this we see, how uncertain are all worldly comforts, how unstable sublunary possessions, and how insufficient the world is for a portion. However persons may be distinguished by situation, wealth, popularity, or influence, all these prominent features of human life will soon be softened down by the hand of affliction, and completely lost in the gloomy shade of death.\* Such

\* Human life is thus described by BISHOP HORNE. "The different ranks and orders of mankind may be compared to

a conviction, cherished and improved, would essentially contribute to cure us of an inordinate attachment to this mortal life; we should disentangle our affections from all earthly comforts, and live expecting changes.

When excellent persons are taken away in early life, this is a means to exercise the *graces* and *virtues* of those who survive. What is more proper to preserve a lively sense of religion in the world, than the serious consideration of our "latter end?" When God commissions death to enter our habitations, and seize a valuable and beloved relative, or a kind and useful friend, whom we considered the staff of our lives, and thus blasts the gourd under which we sat with delight; it is one of the greatest trials in time. We may conclude, that such a dispensation is intended to try our graces: our faith and trust in him, and our patience and submission to his will. This places us in peculiar circumstances, and our behaviour shews, whether we will "receive evil," as well as "good at the hand of the Lord." Grace shines with great lustre, when exercised under such trials and difficulties. Then it redounds to the honour of God, and our own comfort, when we can fall down at the

so many streams and rivers of running water. All proceed from an original small and obscure; some spread wider, travel over more countries, and make more noise in their passage, than others; but all tend alike to an ocean, where distinction ceases, and where the largest and most celebrated rivers are equally lost and absorbed with the smallest and most unknown streams."

sacred footstool, humbly adore the hand stretched out, and kiss the rod that strikes us; can put our mouth in the dust, hold our peace, as Aaron did, and possess our souls in patience, as our Lord directs; yea, when we can approve of the divine conduct in such a dispensation, and bless his name, saying with Job, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." This is honourable to God: it shews the power of divine grace, evinces the superiority of Christian principles, proves our own sincerity, adorns our profession, and recommends religion to others.

We should therefore exemplify in our behaviour the sufficiency of our religion, and the strength of our support, in not giving up our friends for lost, concerning whom we have ground to hope that they died in the Lord; nor ourselves as hopeless, as long as our Redeemer and Saviour lives; since we know, that he and his covenant blessings are not gone with them. We should depend more upon God, than upon the best and most useful instruments. He gave our relatives whatever excellencies they had, and ability for usefulness; and since he has removed them from this terrestrial state, he can raise up others, and give them the like qualifications. There is no case in which they were useful, or their company agreeable, but God is much more able to assist us; yea, able to do for us, what the best and most competent earthly friends cannot. Let us therefore keep in view the fountain more than the streams, the everlasting God more

than dying creatures. Men are often taken away, when the expectations of relatives are raised very high: but the years of the Most High are throughout all generations.

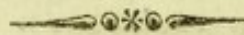
The death of young persons is a standing *monument* of human frailty, and a gracious dispensation to careless youth. On this pillar is written, *Memento mori*: "remember death." Here let them acquire wisdom, render the demise of their equals in age instructive and monitory to themselves, learn what so nearly concerns them, and engage to recollect what they are so apt to forget.\* The death of those of our own age, makes a very sensible impression upon our minds. The demise of the young shews, in a strong light, the necessity of early piety. If some in the season of youth are snatched away, surely it is reasonable that those who are yet spared should instantly secure the "one thing needful:" because it is the only medium that can render them safe and happy. And, on the other hand, it points out the danger attending the neglect of salvation. How destructive has the presumption of long life been to many in youthful days, who doubted not

\* Though the learned and pious BEZA, when he was very old, and saw his end approaching, often used that saying of AUSTIN, *Diu vixi, diu peccavi*, I have lived long, I have sinned long: yet, among many things recorded in his last will and testament, for which he gave God thanks, the first and chief was, that at the age of *sixteen years* he had called him to the knowledge of the truth; and so prevented him committing many sins, and enduring many sorrows, which otherwise would have overtaken him, and have made his life less happy, and more miserable.

they should live to old age, and under this delusive dream have postponed their concern about religion till a future period; but God took them away soon, and so prevented the execution of their purposes. If the King of terrors always observed the order of nature, and only the aged were deposited in the grave, the young might think their season for dying was very remote: but when their co-equals in age are taken away, it is a warning to them, and a convincing evidence that they may die young also. Being dead, they speak to surviving companions, and their language is, Prepare to follow: be ye also ready. Dying is the doom of all flesh: as certain as we are born into this world, we must ere long leave it for ever. And we are going hence very rapidly. Job says, "My days are swifter than a post: they flee away. They pass away as the swift ships: as the eagle that hasteth to the prey. Man cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth as a shadow, and continueth not." On this account, our life is compared to "a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."

God, who is infinitely wise and good, in taking away our beloved and pious relations, does by this affecting dispensation render *heaven* more desirable to us. When renewed persons die, their souls immediately enter into the joy of their Lord. There they meet "an innumerable company of angels, the spirits of just men made perfect, and Jesus the mediator of the new covenant." How many of our dear friends have got to heaven before us! A truly

devout person, would almost be tempted to envy their happiness. But surely so many of our kindred being there, who were high in our esteem while they sojourned here, and in whose society we took so much delight, serves to raise our minds above this world of sense and sin, and render heaven familiar and agreeable to our thoughts. It is true, God is the chief good, the centre of blessedness, and the rest of souls; and that is the most powerful motive of our choice, love, and desire of that glorious abode. Yet God is exalted vastly above our most elevated conceptions of him; these, while here, are very imperfect. Elihu says, "Behold, God is great, and we know him not." But the consideration of the glorified Redeemer in our own nature, and of our beloved relatives and fellow-Christians there, being more sensible objects, is a great relief to our minds; these coming more within our reach, are better adapted to impress and affect us. We hope for a joyful meeting with those who are already gone. The separation is not to be perpetual, we shall meet again in a better world, and in a condition vastly superior. How delightful will this be, to see each other so amazingly improved! How cheerfully will those join together in the triumphs of heaven, who united their prayers to God on earth. There were tears and sorrows at the separation here, but the meeting above will be perpetual joy!



## ON THE CERTAINTY OF A FUTURE STATE.

Whether men of mere worldly dispositions, views and pursuits, will believe it or not, there is a future state of being, though invisible to us while in this abode, and eternal in its duration. And there are some of our contemporaries, who, being so enlightened in their views, and elevated in their affections, have a far greater regard to things unseen, than to all the enjoyments of the present life. Frequent meditation on these future and invisible realities, affords them support and consolation under afflictions of body and exercises of mind, while on their journey to the skies.

