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THOUGHTS  
ON THE  
IMPORTANCE  
OF THE  
MANNERS OF THE GREAT  
TO GENERAL SOCIETY.

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AN ESTIMATE OF THE RELIGION  
OF THE  
FASHIONABLE WORLD.

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REMARKS ON THE SPEECH OF M. DUPONT.

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AND  
TRACTS

WRITTEN DURING THE RIOTS IN 1817.

BY HANNAH MORE.

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A NEW EDITION.

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## PREFACE.

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IT has often occurred to the Author, that it would furnish a fair subject for discussion, to determine whether it argues more vanity when a writer prefixes his name to his book, or when he publishes without it: — whether it implies more self-sufficiency to suppose that his name is of so much value as to attract readers to his work, or to trust so confidently to the merit of the work itself, as to depend on its unassisted strength for making its own way. — In short, whether the presumption be greater in thinking better of himself, or of his book; and how the proportion of good opinion can be settled or separated.

This is a dilemma in which the writer of these pages has not seldom been involved, having not unfrequently indulged her vanity, or her humility, whichever it may be called, under both shapes, without



being able to ascertain on which side the real difference lies. Nor can she decide which principle predominated in risking these two little works anonymously, near twenty years ago, or in afterwards publishing them, with a name which she had little right to expect could confer importance on any performance.

There is, however, one decided advantage which belongs to the anonymous writer. He is not restrained from the strongest reprehension, and most pointed censure, of existing errors, by the conscious apprehension that his own faults may be brought forward. He is under no fear that his negligences will be opposed to his reproofs. He is not deterred from expatiating on the deficiencies of others, by the fear that the reader may confront his life with his arguments.

Being now called upon by her Booksellers to unite these separate pieces into one volume, the Author cannot neglect so fair an occasion of expressing her gratitude for the very favourable reception which they severally experienced in their unacknowledged state, seven large editions of the first of these pieces having

been called for in the course of a few months, and the whole third impression having been sold on the morning it was published, serve, among repeated instances of general favour, to increase her regret that the merit of her writings have not borne more proportion to the indulgence with which they have been received.

May she venture to observe, without incurring the charge of over-rating her slight performances, that there is a point of view in which this success reflects no discredit on the public opinion? For, does it not evince that where the obvious aim of a writer is to promote the interests of Christian morals, the effort, however feeble, will be candidly accepted; nor will the deficiencies of the composition be allowed to defeat the honesty of the intention.

The lapse of years since the first appearance of these two small pieces, has only served to strengthen the conviction that such topics as they embrace, cannot be pressed too closely, or too frequently, though they may be pressed far more ably, on the attention of the great and the gay, — on the consciences of the busy and the opulent.



The awful and unparalleled public events which have occurred since these, "Thoughts on the Manners of the Great," and this "Estimate of the Religion of the Fashionable," were first addressed to them, seem to furnish no new reason why the standard of Religion which these Tracts presumed to hold up should be lowered, while the strictness of practice which they ventured to suggest, should be relaxed. Have we beheld any such additional instances of the stability of greatness, as teach us that it is become more safe than formerly to build on the certainty of earthly prosperity? Have we seen any such new evidences of the permanency of human grandeur, as to induce us, by any fresh conviction of its security, to an increased neglect of the things which are eternal?

So far from it, will even the most careless observer refuse to acknowledge, that if ever there was a period in which the demand for elevating the tone of Christianity, principle, and correct conduct was more imperious than another, that period is the present?

If this country, which God has signally

distinguished, by preserving it from the almost universal wreck of Empire—which God has signally honoured by rendering it the exclusive Asylum for the persecuted, the plundered, and the destitute of all Europe, the sole refuge of a distracted world;—if this country has been singled out from among the nations of the earth, by such pre-eminent favour, should not such a country be anxiously desirous to render itself more worthy of its high destination, in having been preserved itself, and appointed the preserver of others? As it would on the one hand be unreasonable to plead our trials and difficulties as apology for relaxing our moral discipline, it would be unfair in the other, to produce it as a motive for diminishing our gratitude. Are we not then loudly called upon to acknowledge the mercy of these providential distinctions, by exhibiting in our improved practice *that* consistency which is the life and spirit, as well as the criterion of real goodness.

While England is establishing a splendid reputation abroad, by every act of wise and vigorous resistance to the oppressor of mankind, and by every instance of dis-



interested liberality to the oppressed, should she not be equally anxious to establish a solid glory at home, by sedulously labouring to raise the depressed tone of virtuous practice? Should she not be jealous to evince, that her unexampled generosity to strangers is stimulated by the only pure and noble principle of action? And will not this be most unequivocally demonstrated by the only infallible test, a proportionable attention to domestic religion?

While Great Britain is exhibiting a glorious energy in the cause of a nation, brave and generous like herself, yet professing an erroneous worship, let her convince that nation that she is actuated in assisting her, by the spirit of a religion that is indeed *reformed*; a religion which having the love of God for its motive, has consequently for its end, charity to mankind without distinction of country or of religion.

We are become conspicuous like a city set on a hill. We are "the observed of all observers." While the eyes of the whole world are fixed upon us, let the whole world perceive that our active services,

our warm benevolence to our suffering fellow-creatures, flow from the only principle which can sanctify right conduct, from the only source which can recommend it to the favour of God. Let us prove to them that the religion of the Reformation is not a mere term, a nominal distinction, but an improved practical principle, discovering its superiority by its effects. Let us not let slip the present sublime occasion of illustrating the faith which we profess, by a conduct not derogatory to that high profession.

While we cannot too highly value ourselves on being Britons, let us never forget that we must not rest in it as a mere local distinction. — While we justly triumph in our unparalleled constitution, let us remember that it is not a mere political distinction, glorious as that is, which must finally save us. Let us be persuaded that the paramount superiority of our happy country will consist in acting up to the spirit of that religion which it professes. — That it is not enough that its spirit is transfused into our laws — it is not enough even that it is taught in its public worship, and secured in its invaluable



establishment, but that, if it would operate effectually, it must operate individually; if it would operate on the people, it must operate on their superiors, it must be received into the heart, and exhibited in the life of the rich and the great. By adopting this measure, and only by adopting it, can Christianity be rescued from the anomaly with which its enemies have stigmatized it, that the practice of Christians does not more uniformly exemplify the doctrines of its Author.

Thanks to the English spirit, we want at this moment of peril, no Tyrtœus to awake our valour, for it never slumbers. But we want “the warning voice of him who saw the Apocalypse” to rouse us from our *moral* slumber. We want not to be stimulated to public spirit, but to individual virtue: not to exertion for others, but to vigilance over ourselves;—not to generosity, but to self-denial, not to patriotism, but to piety.

MARCH, 1809.



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THOUGHTS  
ON  
THE IMPORTANCE  
OF THE  
*MANNERS OF THE GREAT*  
TO  
GENERAL SOCIETY.

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“ You are the Makers of Manners.”

SHAKSPEARE.

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# THOUGHTS

ON THE

## MANNERS OF THE GREAT.

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To a large and honourable class of the community, to persons considerable in reputation, important by their condition in life, and commendable for the decency of their general conduct, these slight hints are respectfully addressed. They are not intended as a satire upon vice, or a ridicule upon folly, being written neither for the foolish nor the vicious. The subject is too serious for ridicule; and those to whom it is addressed are too respectable for satire. It is recommended to the consideration of those who, filling the higher

ranks in life, are naturally regarded as patterns, by which the manners of the rest of the world are to be fashioned.

The mass of mankind, in most places, and especially in those conditions of life which exempt them from the temptation to shameful vices, is perhaps chiefly composed of what is commonly termed by the courtesy of the world *good kind of people*; for persons of very flagitious wickedness are almost as rare as those of very eminent piety. To the latter of these, admonition were impertinent; to the former it were superfluous. These remarks, therefore, are principally written with a view to those persons of rank and fortune who live within the restraints of moral obligation; who acknowledge the truth of the Christian religion; and who, if in certain instances they allow themselves in practices not compatible with a strict profession of Christianity, seem to do it rather from habit and want of reflection, than either from disbelief of its doctrines, or contempt of its precepts.



Inconsideration, Fashion, and the World, are three confederates against Virtue, with whom even good kind of people often contrive to live on excellent terms: and the fair reputation which may be obtained by a complaisant conformity to the prevailing practice, and by mere decorum of manners, without a strict attention to religious principle, is a constant source of danger to the rich and great. There is something almost irresistibly seducing in the contagion of general example; hence the necessity of that vigilance, which it is the business of Christianity to quicken by incessant admonition, and which it is the business of the world to lay asleep by the perpetual opiates of ease and pleasure.

A fair reputation is among the laudable objects of human ambition; yet even this really valuable blessing is sometimes converted into a snare, by inducing a treacherous security as soon as it is obtained; and by leading him who is too anxious about obtaining it, to stop short without

aiming at a higher motive of action. A fatal indolence is apt to creep in upon the soul when it has once acquired the good opinion of mankind, if the acquisition of that good opinion was the ultimate end of its endeavours. Pursuit is at an end when the object is in possession; for he is not likely to "press forward" who thinks he has already "attained." The love of worldly reputation, and the desire of God's favour, have this specific difference, that in the latter, the possession always augments the desire; and the spiritual mind accounts nothing done while any thing remains undone.

But after all, a fair fame, the support of numbers, and the flattering concurrence of human opinion, is obviously a deceitful dependence; for as every individual must die for himself, and answer for himself, both these imaginary resources will fail, just at the moment when they could have been of any use. A good reputation, even without internal piety, would be worth obtaining, if the tribuna



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to spread the light of Christianity in another hemisphere; while, by their example, they actually obstruct the progress of it at home. But it is, I doubt not, much oftener owing to the imperceptible influence of custom and habit, than to a decided ill intention. Besides, it may be in morals as it is in optics, the eye and the object may come too close to each other, to answer the end of vision. There are certain faults which press too near our self-love to be even perceptible to us.

The petty mischief of what is called *card money*, is so assimilated to our habits, and interwoven with our family arrangements, that even many of the prudent and the virtuous no longer consider it as a worm which is feeding on the vitals of domestic virtue. How many poor youths, after having been trained in a wholesome dread of idleness and gaming, when they are sent abroad into the world, are astonished to find that part of the wages of the servant is to be paid by his furnishing the implements of diversion



for the guests of the master. Thus good servants are a commodity which has long been diminishing by an elaborate system. The more sober the family, the fewer attractions it must necessarily have; for these servants will naturally quit a place, however excellent, where there is no play, for one where there is some; and a family where there is but little, for one where there is much. Thus if the advantage of the dependant is to increase in a direct ratio to the dissipation of his employer, what encouragement is left for valuable servants, or what prospect remains of securing valuable servants for sober-minded families?

It will be said, that so small an evil is scarcely worth insisting on. But a small fault, which is become a part of a system, in time establishes an error into a principle. And that remonstrance which should induce people to abolish one wrong habit, or pluck out one rooted error, however trifling, would be of more real use than the most eloquent declamation against

vice in general. To take out only one thorn from a suffering patient is more beneficial to him than the most elaborate disquisition on the pain he is suffering from the thorns which remain.

It should be held as an eternal truth, that what is morally wrong can never be politically right. It would be arguing great ignorance of human nature, and exacting a very rigorous degree of virtue from a person of vulgar sentiments, to expect that he should wish well to the interests of sobriety, or heartily desire the decrease of dissipation, while the growth of it is made so profitable to himself. It is requiring too much to make the temptation so forcible where the power of resistance is so weak. To hold out to a poor fellow the strong seduction of interest, and yet to expect he will retain the same inflexible principle, is to expect from an illiterate servant an elevation of virtue, which has not always been found even in statesmen and ministers.



It is not here intended to enter into any animadversion on the subject of play itself. But may we not ask, without offence, if it be perfectly right to introduce any money arising from or connected with it, into a part of regular family economy? Is it not giving an air of system to diversion, which does not seem entirely of a piece with the other orderly practices of many discreet families where this odd traffic is carried on? Would not our ancestors, who seem to have understood economy and magnificence too, at least as well as their descendants, have been scandalized had it been proposed to them to incorporate play so intimately with the texture of their domestic arrangements, as that it should make part of their plan? And would they have thought it a very dignified practice not to have paid themselves for the amusements of their own houses; but to have invited their friends to an entertainment of which the guests were to defray part of the expence?

Let me suppose a case : what appearance would it have, if every gentleman who has partaken of the social entertainment of a friend's table, were, after dinner, expected by the butler to leave a piece of money under his plate to pay for his wine ? Do not common sense, hospitality, friendship, and liberal feelings revolt at the bare suggestion of such a project ? Yet there is in effect as little hospitality, as little friendship, and as little liberality in being obliged to pay for the cards as for the wine ; both equally making a part of the entertainment.

It is hardly too ludicrous to add, that seeing how this point has been carried in favour of the groom of the chambers (and it descends down to the lowest footman), we need not despair of seeing the butler insist on being allowed to furnish the wine, for which he shall compel the guests to pay with the same high interest with which they now pay for the cards. It will seem odd at first,



but afterwards we shall think no more about it, to see him, during dinner, noting down those who drink the more costly wines, that they may be taxed double. And it will sound whimsical *at first*, to hear the butler give his master notice that he must quit his place, because the company have drunk little wine. This only sounds ridiculous, while the leaving a place through deficiency of card-money sounds reasonable, because we are accustomed to the one, and the other is not yet become fashionable.

The extinction of this favourite perquisite would at first be considered as a violent innovation. All reformations seem formidable before they are attempted. The custom of *vails*, "which gave corruption *broader* wings to fly," was supposed to be invincible. Yet how soon did a general concurrence exterminate it! Had any one foretold twenty years ago, that in a very short space near half a million of pilfering, swearing, sabbath-breaking children, should be rescued

from the streets, and brought into habits of sobriety and virtue, should we not have laughed to scorn the spiritual Hercules, who would have undertaken that the cleansing stream of religious instruction should thus be poured through the Augean stable of ignorance and vice, and in some measure wash away its grossest impurities?

The servant would probably complain of the annihilation of this gainful custom: but the master would find his account in indemnifying the loss; for he in his turn would be released from the preposterous contribution to the wages of other men's servants. If in a family of overgrown dissipation the stated addition should not be found equivalent to the relinquished perquisite, the servant must heroically submit to the disadvantageous commutation for the public good. And after all it would be no very serious grievance if his reduced income should not then exceed that of the Chaplain. It will still at least exceed that of

many a deserving gentleman, bred to liberal learning, whose feelings that learning has refined to a painful acuteness, and who is withering away in hopeless penury with a large family, on a Curacy, but little surpassing the wages of a livery servant.

The same principle in human nature by which the nabob, the contractor, and others, by a sudden influx of unaccustomed wealth, become voluptuous, extravagant, and insolent, seldom fails to produce the same effect on persons in these humbler stations, when raised from inferior places to the sudden affluence of these gainful ones. Increased profligacy on a sudden swell of fortune is commonly followed by desperate methods to improve the circumstances when impaired by the improvidence attending unaccustomed prosperity.

There is another domestic practice which it is almost idle to mention, because it is so difficult to redress, since such is the present state of society that



even the conscientious think themselves obliged to concur in it. That ingenuity which could devise some effectual substitute for the daily and hourly lie of *Not at home*, would deserve well of society. Why will not some of those illustrious ladies who lead in the fashionable world invent some phrase which shall equally rescue from destruction the time of the master and the veracity of the servant? Some new and appropriate expression, the not adopting which should be branded with the stigma of vulgarity, might accomplish that which the charge of its being immoral has failed to accomplish.

The expediency of the denial itself no one will dispute, who has a just idea of the value of time. Some scrupulous persons so very much dispute the lawfulness of making their servants' tongue the medium of any kind of falsehood, as to make it a point of conscience rather to lay themselves open to the irruption of every idle invader, who

sallies out on morning visits bent on the destruction of business and the annihilation of study. People of very strict integrity lament that this practice induces a general spirit of lying, mixes itself with the habit, and by a quality, the reverse of an alterative, gradually undermines the moral constitution.—Others on the contrary assert, that this is one of those lies of convention, no more intended to deceive, than the *dear sir* at the beginning, or your *humble servant* at the close of a letter to a person who is not dear to you, and to whom you owe no subjection. There is, however, this very material difference, that if the first be a falsehood, you do not convey it by proxy: You use it yourself, and you use it to one who sets no more value on your words than you intended he should; and who shews you he does not, by using the same stated phrase in return, in addressing you, for whom he cares as little. Here the words pass for no more than they are worth.

The ill effects of the custom we are

lamenting may be traced in marking the gradual initiation of an unpractised country servant. And who has not felt for his virtuous distress, when he has been ordered to call back a more favoured visitant, whom he had just sent away with the assurance that his lady was not at home? Who has not seen his suppressed indignation at being obliged to become himself the detector of that falsehood of which he had been before the instrument? But a little practice, and a repetition of reproof for even daring to *look* honest, soon cures this fault, especially as he is sure to be commended, in proportion to the increased firmness of his voice, and the improved steadiness of his countenance.

If this evil, petty as it may seem to be, be really without a remedy; if the state of society be such that it cannot be redressed, let us not be so unreasonable as to expect that a servant will equivocate in small instances and not in great ones. To hope that he will always lie for your



convenience, and never for his own, is perhaps expecting more from human nature in a low and uncultivated state than we have any right to expect. Nor should the master look for undeviating and perfect rectitude from his servant, in whom the principle of veracity is daily and hourly weakened in conformity to his own command.

Let us bring home the case to ourselves, the only fair way of determining in all cases of conscience. Suppose that we had established it into a system to allow ourselves regularly to lie on one certain, given subject, every day, and every hour in the day; while we continued to value ourselves on the most undeviating adherence to truth on every other point. Who shall say, that at the end of one year's tolerated and systematic lying, on this individual subject, we should continue to look upon falsehood in general with the same abhorrence we did when we first entered upon this partial exercise of it.

There is an evil newly crept into polished society, and it comes under a mask so specious, that they who are allured by it, come not seldom under the description of *Good sort of people*. I allude to SUNDAY-CONCERTS. Many who would be startled at a profane, or even a light amusement, allow themselves to fancy that the name of *sacred music* sanctifies the diversion. But if those more favoured beings, whom Providence enables to live in ease and affluence, do not make these petty renunciations of their own way, and their own pleasure, what criterion have we by which to judge of their sincerity? For as the goodness of Providence has exempted them from painful occupations, they have neither labour from which to rest, nor business from which to refrain. A little abstinence from pleasure is the only valid evidence they have to give of their obedience to the divine precept.

I know with what indignant scorn this remark will, by many, be received: I

know that much will be advanced in favour of the sanctity of this amusement. I shall be told that the words are, many of them, extracted from the Bible, and that the composition is the divine Handel's. But were the angel Gabriel the poet, the archangel Michael the composer, and the song of the Lamb the subject, it would not abrogate that statute of the Most High, which has said, "Thou shalt keep holy the Sabbath day, and thy SERVANT, and thy CATTLE, shall do no manner of work."—I am persuaded that the hallelujahs of heaven would make no moral music to the ear of a conscientious person, while he reflected that multitudes of servants are through his means waiting in the street, exposed to every temptation; engaged, perhaps, in profane swearing, and idle, if not dissolute conversation: and the very cattle are deprived of that rest which the tender mercy of God was graciously pleased, by an astonishing condescension, to include in the commandment.



But I will, for the sake of argument, so far concede as to allow of the innocence and even piety of Sunday-concerts: I will suppose (what, however, does not often happen) that no unhallowed strains are ever introduced; I will admit that some attend these concerts with a view to cultivate devout affections; that they cherish the serious impressions excited by the music, and retire in such a frame of spirit as convinces them that the heart was touched while the ear was gratified: nay, I *would* grant, if such a concession would be accepted, that the intervals were filled up with conversation, "whereby one may edify another:"—yet all these good effects, allowing them really to have been produced, will not remove the invincible objection of an EVIL EXAMPLE; and what liberal spirit would refuse any reasonable sacrifice of its own pleasure to so important a motive? Your servants have been accustomed to consider a concert as a secular diversion; if you, therefore, continue it on a Sun-

day, will not they also expect to be indulged on that day with their common amusements? Saint Paul, who was a very liberal thinker, believed it prudent to make frequent sacrifices of things indifferent in themselves. He was willing to deny himself a harmless and lawful gratification, *even as long as the world stood*, rather than shock the tender consciences of men of less understanding. Where a practice is neither good nor evil in itself, it is both discreet and generous to avoid it, if it can be attended with any possible danger to minds less enlightened, and to faith less confirmed.

But, religion apart, I have sometimes wondered that people do not yield to the temptation that is held out to them, of abstaining from diversions one day in seven, upon motives of mere human policy; as voluptuaries sometimes fast, to give a keener relish to the delights of the next repast: for pleasure, like an *over-fed lamp*, is extinguished by the

excess of its own aliment: not to say that the instrument of our gratification is often converted into our bane. Anacreon was choked by a grape stone. The lovers of pleasure are not always prudent, even upon their own principles; for I am persuaded that this world would afford much more real satisfaction than it does, if we did not press, and torture, and strain it, in order to make it yield what it does not contain: Much good, and much pleasure, it does liberally bestow; but no labour, or art, can extract from it that elixir of peace, that divine essence of content, which it is not in its nature to produce. There is good sense in searching into every blessing for its *hidden* properties; but it is folly to ransack and plunder it for such properties as the experience of all ages tells us are *foreign* to it. We exhaust the world of its pleasures, and then lament that it is empty; we wring those pleasures to the very dregs, and then complain that they are vapid. We erroneously seek in



the world for that peace which we are repeatedly told is not to be found in it. While we neglect to seek it in *Him* who has expressly told us that *our* happiness depends on *his* having “overcome the world.”—“Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth give I unto you.”

I shall, probably, be accused of a very narrow and fanatical spirit, in animadverting on a practice so little suspected of harm as the frequenting of public walks and gardens on a Sunday; and, certainly, there cannot be an amusement more entirely harmless in itself. But I must appeal to the honest testimony of our own hearts, if the *effect* be favourable to seriousness. Do we commonly retire from these places with the impressions which were made on us at church, in their full force? We entered these sprightly scenes, perhaps, with a strong remaining tincture of that devout spirit which the public worship had infused into the mind: but have we not felt it

gradually diminish? Have not our powers of resistance grown insensibly weaker? Has not the gaiety of the scene converted, as it were, argument into illusion? The doctrines, which in the morning appeared the sober dictates of reason, now seem unreasonably rigid; and truths, which were then thought incontrovertible, now appear impertinent. To answer objections is much easier than to withstand allurements. The understanding may controvert a startling proposition with less difficulty than the sliding heart can resist the infection of seducing gaiety. To oppose a cold and speculative faith to the enchantment of present pleasure, is to fight with inadequate weapons: it is resisting arms with rules; it is combating a temptation with an idea. Whereas, he who engages in the Christian warfare, will find that his chief strength consists in knowing that he is very weak; his progress will depend on his conviction that he is every hour liable to go back; his success, on the persuasion of his

fallibility ; his safety, on the assurance that to retreat from danger is his highest glory, and to decline the combat his truest courage.

Whatever indisposes the mind for the duty of any particular season, though it assume ever so innocent a form, cannot be perfectly right. If the heart be laid open to the incursion of vain imaginations, and worldly thoughts, it matters little by what gate the enemy entered. If the effect be injurious, the cause cannot be quite harmless. It is the perfidious property of certain pleasures, that though they seem not to have the smallest harm in themselves, they imperceptibly indispose the mind to every thing that is good.

Many readers will be apt to produce against all this preciseness, that hackneyed remark which one is tired of hearing, that Sunday diversions are allowed publicly in many foreign countries, as well in those professing the reformed religion, as popery. But the corruptions



of one part of the Protestant world are no reasonable justification of the evil practices of another. Error and infirmity can never be proper objects of imitation. It is still a remnant of the old leaven : and as to pleading the practice of Roman Catholic countries, one blushes to hear an enlightened Protestant justifying himself by examples drawn from that benighted religion, whose sanctions he would in any other instance be ashamed to plead.

Besides, though I am far from vindicating the amusements permitted on Sundays in foreign countries, by allowing that established custom and long prescription have the privilege of conferring right ; yet foreigners may, at least, plead the sanction of custom, and the connivance of the law : while in this country, the law of the land, and the established usage, concurring with still higher motives, give a sort of venerable sanction to religious observances, the breach of which will be always more

liable to misconstruction than in countries where so many motives do not concur in its support.

I do not assert that all those who neglect a strict observation of the Lord's day are remiss in the performance of all their other duties; though they ought to bear in mind that the observance of their other duties is no atonement for the neglect of this; I will however venture to affirm, that all whom I have remarked conscientiously to observe this day from right motives, have been uniformly attentive to their general conduct. It has been the opinion of many wise and good men \*, that Christianity will stand, or fall, as this day is neglected, or observed.

\* The testimony of one lawyer will, perhaps, be less suspected than that of many priests. "I have ever found," says the great Lord Chief Justice Hale, "by a strict and diligent observation, that a due observance of the duty of Sunday has ever had joined to it a blessing upon the rest of my time; and the week that has been so begun has been blessed and prosperous to me: and, on the other side, when I have been negligent of the

Sunday seems to be a kind of Christian Palladium; and the city of God will never be totally taken by the enemy till the observance of that be quite lost. Every sincere soldier of the great Captain of our Salvation must, therefore, exert himself in its defence, as ever he would preserve the divine Fort of Revelation against the confederated attacks of the world and the Devil.

I shall proceed to enumerate a few of the many causes which seem to impede well-disposed people in the progress of religion. None perhaps contributes more to it than that cold, prudential caution against the folly of aiming at *perfection*, so frequent in the mouths of the worldly wise. "We must take the world," say they, "as we find it; reformation is

" duties of this day, the rest of the week has been  
" unsuccessful and unhappy to my own secular  
" employments. So that I could easily make  
" an estimate of my successes the week following, by the manner of my passing this day.  
" AND I DO NOT WRITE THIS LIGHTLY, BUT BY  
" LONG AND SOUND EXPERIENCE."

*Sir Mathew Hale's Works.*



“not our business, and we are commanded not to be righteous overmuch.” A text by the way entirely misunderstood and perverted by people of this sort. But these admonitions are contrary to every maxim in human affairs. In arts and letters \* the most consummate models are held out to imitation. We never hear any body cautioned against becoming too wise, too learned, or too rich. Activity in business is accounted commendable; in friendship it is amiable; in ambition it is laudable. The highest exertions of industry are commended; the finest energies of genius are admired. In all the perishing concerns of earthly things, zeal is extolled as exhibiting marks of a sprightly temper and a vigo-

\* When Pliny the younger was accused of despising the degenerate eloquence of his own age, and of the vanity of aspiring at perfection in oratory, and of endeavouring to become the rival of Cicero; instead of denying the charge, he exclaimed with a noble spirit, “I think it the height of folly not, “always to propose to myself the most perfect “object of imitation.”

rous mind. Strange! that to be "fer-  
" vent in spirit," should only be disho-  
nourable in that single instance which  
should seem to demand unremitting dili-  
gence, and unextinguishable warmth.

But after all, *is* an excessive and intem-  
perate zeal the *common* vice of the times?  
Is there any *very* imminent danger that  
the enthusiasm of the great should trans-  
port them to dangerous and inconve-  
nient excesses? Are our young men of  
fashion so *very* much led away by the  
fervours of piety, that they require to  
have their imaginations tamed, and their  
ardours cooled by the freezing maxims  
of worldly wisdom? Is the spirit of the  
age so *very* much inclined to catch and  
to communicate the fire of devotion, as  
to require to be damped by admonition,  
or extinguished by ridicule? When  
the inimitable Cervantes attacked the  
wild notions and romantic ideas which  
mised the age in which he lived, he did  
wisely, because he combated an actually  
existing evil; but in this latter end of the

eighteenth century, there seems to be little more occasion, among persons of rank I mean, of cautions against enthusiasm than against chivalry ; and he who declaims against religious excesses in the company of well-bred people, shews himself to be as little acquainted with the manners of the times in which he lives, as he would do who should think it a point of duty to write another Don Quixote.

Among the devices dangerous to our moral safety, certain favourite and specious maxims are not the least successful, as they carry with them an imposing air of indulgent candour, and always seem to be on the popular side of good-nature. One of the most obvious of these is, that method of reconciling the conscience to practices not decidedly wicked, and yet not scrupulously right, by the qualifying phrase, *that there is no harm in it*. I am mistaken if more innocent persons do not inflame their spiritual reckoning by this treacherous apology than by almost any other means. Few are



systematically, or premeditatedly wicked; or propose to themselves, at first, more than such small indulgences as they are persuaded *have no harm in them*. But this latitude is gradually and imperceptibly enlarged. As the expression is vague and indeterminate; as the darkest shade of virtue, and the lightest shade of vice, melt into no very incongruous colouring; as the bounds between good and evil are not always so precisely defined but that he who ventures to the confines of the one, will find himself on the borders of the other; every one furnishes his own definition; every one extends the supposed limits a little further; till the bounds which fence in permitted from unlawful pleasures are gradually broken down, and the marks which separated them imperceptibly destroyed.

It is, perhaps, one of the most alarming symptoms of the degeneracy of morals in the present day, that the distinctions of right and wrong are almost swept away in polite conversation. The most grave

offences are often named with cool indifference; the most shameful profligacy with affected tenderness and indulgent toleration. The substitution of the word *gallantry* for that crime which stabs domestic happiness and conjugal virtue, is one of the most dangerous of all the modern abuses of language. Atrocious deeds should never be called by gentle names. This must certainly contribute, more than any thing, to diminish the horror of vice in the rising generation. That our passions should be too often engaged on the side of error, we may look for the cause, though not for the vindication, in the unresisted propensities of our constitution: but that our *reason* should ever be exerted in its favour, that our *conversation* should ever be taught to palliate it, that our *judgment* should ever look on it with indifference, that our tongues should ever be employed to confound the eternal distinctions of right and wrong; this has no shadow of excuse: because this can pretend to no

foundation in nature, no apology in temptation, no palliative in passion.

• However defective, therefore, our practice may be ; however we may be allured by seduction, or precipitated by passion, let us beware of lowering the STANDARD of RIGHT. This induces an imperceptible corruption into the heart, stagnates the noblest principles of action, irrecoverably debases the sense of moral and religious obligation, and prevents us from living up to the height of our nature, because it prevents us from knowing its possible elevation. It cuts off all communication with virtue, and almost prevents the possibility of a return to it. If we do not rise as high as we aim, we shall rise the higher for having aimed at a lofty mark : but where the RULE is low, the practice cannot be high, though the converse of the proposition is not proportionably true.

Nothing more benumbs the exertions of ardent youthful virtue than the cruel sneer which worldly prudence bestows on



active goodness, and the cool derision it expresses at the defeat of a benevolent scheme, of which malice, rather than penetration, had foreseen the failure. Alas! there is little need of any such discouragements. The world is a climate which too naturally chills a glowing generosity, and contracts an expanded heart. The zeal of the most sanguine is but too apt to cool, and the activity of the most diligent, to slacken of itself: and the disappointments which Benevolence encounters in the failure of her best-concerted projects, and the frequent depravity of the most chosen objects of her bounty, would soon dry up the amplest streams of charity, were they not fed by the living fountain of religious principle.

I cannot dismiss this part of my subject without animadverting on the too prompt alacrity, even of worthy people, to disseminate, in public and general conversation, instances of their unsuccessful attempts to do good. I never hear a

charity story begun to be related in mixed company, that I do not tremble for the catastrophe, lest it should exhibit some mortifying disappointment, which may deter the inexperienced from running any generous hazards, by exciting harsh suspicions, at an age, when it is less dishonourable to meet with a few casual hurts, and transient injuries, than to go cased in the cumbersome and impenetrable armour of distrust. The liberal should be particularly cautious how they furnish the avaricious with creditable pretences for saving their money, since all the instances of the mortifications the humane meet with are carefully treasured up, and added to the armory of the covetous man's arguments, and never fail to be produced by him as defensive weapons, upon every fresh attack on his heart or his purse.

But I am willing to hope that that uncharitableness which we so often meet with in persons of advanced years, is not always the effect of a heart naturally

hard. Misanthropy is very often nothing but abused sensibility. Long habits of the world, and a melancholy conviction how little good he has been able to do in it, harden many a tender-hearted person. The milk of human kindness becomes soured by repeated acts of ingratitude. This commonly induces an indifference to the well-being of others, from a hopelessness of adding to the stock of human virtue and human happiness. This uncomfortable disease is very fond of spreading its own contagion, which is a cruelty to the health of young and uninfected virtue. — For this distemper, generated by a too sanguine disposition, and grown chronical from repeated disappointments, from having rated worldly virtue and worldly generosity too highly, there is but one remedy, or rather one prevention: and this is a genuine principle of Christian piety. He who is once convinced that he is to assist his fellow-creatures, because it is the will of God; he who is persuaded that his forgiving his



fellow-servant the hundred pence is a condition annexed to the remission of his own ten thousand talents, will soon get above all uneasiness when the consequence does not answer his expectation. He will soon become only anxious to do his duty, humbly committing events to higher hands. Disappointments will then only serve to refine his motives, and purify his virtue. His charity will then become a sacrifice with which God is well pleased! His affections will be more spiritualized, and his devotions more intense. Nothing short of such a courageous piety, growing on the stock of Christian principle, can preserve a heart hackneyed in the world from relaxed diligence or criminal despair.

People in general are not aware of the mischief of judging of the rightness of any action by its prosperity, or of the excellence of any institution by the abuse of it. We must never proportion our exertions to our success, but to our duty. If every laudable undertaking were to be

dropped because it failed in some cases, or was abused in others, there would not be left an Alms-House, a Charity-School, or an Hospital in the land. If every right practice were to be discontinued because it had been found not to be successful in every instance, and if every right principle were rejected because it had not been operative in all cases, this false reasoning pushed to the extreme, might at last be brought as an argument for shutting up our churches, and burning our bibles.

But if, on the one hand, there is a proud and arrogant discretion which ridicules, as Utopian and romantic, every generous project of the active and the liberal ; so there is on the other, a sort of popular bounty which arrogates to itself the exclusive name of *feeling*, and rejects with disdain the influence of a higher principle. I am far from intending to depreciate this humane and exquisitely tender sentiment, which the beneficent Author of our nature gave us,

as a stimulus to remove the distresses of others, in order to get rid of our own uneasiness. I would only observe, that where not strengthened by superior motives, it is a casual and precarious instrument of good, and ceases to operate, except in the immediate presence, and within the audible cry of misery. This sort of feeling forgets that any calamity exists which is out of its own sight; and though it would empty its purse for such an occasional object as rouses transient sensibility, yet it seldom makes any stated provision for miseries, which are not the less real because they do not obtrude upon the sight, and awaken the tenderness of immediate sympathy. This is a mechanical charity, which requires springs and wheels to set it a going; whereas, real Christian charity does not wait to be acted upon by impressions and impulses.