These things are mysterious and paradoxical to the men of this world, who, seldom troubling their heads with the country beyond the grave, being decidedly in favour of a present inheritance, leave the heavenly blessings to those who have faith and patience enough to wait for them. But there are a pious few, who, believing the sacred truths revealed by the Spirit of God in the Scriptures, are fully assured that there is another world beside this in which they live, though they have not seen it, the privileges, honours, and felicities of which are not mere flights of fancy, but substantial realities. On these they attentively fix the eye of the mind, employ their most active thoughts, and to them have a particular regard in the whole of their conduct.

Eternal things have as real an existence, as those with which we are daily conversant while subjects



of time. So great is the depravity of mankind, and especially such the effects of septicism and infidelity, that there are some persons who will not believe any thing to have an existence but what is visible, or, at least, of what they can judge by some of their senses; and therefore hesitate not to call in question the existence of their own souls, and the reality of a future state. As a proof of the atheistical tendency of their minds, they affirm that they never saw God, angel, or spirit departed, and therefore will not believe there are such in being. They are pleased with the objects of sense, with these they are familiar, and are confident they are in actual possession of being; but, respecting those which are unseen, and presented only to the eye of faith, they are not solicitous, and will not be at any pains to inquire about them.

This unbelief in men is the awful result of moral depravity, and of a criminal attachment to the objects of sense. They daringly blunt the edge of conviction, resolutely shut their eyes against the light of reason, violently attempt to suppress the remonstrance of conscience, and thus determinately refuse to believe (what they anxiously wish may not be true) that there is another world—a God, who will be the righteous Judge of all without exception, a heaven to be the happy residence of pious and good persons, and a hell in which impure and wicked men are to be punished. On such corrupt principles, it being their interest that none of these things should be true, their stubborn wills bribe, and their irregular passions blind their understand-

ing, and so they easily deceive themselves to their everlasting ruin.

But whatever vicious persons may think, there is a future state, unseen to mortal man, while imprisoned in a tenement of clay; but visible to disembodied spirits. For how weak and imperfect are the most acute of our bodily senses, in which we are excelled by many animals? We can judge only of things that are not remote, and even respecting these our opinion is often erroneous. Our sight, the quickest and best of the senses, can with certainty reach but a little distance. We contemplate the sun, the moon, and the stars; but by the eye, unassisted, we can know little of their nature, distance, or magnitude. It is not surprising then that heaven, which is immeasurably high, and hell, which is unfathomably deep, and covered with thick darkness, should not be much known.

Beside, the things of that distant world are of a spiritual nature, and therefore beyond the reach of the senses. We could never to this hour see our own souls that are resident within us, and ever present, influencing all our actions; and yet we are fully assured of their existence. As little cause have we to doubt the existence of the realities of another world. But because they are invisible, they are neglected: though reason, that intellectual eye, if properly exercised on divine revelation, would discover them.

For, whether the sceptic will believe it or not, there is an infinitely *Supreme Intelligence*, possessed of every natural and moral perfection, whom no

mortal eye has seen or can see; who derived his being from no one, but is completely happy in himself, even from everlasting to everlasting; who gave birth to time, existence to all worlds, and still upholds the universe by the word of his power; and who is always present with mankind, to preserve them in being, and to renew their breath every moment. And yet how little is he the object of their regard, or the subject of their thoughts? He is most certainly present in every place: but immoral persons behave as if he were not so. If they were penetrated with a sense of his omnipresence, would they act so profanely? Or, at night, when retiring to rest, if they believed that he was looking upon them, durst they lie down without commending themselves to his protection by prayer;\* or, rising in the morning, without giving him thanks? If they considered him as standing by and beholding them, would they dare to profane his sacred name by impious oaths and horrid imprecations; or abuse and dishonour their own bodies by intemperance, uncleanness, or intoxication? But the wilful commission of these and many other crimes,

\* It is reported of a *voluptuous* YOUNG MAN, who, above all things, could not bear to be kept awake in the dark, that, being sick, could not sleep at all during the night. The following reflections were the means of his conversion to God. "What, is it so tedious then to be kept from sleep one night, and to lie a few hours in the dark? Oh, what is it then to be in torments and everlasting darkness! I am here in my own house upon a soft bed in the dark, kept from sleep only one night; but to lie in flames and endless misery, how dreadful must that be?"

is a sufficient proof that they neglect to think of him, and the glorious perfections of his nature.

Whatever deistical unbelievers, who deny the Scripture revelation, may think, there is a blessed and glorious *Redeemer*. He once came "to seek and to save that which was lost," has manifested the greatest good-will to the apostate children of Adam, by pouring out his blood and laying down his life for their ransom, and has promised to be with his church, composed of genuine believers, to the end of the world: but he will come again "to execute judgment upon all; and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him." Yet how little is he regarded by men? How is his name blasphemed, his authority despised, his righteous laws trampled upon, his institutions profaned, his sacred blood accounted an unholy thing, and his friends reproached and persecuted? But would they do thus, if they considered him as present with them? No; surely this would affect them with awe and reverence. How far are the practically wicked from looking to him for the remission of their sins, to his atonement for their justification, and to his sufficient grace for complete salvation and eternal life? He is, alas! almost wholly forgotten and neglected by the multitude, who are estranged from him. But they should remember, that the day is fast approaching when he will "be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire,

taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe in that day."

Whatever the "natural man" may imagine, who has no right knowledge, or discerning of spiritual objects, there is a *Holy Spirit* of truth and grace. He, proceeding from the Father and the Son, is sent down to convince, by undeniable evidence, the ungodly "world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment;" to strive with sinners, and call them to repentance; and to dwell in the hearts of those who obey his dictates, to illuminate, quicken, sanctify, strengthen, comfort, and seal them to the day of redemption: but he will depart from those who resist, grieve, tempt, and blaspheme him, and thus refuse to be guided by his light and direction.

Is it not this Divine Spirit that convinces men of sin, and reproveth them for it? that excites in them any good desire or holy affection, of which they are at any time the happy subjects? and that encourages them to walk in the way of God's commandments? For even the most inconsiderate and wicked persons have intervals of reflection and remorse. And yet they see him not, neither are sufficiently sensible of his presence with them, nor of his sacred inspiration. For if they were, could they obstinately resist him, cause him to depart from them, which would be the means of leav-

ing themselves under judicial blindness and impenitency? It is true, in his own nature he is invisible, because a Spirit; but in his operation he is visible, and produces real and sensible effects. As the invisible things of the Godhead are clearly seen by the things that are made; so in the new world of grace, the existence, personality, and divine perfections of the Holy Ghost, are abundantly proved by the visible effects of his power and energy, in turning men from darkness to light, liberating persons who were captives to Satan, transforming sinners, dead in trespasses and sins, into saints possessed of spiritual life and purity, and in changing a furious persecuting Saul into a zealous preaching apostle—which effects in the converts at Antioch, gave great joy to Barnabas, when he had seen the grace of God manifested towards them. And though similar effects are visible in the conversion of sinners in every age, and the power and grace of the Holy Spirit are very discoverable, yet some men will not see or regard his operation.