Another cause which very much intimidates well-disposed people, is their terror, lest the character of piety should derogate from their reputation as men of



sense. Every man of the world naturally arrogates to himself the superiority of understanding over every religious man. He, therefore, who has been accustomed to set a high value on his intellectual powers, must have made very considerable advances in piety before he can acquire a magnanimous indifference to this usurped superiority of another: before he can submit to the parsimonious allotment of wit and learning, which is assigned him by the supercilious hand of worldly wisdom. But this attack upon his pride will be no bad touchstone of his sincerity. If his advances have not been so considerable, then, by an hypocrisy of the least common kind, he will be industrious to appear less good than he really is, lest the detection of his serious propensities should draw on him the imputation of ordinary parts or low attainments. But the danger is, that while he is too sedulously intent on maintaining his pretensions as an ingenious man, his claims to piety should

daily become weaker. That which is long suppressed is too frequently extinguished.


Nothing, perhaps, more plainly discovers the faint impression which religion has really made upon our hearts, than this disinclination, even of good people, to serious conversation. Let me not be misunderstood ; I do not mean the wrangle of debate ; I do not mean the gall of controversy ; I do not mean the fiery strife of *opinions*, than which nothing can be less favourable to good nature, good manners, or good society. But it were to be wished, that it was not thought ill-bred and indiscreet that the escapes of the tongue should now and then betray the “abundance of the heart :” that when such subjects are casually introduced, a discouraging coldness did not instantly take place of that sprightly animation of countenance which made common topics interesting. If these “outward and visible signs” were unequivocal, we should form but moderate ideas

of the "inward and spiritual grace." It were to be wished, that such subjects were not thought dull *merely* because they are good; it were to be wished that they had the common chance of fair discussion; and that parts and learning were not ashamed to exert themselves on occasions where both might appear to so much advantage. If the heart were really interested, could the affections forbear now and then to break out into language? Artists, physicians, merchants, lawyers, and scholars, keep up the spirit of their professions by mutual intercourse. New lights are struck out, improvements are suggested, emulation is kindled, love of the object is inflamed, mistakes of the judgment are rectified, and desire of excellence is excited by communication. And is piety alone so very easy of acquisition, so very natural to our corrupt hearts, as to require none of the helps which are indispensable on all other subjects? Travellers, who are to visit any particular country, are full



of earnest inquiry, and diligent research; they think nothing indifferent by which their future pleasure or advantage may be affected. Every hint which may procure them any information, or caution them against any danger, is thankfully received; and all this, because they are really in *earnest* in their preparation for this journey; and do fully *believe*, not only that there is such a country, but that they themselves have a personal individual interest in the good, or evil, which may be found in it.

A further danger to *good kind of people* seems to arise from a mistaken idea, that only great and actual sins are to be guarded against. Whereas, in effect, temptations to the grosser sins do not so frequently occur to those who are hedged in by the blessings of affluence, by a regard to reputation and the care of health; while sins of omission make up, perhaps, the most formidable part of *their* catalogue of offences. These generally sup-



ply in number what they want in weight, and are the more dangerous for being little ostensible. They continue to be repeated with less regret, because the remembrance of their predecessors does not, like the remembrance of formal, actual crimes, assume a body and a shape, and terrify by the impression of particular scenes and circumstances. While the memory of transacted evil haunts a tender conscience by perpetual apparition; omitted duty, having no local or personal existence, not being recorded by standing acts, and deeds, and dates, and having no distinct image to which the mind may recur, sinks into quiet oblivion, without deeply wounding the conscience, or tormenting the imagination. These omissions were, perhaps, among the "secret sins," from which the royal penitent so earnestly desired to be cleansed: and it is worthy of the most serious consideration, that these are the offences against which the Gospel pronounces some of its very

alarming denunciations. It is not less against negative than against actual evil, that affectionate exhortation, lively remonstrance, and pointed parable, are exhausted. It is against the tree which bore no fruit, the lamp which had no oil, the unprofitable servant who made no use of his talent, that the severe sentence is denounced ; as well as against *corrupt* fruit, *bad* oil, and talents *ill* employed. We are led to believe, from the same high authority, that omitted duties, and neglected opportunities, will furnish no inconsiderable portion of our future condemnation. A very awful part of the decision, in the great day of account, seems to be reserved merely for carelessness, omissions, and negatives. Ye gave me no meat ; ye gave me no drink ; ye took me NOT in ; ye visited me NOT. On the punishment attending positive crimes, as being more naturally obvious, it was not, perhaps, thought so necessary to insist.

Another cause, which still further im-



pedes the reception of Religion even among the well-disposed, is, that garment of sadness in which people delight to suppose her dressed; and that life of hard austerity, and pining abstinence, which they pretend she enjoins her disciples. And it were well if this were only the misrepresentation of her declared enemies; but unhappily, it is the too frequent misconception of her injudicious friends. But such an overcharged picture is not more unamiable than it is unlike: for I will venture to affirm that Religion, with all her beautiful and becoming sanctity, imposes fewer sacrifices, not only of rational, but of pleasurable enjoyment, than the uncontrolled dominion of any one vice. Her service is not only safety hereafter, but freedom here. She is not so tyrannizing as Appetite, so exacting as the World, nor so despotic as Fashion. Let us try the case by a parallel, and examine it, not as affecting our virtue but our pleasure. Does Religion forbid the

cheerful enjoyments of life as rigorously as Avarice forbids them? Does she require such sacrifices of our ease as Ambition, or such renunciations of our quiet as Pride? Does Devotion *murder sleep* like Dissipation? Does she destroy Health like Intemperance? Does she annihilate Fortune like Gaming? Does she imbitter Life like Discord? or abridge it like Duelling? Does Religion impose more vigilance than Suspicion? or inflict half as many mortifications as Vanity? Vice has her martyrs: and the most austere and self-denying Ascetic — (who mistakes the genius of Christianity almost as much as her enemies mistake it) — never tormented himself with such cruel and causeless severity as that with which Envy lacerates her unhappy votaries. Worldly honour obliges us to be at the trouble of resenting injuries; and worldly prudence obliges us to be at the expence of litigating about them; but Religion spares us the inconvenience of the one and the cost of the other, by the sum.

mary command TO FORGIVE; and by this injunction she consults our happiness no less than our virtue; for the torment of constantly hating any one must be, at least, equal to the sin of it. And resentment is an evil so costly to our peace, that we should find it more cheap to forgive even were it not more right. If this estimate be fairly made, then is the balance clearly on the side of Religion even in the article of pleasure.

It is an infirmity not uncommon to *good kind of people*, to comfort themselves that they are living in the exercise of some one natural good quality, and to make a religious merit of a constitutional happiness. They have also a strong propensity to separate what God has joined; belief and practice; the creed and the commandments; actions and motives; moral duty and religious obedience. Whereas, you will hardly find, in all the New Testament, a moral, or a social virtue, that is not hedged in by some religious injunction: scarcely a good action



enjoined towards others, but it is connected with some exhortation to personal purity. All the charities of benevolence are, in general, so agreeable to the natural make of the heart, that it is a very tender mercy of God to have made that a duty, which, to finer spirits, would have been irresistible as an inclination; and to have annexed the highest future reward to the greatest present pleasure. But in order to give a religious sanction to a social virtue, the duty of "visiting the fatherless and widow in their affliction," is inseparably attached to the difficult and self-denying injunction of "keeping ourselves unspotted from the world." This adjunct is the more needful, as many are apt to make a kind of moral commutation, and to allow themselves so much pleasure in exchange for so much charity. But one good quality can never stand proxy for another. The Christian virtues derive their highest lustre from association: they have such a spirit of society, that they are

weak and imperfect when solitary ; their radiance is brightened by an intermingling of their beams, and their natural strength multiplied by their alliance with each other.

It cannot be denied that *good sort of people* sometimes use religion as the voluptuous use physick. As the latter employ medicine to make health agree with luxury, the former consider religion as a medium to reconcile peace of conscience with a life of pleasure. But no moral chemistry can blend natural contradictions. In all such unnatural mixtures the world will still be uppermost, and religion will disdain to coalesce with its antipathy.

Let me not be suspected of intending to insinuate that religion encourages men to fly from society, and hide themselves in solitudes : to renounce the generous and important duties of active life, for the visionary, cold, and fruitless virtues of an Hermitage, or a Cloister. No : the mischief arises not from our living in

the world, but from the world living in us ; occupying our hearts, and monopolizing our affections. Action is the life of virtue, and the world is the theatre of action. Perhaps some of the most perfect patterns of human conduct may be found in the most public stations, and among the busiest orders of mankind. It is, indeed, a scene of trial, but the glory of the triumph is proportioned to the peril of the conflict. A sense of danger quickens circumspection, and makes virtue more vigilant. Lot, perhaps, is not the only character who maintained his integrity in a great city, proverbially wicked, and forfeited it in the bosom of retirement.

It has been said that worldly *good sort of people* are a greater credit to their profession, by exhibiting more cheerfulness, gaiety, and happiness, than are visible in serious Christians. If this assertion be true, which I very much suspect, is it not probable that the apparent ease and gaiety of the former may be derived from



the same source of consolation which Mrs. Quickly recommends to Falstaff, in Shakspeare's admirable picture of the death-bed scene of that witty profligate? "He wished for comfort, quoth mine hostess, and began to talk of God; now I, to comfort him, begged him he should not think of God: it was time enough to trouble himself with these things." Do not many deceive themselves by drawing water from these dry wells of comfort? and patch up a precarious and imperfect happiness in this world, by diverting their attention from the concerns of the next?

Another obstruction to the growth of piety, is that unhappy prejudice which even good kind of people too often entertain against those who differ from them in opinion. Every man who is sincerely in earnest to advance the interests of religion, will have acquired such a degree of candour, as to become indifferent by whom good is done, or who has the reputation of doing it, provided it be ac-

tually done. He will be anxious to increase the stock of human virtue, and of human happiness, by every possible means. He will whet and sharpen every instrument of goodness, though it be not cast in his own mould, or fashioned after his own pattern. He will never consider whether the form suits his own particular taste, but whether the instrument itself be calculated to accomplish the work of his master.

I shall conclude these loose and immethodical hints with a plain though short address to those who content themselves with a decent profession of the doctrines, and a formal attendance on the offices, instead of a diligent discharge of the duties of Christianity. Believe, and forgive me!—You are the people who lower religion in the eyes of its enemies. The openly profane, the avowed enemies to God and goodness, serve to confirm the truths they mean to oppose, to illustrate the doctrines they deny, and to accomplish the very predictions they affect to

disbelieve. But you, like an inadequate and faithless prop, overturn the edifice which you pretend to support.—When an acute and keen-eyed infidel measures your lives with the rule by which you profess to walk ; he finds so little analogy between them, the copy is so unlike the pattern, that this inconsistency of yours is the pass through which his most dangerous attack is made. And I must confess, that, of all the arguments, which the malignant industry of infidelity has been able to muster, the negligent conduct of professing Christians seems to me to be the only one which is really capable of staggering a man of sense.—He hears of a spiritual and self-denying religion ; he reads the beatitudes ; he observes that the grand artillery of the Gospel is planted against pride and sensuality. He then turns to the transcript of this perfect original ; to the lives which pretend to be fashioned by it. There he sees, with triumphant derision, that pride, self-love, luxury, self-sufficiency, unbounded per-



sonal expence, and an inordinate appetite for pleasure, are reputable vices in the eyes of many of those who acknowledge the truth of the Christian doctrines. He weighs that meekness to which a blessing is promised, with that arrogance which is too common to be very dishonourable. He compares that non-conformity to the world, which the Bible makes the criterion of a believer, with that rage for amusement which is not considered as disreputable in a Christian. He opposes the self-denying and lowly character of the Author of our faith with the sensual practices of his followers. He finds little resemblance between the restraints prescribed, and the gratifications indulged in. What conclusions must a speculative reasoning sceptic draw from such premises? Is it any wonder that such phrases as "a broken spirit," a "contrite heart," "poverty of spirit," "refraining the soul," "keeping it low," and "casting down high imaginations," should be to the unbeliever "foolishness,"

when such humiliating doctrines are a "stumbling block" to professing Christians; to Christians who cannot cordially relish a religion which professedly tells them it was sent to stain the pride of human glory, and "to exclude boasting?"

But though the passive and self-denying virtues are not high in the esteem of mere good sort of people, yet they are peculiarly the evangelical virtues. The world extols brilliant actions; the Gospel enjoins good habits and right motives; it seldom inculcates those splendid deeds which make heroes, or teaches those lofty sentiments which constitute philosophers; but it enjoins the harder task of renouncing self, of living uncorrupted in the world, of subduing besetting sins, and of "not thinking of ourselves more highly than we ought." The *acquisition* of glory was the precept of other religions, the *contempt* of it is the perfection of Christianity.

Let us then be consistent, and we shall

never be contemptible, even in the eyes of our enemies. Let not the unbeliever say that we have one set of opinions for our theory, and another for our practice; that to the vulgar

We show the rough and thorny way to heav'n,  
While we the primrose path of dalliance tread.

Would it not become the character of a man of sense, of which consistency is a most unequivocal proof, to choose some rule and abide by it? An extempore Christian is a ridiculous character. Fixed principles, if they be really principles of the heart, and not merely opinions of the understanding, will be followed by a consistent course of action; while indecision of spirit will produce instability of conduct. If there be a model which we profess to admire, let us square our lives by it. If either the Koran of Mahomet, or the Revelations of Zoroaster, be a perfect guide, let us follow one of them. If either Epicurus, Zeno, or Confucius, be the peculiar object of our veneration



and respect, let us avowedly fashion our conduct by the dictates of their philosophy; and then, though we may be wrong, we shall not be absurd; we may be erroneous, but we shall not be inconsistent; but if the Bible be in truth the word of God, as we profess to believe, we need look no further for a consummate pattern. "If the Lord be God, let us follow HIM." If Christ be a sacrifice for sin, let Him be also to us the example of an holy life.

But I am willing to flatter myself that the moral and intellectual scene about us begins to brighten. I indulge myself in moments of the most enthusiastic and delightful vision, that things are beginning gradually to lead to the fulfilment of that promise, that "all the kingdoms of the earth shall become the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ." I take encouragement that that glorious prophecy, that "of the increase of his government there shall be no end," seems to be gradually accomplishing; and in no in-

stance more, perhaps, than in the noble attempt about to be made for the abolition of the African Slave-trade.\* For what event can human wisdom foresee more likely to contribute to “ give the  
“ Son the Heathen for his inheritance,  
“ and the uttermost parts of the earth  
“ for his possession,” than the success of such an enterprize, which will restore the lustre of the British name, and cut off at a single stroke as large and disgraceful a portion of national guilt as ever impaired the virtue, or dishonoured the councils of a Christian country.

A good spirit seems to be at work. A catholic temper is diffusing itself among all sects and parties: an enlightened candour, and a liberal toleration, were never more prevalent; good men combat each other's opinions with less

\* This interesting question was then beginning to be agitated in parliament; but it was not *then* foreseen that Bible and Missionary Societies would spring up to fill up the measure of these predictions.

rancour, and better manners\*; they hate each other less for those points in which they disagree, and love each other more for those points in which they join issue than they formerly did. We have many public encouragements; we have a pious king; a wise and virtuous minister; very many respectable, and not a few serious clergy. Their number I am willing to hope is daily encreasing. Among these, some of the first in dignity are the most exemplary in conduct. An increasing desire to instruct the poor, to inform the ignorant, and to reclaim the vicious, is spreading among us. The late Royal Proclamation affords an honourable sanction to virtuous endeavours, and lends nerves and sinews to the otherwise feeble exertions of individuals, by enforcing laws wisely planned, but hitherto feebly executed. In short, there is a good hope that we shall more and more become “ that happy people who have

\* This was written before the French Revolution!!!



“ the Lord for their God :” that as prosperity is already within our walls, peace and virtue may abide in our dwellings.

But vain will be all endeavours after *partial* and *subordinate* amendment. Reformation must begin with the GREAT, or it will never be effectual. *Their* example is the fountain whence the vulgar draw their habits, actions, and characters. To expect to reform the poor while the opulent are corrupt, is to throw odours into the stream while the springs are poisoned.

If, therefore, the Rich and Great will not, from a liberal spirit of doing right, and from a Christian spirit of fearing God, abstain from those offences, for which the poor are to suffer fines and imprisonments, effectual good cannot be done. It will signify little to lay penalties on the horses of the drover, or on the waggon of the husbandman, while the chariot wheels of the Great roll with incessant motion ; and while the sacred day on which the sons of industry are

commanded by royal proclamation to desist from travelling, is for that very reason selected for the journeys of the Great, and preferred, because the road is encumbered with fewer interruptions. But will it not strike every well-meaning Sunday traveller with a generous remorse, when he reflects that he owes the accommodation of an unobstructed road to the very obedience which is paid by others to that divine and human law which he is in the very act of violating?

Will not the common people think it a little inequitable that they are abridged of the diversions of the public-house and the gaming-yard on Sunday evening, when they shall hear that many houses of the first nobility are on that evening crowded with company, and such amusements carried on as are prohibited by human laws even on common days? As imitation, and a desire of being in the fashion, govern the lower orders of mankind, it is to be feared that they will not think reformation reputable, while they

see it *recommended* only, and not *practised*, by their superiors. A precept counteracted by an example, is worse than fruitless, it is ridiculous: and the common people will be tempted to set an inferior value on goodness, when they find it is only expected from the lower ranks. They cannot surely but smile at the disinterestedness of their superiors, who, while they seem anxiously concerned to save others, are so little solicitous about their own state. The ambitious vulgar will hardly relish a salvation which is only intended for plebeians; nor will they be apt to entertain very exalted notions of that promised future reward, the road to which they perceive their betters are so much more earnest to point out to *them*, than to walk in themselves.

It was not by inflicting pains and penalties that Christianity first made its way into the world: the divine truths it inculcated received irresistible confirmation from the LIVES, PRACTICES, and



EXAMPLES of its venerable professors. These were arguments which no popular prejudice could resist, no Jewish logic refute, and no Pagan persecution discredit. Had the primitive Christians only *praised and promulgated* the most perfect religion the world ever saw, it would have produced but very slender effects on the faith and manners of the people. The astonishing consequences which followed the pure doctrines of the Gospel, would never have been produced if the jealous and inquisitive eye of malice could have detected that the DOCTRINES the Christians recommended had not been illustrated by the LIVES they led.

POSTSCRIPT  
TO THE  
*SECOND EDITION.*

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THE public favour having already brought this little Essay to another Edition, the Author has been sedulous to discover any particular objections that have been made to it. Since the preceding sheets were printed off, it has been suggested by some very respectable persons who have honoured this slight performance with their notice, that it inculcates a too rigid austerity, and carries the point of observing Sunday much too far; that it takes away all the usual occupations of the day, without substituting any others in their stead; and that it only pulls down a wrong system, without so much as attempting to build up a right one. To these observations the Author begs leave to reply, that whilst

animadverting on error, the insisting on obvious duty was purposely omitted. To tell people what they already know to be right, was less the intention of this address, than to observe upon practices which long habit had prevented them from perceiving to be wrong. Sensible and well-meaning persons can hardly be at a loss on a subject which has exhausted precept and wearied exhortation. To have expatiated on it, would only have been to repeat what is already known and acknowledged to be right, even by those whom the hurry of engagements will not allow to take breath one day in a week, that they may run the race of pleasure with more alacrity on the other six. But probably it is not the duties, but the amusements appropriated to the day about which the enquiry is made. It will, perhaps, be found, that the intervals of a Sunday regularly devoted to all its reasonable and obvious employments, are not likely to be so very tedious, but that they might be easily and pleasantly



filled up by cheerful, innocent, and instructive conversation. Human delights would be very circumscribed indeed, if the practices here noticed as erroneous, included the whole circle of enjoyment. In addition to the appropriate pleasures of devotion, are the pleasures of retirement, the pleasures of friendship, the pleasures of intellect, and the pleasures of beneficence, to be estimated as nothing?

There will not be found, perhaps, a single person who shall honour these pages with a perusal, who has not been repeatedly told, with an air of imposing gravity, by those who produce cards on a Sunday evening, *that it is better to play than to talk scandal*. Before this pithy axiom was invented, it was not perhaps suspected that Sunday gaming would ever be adduced as an argument in favour of morals. Without entering into the comparative excellence of these two occupations, or presuming to determine

which has a claim to pre-eminence of piety, may we not venture to be thankful that these alternatives do not seem to empty the whole stock of human resource; but that something will still be left to occupy and to interest those who adopt neither the one nor the other?

People in the gay and elegant scenes of life are perpetually complaining that an extensive acquaintance, and the necessity of being constantly engaged in large circles and mixed assemblies, leaves them little leisure for family enjoyment, select conversation, and domestic delights. Others, with no less earnestness, lament that the hurry of public stations, and the necessary demands of active life, allow them no time for any but frivolous reading. Now the recurrence of one Sunday in every week seems to hold out an inviting remedy for both these evils. The sweet and delightful pleasures of family society might then be uninterruptedly enjoyed, by the habitual exclu-

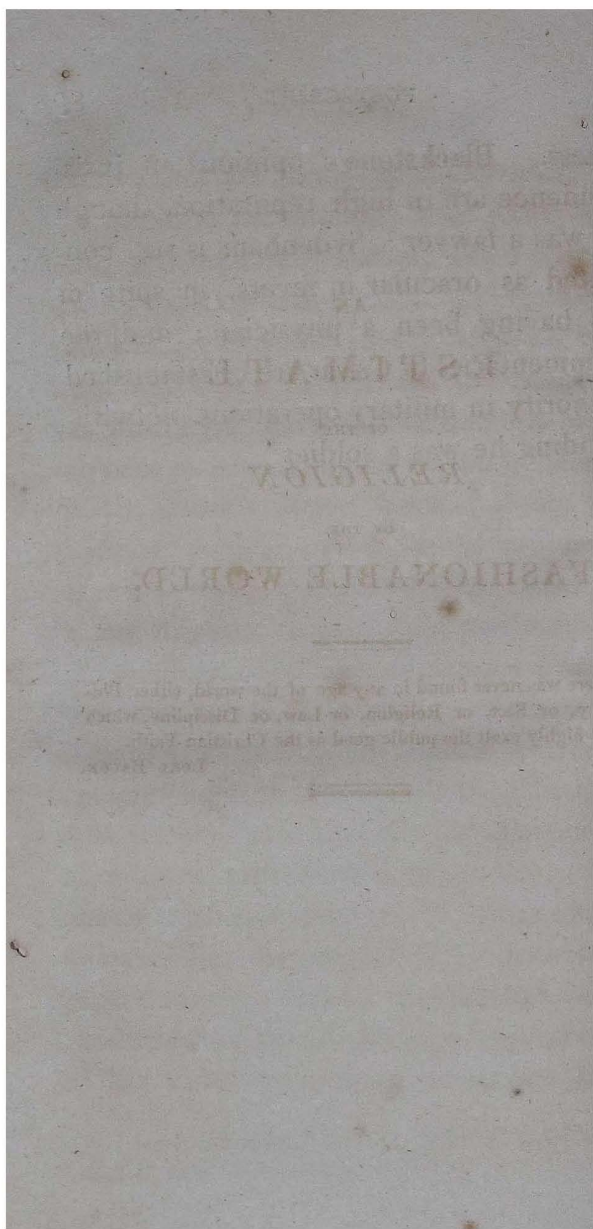
sion of trifling and idle visitors, who do not come to see their friends, but to get rid of themselves. Persons of fashion, living in the same house, and connected by the closest ties, whom business and pleasure keep asunder during the greatest part of the week, would then have an opportunity of spending a little time together, and of cultivating that friendship for each other, that affection for their children, and that intercourse with their Maker, to which the present manners are not *very* favourable. To the other set of complainers, those who can find no time to read, this interval naturally presents itself; and it so happens, that some of the most enlightened men the world ever saw have, not unfrequently, devoted their rare talents to subjects peculiarly suited to this day; and that not merely in the didactic form of sermons, which men of the world affect to disdain; but in every alluring shape which human ingenuity could assume. It can be fortunately produced among a thousand other in-



stances, that the deepest metaphysician \*, the greatest astronomer, the sublimest poet, the acutest reasoner, the politest writer, the most consummate philosopher, and the profoundest investigator of nature, which this, or perhaps any country has produced, have all written on such subjects as are analogous to the business of the Lord's day. Such authors as these, even wits, philosophers, and men of the world, must acknowledge that it is not bigotry to read, nor enthusiasm to commend. Of this illustrious group only *one* was a clergyman, which to a certain class of readers will be a strong recommendation to the others; though it is a little hard that the fastidiousness of modern taste should undervalue the learned and pious labours of divines, only because they are *professional*. In every other function, a man's compositions are not the less esteemed because they peculiarly belong to his more immediate bu-

\* Locke, Newton, Milton, Butler, Addison, Bacon, Boyle.

siness. Blackstone's opinions in jurisprudence are in high reputation, though he was a lawyer : Sydenham is still consulted as oracular in fevers, in spite of his having been a physician ; and the Commentaries of Cæsar are of established authority in military operations, notwithstanding he was a soldier.





AN  
ESTIMATE  
OF THE  
*RELIGION*  
OF THE  
FASHIONABLE WORLD.

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There was never found in any age of the world, either Philosophy, or Sect, or Religion, or Law, or Discipline, which did so highly exalt the public good as the Christian Faith.

LORD BACON.

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# AN ESTIMATE

## INTRODUCTION

The general design of these papers is to  
present some curious remarks on the pre-  
sented state of religion among a great part  
of the people, and the relationship ; not  
among that description of persons  
whether from disbelief or whenever  
it cannot avowedly neglect the lowest  
Christianity ; but among that more  
not class also who, while they ac-  
knowledge their belief of its truth by a  
profession, and are not inactive  
in its forms, yet exhibit little or  
none in their general temper and  
conduct. It is designed to show that  
Christianity, like its Divine Author, is

## AN ESTIMATE,

*&c. &c. &c.*

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### INTRODUCTION.

THE general design of these pages is to offer some cursory remarks, on the present state of religion among a great part of the polite and the fashionable; not only among that description of persons who, whether from disbelief or whatever other cause, avowedly neglect the duties of Christianity; but among that more decent class also, who, while they acknowledge their belief of its truth by a public profession, and are not inattentive to any of its forms, yet exhibit little of its spirit in their general temper and conduct. It is designed to shew that Christianity, like its Divine Author, is



not only *denied* by those who in so many words disown their submission to its authority, but is *betrayed* by the still more treacherous disciple, even while he cries, *Hail, Master!*

For this visible declension of piety various reasons have been assigned, some of which, however, do not seem fully adequate to the effects ascribed to them. The author of a late popular pamphlet\* has accounted for the increased profligacy of the *common people*, by ascribing it, very justly, to the increased dissoluteness of their superiors. And who will deny what he further affirms—that the general conduct of high and low receives a deep tincture of depravity from the growing neglect of public worship? So far I most cordially agree with the noble author. Nothing can be more obvious, than that the disuse of public worship is naturally followed by a neglect of all religious

\* Hints to an Association for preventing Vice and Immorality, written by the Duke of Grafton.

duties. Energies, which are not called out into action, almost necessarily die in the mind. The soul, no less than the body, requires its stated repairs, and regular renovations. And from the sluggish and procrastinating spirit of man, that religious duty to which no fixed time is assigned, is seldom, it is to be feared, performed at all.\*

I must, however, take leave to dissent from the opinion of the noble author, that the too common desertion of persons of rank from the service of the establishment, is occasioned in general, as he intimates, by their disapprobation of the Liturgy; as it may more probably be supposed, that the far greater part of them are deterred from going to church by motives widely removed from speculative objections and conscientious scruples.

It would be quite foreign to my present purpose to enter upon the question

\* On this subject see Dr. Johnson's *Life of Milton*.

of the superior utility of a form of prayer for public worship. Most sincerely attached to the establishment myself, not, as far as I am able to judge, from prejudice, but from a fixed and settled conviction; I regard its institutions with a veneration at once affectionate and rational. Never need a Christian, except when his own heart is strangely indisposed, fail to derive benefit from its ordinances; and he may bless the overruling providence of God, that, in this instance, the natural variableness and inconstancy of human opinion is, as it were, fixed, and settled, and hedged in, by a stated service, so pure, so evangelical, and which is enriched by such a large infusion of sacred Scripture.

If so many among us condemn the service as having been, individually, to *us* fruitless and unprofitable, let us inquire whether the blessing may not be withheld because we are not fervent in asking it.—If we do not find a suitable humiliation in the *Confession*, a becoming



earnestness in the *Petitions*, a congenial joy in the *Adoration*, a corresponding gratitude in the *Thanksgivings*, it is because our hearts do not accompany our words ; it is because we rest in “ the form of godliness,” and are contented to remain destitute of its “ power.” If we are not duly interested when the select portions of Scripture are read to us, it is because we do not as “ new-born babes desire the sincere milk “ of the word, that we may grow “ thereby.”

Perhaps there has not been since the age of the Apostles, a church upon earth in which the public worship was so solemn and so cheerful ; so simple yet so sublime ; so full of fervour, at the same time so free from enthusiasm ; so rich in the gold of Christian antiquity, yet so astonishingly exempt from its dross. That it has imperfections we do not deny, but what are they compared with its general excellence ? They are as the spots on the sun’s disk, which a sharp observer

may detect, but which neither diminish the warmth, nor obscure the brightness.

But if those imperfections, which are inseparable from all human institutions, are to be alleged as reasons for abstaining to attend on the service of the established church; we must, on the same principle, and on still stronger grounds, abstain from all public worship whatever; and indeed it must be confessed, that the persons of whom we are now speaking are very consistent in this matter.

But the difference of opinion here intimated, is not so much about the Liturgy itself, as the imaginary effects attributed to it in thinning the pews of our people of fashion. The slightest degree of observation serves to contradict this assertion. Those, however, who, with the noble author, maintain the other opinion, may satisfy their doubts by enquiring, whether the regular and systematic absentees from church are chiefly to be found among the thinking,

the reading, the speculative, and the scrupulous part of mankind.

Even the most negligent attendant on public worship must know, that the obnoxious creed, to whose malignant potency this general desertion is ascribed by the noble author, is never read above three or four Sundays in the year; and even allowing the validity of the objections brought against it, that does not seem a very adequate reason for banishing the most scrupulous and tender consciences from church on the remaining eight-and-forty Sundays of the calendar.

Besides, there is one test which is absolutely unequivocal: this creed is never read at all in the afternoon, any more than the Litany, that other great source of offence and supposed desertion; and yet with all these multiplied reasons for their attendance, do we see the conscientious crowds of the high-born, who abstain from the morning service through their repugnance to subscribe to the



dogmas of Athanasius, or the more orthodox clauses of the morning Litany, do we see them, I say, flocking to the *evening* service, impatient for the exercise of that devotion which had been obstructed by these two objectionable portions of the Liturgy? Do we see them eager to explain the cause of their morning absence, and zealous to vindicate their piety, by assiduously attending when the reprobated portions are omitted? So far from it, is it not pretty evident that the general quarrel, with some few exceptions, of those who habitually absent themselves from public worship, is not with the Creed, but the Commandments? With such, to reform the Prayer-Book would go but a little way, unless the New Testament could be also abridged. Cut, and pare, and prune the service of the Church ever so much, still Christianity itself will be found full of formidable objections. Should the Church even give up her abstruse creeds, 'it would avail but little, unless the Bible

would also expunge those rigorous laws which not only prohibit sinful actions, but corrupt inclinations. And to speak honestly, I do not see how such persons as habitually infringe the laws of virtue and sobriety, and who yet are men of acute sagacity, accustomed on other subjects to a consistent train of reasoning ; who see consequences in their causes ; who behold practical self-denial necessarily involved in the sincere habit of religious observances—I do not see how, with respect to such men, any doctrines reformed, any redundancies lopped, any obscurities brightened, could effect the object of this author's very benevolent and christian wish.

Religious duties are often neglected upon more consistent grounds than the friends of religion are willing to allow. They are often discontinued, not as repugnant to the understanding, not as repulsive to the judgment, but as hostile to a licentious life. And when a prudent man, after having entered into a

solemn convention, finds that he is living in a constant breach of every article of the treaty he has engaged to observe, one cannot much wonder at his getting out of the hearing of the heavy artillery which he knows is planted against him, and against every one who lives in the allowed infraction of the covenant into which every Christian has entered.

For a man of sense who should acknowledge the truth of the doctrine, would find himself obliged to submit to the force of the precept. It is not easy to be a comfortable sinner, without trying, at least, to be a confirmed unbeliever. And as that cannot be achieved by a wish, the next expedient is to shun the recollection of that belief, and to forget that of which we cannot be ignorant. The smallest remains of faith would embitter a life of libertinism, and to be frequently reminded of the articles of that faith, would disturb the ease induced by a neglect of all observances. While to him who retains any impression



of Christianity, the wildest festivals of intemperance will be converted into the terrifying feast of Damocles.

That many a respectable non-conformist is kept out of the pale of the establishment by some of the causes noticed by the noble author, cannot be questioned, and a matter of regret it is. But these, however, are often sober thinkers, serious enquirers, conscientious reasoners, whose object we may charitably believe is truth, however they may be deceived as to its nature : but that the same objections banish the great and the gay is not equally evident. Thanks to the indolence and indifference of the times, it is not dogmas or doctrines, it is not abstract reasonings, or puzzling propositions, it is not perplexed argument, or intricate metaphysics, which can now disincline from Christianity ; so far from it, they cannot even allure to unbelief. Infidelity itself, with all that strong and natural bias which selfishness and appetite entertain in its favour, if it appear in the grave and

scholastic form of speculation, argument, or philosophical deduction, may lie almost as quietly on the shelf as the volumes of its most able antagonist; and the cobwebs are almost as seldom brushed from Hobbes as from Hooker. No: prudent scepticism has wisely studied the temper of the times, and skilfully felt the pulse of this relaxed, and indolent, and selfish age. It prudently accommodated itself to the reigning character, when it adopted sarcasm instead of reasoning, and preferred a sneer to an argument. It discreetly judged, that, if it would now gain proselytes, it must shew itself under the bewitching form of a profane bon-mot; must be interwoven in the texture of some amusing history, written with the levity of a romance, and the point and glitter of an epigram: it must embellish the ample margin with some offensive anecdote or impure allusion, and decorate impiety with every loose and meretricious ornament which a corrupt imagination can invent. It must

break up the old flimsy system into little mischievous aphorisms, ready for practical purposes: it must divide the rope of sand into little portable parcels, which the shallowest wit can comprehend, and the shortest memory carry away.

Philosophy therefore (as Unbelief, by a patent of its own creation, has lately been pleased to call itself) will not do nearly so much mischief to the present age as its primitive apostles intended: since it requires time, application, and patience to peruse the reasoning veterans of the sceptic school: and these are talents not now very severely devoted to study of any sort, by those who give the law to fashion; especially since, as it was hinted above, the same principles may be acquired on cheaper terms, and the reputation of being philosophers obtained without the sacrifices of pleasure for the severities of study; since the industry of our literary chemists has extracted the spirit from the gross substance of the old unvendible poison, and exhibited it



in the volatile essence of a few sprightly sayings.