Whether the unbeliever, who minds earthly things, and the sensualist, whose god is his belly, will consider it or not, there is another *world* beside this in which we live; a heaven of glory and happiness, designed and prepared to be the everlasting habitation of pious persons, who love God and keep the testimony of Jesus, and where their most enlarged desires shall be for ever satisfied: where their faith shall be changed for sight, and they shall behold Jesus as he is, “whom having not seen, they love;” and be incorporated with the glorified

inhabitants, who surround the eternal throne, and joyfully sing praises to God and the Lamb. And there is a hell, a place of darkness and horror, prepared by the Almighty for the prison and dwelling place of the great apostate spirit and his miserable associates; as also of men who forget God, are enemies to him by wicked works, will not submit to the authority of Jesus, and do despite to the Spirit of grace and holiness.

But because a thick veil intervenes between the present and the future world, a large majority of mankind very little regard the declarations of the sacred Scriptures, though announced by Him who cannot lie. When on the contrary, did men perceive the felicity and glory of the blessed, or the privations and misery of the damned, they would not live as they commonly do: they could not expect to be admitted to the mansions of the blessed, without previous holy dispositions of mind, or to escape the torments of the latter, without forsaking their evil ways, and being reconciled to God.

How eagerly do men pursue the riches, honours, and pleasures of the present world! But, alas! the high realities of heaven seldom occupy their thoughts. Surely it is their duty, and would be their wisdom, seriously and impartially to consider the nature of these things, and the evidence there is of them in reason and divine revelation. Nothing is more certain than that they must soon be removed from all those visible objects with which they are now engaged, and enter into the unseen world. And will they not be filled with fear and conster-

nation, on their admission into eternity, if the things there are as unknown as they are unseen? If they have not acquainted themselves with God, and secured peace with him? If they have not the friendship of Jesus, and put their souls into his hands? If they have no disposition to qualify themselves for the society of angels and saints? But if, on the contrary, they have opposed the operations of the Holy Spirit, and offered indignity to him? If there be found upon them all the marks of the heirs of hell and destruction?

One cannot but express a fervent wish that men were wise! that they understood the importance of these things, and would lay them to heart! that they would seriously consider and diligently prepare for their latter end! for that eventful hour when their eyes will be for ever closed to all sublunary things; and for that day when these material heavens will pass away, and this earth, with all its magnificent furniture, will be utterly consumed, and they must dwell in the other world, and converse with invisible things to eternity!

*The death-bed of a Medical Student*, recently communicated to the Public, and asserted to be a *true narrative*, is adapted powerfully to impress this subject on the mind.

Mr. J. W. after completing his preparatory studies and spending several years with an eminent Surgeon in London, left his friends to pass a winter at a celebrated Northern University. Before three months had elapsed, Mr. W. by midnight studies and habits of dissipation, so impaired his health,



that very soon his constitution became completely undermined by an illness which speedily terminated fatally.

Now, behold this amiable young man, who but a few weeks back had every prospect of spending a long life in the honourable and benevolent discharge of his professional duties, respected and caressed by all. Stretched on a sofa when an intimate friend entered his room, he with difficulty fixed on him those eyes which a fortnight before beamed mildness and serenity, and exclaimed, with an agitated voice, ‘ Charles, my friend, *Eternity! Eternity!* Whither, Oh, whither shall I flee?’ His friend attempted to tranquilize him, by assuring him that one possessed of his amiable qualities could have nothing to fear in the prospect of eternity. With a bewildered vacant look, expressive of extreme mental distress, he grasped the hand of his friend, and replied, ‘ Is there not a righteous Judge, who has denounced eternal death on every sinner who violates his holy law in a single point? and is there a commandment which I have not broken? is there a precept which I have not disregarded? or an offer of mercy, through Christ, which I have not rejected? How then shall I escape *His* wrath who cannot lie, and who has declared that sinners shall be *for ever* banished from his presence, and consigned to that place of torment, where there is only weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth! Oh, Charles, the world has deceived me, and ruined me *for ever!* Where now is the benefit of its unsatisfying caresses? About to

enter on an era which shall never terminate, how despicable do its empty pleasures and irrational pursuits appear! Its votaries attempted to infuse infidel principles into my mind, and, for a time, these succeeded in quieting the remonstrances of a conscience, which, though concealed under a cheerful countenance, has often been tortured almost to despair. Believe me, Charles, *a depraved heart*\* is the only solid objection to the contents of the Bible. Then, with eyes elevated to heaven, and expressive of what cannot be described, he exclaimed, ‘O Thou! who art a Being of spotless purity and inflexible justice, I dare not now implore the bestowment of that mercy which I have so long despised; for I have obstinately turned a deaf ear to thy gracious invitations contained in the blessed gospel! Who, O Lord, knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear so is thy wrath. Woe unto him who presumptuously striveth with his Maker! for what impotent arm can resist his power? Who among the mighty can endure his vengeance? Who can dwell with the devouring fire, or endure everlasting burnings?—Charles, Charles, hasten to the Lamb of God, who alone can take away the sins of the world, and satisfy the equitable demands of divine justice. Turn from

\* BISHOP HORNE remarks, “It will be hereafter with a wicked man, when he is punished for his sins, as it was with Apollodorus, when he dreamed that he was flayed and boiled by the Scythians, and his *heart* spoke to him out of the caldron: “*Εγω σοι τούτων αιτια.*”—“I am the cause of these thy sufferings.”

your unhappy and undone friend, who is about to appear at the bar of that Being, who to every despiser of his offered salvation is a *consuming fire*?

Mr. W. became insensible immediately after this, and continued in a lethargic state till midnight, when he entered an eternal world!



ON THE DIGNITY AND EXCELLENCE OF THE CHRISTIAN CHARACTER, WITH REFERENCE TO THE HEAVENLY WORLD.