If therefore, in this voluptuous age, when a frivolous and relaxing dissipation has infected our very studies, infidelity will not be at the pains of deep research and elaborate investigation, even on such subjects as are congenial to its affections, and promotive of its object ; it is vain to expect that Christianity will be more engaging, either as an object of speculation, or as a rule of practice ; since it demands a still stronger exertion of those energies which the gay world is not at the pains to exercise, even on the side they approve. For the evidences of Christianity require attention to be comprehended, no less than its doctrines require humility to be received, and its precepts self-denial to be obeyed.

Will it then be uncharitable to pronounce, that the leading mischief, not which thins our churches, (for that is not the evil I propose to consider,) but which pervades our whole character, and gives

the colour to our general conduct, is *practical irreligion*? an irreligion not so much opposed to a speculative faith, not so much in hostility to the evidences of christianity, as to that spirit, temper, and behaviour which christianity inculcates.

On this practical irreligion it is proposed to offer a few hints. After attempting to shew, by a comparison with the religion of the great in preceding ages, that there is a visible decline of piety among the higher ranks—that even those more liberal spirits who neglect not many of the great duties of benevolence, yet hold the severer obligations of piety in no esteem—I shall proceed, though perhaps with too little method, to remark on the notorious *effects* of the decay of this religious principle, as it corrupts our mode of education, infects domestic conduct, spreads the contagion downwards among servants and inferiors, and influences our general manners, habits, and conversation.

But what it is here proposed principally to insist on is, that this defect of religious principle is almost equally fatal, as to all the ends and purposes of genuine piety, whether it appear in the open contempt and defiance of all sacred institutions, or under the more decent veil of external observances, unsupported by such a conduct as is analogous to the christian profession.

I shall proceed with a few remarks on a third class of fashionable characters, who profess to acknowledge christianity as a perfect system of morals, while they deny its divine authority : and conclude with some slight animadversions on the opinion which these modish christians maintain, that morality is the whole of religion.

It must be confessed, however, that manners and principles act reciprocally on each other ; and are, by turns, cause and effect. For instance — the increased relaxation of morals produces the in-



creased neglect of infusing religious principles in the education of youth : which effect becomes, in its turn, a cause ; and in due time, when that cause comes to operate, helps on the decline of manners.

## CHAP. I.

*Decline of Christianity shewn, by a Comparative View of the Religion of the Great in preceding Ages.*

IF the general position of this little tract be allowed, namely, that religion is at present in no very flourishing state among those whose example, from the high ground on which they stand, guides and governs the rest of mankind, it will not be denied by those who are ever so superficially acquainted with the history of our country, that this has not always been the case. Those who make a fair comparison must allow, that however the present age may be improved in other important and valuable advantages, yet that there is but little appearance remaining among the great and the powerful of that “righteousness which exalteth a nation :” — they must con-

fess that there has been a *moral revolution* in the national manners and principles, very little analogous to that great *political* one which we hear so much and so justly extolled; that our public virtue bears little proportion to our public blessings; and that our religion has decreased in a pretty exact proportion to our having secured the means of enjoying it.

That the antipodes to wrong are hardly ever right, was very strikingly illustrated about the middle of the last century, when the fiery and indiscreet zeal of one party was made a pretext for the profligate impiety of the other; who, to the bad principle which dictated a depraved conduct, added the bad taste of being proud of it:—when even the least abandoned were absurdly apprehensive that an appearance of decency might subject them to the charge of fanaticism, a charge in which they took care to involve real piety as well as enthusiastic pretence, till it became the general fashion



to avoid no sin but hypocrisy, to dread no imputation but that of seriousness, and to be more afraid of the virtues which procure a good reputation than of every vice which ever earned a bad one. Party was no longer confined to political distinctions, but became a part of morals, and was carried into religion. The more profligate of the court party began to connect the idea of devotion with that of republicanism; and to prove their aversion to the one, thought they could never cast too much ridicule upon the other. The public taste became debauched, and to be licentious in principle, was thought by many to be the best way of making their court to the restored Monarch, and of proving their abhorrence of the hypocritical side. And *Poems by a person of honour*, the phrase of the day to designate a fashionable author, were often scandalous offences against modesty and virtue.

It was not till piety was thus unfortunately brought into disrepute, that

persons of condition thought it made their sincerity, their abilities, or their good breeding questionable, to appear openly on the side of religion. A strict attachment to piety did not antecedently subtract from a great reputation. Men were not thought the worse lawyers, generals, ministers, legislators, or historians, for believing, and even defending, the religion of their country. The gallant Sir Philip Sidney, the rash but heroic Essex, the politic and sagacious Burleigh, the all-accomplished Falkland\*, not only publicly avowed their belief in christianity, but even wrote some things of a religious† nature. These instances, and many others which might be adduced, are not, it will be allowed, selected from among contemplative recluses, grave divines, or authors

\* Lord Falkland assisted the great Chillingworth in his incomparable work, *The Religion of a Protestant*.

† See that equally elegant and authentic work, *The Anecdotes of Royal and Noble Authors*.

by profession ; but from the busy, the active, and the illustrious ; from public characters, from men of strong passions, beset with great temptations ; distinguished actors on the stage of life ; and whose respective claims to the title of fine gentlemen, brave soldiers, or able statesmen, have never been called in question.

What would the Hales, and the Clarendons, and the Somers's \* have said, had they been told that the time was at no great distance when that sacred book, for which they thought it no derogation from their wisdom or their dignity to entertain the profoundest reverence ; the book which they made the rule of their faith, the subject of their most serious study, and the foundation of their eternal hope ; that this book would

\* This consummate statesman was not only remarkable for a strict attendance on the public duties of religion, but for maintaining them with equal exactness in his family, at a period too when religion was most discountenanced.



one day be of little more use to men in high public stations, than to be the instrument of an oath; and that the sublimest institution of the christian religion would soon be considered as little more than a necessary qualification for a place, or the legal preliminary to an office.

This indeed is the boasted period of free enquiry and liberty of thinking: but it is the peculiar character of the present age, that its mischiefs often assume the most alluring forms; and that the most alarming evils not only look so like goodness as to be often mistaken for it, but are sometimes mixed up with so much real good, as often to disguise, though never to counteract, their malignity. Under the beautiful mask of an enlightened philosophy, all religious restraints are set at nought; and some of the deadliest wounds have been aimed at christianity, in works written in avowed vindication of the most amiable

amiable of all the christian \* principles. Even the prevalence of a liberal and warm philanthropy is secretly sapping the foundation of christian morals, because many of its champions allow themselves to live in the open violation of the severer duties of justice and sobriety, while they are contending for the gentler ones of charity and beneficence.

The strong and generous bias in favour of universal toleration, noble as the principle itself is, has engendered a dangerous notion that all error is

\* See particularly *Voltaire sur la Tolerance*. This is a common artifice of that insidious author. In this instance he has made use of the popularity he obtained in the fanatical tragedy at Thoulouse (the murder of Calas) to discredit, though in the most guarded manner, christianity itself; degrading martyrdoms, denying the truth of the Pagan persecutions, &c. &c. And by mixing some truths with many falsehoods, by assuming an amiable candour, and professing to serve the interests of goodness, he treacherously contrives to leave on the mind of the unguarded reader impressions the most unfavourable to christianity.

innocent. Whether it be owing to this, or to whatever other cause, it is certain that the discriminating features of the christian religion are every day growing into less repute; and it is become the fashion, even among the better sort, to evade, to lower, or to generalize, its most distinguishing peculiarities.

There is so little of the Author of christianity left in his own religion, that an apprehensive believer is ready to exclaim, with the woman at the sepulchre, "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him." The locality of Hell and the existence of an evil Spirit are annihilated, or considered as abstract ideas. When they are alluded to, it is periphrastically; or they are rejected not on the ground of their being awful and terrible, but are set aside as topics too vulgar for the polished, too illiberal for the learned, and as savour-



ing too much of credulity for the enlightened.

While we glory in having freed ourselves from the trammels of human authority, are we not turning our liberty into licentiousness, and wantonly struggling to throw off the *divine* authority too? Freedom of thought is the glory of the human mind, while it is confined within its just and sober limits; but though we may think ourselves accountable for *opinions* at no earthly tribunal, yet it should be remembered that thoughts as well as actions are amenable to the bar of God; and though we may rejoice that the tyranny of the spiritual Procrustes is so far annihilated, that we are in no danger of having our opinions lopped or lengthened till they are brought to fit the measure of human caprice, yet there is still a standard by which not only actions are weighed, but opinions are judged; and every sentiment which is clearly inconsistent with the revealed

will of God, is as much throwing off *his* dominion as the breach of any of his moral precepts. This cuts up by the roots that popular and independent phrase, that "thoughts are free," for in this view we are no more at liberty to indulge opinions in opposition to the express word of God than we are at liberty to infringe practically on his commandments.

There is then surely one test by which it is no mark of intolerance to try the principles of men, namely, the *Law and the Testimony*: and on applying to this touchstone, it is impossible not to lament, that, while a more generous spirit governs our judgment, a purer principle does not seem to regulate our lives. May it not be said, that, while we are justly commended for thinking charitably of the opinions of others, we seem, in return, as if we were desirous of furnishing them with an opportunity of exercising their candour by the laxity of principle in

which we indulge ourselves? If the hearts of men were as firmly united to each other by the bond of charity as some pretend, they could not fail of being united to God also by one common principle of piety; and christian piety furnishes the only certain source of all charitable judgment, as well as of all virtuous conduct.

Instead of abiding by the salutary precept of *judging no man*, it is become the fashion to exceed our commission, and to fancy every body to be in a safe state. "Judge not" is the precise limit of our rule. There is no more encouragement to judge falsely on the side of worldly candour, than there is to judge harshly on the side of Christian charity. In forming our notions we have to chuse between the Bible and the world, between the rule and the practice. Where these do not agree, it is left to the judgment of believers, at least, by which



we are to decide. But we never act, in religious concerns, by the same rule of common sense and equitable judgment which governs us on other occasions. In weighing any commodity, its weight is determined by some generally allowed standard; and if the commodity be heavier or lighter than the standard weight, we add to or take from it: but we never break, or clip, or reduce the weight to suit the thing we are weighing; because the common consent of mankind has agreed that the one shall be considered as the standard to ascertain the value of the other. But, in weighing our principles by the standard of the Gospel, we do just the reverse. Instead of bringing our opinions and actions to the *balance of the sanctuary*, in order to determine and rectify their comparative deficiencies, we lower and reduce the standard of the scripture-doctrines till we have accommodated them to our own purposes: so that, instead of trying

others and ourselves by God's unerring rule, we try the truth of God's rule by its conformity or non-conformity to our own depraved notions and corrupt practices.

## CHAP. II.

*Benevolence allowed to be the reigning Virtue, but not exclusively the Virtue of the present Age. — Benevolence not the Whole of Religion, though one of its most characteristic Features. Whether Benevolence proceeds from a religious Principle, will be more infallibly known by the general Disposition of Time, Fortune, and the common Habits of Life, than from a few occasional Acts of Bounty.*

TO all the remonstrance and invective of the preceding chapter, there will not fail to be opposed that which we hear every day so loudly insisted on, — the decided superiority of the present age in other and better respects. It will be said, that even those who neglect the outward forms of religion, exhibit however the best proofs of the best principles; that the unparalleled instances of charity



of which we are continual witnesses; that the many striking acts of public bounty, and the various new and noble improvements in this shining virtue, justly entitle the present age to be called, by way of eminence, *the age of benevolence*.

It is with the liveliest joy I acknowledge the delightful truth. Liberality flows with a full tide through a thousand channels. There is scarcely a newspaper but records some meeting of men of fortune for the most salutary purposes. The noble and numberless structures for the relief of distress, which are the ornament and the glory of our metropolis, proclaim a species of munificence unknown to former ages. Subscriptions, not only to hospitals, but to various other valuable institutions, are obtained almost as soon as solicited. And who but must wish that these beautiful monuments of benevolence may become every day more numerous, and more extended!

Yet, with all these allowed and obvious excellencies, it is not quite clear whether something too much has not been said of the liberality of the present age, in a comparative view with that of those ages which preceded it. A general alteration of habits and manners has at the same time multiplied public bounties and private distress; and it is scarcely a paradox to say, that there was probably less misery when there was less munificence.

If an increased benevolence now ranges through and relieves a wider compass of distress; yet still, if those examples of luxury and dissipation which promote that distress are still *more* increased, this makes the good done bear little proportion to the evil promoted. If the miseries removed by the growth of charity fall, both in number and weight, far below those which are caused by the growth of vice and disorder; if we find that, though bounty is extended, yet those corruptions which make bounty

so necessary are extended also, almost beyond calculation; if it appear that, though more objects are relieved by our money, yet incomparably more are debauched by our licentiousness — the balance perhaps will not turn out so decidedly in favour of the times as we are willing to imagine.

If then the most valuable species of charity is that which prevents distress by preventing or lessening vice, the greatest and most inevitable cause of want, — we ought not so highly to exalt the bounty of the great in the present day, in preference to that broad shade of protection, patronage, and maintenance, which the wide-spread bounty of their forefathers stretched out over whole villages, I had almost said whole provinces. When a few noblemen in a county, like their own stately oaks (paternal oaks! which were not often set upon a card) extended their sheltering branches to shield all the underwood of the forest — when there existed a kind of passive



charity, a negative sort of benevolence, which did good of itself; and without effort, exertion, or expence, produced the effect of all, and performed the best functions of bounty, though it did not aspire to the dignity of its name—it was simply this: *great people staid at home*; and the sober pomp and orderly magnificence of a noble family, residing at their own castle great part of the year, contributed in the most natural way to the maintenance of the poor; and in a good degree prevented that distress, which it must, however, thankfully be confessed it is the laudable object of modern bounty to relieve. A man of fortune might not then, it is true, so often *dine in public* for the benefit of the poor; but the poor were more regularly and comfortably fed with the abundant crumbs which then fell from the rich man's table. Whereas it cannot be denied that the prevailing mode of living has pared real hospitality to the very quick; and, though the remark may be

thought ridiculous, it is a material disadvantage to the poor that the introduction of the modern artificial style of luxury has rendered the remains of the most costly table but of small value.

But even allowing the boasted superiority of modern benevolence, still it will not be inconsistent with the object of the present design, to enquire whether the diffusion of this branch of charity, though the most lovely offspring of religion, be yet any positive proof of the prevalence of religious principle? and whether it be not the fashion rather to consider benevolence as a substitute for Christianity than as an evidence of it?

It seems to be one of the reigning errors among the better sort, to reduce all religion into benevolence, and all benevolence into alms-giving. The wide and comprehensive idea of Christian charity is compressed into the slender compass of a little pecuniary relief. This species of beneficence is indeed a

bright gem among the ornaments of a Christian ; but by no means furnishes all the jewels of his crown, which derives its lustre from the associated radiance of every Christian grace. Besides, the genuine virtues are all of the same family ; and it is only by being seen in company with each other, and with Piety their common parent, that they are certainly known to be legitimate.

But it is the property of the *Christian* virtues, that, like all other amiable members of the same family, while each is doing its own particular duty, it is contributing to the prosperity of the rest ; and the larger the family the better they live together, as no one can advance itself without labouring for the advancement of the whole : thus, no man can be benevolent on Christian principles without self-denial ; and so of the other virtues : each is connected with some other, and all with religion.

I already anticipate the obvious and hackneyed reply, that “ whoever be



“ the instrument, and whatever be the  
“ motive of bounty, still the poor are  
“ equally relieved, and therefore the end  
“ is the same,” And it must be confessed that those compassionate hearts, who cannot but be earnestly anxious that the distressed should be relieved at any rate, should not too scrupulously enquire into any cause of which the effect is so beneficial. Nor indeed will candour scrutinize too curiously into the errors of any life of which benevolence will always be allowed to be the shining ornament, while it does not pretend to be the atoning virtue.

Let me not be misrepresented, as if I were seeking to detract from the value of this amiable feeling ; we do not surely lower the practice by seeking to ennoble the principle ; the action will not be impaired by mending the motive : and no one will be likely to give the poor less because he seeks to please God more.

One cannot then help wishing that pecuniary bounty were not only not

practised, but that it were not sometimes enjoined too, as a redeeming virtue. In many conversations (I had almost said in many charity-sermons) it is insinuated as if a little alms-giving could pay off old scores contracted by favourite indulgences. This, though often done by well-meaning men to advance the interests of some present pious purpose, yet has the mischievous effect of those medicines which, while they may relieve a local complaint, are yet undermining the general habit.

That great numbers who are not influenced by so high a principle as Christianity holds out, are yet truly compassionate without hypocrisy and without ostentation, who can doubt? But who that feels the beauty of benevolence can avoid being solicitous, not only that its offerings should comfort the receiver, but return in blessings to the bosom of the giver, by springing from such motives, and being accompanied by such a temper as shall redound to his eternal

good ! For that the benefit is the same to the object, whatever be the character of the benefactor, is but an uncomfortable view of things to a real Christian, whose compassion reaches to the souls of men. Such a one longs to see the charitable giver as happy as he is endeavouring to make the object of his bounty ; but such a one knows that no happiness can be fully and finally enjoyed but on the solid basis of Christian piety.