What a striking contrast there is between the *unbeliever* and the *real Christian*, both in life and death! While others are anxiously engaged about the things of time and sense, the man of faith looks beyond this terrestrial scene to things eternal, and, confiding in the testimony of divine revelation, is fully assured of their existence. The apostle says, that "faith is the evidence of things not seen." The eye can reach no farther than the starry regions, and there faith begins and looks beyond to the third heaven of light and glory. Faith easily enters where the eye of sense never could, even within the veil, and presents to the eye of the soul surprising glories. It brings heaven down to earth, and sets it in open view; and the Christian exercises his contemplative powers till his mind be deeply impressed with the images of these invisible realities, and he rise into meridian evidence concerning their existence. \*

These things have his entire *approbation*, and he *esteems* them far preferable to all sublunary enjoyments. Is it possible for any one, who gives himself the least time for serious reflection, to doubt whether the heavenly world be better than this in which we dwell? Whether God, whose nature comprises a constellation of infinite and adorable perfections, possess excellencies superior to the most exalted of his creatures? whether grace, the operation of which transforms the soul into a moral resemblance to the Divine Being, be more estimable than riches, which are tangible, transitory, and uncertain? or whether everlasting felicity be an object more deserving of attention and pursuit, than those pleasures which are adapted to gratify our senses, passions, and appetites, and continue only during a short season? Once, it is highly probable, the Christian entertained a more favourable opinion of sensible objects; but now, his mind being enlightened, he has a right discerning of spiritual matters, and his judgment rectified, knows how to distinguish things that differ, and to prefer those that are most excellent. While others say, "Who will shew us any temporal good?" he devoutly prays, "Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon me; for with thee is the fountain of goodness, and in thy favour is life."

He beholds heavenly things with a *longing desire*. Their excellence and beauty excite in his breast holy aspirations, such as David expresses, "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for

God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before him?" He can view terrestrial things with indifference, which are not essential to his happiness, and can either possess or leave them without much uneasiness. But his heart is fixed on the heavenly joys, he has most ardent desires towards the New Jerusalem, and is willing to resign all his other possessions, rather than part with his interest in the favour of God, the merits of Christ, the witness of the Holy Spirit, and his hope of eternal glory.

As an archer attentively looks at the mark he *aims at*, so heaven, and not this earth, is the object to which all the Christian's thoughts, desires, words, and actions, are directed. He leaves sordid things to those who have their portion in this life. While others are grovelling in the dust to heap a little of it together, he looks up and aspires after glory, honour, and immortality; regularly attends all the means of divine appointment, for securing these; nobly disdains an earthly happiness when God has provided for him a heavenly one; and in all his duties and sufferings he keeps his eye on this mark, looking steadily to the recompense of reward.\*

\* JEREMIAH BURROUGHS, a puritan divine, makes mention of one *Theodorus*, a christian young man, who, when there was a great deal of feasting and music in his father's house, withdrew from the company. Being alone, his thoughts were thus employed:—"Here is content and delight enough for the flesh; I may have what I desire, but how long will it last? this will not hold out long."

This is his practice while he acts suitably to his character. When earthly things interpose between him and the heavenly world, so that it escapes his sight, all is not well with him; he dishonours his profession, and deprives himself of solid joy. But when he acts like himself, conformably to his dignity and hope as a Christian, he regards not so much "the things which are seen," as "the things which are not seen."

Persons whose views and wishes are concentrated in earthly things, call this practice, founded on the principles just stated, "the losing of a certainty for an uncertainty," and are ready to charge the pious Christian with great folly: but, as his religious profession will bear the most severe scrutiny, so the following reasons will sufficiently *justify* his conduct.

This is what the Lord of the heavenly world has strictly *commanded*. He alone has sovereign right of admitting persons into those blissful regions where he dwells, and of enjoining them what ser-

Then falling upon his knees, he thus prayed, "O Lord, my heart is open to thee. I indeed know not what to ask, but only this, Lord, let me not die eternally; O Lord, thou knowest I love thee, O let me live eternally to praise thee." His *Mother* came to him, and urged him to join the company: but he refused, and, alluding to the festivity in the house, said, "This cannot hold out long." Thus if moral causes and their consequences were impartially considered, such reflections would operate as a check to prevent practices that debase the character of man; also excite him to cultivate a taste and disposition for pleasures, that are rational, spiritual, and eternal.

vices he pleases, as necessary qualifications for their admission. And how often as he commanded Christians, to seek, in the first place, his kingdom and righteousness, and not to be anxiously careful for any thing relating to the present life: to set their affections on things that are above, and not on things on the earth: to lay up for themselves treasure in Heaven, that they may have their hearts and their conversation there; and to live above the frowns and smiles of this evil world? Therefore, however unreasonable a conformity to these injunctions might appear to an eye of sense, yet being enforced by the authority of Heaven's eternal King, in whose hand their lives are, it will appear to unprejudiced reason wise and proper.

This is suitable to the Christian's *origin* and *birth*. Man is the offspring of God, especially the good man, who is born again, "born *ανωθεν* from above," and is created again in his Maker's image. And shall he confine his cares, his desires and wishes to this spot of earth, or to any of its transitory enjoyments? Shall not he be aspiring after that world whence he had his birth? Is it not natural for a traveller in a distant land to be often thinking and speaking of his native country, and endeavouring to promote its interests? And thus it is with the Christian: having derived his being, and also his new life and nature from God, he has strong desires of re-union with him. He attentively looks and anxiously desires to view with open face the unspeakable glories of the heavenly world.

His greatest *interest* and *treasure*, and his best

*friends*, are there. Here he possesses nothing that he can call his own : all his wordly comforts are in the power of others, who can take them away. Why then should he have a strong attachment to things that are so very uncertain ? But in heaven he has rich treasures laid up, “ where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal : ” thither he frequently directs his eye, and his thoughts take hold on eternal life. Here he meets with many enemies, with much contempt and hatred from an evil world : but in the realms above he has many friends—for there his God and Father dwells ! there his Saviour reigns high on a throne of glory ! there is an innumerable company of holy angels, who ardently desire his happiness ! and there are all his pious relatives that have died in the Lord, waiting for his arrival ! Will he not then be frequently thinking of these illustrious and happy connexions, and diligently preparing to join with them in their delightful work and worship ?

He considers the upper world as his *home*, and expects, when he is removed hence, to *dwell* there for ever. Would it not be absurd for a person travelling to a far distant country, where he is to be crowned with the highest honours, and possess immense riches, to allow himself to be diverted in his journey by every trifling incident, and to stand still and gaze on every new scene he meets with ? So unreasonable would it be in a child of God, and an heir of heaven, to fix his thoughts and desires on things upon this earth, and lose the prospect of



the supernal felicity and glory. Will he not rather turn away his eyes from all these vanities; and, with Stephen, "look up steadfastly into heaven," to those mansions, where he wishes and expects to reside, and where is "fulness of joy."

By looking from earth to heaven, he will increase in a *meetness* for that holy and happy world, into which nothing can enter that defileth. Without a fitness for the society, exercises, and enjoyments of Paradise, there can be no well-grounded hope of ever dwelling there. And frequently meditating on the celestial state tends to prepare persons for that "inheritance of the saints in light:" it brings the glories of that world down into the soul, and excites in it longing desires to be there. Converse with heaven renders the Christian disgusted with the follies and vanities of the present life, and more regardless about things below. In the exercise of faith, a luminous ray of heavenly light will shine into the mind, and the fire of holy love warm and animate his breast, till he experience a measure of heaven, which will put a lustre upon his soul (such as was upon the face of Moses, when he had been in the mount with God,) and make him more like one of the blessed inhabitants of that world, with which he so frequently converses.