For as religion is not, on the one hand, merely an opinion or a sentiment, so neither is it, on the other, merely an act or a performance ; but it is a disposition, a habit, a temper : it is not a name, but a nature : it is a turning the whole mind to God : it is a concentration of all the powers and affections of the soul into one steady point, an uniform desire to please *Him*. This desire will naturally and necessarily manifest itself in our doing all the good we can to our fellow-creatures in every possible way ; for it will be found that neither of the two



parts into which practical religion is divided, can be performed with any degree of perfection but by those who unite both : it may be questioned whether any man really *does* "love his neighbour as himself," who does not first endeavour to "love God with all his heart." As genius has been defined to be strong general powers of mind, accidentally determined to some particular pursuit, so Christian piety may be denominated a strong general disposition of the heart to every thing that is right, breaking forth into every excellent action, as the occasion presents itself. The temper must be lying ready in the mind, and the whole heart must be prepared and trained to every act of virtue to which it may be called out. For religious principles are like the military exercise ; they keep up an habitual state of preparation for actual service ; and, by never relaxing the discipline, the real Christian is ready for every duty to which he may be commanded. Right actions best prove the

existence of religion in the heart; but they are evidences, not causes.

Whether therefore a man's charitable actions proceed from religious principle, he will be best able to ascertain by scrutinizing into what is the general disposition of his time and fortune, and by observing whether his pleasures and expences are habitually regulated with a view to enable him to be more or less useful to others.

It is in vain that he possess what is called by the courtesy of fashion *the best heart in the world* (a character we every day hear applied to the libertine and the prodigal), if he squander his time and estate in such a round of extravagant indulgences and thoughtless dissipation as leaves him little money and less leisure for nobler purposes. It makes but little difference whether a man is prevented from doing good by hard-hearted parsimony, or an unprincipled extravagance; the stream of usefulness is equally cut off by both.

The mere *casual* benevolence of any man can have little claim to solid esteem ; nor does any charity deserve the name, which does not grow out of a steady conviction that it is his bounden duty ; which does not spring from a settled propensity to obey the whole will of God ; which is not therefore made a part of the general plan of his conduct ; and which does not lead him to order the whole scheme of his affairs with an eye to it.

He therefore who does not habituate himself to certain interior restraints, who does not live in a regular course of self-renunciation, will not be likely often to perform acts of beneficence, when it becomes necessary to convert to such purposes any of that time or money which appetite, temptation, or vanity solicit him to divert to other purposes.

And surely he who seldom sacrifices one darling indulgence, who does not subtract one gratification from the incessant round of his enjoyments, when



the indulgence would obstruct his capacity of doing good, or when the sacrifice would enlarge his power, does not deserve the name of *benevolent*. And for such an unequivocal criterion of charity, to whom are we to look but to the conscientious Christian? No other spirit but that by which he is governed, can subdue self-love: and where self-love is the predominant passion, benevolence can have but a feeble, or an accidental dominion.

Now if we look around, and remark the excesses of luxury, the costly diversions, and the intemperate dissipation in which numbers even of professing Christians indulge themselves, can any stretch of candour, can even that tender sentiment by which we are enjoined “to hope,” and to “believe all things,” enable us to hope and believe that such are actuated by a spirit of Christian benevolence, merely because we see them perform some casual acts of charity, which the spirit of the world can con-

trive to make extremely compatible with a voluptuous life ; and the cost of which, after all, bears but little proportion to that of any one vice, or even any one vanity !

Men will not believe that there is hardly any one human good quality which will know and keep its proper bounds, without the restraining influence of religious principle. There is, for instance, great danger lest a constant attention even to so right a practice as an invariable economy, should incline the heart to the love of money. Nothing can effectually counteract this natural propensity but the Christian habit of devoting those retrenched expences to some good purpose ; and then economy, instead of narrowing the heart, will enlarge it, by inducing a constant association of benevolence with frugality. As habitual attention to the wants of others is the only wholesome regulator of our own expences ; and carries with it a whole train of virtues, disinterestedness,

sobriety, self-denial, and temperance. And those who live in the custom of levying constant taxes on their own vanities for such purposes, serve the poor still less than they serve themselves. For if they are charitable upon true Christian principles, "they are laying  
" up for themselves a good foundation  
" against the time to come."

Thus when a vein of sound Christianity runs through the whole mass of a man's life, it gives a new value to all his actions, and a new character to all his views. It transmutes prudence and economy into Christian virtues; and every offering that is presented on the altar of charity becomes truly consecrated, when it is the gift of obedience, and the price of self-denial. Religion is that fire from heaven that can alone kindle the sacrifice, which through the mediation and intercession of our great High Priest "will go up for a memorial  
" before God."



On the other hand, when any act of bounty is performed by way of composition with our Maker, either as a purchase or an expiation of unallowed indulgences; though, even in this case, God (who makes all the passions of men subservient to his good purposes) can make the gift equally beneficial to the receiver, yet it is surely not too severe to say, that to the giver such acts are an unfounded dependence, a deceitful refuge, a broken staff.

## CHAP. III.

*The Neglect of Religious Education, both a Cause and a Consequence of the Decline of Christianity. — No Moral Restraints. — Religion only incidentally taught, not as a Principle of Action. A few of the many Causes which dispose the Young to entertain low Opinions of Religion.*

LET not the truly pious be offended, as if, in the present chapter, which is intended to treat of the notorious neglect of Religious Education, I meant to insinuate that the principles and tempers of Christianity may be formed in the young mind, by the mere mechanical operation of early institution, without the co-operating aid of the Holy Spirit of God. To imply this would be indeed to betray a lamentable ignorance of human nature, of the disorder that sin has introduced, of the inefficacy of mere human means ;

and entirely to mistake the genius, and overlook the most obvious and important truths of our holy religion.

It must however be allowed, that the Supreme Being works chiefly by means; and though it be confessed that no defect of education, no corruption of manners can place any out of the reach of the Divine influences, (for it is under such circumstances perhaps that some of the most extraordinary instances of Divine grace have been manifested,) yet it must be owned, that instructing children in principles of religion, and giving them early habits of temperance and piety, is the way in which we may most confidently expect the Divine blessing. And that it is a work highly pleasing to God, and which will be most assuredly accompanied by his gracious energy, we may judge from what he says of his faithful servant Abraham; "I know him that he will command his children, and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord."



But religion is the only thing in which we seem to look for the end, without making use of the means; and yet it would not be more surprising if we were to expect that our children should become artists and scholars without being bred to arts and languages, than it is to look for a Christian world, without a Christian education.

The noblest objects can yield no delight, if there be not in the mind a disposition to relish them. There must be a congruity between the mind and the object, in order to produce any capacity of enjoyment. To the Mathematician, demonstration is pleasure; to the Philosopher, the study of nature; to the Voluptuary, the gratification of his appetite; to the Poet, the pleasures of the imagination. These objects they each respectively pursue, as pleasures adapted to that part of their nature which they have been accustomed to indulge and cultivate.

Now as men will be apt to act con-

sistently with their general views and habitual tendencies, would it not be absurd to expect that the philosopher should look for his sovereign good at a ball, or the sensualist in the pleasures of intellect or piety? None of these ends are answerable to the general views of the respective pursuer; they are not correspondent to his ideas; they are not commensurate to his aims. The sublimest pleasures can afford little gratification where a taste for them has not been previously formed. A clown, who should hear a scholar or an artist talk of the delights of a library, a picture-gallery, or a concert, could not guess at the nature of the pleasures they afford; nor would his being introduced to them give him much clearer ideas; because he would bring to them an eye blind to proportion, an understanding new to science, and an ear deaf to harmony.

Shall we expect then, since men can only become scholars by diligent labour, that they shall become Christians by

mere chance? Shall we be surprised if those do not fulfil the offices of religion, who are not trained to an acquaintance with them? And will it not be obvious that it must be some other thing besides the abstruseness of creeds, which has tended to make Christianity unfashionable, and piety obsolete?

It probably will not be disputed, that in no age have the passions of our high-born youth been so early freed from all curb and restraint. In no age has the paternal authority been so contemptuously treated, or every species of subordination so disdainfully trampled upon. In no age have simple, and natural, and youthful pleasures so early lost their power over the mind; nor was ever one great secret of virtue and happiness, the secret of being *cheaply pleased*, so little understood.

A taste for costly, or artificial, or tumultuous pleasures cannot be gratified, even by their most sedulous pursuers, at every moment; and what wretched



management is it in the economy of human happiness, so to contrive, as that the enjoyment shall be rare and difficult, and the intervals long and languid! Whereas real and unadulterated pleasures occur perpetually to him who cultivates a taste for truth and nature, and science and virtue. But these simple and tranquil enjoyments cannot but be insipid to him whose passions have been prematurely excited by agitating pleasures, or whose taste has been depraved by such as are debasing and frivolous; for it is of more consequence to virtue than some good people are willing to allow, to preserve the taste pure, and the judgment sound. A vitiated intellect has no small connection with depraved morals.

Since amusements of some kind are necessary to all ages, I speak now with an eye to mere human enjoyment, why should it not be an object of early care, to keep a due proportion of them in reserve for those future sea-

sons of life, in which they will be so much more needed? Why should there not, even for this purpose, be adopted a system of salutary restriction, to be used by parents toward their children, by instructors toward their pupils, and in the progress of life by each man toward himself? In a word, why should not the same reasons, which have induced us to tether inferior animals, suggest the expediency of, in some sort, tethering man also? Since nothing but experience seems to teach him, that if he be allowed to anticipate his future possessions, and trample all the flowery fields of real, as well as those of imaginary and artificial enjoyment, he not only endures present disgust, but defaces and destroys all the rich materials of his future happiness; and leaves himself, for the rest of his life, nothing but ravaged fields and barren stubble.

But the great and radical defect, and that which comes more immediately within the present design, seems to be, that

in general the characteristic principles of Christianity are not early and strongly infused into the mind: that religion, if taught at all, is rather taught incidentally, as a thing of subordinate value, than as the leading principle of human actions, the great animating spring of human conduct. Were the high influential principles of the Christian religion anxiously and early inculcated, we should find that those lapses from virtue, to which passion and temptation afterwards too frequently solicit, would be more easily recoverable.

For though the evil propensities of fallen nature, and the bewitching allurements of pleasure, will too often seduce even those of the best education into devious paths, yet we shall find that men will seldom be *incurably* wicked, unless that internal corruption of principle has taken place, which teaches them how to justify iniquity by argument, and to confirm evil conduct by the sanction of false reasoning; or where there is a total ig-



norance of the very nature and design of Christianity, which ignorance can only exist where early religious instruction has been entirely neglected.

The errors occasioned by the violence of passion may be reformed, but systematic wickedness will be only fortified by time; and no decrease of strength, no decay of appetite, can weaken the power of a pernicious principle. He who deliberately commits a bad action, puts himself indeed out of the path of safety; but he who adopts a false principle, not only throws himself into the enemy's country, but burns the ships, breaks the bridge, cuts off every retreat by which he might hope one day to return into his own.

It is remarkable, that in almost all the celebrated characters of whom we have an account in former periods of the English History, we find a serious attention to religion discovering itself at the close of life, however the preceding years might have been misemployed. We meet with striking examples of this kind

amongst statesmen, amongst philosophers, amongst men of business, and even amongst men of pleasure. We have on record the dying sentiments of *Walsingham*, of *Smith*, of *Hatton*, the favourites of Queen Elizabeth. We see, in the following reign, *Raleigh* supporting himself by religion under the severity of his fate; *Bacon* seeking comfort in devotion amidst his disgraces; and *Wotton*, after having been ambassador to almost every court in Europe, taking refuge at last in a pious retirement at Eton college. But to enumerate instances would be endless, when, in fact, we scarcely discover a single instance to the contrary. In those times, it was considered as a matter even of common decency, that advanced age should possess, at least, the exterior of piety; and we have every reason to believe that an irreligious old man would have been pointed at as a sort of monster.

But is this the case in our day? Do we now commonly perceive in any rank

that disposition to close life religiously, which at the period to which I have alluded was so general even in the fashionable world? I fear it is so far the reverse, that if Pope had been our contemporary, and were now composing his famous Ethical Poem, he could not hazard even that light remark,

That beads and prayer books are the toys of age, without grossly violating probability.

But to what cause are we to ascribe that superannuated impiety, which seems to distinguish the present from the preceding generations? Is it not chiefly owing to the neglect of early religious instruction, which now for so many years has been gaining ground among us? In the last age even public schools were places, no less of Christian than of classical institution: and the omission of religious worship, whether public or private, was deemed, at least, as censurable a fault as the neglect of a lesson. Parents had not yet imbibed that maxim of mo-



dern refinement, that religious instruction ought to be deferred until the mind be capable of chusing for itself—that is, until it be so pre-occupied as to leave neither room nor relish for the articles of Christian faith, or the rules of Christian obedience. The advice of the wise king of Israel of “training up a child in the way he should go,” had not then become obsolete; and the truth of his assertion, in the remaining clause of the passage, was happily realized in the sincere, though perhaps late, return of many a wanderer.

Even in the very laws of our nature, there seems to be a gracious provision for promoting the final efficacy of early religious instruction. When the old man has no longer any relish left for his accustomed gratifications, in what way does he endeavour to fill up the void? Is it not by sending back his thoughts to his early years, and endeavouring to live over again in idea those scenes which, in this distant retrospect, appear far more delightful

than he had found them to be at the actual period of enjoyment? Disgusted at every thing around him, and disappointed in those pursuits to which he had once looked forward with all the ardour of hope; but to which he now feels he has sacrificed in vain his quiet, and perhaps his integrity, he takes a pensive pleasure in reviewing the season when his mind was yet cheerful and innocent; and even the very cares and anxieties of that happy period appear to him now, in a more captivating form than any pleasures he can yet hope to enjoy. What then is more natural, I had almost said more certain, than that if the principles of religion were inculcated, and the feelings of devotion excited in his mind in that most susceptible season of life, they should now revive as well as other contemporary impressions, and present themselves in a point of view the more interesting, because, while all other instances of youthful occupation can be only *recollected*, these may be called up into fresh exist-

ence, and be enjoyed even more perfectly than before.

The defects of memory also, which old age induces, will, in this instance, assist rather than obstruct. It almost universally happens, that the more recent transactions are those soonest forgotten, while the events of youth and childhood are remembered with accuracy. If therefore pious principles have been implanted, they will, even by the course of nature, be recollected, while those things which most contributed to hinder their growth are swept from the memory. What a powerful encouragement then does this consideration afford! or rather what an indispensable obligation does it lay upon parents, to store the minds of their children with the seeds of piety! And on the other hand, what unnatural barbarity is it, irretrievably to shut up this last refuge of the wretched, by a neglect of this duty; and to render it impossible for those who had "stood all the day



“idle,” to be called, at least without a miracle, even at the eleventh hour!

No one surely will impute to bigotry or enthusiasm, the lamenting, or even remonstrating against such desperate negligence; nor can it be deemed illiberal to enquire, whether even a still greater evil does not exist? I mean, whether pernicious principles are not as strenuously inculcated as those of real virtue and happiness are discountenanced? Whether young men are not expressly taught to take custom and fashion as the ultimate and exclusive standard by which to try their principles and to weigh their actions? Whether some idol of false honour be not consecrated and set up for them to worship? Whether, even among the better sort, reputation be not held out as a motive of sufficient energy to produce virtue, in a world where yet the greatest vices are every day practised openly, without at all obstructing the reception of those who practise them into the best company? Whether resentment

be not ennobled; and pride, and many other passions, erected into honourable virtues — virtues not less repugnant to the genius and spirit of Christianity than obvious and gross vices? Will it be thought impertinent to enquire if the awful doctrines of a perpetually present Deity, and a future righteous judgment, are early impressed and lastingly engraven on the hearts and consciences of our high-born youth?

Perhaps, if there be any one particular in which we fall remarkably below the politer nations of antiquity, it is in that part of education which has a reference to purity of mind, and the discipline of the heart.

The great secret of religious education, which seems banished from the present practice, consists in training young men to an habitual interior restraint, an early government of the affections, and a course of self-controul over those tyrannizing inclinations which have so natural a tendency to enslave the human heart. With-

out this habit of moral restraint, which is one of the fundamental laws of Christian virtue, though men may, from natural temper, often *do* good, yet it is impossible that they should ever *be* good. Without the vigorous exercise of this controuling principle, the best dispositions and the most amiable qualities will go but a little way towards establishing a virtuous character. For the best dispositions will be easily overcome by the concurrence of passion and temptation, in a heart where the passions have not been accustomed to this wholesome discipline : and the most amiable qualities will but more easily betray their possessor, unless the heart be fortified by repeated acts and long habits of resistance.

In this, as in various other instances, we may blush at the superiority of Pagan institution. Were the Roman youth taught to imagine themselves always in the awful presence of Cato, in order to habituate them betimes to suppress base sentiments, and to excite such as were



generous and noble? And should not the Christian youth be continually reminded, that a greater than Cato is here? Should they not be trained to the habit of acting under the constant impression, that *He* to whom they must one day be accountable for intentions, as well as words and actions, is witness to the one as well as the other? that he not only is "about their path," but "understands their very thoughts?"

Were the disciples of a Pagan \* leader taught that it was a motive sufficient to compel their obedience to any rule, whether they liked it or not, that it had the authority of their teacher's name? Were the bare words, *the master hath said it*, sufficient to settle all disputes, and to subdue all reluctance? And shall the scholars of a more divine teacher, who have a code of laws written by God himself, be contented with a lower rule, or abide by a meaner authority? And is

\* Pythagoras.

any argument drawn from human considerations likely to operate more forcibly on a dependent being, than that simple but grand assertion, with which so many of the precepts of our religion are introduced—Because, THUS SAITH THE LORD?