A strong reason can be inferred from the consideration, that "the things which are seen are *temporal*; but the things which are not seen are eternal." And can any thing be said of the former more disparaging, or of the latter more commend-

able? That which is temporal is weak, imperfect, changeable, and insufficient for my happiness; but that which is eternal is perfect, immutable, adequate to all my wishes, and of endless duration. Judge, then, if the Christian does not act wisely in relinquishing things temporal, and directing his pursuit to those which are eternal! If I look to this world, and make it my end and aim, I must expect to meet with a thousand disappointments and vexatious affairs: my immortal mind will still be aspiring after something more, and nothing temporal is equal to its nature, capacity, and duration. But if I make choice of eternal things, these are objects suitable to an intellectual and immortal spirit. And though I at present possess not all I wish, I shall ere long; because the good things I seek after, are boundless as my wishes, and lasting as the duration of my soul.

But the last reason to be produced is, that this practice will afford the sincere Christian great *support* under trouble, and be a good preservative to keep him from fainting in any difficult service to which he may be called. Living by faith will assist him in any thing painful, in which he may be engaged. Every Christian has much work to perform for his God and Saviour; and having but little strength in himself, will soon faint if he be not assisted and supported. But looking to things beyond the precincts of death, will both encourage and strengthen him. What if some of the duties of religion are difficult: yet is not eternal glory a sufficient recompense? What if it be hard work

to overcome irregular desires and unruly passions, and to break through the snares of the world: will not the prospect of heaven, and the hope of an immortal crown, animate him in the contest? Does he sometimes feel a reluctance to duty? Will not a persuasion that God is present, excite him to diligence and perseverance?

This will be also an excellent means to keep the Christian from being dejected under sufferings, and the sharpest trials of life. It may prevent many troubles and afflictions; for, to what are we to attribute various of the disappointments that persons frequently meet with, but to their reposing confidence in sensible things, and their fond expectation of finding happiness in them, while they forget that they are mutable and unsatisfactory? But by looking chiefly to things eternal, the Christian escapes many of these disappointments.

And as to the troubles of life, which cannot be avoided, whether poverty, pain, and sickness, reproach, or the affliction and death of beloved relatives, this practice will bear him up under them. Can a Christian be impatient in straits, or want, who has immense treasures, and a rich inheritance reserved for him in the world above, and of which he is soon to be put in full possession? Can he repine at pain or sickness, who knows these sufferings are but temporal, and consequently short, infinitely less than those torments which are endured in the infernal regions? For these light afflictions are but for a moment, and work out for the Christian a far more exceeding and eternal

weight of glory. Or, can he be cast down at parting with pious relatives, who expects to meet them again with great advantage in a better world, so as never to part any more?\* What are afflictive dispensations, reproaches, or losses, to him who has in view a heavenly kingdom, of which he is going to take possession? Surely there is nothing that can destroy his hope or joy, who lives by faith on things future and eternal! Is the hireling patient during the labours of the day, in expectation of enjoying rest in the evening, and receiving the promised reward? Is the soldier patient during the fatigues and perils of war, that he may be remunerated with a crown of laurel? Shall not then the high honours and inestimable rewards reserved for pious persons in the eternal kingdom of peace and righteousness, cause them to be patient and persevering in all the services and sufferings allotted to them in the Christian warfare? How excellent a life the Christian lives! In poverty he is rich, having a title to an incorruptible inheritance; and, under all the complicated ills of life, rejoices in the prospect of everlasting felicity in the world to come! While the infidel and libertine, at the hour of dissolution, being loaded with the guilt of their numerous and aggravated crimes, dread the grasp of death, and are horribly afraid to enter the eternal world; the pious Christian, enjoying

\* BISHOP HORNE observes, "In the journey of life, as in other journies, it is a pleasing reflection, that we have friends who are thinking of us at home, and who will receive us with joy when our journey is at an end."

the love of God, has a joyful assurance of being admitted through the gates into the New Jerusalem, and of participating in its exalted privileges for ever!



YOUNG PERSONS GUARDED AGAINST FATAL ERRORS  
IN RELIGION.

As true religion is the most important subject, viewed with respect both to this world and the future state, I cannot close this work till I have attempted faithfully to point out some of those *errors* by which many persons are deceived, affectionately warning young persons especially to guard against such fatal delusions, and urging them to lay hold on eternal life.

Is there a soul, a thinking, reasonable, immortal spirit in every man, which is capable of the most noble, excellent, and sublime employments in this life, and whose duration beyond the bounds of time and space is endless? And will its future existence be either completely happy, or wretchedly miserable? Then its salvation must be a matter of the highest import, and should excite in every one the most anxious solicitude. If so, it will follow, that the utmost caution is necessary to prevent a mistake, and avoid being deceived in this weighty affair.

An error in temporal business may be attended with some considerable loss, but the injury may be

repaired. When, on the contrary, a delusion in the vastly superior concern of the soul may be accompanied with an irreparable loss. Yet, alas! there is no engagement or obligation in which a large majority of mankind use so little precaution. The religion by which they hope to be saved, they receive as true without proper examination; and thus expose that in which is contained their spiritual interest to the greatest hazard. As this is a desperate folly, it appears necessary to warn persons against being deceived, in a matter on which an eternity of happiness or misery does depend.

That many are under strong delusions respecting religion, is incontrovertible. The Heathen presumptuously offer religious worship to those that are no gods, and stupidly bow down before stocks and stones, the works of men's hands. Mahometans, rejecting the pure gospel of Christ, put their trust in an impious impostor. And the Jews, blinded by unbelief, are vainly expecting the Messiah to appear, who nearly two thousand years since was cut off for the sins of the people. All these different characters are awfully deceived, and under perilous delusions. But not to insist on these notorious errors, by which so many of the human race allow themselves to be led away, we shall turn our attention to some of those dangerous mistakes too prevalent in the Christian world, and which, having a pernicious influence, produce gloomy reflections, if not lead to endless ruin.

It is very probable that there are not a few in

our day who make choice of a *morality* detached from *faith* in Jesus. The Scriptures containing a divine revelation, and consequently true, unequivocally assert, that "he who believeth not in the name of the only begotten Son of God is condemned already, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him, and he shall die in his sins: that he who loves not the Lord Jesus Christ, shall be anathema maran-atha; and that every soul which will not hear so as to obey him, shall be destroyed."