It is doing but little, in the infusion of first principles, to obtain the bare assent of the understanding to the existence of one Supreme Power, unless the heart and affections go along with the conviction, by our conceiving of that power as intimately connected with ourselves. A feeling temper will be but little affected with the cold idea of a *geometrical* God, as the excellent Pascal expresses it, who merely adjusts all the parts of matter, and keeps the elements in order. Such a mind will be but little moved, unless he be taught to consider his Maker under the interesting and endearing representation which revealed religion gives of him. That “God is,” will be to him rather an alarming than a consolatory idea; till he be persuaded of the subse-

quent proposition, that "he is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek him. Nay, if natural religion *does* even acknowledge one awful attribute, that "God is just," it will only increase the terror of a tender conscience, till it be learned from the fountain of truth, that he is "the Justifier of him who believeth in Jesus."

But if the great sanctions of our religion are not deeply engraven on the heart, where shall we look for any other adequate curb to the fiery spirit of youth? For, let the elements be ever so kindly mixed in a human composition, let the natural temper be ever so amiable, still whenever a man ceases to think himself an accountable being, what motive can he have for resisting a strong temptation to a present good, when he has no dread that he shall thereby forfeit a greater future good?

It may perhaps be objected, that this deep sense of religion would interfere



with the general purpose of education, which is designed to qualify men for the business of human life, and not to train up a race of monks and ascetics.

There is however so little real solidity in this specious objection, that I am firmly persuaded, that if religious principles were more deeply impressed on the heart, even the things of this world would be much better carried on. For where are we to look for all the qualities which constitute the man of business; for punctuality, diligence, and application, for such attention in doing every thing in its proper day, (the great hinge on which business turns,) as among men of principle? Economy of time, truth in observing his word, never daring to deceive or to disappoint — these form the very essence of an active and a useful character; and for these to whom shall we most naturally look? Who is so little likely to be “slothful in business” as he who is “fervent in spirit?” And will

not he be most regular in dealing with men, who is most diligent in "serving the Lord?"

But, it may be said, allowing that religion does not necessarily spoil a man of *business*, yet it would effectually defeat those accomplishments, and counteract that fine breeding, which essentially constitute the *gentleman*.

This again is so far from being a natural consequence, that, supposing all the other real advantages of parts, education, and society, to be equally taken into the account, there is no doubt but that, in point of true politeness, a real Christian would beat the world at its own weapons, the world itself being judge.

It must be confessed that, in the present corrupt state of things, there is scarcely any one contrivance for which we are more obliged to the inventions of mankind than for that of politeness, as there is perhaps no screen in the world which hides so many ugly sights; yet

while we allow that there never was so admirable a substitute for real goodness as good-breeding, it is certain that the principles of Christianity put into action, would of themselves produce more genuine politeness than any maxims drawn from motives of human vanity or worldly convenience. If *love, peace, joy, long-suffering, gentleness, patience, goodness, and meekness*, may be thought instruments to produce sweetness of manners, these we are expressly told are “the fruits of the spirit.” If mourning with the afflicted, rejoicing with the happy; if to “esteem others better than ourselves;” if “to take the lowest room;” if “not to seek our own;” if “not to behave ourselves unseemly;” if “not to speak great swelling words of vanity”—if these are amiable, engaging, and polite parts of behaviour, then would the documents of Saint Paul make as true a fine gentleman as the *Courtier of Castiglione*, or even the *Letters of Lord Chesterfield* himself. Then would



simulation, and dissimulation, and all the nice shades and delicate gradations of passive and active deceit, be rendered superfluous; and the affections of every heart be won by a shorter and a surer way than by the elegant obliquities of this late popular preceptor, whose mischiefs have outlived his reputation; and who, notwithstanding the present just declension of his fame, greatly helped, during its transient meridian, to relax the general nerve of virtue, and has left a taint upon the public morals, of which we are still sensible.

That self-abasement then, which is inseparable from true Christianity, and the external signs of which good-breeding knows so well how to assume; and those charities which suggest invariable kindness to others, even in the smallest things, would, if left to their natural workings, produce that gentleness which it is one great object of a polite education to imitate. They would produce it too without effort and without exertion; for

being inherent in the substance, it would naturally discover itself on the surface.

For however useful the institutions of polished society may be found, yet they can never alter the eternal difference between right and wrong, or convert appearances into realities; they cannot transform decency into virtue, nor make politeness pass for principle. And the advocates for fashionable breeding should be humbled to reflect, that every convention of artificial manners was adopted not to *cure*, but to *conceal*, deformity: that though the superficial civilities of elegant life tend to make this corrupt world a more tolerable place than it would be without them, yet they never will be considered as a substitute for truth, nor a commutation for virtue, by HIM who is to pass the definitive sentence on the characters of men.

Among the many prejudices which the young and the gay entertain against religion, one is, that it is the declared enemy to wit and genius. But says

one of its wittiest champions \*, “ Piety  
 “ enjoins no man to be dull :” and it  
 will be found, on a fair enquiry, that  
 though it cannot be denied that irreligion  
 has had able men for its advocates,  
 yet they have never been the *most* able.  
 Nor can any learned profession, any department  
 in letters or in science, produce a champion  
 on the side of unbelief, but Christianity has  
 a still greater name to oppose to it ; *philosophers*  
 themselves being judges.

He who studied the book of nature  
 with a scrutiny which has scarcely been  
 permitted to any other mortal eye, was  
 deeply learned in the book of † God.  
 And the ablest writer on the intellect of  
 man, has left one of the ablest treatises  
*on the Reasonableness of Christianity.*  
 This essay of Mr. Locke on the *Human*  
*Understanding*, will stand up to  
 latest ages, as a monument of wisdom ;  
 while Hume’s posthumous work, *the*

\* Dr. South.

† Sir Isaac Newton.



*Essay on Suicide*, which had excited such large expectations, has been long since forgotten. \*

\* The *Essay on Suicide* was published soon after Mr. Hume's death. It might mortify his liberal mind (if matter and motion were capable of consciousness) to learn, that this his dying legacy, the last concentrated effort of his genius and his principles, sent from the grave, as it were, by a man so justly renowned in other branches of literature, produced no sensation on the public mind. And that the precious information that every man had a right to be his own executioner, was considered as a privilege so little desirable, that it probably had not the glory of converting one *cross road* into a cemetery. It is to the credit of this country that fewer copies of this work were sold than perhaps ever was the case with a writer of so much eminence. A more impotent act of wickedness has seldom been achieved, or one which has had the glory of making fewer persons wicked or miserable. That cold and cheerless oblivion which he held out as a refuge to beings who had solaced themselves with the soothing hope of immortality has, by a memorable retribution, overshadowed his last labour; the *Essay on Suicide* being already as much forgotten as he promised the best men that they themselves would be. And this favourite work became at once a prey to that forgetfulness to which he had consigned the whole human race.

The example of Pascal has proved that as much rhetoric and logic too may be shewn in defending revelation as in attacking it. His geometrical spirit was not likely to take up with any proofs but such as came as near to demonstration as the nature of the subject would admit. *Erasmus* in his writings on the ignorance of the Monks, and the Provincial Letters on the fallacies of the Jesuits, while they exhibit as entire a freedom from bigotry, exhibit also as much pointed wit, and as much sound reasoning, as can be found in the whole mass of modern Philosophy.

But while the young adopt the opinion from one class of writers, that religious men are weak men, they acquire from another class a notion that they are ridiculous. And this opinion, by mixing itself with their common notions, and deriving itself from their very amusements, is the more mischievous, as it is imbibed without suspicion, and entertained without resistance.

One common medium through which they take this false view is, those favourite works of wit and humour, so captivating to youthful imaginations, where no small part of the author's success perhaps has been owing to his dexterously introducing a pious character with so many virtues, that it is impossible not to love him; yet tinctured with so many absurdities, that it is equally impossible not to laugh at him. The reader's memory will furnish him with too many instances of what is here meant. The slightest touches of a witty malice can make the best character ridiculous. It is effected by any little awkwardness, absence of mind, an obsolete phrase, a formal pronounciation, a peculiarity of gesture. Or if such a character be brought by unsuspecting honesty, and credulous goodness, into some foolish scrape, it will stamp on him an impression of ridicule so indelible, that all his worth shall not be able to efface it: and the young, who do not always separate their ideas very carefully, shall ever



after, by this early and false association, conceive of piety as having something essentially ridiculous in itself.

But one of the most infallible arts by which the inexperienced are engaged on the side of irreligion, is that popular air of candour, good-nature, and toleration, which it so invariably puts on. While sincere piety is often accused of moroseness and severity, because it cannot hear the doctrines on which it founds its eternal hopes derided without emotion; indifference and unbelief purchase the praise of candour at an easy price, because they neither suffer grief nor express indignation at hearing the most awful truths ridiculed, or the most solemn obligations set at nought. They do not engage on equal terms. The infidel appears good-humoured from his very levity; but the Christian cannot jest on subjects which involve his everlasting salvation.

• The scoffers whom young people hear talk, and the books they hear quoted,

falsely charge their own injurious opinions on Christianity, and then unjustly accuse her of being the monster they have made. They dress her up with the sword of persecution in one hand, and the flames of intolerance in the other; and then ridicule the sober-minded for worshipping an idol which their misrepresentation has rendered as malignant as Moloch. In the mean time they affect to seize on benevolence with exclusive appropriation as their own cardinal virtue, and to accuse of a bigotted cruelty that narrow spirit which points out the perils of licentiousness, and the terrors of a future account. And yet this benevolence, with all its tender mercies, is not afraid nor ashamed to endeavour at snatching away from humble piety the comfort of a present hope, and the bright prospect of a felicity that shall have no end. It does not however seem a very probable means of increasing the stock of human happiness, to plunder mankind of that principle, by the destruction of

which friendship is robbed of its bond, society of its security, patience of its motive, morality of its foundation, integrity of its reward, sorrow of its consolation, life of its balm, and death of its support. \*

It will not perhaps be one of the meanest advantages of a better state that, as the will shall be reformed, so the judgment shall be rectified; that "evil" shall no more be called good," nor the "churl liberal;" nor the plunderer of our best possession, our principles, *benevolent*. Then it will be evident that

\* Young persons too are liable to be misled by that extreme disingenuousness of the new philosophers, when writing on every thing and person connected with revealed religion. These authors often quote satirical poets as grave historical authorities; for instance, because Juvenal has said that the Jews were so narrow-minded that they refused to show a spring of water or the right road to an inquiring traveller who was not of their religion, I make little doubt but many an ignorant freethinker has actually gone away with the belief, that such good-natured acts of information were actually forbidden by the law of Moses.



greater injury could not be done to truth, nor greater violence to language, than by attempting to wrest from Christianity that benevolence which is in fact her most appropriate and peculiar attribute. — “ A new commandment give I “ unto you, that ye love one another.” If benevolence be “ good will to men,” it was that which angelic messengers were not thought too high to announce, nor a much higher being than Angels too great to teach by his example, and to illustrate by his death. It was the criterion, the very watch-word as it were, by which he intended his religion and his followers should be distinguished. “ By this shall “ all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.” Besides, it is the very genius of Christianity to extirpate all selfishness, on whose vacated ground benevolence naturally and necessarily plants itself.

But not to run through all the particulars which obstruct the growth of piety in young persons, I shall only name one

more. They hear much declamation from the fashionable reasoners against the contracted and selfish spirit of Christianity — that it is of a sordid temper, works for pay, and looks for reward.

This jargon of French philosophy, which prates of pure disinterested goodness acting for its own sake, and equally despising punishment and disdaining recompence, indicates as little knowledge of human nature as of Christian revelation, when it addresses man as a being made up of pure intellect, without any mixture of passions, and who can be made happy without hope, and virtuous without fear. These Philosophers affect to be more independent than Moses, more disinterested than Christ himself; for “Moses had respect to the recompence of reward;” and Christ “endured the cross and despised the shame, for the joy that was set before him.”

A creature hurried away by the impulse of some impetuous inclination, is

not likely to be restrained, if he be restrained at all, by a cold reflection on the beauty of virtue. If the dread of offending God, and incurring his everlasting displeasure, cannot stop him, how shall a weaker motive do it? When we see that the powerful sanctions which religion holds out are too often an ineffectual curb; to think of attaining the same end by feebler means, is as if one should expect to make a watch go the better by breaking the main-spring; nay, as absurd as if the philosopher who inculcates the doctrine should undertake, with one of his fingers, to lift an immense weight which had resisted the powers of the crane and the lever.

On calm and temperate spirits indeed, in the hour of retirement, in the repose of the passions, in the absence of temptation, virtue does seem to be her own adequate reward; and very lovely are the fruits she bears in preserving health, credit, and fortune. But on how few will this principle act! and even on



them how often will its operation be suspended ! And though virtue for her own sake might have captivated a few hearts, which almost *seem* cast in a natural mould of goodness, yet no motive could, at all times, be so likely to restrain even these, (especially under the pressure of temptation,) as this simple assertion — *For all this, God will bring thee into judgment.*

It is the beauty of our religion, that it is not held out exclusively to a few select spirits : it is not an object of speculation, or an exercise of ingenuity, but a *rule of life*, as well as a scheme of salvation. It is suited to every condition, capacity, and temper. It is the glory of the Christian religion to *be*, what it was the glory of every ancient philosophic system *not* to be, *the religion of the people* ; and that which constitutes its characteristic value, is its suitableness to the genius, condition, and necessities of all mankind.

For with whatsoever obscurities it has pleased God to shadow some parts of his written word, yet he has graciously ordered, that whatever is necessary should be perspicuous also : and though, as to his adorable essence, “ clouds and darkness “ are round about him ;” yet these are not the medium through which he has left us to discover our duty. In this, as in all other points, revealed religion has a decided superiority over all the ancient systems of philosophy, which were always in many respects impracticable and extravagant, because not framed from observations drawn from a perfect knowledge “ of what was in man.” Whereas the whole scheme of the Gospel is accommodated to real human nature ; laying open its mortal disease, presenting its only remedy ; exhibiting rules of conduct, often difficult indeed, but never impossible ; and where the rule was so high that the practicability seemed desperate, holding out a living pattern, to elucidate the doctrine and to illustrate

the precept ; offering every where the clearest notions of what we have to hope, and what we have to fear ; the strongest injunctions of what we are to believe, and the most explicit directions of what we are to do : with the most encouraging offers of Divine assistance for strengthening our faith and quickening our obedience.

In short, whoever examines the wants of his own heart, and the appropriate assistance which the Gospel furnishes, will find them to be two tallies which exactly correspond — an internal evidence, stronger perhaps than any, than all other evidences, of the truth of revelation.

This is the religion with which the ingenuous hearts of youth should be warmed, and by which their minds, while pliant, should be directed. This will afford a “lamp to their paths,” stronger, steadier, brighter than the feeble and uncertain glimmer of a cold and comfortless philosophy.



## CHAP. IV.

*Other Symptoms of the Decline of Christianity—No Family-Religion—Corrupt or negligent Example of Superiors—The Self-denying and Evangelical Virtues held in Contempt—Neglect of encouraging and promoting Religion among Servants.*

IT was by no means the design of the present undertaking to make a general invective on the corrupt state of manners, or even to animadvert on the conduct of the higher ranks, but inasmuch as the corruption of that conduct, and the depravation of those manners, appear to be a natural consequence of the visible decline of religion; and as operating in its turn, as a cause, on the inferior orders of society.

Of the other obvious causes which contribute to this decline of morals, little will be said. Nor is the present a ro-

mantic attempt to restore the simplicity of primitive manners. This is too literally an age of gold, to expect that it should be so in the poetical and figurative sense. It would be unjust and absurd not to form our opinions and expectations from the present general state of society. And it would argue great ignorance of the corruption which commerce, and conquest, and riches, and arts necessarily introduce into a state, to look for the same sober-mindedness, simplicity, and purity among the *dregs of Romulus*, as the severe and simple manners of elder Rome presented.

But though it would be an attempt of desperate hardihood, to controvert that maxim of the witty bard, that

To mend the world's a vast design ;

a popular aphorism, by the way, which has done no little mischief, inasmuch as, under the mask of hopelessness, it suggests an indolent acquiescence; yet to make the best of the times in which we

live; to fill up the measure of our own actual, particular, and individual duties; and to take care that the age shall not be the worse for our having been cast into it, seems to be the bare dictate of common probity, and not a romantic flight of impracticable perfection.

Is it then so very chimerical to imagine that the benevolent can be sober-minded? Is it romantic to desire that the good should be consistent? Is it absurd to fancy that what has once been practised should not now be impracticable?

It is impossible not to help regretting that it should be the general temper of many of the leading persons of that age which arrogates to itself the glorious character of the *age of benevolence*, to be kind, considerate, and compassionate, every where rather than at home; that the rich and the fashionable should be zealous in promoting religious as well as charitable institutions abroad, and yet discourage every thing which looks like religion in their own families: that they



should be at a considerable expence in instructing the poor at a distance, and yet discredit piety among their own servants — those more immediate objects of every man's attention, whom Providence has enabled to keep any ; and for whose conduct he will be finally accountable, inasmuch as he may have helped to corrupt it.

Is there any degree of pecuniary bounty without doors which can counteract the mischief of a wrong example at home, or atone for that infectious laxity of principle which spreads corruption wherever its influence extends ? Is not he the best benefactor to society who sets the best example, and who does not only the most good, but the least evil ? Will not that man, however liberal, very imperfectly promote virtue in the world at large, who neglects to disseminate its principles within the immediate sphere of his own personal influence, by a correct conduct and a blameless behaviour ? Can a generous but profligate person atone by his

purse for the disorders of his life? Can he expect a blessing on his bounties, while he defeats their effect by a profane or even a careless conversation?

In moral as well as in political treatises, it is often asserted that it is a great evil to do no good: but it has not been perhaps enough insisted on, that it is a great good to do no evil. This species of goodness is not ostentatious enough for popular declamation; and the value of this abstinence from vice is perhaps not well understood but by Christians, because it wants the ostensible brilliancy of actual performance.