And yet, there are many even in this land, who account *unbelief* a very excusable and harmless thing, pay no religious regard to Jesus, and either consider the history of him given by the Evangelists as a fable, or esteem him only as a Prophet and Preacher of righteousness; and represent his sufferings and death as of no importance, denying that they were *necessary*, or appointed by the Supreme Being to make atonement for sin. And therefore they imagine that the whole of religion consists in the practice of moral virtue, or in the observance of those duties which the light of reason teaches; and more especially in social virtues, such as fidelity, righteousness, and charity. They set aside the Gospel as a *rule* of faith and duty, think little of those virtues that relate to self-government, and less of those that have reference to God; but take his name in vain, profane his holy Sabbath, neglect and despise his instituted worship, and speak with contempt and ridicule of the Baptismal dedication to God, and of the Sacramental remembrance

of the Saviour's love and death. And yet they hope to be accepted of God, and to obtain salvation, for their moral honesty!

But these people are under a delusion similar to that of the Jews. "Being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, they will not submit themselves unto the righteousness of God." They are not willing to receive their religion from God, nor to accept salvation in the way which divine wisdom has revealed; but, as if wiser than he, they are attempting to find out a way for themselves, and so deceive their own souls. The preaching of salvation by the sufferings and death of the Son of God, is to them, as it was to the ancient Jews and Greeks, "a stumbling-block and foolishness;" while they who believe, see the wisdom and power of God gloriously displayed in this astonishing scheme of human redemption. But as there are some persons who expect to be saved by morality without faith, so

There are others under a strong delusion who indulge a hope of obtaining acceptance with God by *faith without morality*. That no man acquainted with the Scriptures can be saved without faith in the Son of God, is a truth supported by the authority of heaven. It is equally true, that without personal "holiness no man shall see the Lord." They are strangely deluded who think, that the soundness of their faith will compensate for the irregularity of their lives. That faith which does not produce the living fruits of purity and right-



eousness in the life, must be unsound and dead. Of what avail will it be to men, nay, will it not greatly aggravate their condemnation, that they are sound in the Christian faith, if they be drunkards, adulterers, liars, unrighteous in their dealings, or covetous? concerning whom the apostle says, that they cannot "inherit the kingdom of God."

If such a faith as consists in a bare assent of the mind to the truths contained in the Scriptures be all that is necessary to salvation, why might not the apostate angels be saved? for they believe all that is recorded by the sacred Writers concerning Jesus, and the great things he has done and suffered. But because they continue malicious, proud, revengeful, and in a state of confirmed enmity against God, salvation is removed far from them.

And is it not thus with many who call themselves Christians? They have been educated in the principles of the Christian religion, and express an abhorrence of those destructive errors propagated by Arians and Socinians; yet, in eating and drinking indulge to excess, are unjust in their dealings, false to their promises, impure in life; therefore are they far from the kingdom of God, and their hope of heaven is vain and delusive. This is evident from the words of our blessed Saviour, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."

There were some persons even in the apostolic

age, called Gnostics and Nicolaitanes, who boasted of their consummate knowledge in the mysteries of religion, and of the purity of their faith, while at the same time they lived in injustice, uncleanness, and violence. They talked much of the free grace of God, but grossly abused it, by making it a pretence for vile actions. They held, that fornication and adultery were things lawful, and that it was no sin to equivocate, or to conform occasionally to the heathen ceremonies; and they practised all manner of abominable wickedness, of which Epiphanius gives a large account. Irenæus says, These Nicolaitanes received their impiety from Simon Magus, the father of almost all heresies, and one of the vilest and most blasphemous impostors that ever appeared in the world. He allowed his followers to live as they pleased, persuading them not to regard the threatenings of the law, saying, that salvation was only by grace, and that good works were not necessary to it. Hence his followers indulged the most irregular and impure passions, and, while living after the flesh in its lowest state of degradation, failed not to extol the grace of God.

Their notions have been revived by libertines at different periods, who openly professed to believe, that good works or moral actions are not necessary to salvation; that remorse for sin is unworthy of a Christian, reflecting dishonour on the free grace of God, and the merits of Christ; with many more such like blasphemous assertions, as contrary to the holy tendency of the Scriptures, as darkness is to

light, and hell to heaven. The divine Oracles every where abound with invitations and exhortations to purity of heart and holiness of life; and denounce threatenings and wrath against such as turn the grace of God into wantonness, and obey not his Son, but continue in uncleanness and unrighteousness. Professing Christians therefore should guard against this destructive error, so contrary to the sober dictates of reason, and the united testimony of the word of God.

Some Christians rest in the *externals* of religion, without cultivating that *internal holiness*, which is an essential qualification for heaven. This error has been common to men in several ages. In the days of the prophet Jeremiah, there were some who said, "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, are these." They were called the peculiar people of God, and therefore trusted in these lying words, hoping to be saved; notwithstanding that the prophet reproves them for "oppressing the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, shedding innocent blood, and walking after strange gods."

Thus did the hypocritical Pharisees deceive themselves, when our Saviour was upon earth. They boasted in their external privileges and advantages, in being descended from Abraham the friend of God, taken into covenant with God, and having his word and ordinances among them. They trusted likewise in their exact obedience to the ceremonial law, and to their performing all the external rites of religion. They were circumcised,

“payed tythes of mint, anise, and cummin,” kept many fasts, and made “long prayers:” but these they substituted in the place of true religion, which consists in faith, love, and purity, and is evidenced in works of piety, self-denial, mercy, and justice; and it is only by these persons are made meet for the heavenly world.

In the days of the Apostles, there were some who had a “form of godliness,” but were destitute of its “power;” who had a “name that they lived,” were well esteemed by others because of a specious profession, and confided in that, while they were spiritually “dead;” and contented themselves with “bodily exercise,” and joining in all the circumstances of divine worship, which profit men little, and at the same time were unacquainted with that internal principle of vital “godliness,” which alone has “the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.”

And how many among Christians in our day are under the same delusion? They have been baptized into the Christian church, and by that solemn rite made, as they imagine, heirs of heaven. They have been instructed in the principles of the Christian religion, and have never departed from them. They frequent the public worship of God, joining in all the instituted ordinances; and their lives being reformed, are free from all scandalous crimes. Therefore they hope that they shall obtain favour with God, and arrive safe in heaven: although they are unjust, false, penurious, proud, contumelious, and revengeful; far removed from that meek-

ness, humility, and those holy tempers, which the gospel requires in all the disciples of Jesus; and have no inward love of God or holiness, or real delight in his ways or worship. But the sacrifice and religious performance of such persons, who rest in any thing short of inward religion, will not be accepted of God; and a period will certainly arrive, when, the veil being removed, the awful deception will manifestly appear.

Others deceive themselves by an *unqualified trust* in the *rich mercy* and *compassion* of God, and the *infinite merits* of the adorable Redeemer. Far be it from me to intimate, in the most distant manner, any thing disparaging to the free mercy of God, or to the meritorious righteousness and infinite worthiness of Jesus Christ; or to discourage any sincere Christian or true penitent from trusting in them.

But as there were some in the early days of Christianity who abused these glorious doctrines, and “turned the grace of God into lasciviousness, sporting themselves with their own deceivings;” so there is ground to fear, that in this enlightened period there are some who “wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction.” They read, that the ever blessed God is “gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger and of great mercy:” that he “desireth not the death of a sinner, but that all men should be saved:” likewise, that the holy Jesus is a “Mediator between God and men, the propitiation for our sins;” that God is “in him reconciling the world to himself;” that “there is now no condemnation to those that are in him.”

Hence they deduce the most absurd consequences, flattering themselves, that if they rely upon the free mercy of God, and the meritorious sufferings of Christ, they shall certainly be saved, though they should not relinquish a sinful course of life; that a compassionate God will certainly have mercy on the work of his own hands; that the blood of Christ is sufficient to atone for all their trespasses, and cleanse them from all sin; and that the free grace of God will be the more glorified in their salvation.

But, alas! all this while they forget, that the Lord Jehovah is a holy, righteous, and jealous God; that practical sinners are an "abomination in his pure eyes," and that "he is angry with the wicked every day;" that if they die in their sins "he who made them will have no mercy on them, and he who formed them will shew them no favour;" that they only shall be delivered from condemnation by Christ, "who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit;" that they who go on "wilfully" in sin under the gospel dispensation, do virtually "crucify the Son of God afresh," and have nothing to "look for but fiery indignation to devour them as adversaries;" that Jesus will be the "author of salvation" only to those "who obey him:" but that to all those "who would not that he should rule over them," he will say, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

Many have been fatally deceived in neglecting the salvation of their souls till the decline of life,

trusting to a *death-bed repentance*. It would be cruel to dissuade persons from repenting of their sins, who have not previously done so: it is undoubtedly the best thing they can do. But to go on resolutely in sin, purposing to repent at the end of life, and to expect then to obtain remission of sins, and be received into heaven, is a dreadful delusion, into which numerous unhappy persons have fallen to their everlasting ruin. They have been informed, that repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, are necessary to salvation; they at present profess to believe in Jesus, and hope to repent of sin before they leave the world; and therefore doubt not but they shall be accepted. Alas! they awfully deceive themselves, if they imagine confession of sin, and a little superficial sorrow for it, to be all that is included in repentance. Only he "who confesseth and forsaketh his sins shall have mercy." But with what propriety can those persons be said to forsake their sins, who never attempt to repent of them, till they are arrested by affliction, and laid upon their last sick-bed, when appetite is lost, and nature is sinking, when the terrors of death set themselves in array round about them, and the prospect of the eternal world lies open to their view? The truth is, that then, in a certain sense, their sins forsake them.\*

\* An old man, with more simplicity than adroitness, recently said to the author, "I thank God, Sir, that I have overcome the sin of drunkenness: *for now my head will not bear it!*" Thus sins are laid aside, not from a conviction of their moral turpitude, and by the aid of divine

I would ask those who flatter themselves with this vain hope of being saved by a death-bed repentance, Do you know you shall then have time or grace to repent, or that your protracted repentance will be accepted of the Almighty? A person who was reprov'd for his immoral conduct, answered, "I doubt not but to have time before I die to say, Lord, have mercy upon me, and on that to be accepted and saved." But it pleas'd God, who will not be mocked, suddenly to arrest him by an affliction which deprived him of speech, so that he could not utter these few words; but died in great agony and awful confusion. Will you say, That it is possible with God by his grace to renew the soul in the last hours of life? I acknowledge it is. But not what the Almighty *can* do, but what he has declared he *will* do, ought to be the *rule* of our conduct. Did he give genuine repentance to the malefactor in his last hours, who suffered when our Saviour died for us? When the Son of God shall be crucified again in the same manner, you may expect another such miracle: but till then, sinners should instantly repent, and believe the gospel.

They, therefore, who presumptuously proceed in the broad way to destruction, dishonouring them-

influence; but because the commission of them would produce certain physical effects, which cannot now be endured. Others are restrained from sins by the poverty of their pockets—they cannot afford to live as formerly. This is morality without religion, reformation without conversion, and works without faith.



selves, and affronting their Creator with this intention, that in a few of the last hours of life they will rectify their past mistakes, and atone for their former crimes, by professing a sorrow for sin, and imploring forgiveness, do most egregiously deceive themselves, and impudently mock their Supreme Law-giver and Judge. For this is a certain maxim in spiritual matters, that "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. He that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."

Having mentioned some instances of deception in religion, I shall take the liberty to point out a few things, incumbent on persons, to prevent their falling into error, particularly for the direction and preservation of youth.

Carefully consult the *inspired Scriptures*. There you will find every thing revealed that is necessary to salvation, and eternal life; and also learn what they rest in who "fail of the grace of God," and perish for ever. With this sacred lamp in your hand, you will not easily mistake your way. David says, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding to the simple." Consult this unerring guide with sincerity of intention. Lay aside all blind and hurtful prejudice, and follow not your own vain imagination. Be open to conviction, and willing to receive every truth, though it should not exactly agree with some pre-conceived opinions, or should restrain some

favourite passion. You should imitate the example of the Psalmist, who says, "I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way." Respecting every article of your Creed, and every part of your practice, endeavour conscientiously to say, "Thus the Holy Scriptures teach." Use this Sacred Volume impartially, not receiving some of its truths, and rejecting others, as many have injudiciously done; but take them altogether in harmony, those parts that magnify divine grace, connected with those that recommend duty and holiness.

Be serious and impartial in *examining* your own hearts, and in *comparing* them with the *Word* of God. The heart is deceitful, they who have made the closest search into it have found it so. "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool." Trust not to appearances, they will make fair promises. But search the heart thoroughly, and be not afraid to know the worst of yourselves, nor of bringing your conduct to the touchstone of divine revelation. If you have built upon a safe foundation, and your state is good, examination will yield you great satisfaction; and if you find you have been under a dangerous mistake, the discovery will be a means to prevent you from proceeding in it to your final ruin. Suspect some danger where the flesh pleads for indulgence, or where your temporal interest is concerned. Were the flesh to be consulted, and the love of the world to predominate, you would wish those opinions true, and those practices just, which will not bear the test of inquiry. Immorality

is the basis of infidelity. When persons wish things to be right, they more readily embrace them. And therefore you should be very diligent in inquiring what the foundation is upon which you are building for eternity.

Pray for *divine teaching*, for the illumination of the Spirit of grace and truth. If you lean to your own understanding, God may leave you to wander in labyrinths of error. He "resisteth the proud," beholds them afar off, is not near to assist them; but he "giveth grace to the humble," the meek will he guide in judgment.

" Learning is proud, that he has gain'd so much ;  
Wisdom is humble, that she knows no more."

Acknowledge him in all your ways, and he will direct your steps. No upright Christian, who is regular and earnest in the duty of prayer, can be much mistaken, or fatally deceived. Pray therefore that you may, by the Spirit of light and truth, be led into the knowledge of the Sacred Scriptures, especially in those things that relate to your salvation.

And that you may know yourselves, and not err in a matter of the greatest importance, thus address the throne of grace, " O God, thou seest the dangers, snares, and enemies, with which I am surrounded. The world allures, the flesh entices, the devil tempts, and my own heart deals treacherously with me. Do thou shew pity, or I am lost for ever. Enlighten my darkness, O Lord, and deliver me from all errors. Remove from me the way

of lying, and lead me in thy paths. Teach me thy way, and I will walk in it to the end of my life. Let thy good Spirit guide me into all truth, then shall I not err from the ways of thy commandments. What I know not teach thou me, and what I see not make me to understand. My hope, O God, is in thee: when I am weak, strengthen me; when I am in doubt, direct me; and when I am in danger, succour me. Keep me by thy power, through faith, to salvation."

Let it be your earnest desire and endeavour to *do the will of God*; then shall you *know the truth*, and be *preserved from every dangerous mistake*. For thus our Saviour affirms, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God." Have a sincere desire to know the mind of God, firmly resolve through his assistance to embrace his will, live according to what he has revealed as your duty, and you shall acquire the experimental and saving knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ. Proceed in this manner, and you cannot err far from the way of truth and righteousness, or mistake the way of salvation. But whatever less mistakes you may be liable to, you shall at last obtain the end of your scriptural faith, fervent prayers, and persevering obedience—the everlasting salvation of your souls.

O that these things might excite you to use diligence and caution, that you be not deceived in the momentous concerns of your souls and eternity: lest you discover not your mistake till it be too late

to rectify it, and you awake only in that place of misery, from whence there is no redemption.

You, my dear young friends, can never begin this necessary work and duty too soon. Remember, I beseech you, that you were born in sin, you are by practice guilty before God, as transgressors of the moral law you are under condemnation, and while you live in this state you are liable to eternal death; that so long as you continue walking after the flesh, and following the vanities of the world, you are far from the kingdom of grace, and can have no hope of finding acceptance with God, or of enjoying happiness beyond the grave.

Remember also that you are not too young to die. Death may suddenly seize you, and your souls may be summoned to depart in an unexpected moment. How many with eyes sparkling with vivacity, health blooming in their cheeks, and with flattering expectations of long life, have been called hence! Though, in the diseases incident to childhood and youth, you have already escaped many deaths; yet, consider,

“ Old age will come, disease may come before—  
Fifteen is full as mortal as threescore.”

Plutarch informs us, Lycurgus made a law in Lacædemon, that they should bury their dead round about their temples, that the young men having the graves always before their eyes, might be reminded of their own mortality. If you read the sepulchral monuments of the dead, you will be in-

formed that many, not only of those who had not advanced so far in the eventful pilgrimage of life as you have, but even younger persons have found an early grave.

Is it not then your wisdom to secure an interest in Christ your Saviour, that you may be delivered from your sins, and prepared for the society of the blessed in the regions of immortal glory? Or do you think it is yet too soon to make heaven sure to yourselves? What! is it too soon to be safe and happy—to have the blessings of pardon and holiness, and a right to eternal life? You cannot engage in this “one thing needful” too soon, but you may delay it till it be too late. If you were to grieve the Holy Spirit, till you were deprived of his gracious assistance, even your cries and tears would be in vain.

Why then will you hesitate to enter immediately on a work of such vast importance? “Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation. To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.” To-morrow you may stand trembling before the bar of your Judge. Some of the Heathen sages recommended to their pupils, as a very useful practice in the conduct of life, and to provoke and encourage them to good and generous actions, that they should always conceive some great and virtuous man, for whom they had a high veneration, as continually standing by and observing them, ready to applaud or censure what they did, well or ill. But one greater than man or angel observes you. “The eyes of the Lord run to and

fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him." And he who is acquainted even with your thoughts and desires, as well as with your words and actions, "shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." Then "kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and so ye perish from the way."

I know your thoughts: you say, "We will first endeavour to make our fortunes in the world, and spend a few more years in pleasure, then we will listen to the advice, and think of heaven." Some persons, abandoning their reason and conscience, ransack this lower world in pursuit of happiness; climb in search of it the slippery ascent of honour; dig for it in the treasures of gold and silver; or plunge for it in the foul streams of sensual pleasures. But this is a conduct that will not bear reflection, and arms death with a worse than scorpion-sting. Dr. Jortin wisely remarks, "Happy is he who is engaged in controversy with his own passions, and comes off superior; who makes it his endeavour that his follies and weaknesses may die before him, and who daily meditates on mortality, and immortality!"

Allow me to ask you a few questions, and let your own conscience return the answers. Can you positively prosper in secular affairs, without the blessing of the Almighty? If you could, are the riches of this world so much preferable to spiritual blessings, that you will attempt to secure the for-

mer, while you hazard the latter? Are the pleasures of sense, superior to those resulting from communion with God, a sense of his love, and a blooming hope of heaven? Do you know that you shall at a future period, be better disposed for real religion than at present? Or that you shall have time given you for repentance, seeking salvation, and securing a glorious eternity? Or that God will accept of the refuse of life, when you have spent the best of your days in the service of Mammon, and gratification of your senses and appetites? And can you not see on every side, some, who in their younger years had the same thoughts that you now have, but are as little resolved to begin the necessary work as ever, though advanced near the grave? An awful instance of inconsideration in a rich old man, extracted from the Journal of a deceased clergyman, is not a solitary case. "Friday, 24th. We rode by a fine seat; the owner of which, not much above fourscore years old, says he desires only to live thirty years longer: ten to hunt, ten to get money, (having at present but £20,000 a year,) and ten to repent. O that God may not say to him, *Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee!*" You see in this long protracted life, a wish to have it extended thirty years; and even in that case, two-thirds of the time are to be devoted to sin and the world, and only the last ten years to repentance! Ten years are to be employed in recollecting, censuring, confessing, and indulging contrition for, the crimes of a hundred years! Such is the amazing folly of man! And there is reason to suppose, that were this whole pe-



riod added to his life, so far from spending his last ten years in repentance, his confirmed habits of sin would prevent him employing any part of that time in penitence. Such is the probability of those repenting at a distant period, who at present refuse to comply with the requisitions of God's word.

Be persuaded therefore in the morning of your life, to "seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Religion will be so far from spoiling the pleasures of your life, that it will greatly increase them; securing a blessing on all your lawful engagements, and qualifying you for life or death, for service or reward; in "the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," where you shall enjoy, with raptured saints and angels, the beatific vision for ever.