But as the *principles* of Christianity are in no great repute, so their concomitant *qualities*, the evangelical virtues, are proportionably disesteemed. Let it however be remembered, that those secret habits of self-controul, those interior and unobtrusive virtues, which excite no astonishment, kindle no emulation, and extort no praise, are at the same time the most difficult, and the most sublime;

and if Christianity be true, will be the most graciously accepted by *Him* who witnesses the secret combat and the silent victory; while the splendid deeds which have the world for their witness, and immortal fame for their reward, shall perhaps cost him who achieved them less than it costs a conscientious Christian to subdue one irregular inclination; a conquest which the world will never know; and, if it did, would probably despise.

Though great actions performed on human motives, are permitted by the supreme Disposer to be equally beneficial to society with such as are performed on purer principles; yet it is an affecting consideration, that, at the final adjustment of accounts, the politician who *raised* a state, or the hero who *preserved* it, may miss of that favour of God which, if it was not his motive, will certainly not be his reward. And it is awful to reflect, as we visit the monuments justly raised by public gratitude, or the statues properly erected by well-earned admir-



ation ; it is awful, I say, to reflect on what may now be the unalterable condition of the illustrious object of these deserved but unavailing honours ; to reflect that he who has saved a state may have lost his own soul !

A Christian life seems to consist of two things, almost equally difficult ; the adoption of good habits, and the excision of such as are evil. No one sets out on a religious course with a stock of native innocence, or actual freedom from sin ; for there is no such state in human life. The natural heart is not, as has been too often supposed, a blank paper, whereon the divine spirit has nothing to do but to stamp characters of goodness : no ! many blots are to be erased, many defilements are to be cleansed, as well as fresh impressions to be made.

The vigilant Christian, therefore, who acts with an eye to the approbation of his Maker, rather than to that of mankind, to a future account, rather than to present glory, will find that, diligently to culti-

vate the "unweeded garden" of his own heart; to mend the soil; to clear the ground of its indigenous vices, by practising the painful business of extirpation, will be that part of his duty which will cost him most labour, and bring him least credit; while the fair flower of one shewy action, produced with little trouble, and of which the very pleasure is reward enough, shall gain him more praise than the eradication of the rankest weeds which over-run the natural heart.

But the Gospel judges not after the manner of men; for it never fails to make the abstinent virtues a previous step to the right performance of the operative ones; and the relinquishing what is wrong to be a necessary prelude to the performance of what is right. It makes "ceasing to do evil" the indispensable preliminary to "learning to do well." It continually suggests that something is to be laid aside, as well as to be practised. We must "hate vain thoughts," before we can "love God's law." We must

lay aside "malice and hypocrisy," to *enable* us "to receive the engrafted word."—Having "a conscience void of offence;" "abstaining from fleshly lusts;" "bringing every thought into obedience;"—these are actions, or rather negations, which, though they never will obtain immortality from the chisel of the statuary, the declamation of the historian, or the panegyric of the poet, will however be "had in everlasting remembrance," when the works of the statuary, the historian, and the poet will be no more.

And, for our encouragement, it is observable that a more difficult Christian virtue generally involves an easier one. A habit of self-denial in permitted pleasures, easily induces a victory over such as are unlawful. And to sit loose to our own possessions, necessarily includes an exemption from coveting the possessions of others: and so on of the rest.

Will it be difficult then to trace back to that want of early restraint noticed in the preceding chapter, that licence of



behaviour which, having been indulged in youth, afterwards reigns uncontrouled in families; and which having infected education in its first springs, taints all the streams of domestic virtue? And will it be thought strange that that same want of religious principle which corrupted our children, should corrupt our servants?

We scarcely go into any company without hearing some invective against the increased profligacy of this order of men; and the remark is made with as great an air of astonishment, as if the cause of the complaint were not as visible as the truth of it. It would be endless to point out instances in which the increased dissipation of their *bettors* (as they are oddly called) has contributed to the growth of this evil. But it comes only within the immediate design of the present undertaking, to insist on the single circumstance of the almost total extermination of religion in fashionable families, as a cause adequate of itself to any consequence which depraved morals can produce.

Is there not a degree of injustice in persons who express strong indignation at those crimes which crowd our prisons, and furnish our incessant executions, and who yet discourage not an internal principle of vice: since those crimes are nothing more than that principle put into action? And it is no less absurd than cruel, in such of the great as lead disorderly lives, to expect to prevent vice by the laws they make to restrain or punish it, while their own example is a perpetual source of temptation to commit it. If, by their own practice, they demonstrate that they think a vicious life is the only happy one, with what colour of justice can they inflict penalties on others, who, by acting on the same principle, expect the same indulgence!

And indeed it is somewhat unreasonable to expect very high degrees of virtue and probity from a class of people whose whole life, after they are admitted into dissipated families, is one continued counteraction of the principles in which they have probably been bred.

When a poor youth is transplanted from one of those excellent institutions which do honour to the present age, and give some hope of reforming the next, into the family of his noble benefactor in town, who has, perhaps, provided liberally for his instruction in the country ; what must be his astonishment at finding the manner of life to which he is introduced diametrically opposite to that life to which he has been taught that salvation is alone annexed ! He has been taught that it was his bounden duty to be devoutly thankful for his own scanty meal, perhaps of barley-bread ; yet he sees his noble lord sit down every day

Not to a dinner, but a hecatomb ;

to a repast for which every element is plundered, and every climate impoverish-  
ed ; for which nature is ransacked, and art is exhausted ; without even the formal ceremony of a slight acknowledgment. It will be lucky for the master, if his servant does not happen to know



that even the Pagans never sat down to a repast without making a libation to their deities ; and that the Jews did not eat a little fruit, or drink a cup of water, without an expression of devout thankfulness.

Next to the law of God, he has been taught to reverence the law of the land, and to respect an act of parliament next to a text of Scripture : yet he sees his honourable protector, publicly in his own house, engaged in the evening in playing at a game expressly prohibited by the laws, and against which perhaps he himself had been assisting in the day to pass an act.

While the contempt of religion was confined to wits and philosophers, the effect was not so sensibly felt. But we cannot congratulate the ordinary race of mortals on their emancipation from old prejudices, or their indifference to sacred usages ; as it is not at all visible that the world is become happier in proportion as it is become more enlightened. We might

rejoice more in the boasted diffusion of light and freedom, were it not apparent that bankruptcies are grown more frequent, robberies more common, divorces more numerous, and forgeries more extensive — that more rich men die by their own hand, and more poor men by the hand of the executioner — than when Christianity was practised by the vulgar, and countenanced, at least, by the great.

Is it not to be regretted therefore, while the affluent are encouraging so many admirable schemes for promoting religion among the children of the poor, that they do not like to *perpetuate* the principle, by encouraging it in their own children and their servants also? Is it not pity, since these last are so moderately furnished with the good things of this life, to rob them of that bright reversion, the bare hope of which is a counterpoise to all the hardships they undergo here — especially since by diminishing this future hope, we shall not be likely to add to their present usefulness?

Still allowing, what has been already granted, that absolute infidelity is not the reigning evil, and that servants will perhaps be more likely to see religion neglected than to hear it ridiculed, — would it not be a meritorious kindness in families of a better stamp, to furnish them with more opportunities of learning and practising their duty? Is it not impolitic indeed, as well as unkind, to refuse them any means of having impressed on their consciences the operative principles of Christianity? It is but little, barely not to *oppose* their going to church, not to *prevent* their doing their duty at home; their opportunities of doing both ought to be facilitated, by giving them, at certain seasons, as few employments as possible that may interfere with both. Even when religion is by pretty general consent banished from our families at home, that only furnishes a stronger reason why our families should not be banished from religion in the churches.



But if these opportunities are not made easy and convenient to them, their superiors have no right to expect from them a zeal so far transcending their own, as to induce them to surmount difficulties for the sake of duty. Religion is never once represented in scripture as a light attainment ; it is never once illustrated by an easy, a quiet, or an indolent allegory. On the contrary, it is exhibited under the active figure of a combat, a race ; something expressive of exertion, activity, progress. And yet many are unjust enough to think that this warfare can be fought, though they themselves are perpetually weakening the vigour of the combatant ; this race be run, though they are incessantly obstructing the progress of him who runs by some hard and interfering command. That our compassionate Judge, who “ knoweth whereof we are made, and “ remembereth that we are but dust,” is particularly touched with the feeling of *their* infirmities, can never be doubted ;

but what portion of forgiveness he will extend to those who lay on their virtue hard burdens "too heavy for them to bear," who shall say?

To keep an immortal being in a state of spiritual darkness, is a positive disobedience to *His* law, who when he bestowed the Bible, no less than when he created the material world, said, *Let there be light*. It were well, both for the advantage of master and servant, that the latter should have the doctrines of the Gospel frequently impressed on his heart; that his conscience should be made familiar with a system which offers such clear and intelligible propositions of moral duty. The striking interrogation, "How shall I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" will perhaps operate as forcibly on an uncultivated mind, as the most eloquent essay to prove that man is not an accountable being. That once credited promise, that "they who have done well shall go into everlasting life," will be

more grateful to the spirit of a plain man, than that more elegant and disinterested sentiment, that *virtue is its own reward*. That "ne that walketh uprightly walketh surely," is not on the whole a dangerous, or a misleading maxim. And "well done, good and faithful servant! I will make thee ruler over many things," though offensive to the liberal spirit of philosophic dignity, is a comfortable support to humble and suffering piety. That "we should do to others as we would they should do to us," is a portable measure of human duty, always at hand, as always referring to something within himself, not amiss for a poor man to carry constantly about with him, who has neither time nor learning to search for a better. It is an universal and compendious law; so universal, as to include the whole compass of social obligation; so compendious, as to be inclosed in so short and plain an aphorism, that the dullest mind cannot misapprehend, nor the weakest memory



forget it. It is convenient for bringing out on all the ordinary occasions of life. We need not say "who shall go up to heaven and bring it unto us, for this word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it." \*

For it is a very valuable part of the gospel of Christ, that though it is an entire and perfect system in its design; though it exhibits one great plan, from which complete trains of argument, and connected schemes of reasoning may be deduced; yet in compassion to the multitude, for whom this benevolent institution was in a good measure designed, and who could not have comprehended a long chain of propositions, or have embraced remote deductions, the most important truths of doctrine, and the most essential documents of virtue, are detailed in single maxims, and comprised in short sentences; independent

\* Deut. xxx. 11. and 12.

of themselves, yet making a necessary part of a consummate whole; from a few of which principles the whole train of human virtues has been deduced, and many a perfect body of ethics has been framed.

If it be thought wonderful, that from so few letters of the alphabet, so few figures of arithmetic, so few notes in music, such endless combinations should have been produced in their respective arts; how far more beautiful would it be to trace the whole circle of morals thus growing out of a few elementary principles of gospel truth.

All Seneca's arguments against the fear of death never yet reconciled one reader to its approach, half so effectually as the humble believer is reconciled to it by that simple persuasion, "I know that my Redeemer liveth."

While the modern philosopher is extending the boundaries of human knowledge, by undertaking to prove that matter is eternal; or enlarging the stock of hu-

man happiness, by demonstrating the extinction of spirit, — it can do no harm to an unlettered man to believe, that “heaven and earth shall pass away, “but God’s word shall not pass away.” While the former is indulging the profitable enquiry why the Deity made the world so late, or why he made it at all, it will not hurt the latter to believe that “in the beginning God made the world,” and that in the end “he shall judge it in “righteousness.”

While the liberal scholar is usefully studying the law of nature and of nations, let him rejoice that his more illiterate brother possesses the plain conviction that “love is the fulfilling of the law,” — that “love working no ill to his neighbour.” And let him be persuaded that he himself, though he know all Tully’s Offices by heart, may not have acquired a more feeling and operative sentiment than is conveyed to the *common* Christian in the rule to “bear each other’s burdens.” While the wit is criticising



the creed, he will be no loser by encouraging his dependants to keep the commandments; since a few such simple propositions as the above furnish a more practical and correct rule of life than can be gleaned from all the volumes of ancient philosophy, justly eminent as many of them are for wisdom and purity. For though they abound with passages of true sublimity, and sentiments of great moral beauty, yet the result is naturally defective, the conclusions necessarily contradictory. This was no fault of the author, but of the system. The vision was acute, but the light was dim. The sharpest sagacity could not distinguish spiritual objects, in the twilight of natural religion, with that accuracy with which they are now discerned by every common Christian, in the diffusion of gospel light.

And whether it be that what depraves the principle darkens the intellect also, certain it is that an uneducated serious Christian reads his bible with a clearness

of intelligence, with an intellectual comment, which no sceptic or mere worldling ever attains. The former has not prejudged the cause he is examining. He is not often led by his passions, still more rarely by his interest, to resist his convictions. While "the secret of the Lord is (obviously) with them that fear him," the mind of them who fear him *not*, is generally prejudiced by a retaining fee from the world, from their passions or their pride, before they enter on the enquiry.

With what consistency can the covetous man embrace a religion which so pointedly forbids him to lay up "treasures upon earth?" How will the man of spirit, as the world is pleased to call the duellist, relish a religion which allows not "the sun to go down upon his wrath?" How can the ambitious struggle for "a kingdom which is not of this world," and embrace a faith which commands him to lay down his crown at the feet of another? How

should the professed wit or the mere philosopher adopt a system which demands, in a lofty tone of derision, "Where is the scribe? Where is the wise? Where is the disputer of this world?" How will the self-satisfied Pharisee endure a religion which, while it peremptorily demands from him every useful action, and every right exertion, will not permit him to rest his hope of salvation on their performance? He whose affections are voluntarily rivetted to the present world, will not much delight in a scheme whose avowed principle is to set him above it. — The obvious consequence of these "hard sayings" is illustrated by daily instances. "Have any of the rulers believed on him?" is a question not confined to the first age of his appearance. Had the most enlightened philosophers of the most polished nations, collected all the scattered wit and learning of the world into one point in order to invent a religion for the salvation of mankind, the doctrine of the cross is



perhaps precisely the thing they would never have hit upon ; precisely the thing which, being offered to them, they would reject. The intellectual pride of the philosopher relished it as little as the carnal pride of the Jew ; for it flattered human wit no more than it gratified human grandeur. The pride of great acquirements, and of great wealth, equally obstructs the reception of divine truth into the heart ; and whether the natural man be called upon to part either from " great possessions," or " high imaginations," he equally goes away sorrowing.

## CHAP. V.

*The negligent Conduct of Christians no real Objection against Christianity. — The Reason why its Effects are not more manifest to Worldly Men is, because Believers do not lead Christian Lives. — Professors differ but little in their Practice from Unbelievers. — Even real Christians are too diffident and timid, and afraid of acting up to their Principles. — The Absurdity of the Charge commonly brought against religious People, that they are too strict.*

IT is an objection frequently brought against Christianity, that if it exhibited so perfect a scheme, if its influences were as strong, if its effects were as powerful, as its friends pretend, it must have produced more visible consequences in the reformation of mankind. This is not the place fully to answer this objec-

tion, which (like all the other cavils against our religion) continues to be urged just as if it never *had* been answered.

That vice and immorality prevail in no small degree in countries professing Christianity, we need not go out of our own to be convinced. But that this is the case only because this benign principle is not suffered to operate in its full power, will be no less obvious to all who are sincere in their enquiries : For if we allow (and who that examines impartially can help allowing ?) that it is the natural tendency of Christianity to make men better, then it must be the aversion from receiving it, and not the fault of the principle, which prevents them from becoming so.

Those who are acquainted with the effects which Christianity actually produced in the first ages of the church, when it *was* received in its genuine purity, and when it *did* operate without obstruction, from its professors at least,



will want no other proof of its inherent power and efficacy. At that period, its most decided and industrious enemy, the emperor Julian, could recommend the *manners* of the Galileans to the imitation of his pagan high priest; though he himself at the same time was doing every thing which the most inveterate malice, sharpened by the acutest wit, and backed by the most absolute power, could devise, to discredit their doctrines.

Nor would the efficacy of Christianity be less visible now in influencing the conduct of its professors, if its principles were heartily and sincerely received. They would, were they of the true genuine cast, operate on the conduct so effectually, that we should see morals and manners growing out of principles, as we see other consequences grow out of their proper and natural causes. Let but this great spring have its unobstructed play, and there would be little occasion to declaim against this excess, or that enormity. If the same skill and care

which are employed in curing symptoms, were vigorously levelled at the internal principle of the disease, the moral health would feel the benefit. If that attention which is bestowed in lopping the redundant and unsightly branches, were devoted to the cultivation of a sound and uncorrupt root, the effect of this labour would soon be discovered by the excellence of the fruits.

For though, even in the highest possible exertion of religious principle, and the most diligent practice of all its consequential train of virtues, man would still find evil propensities enough, in his fallen nature, to make it necessary that he should counteract them, by keeping alive his diligence after higher attainments, and to quicken his aspirations after a better state ; yet the prevailing temper would be in general right ; the will would be in a great measure rectified ; and the heart, feeling and acknowledging its disease, would apply itself diligently to the only remedy. Thus though even

the best men have infirmities enough to deplore, commit sins enough to keep them deeply humble, and feel more sensibly than others the imperfections of that vessel in which their heavenly treasure is hid, they however have the internal consolation of knowing that they shall have to do with a merciful Father, who “despiseth not the sighing of the contrite heart, nor the desire of such as be sorrowful;” who has been witness to all their struggles against sin, and to whom they can appeal with Peter for the sincerity of their desires—“Lord! Thou knowest all things. Thou knowest that I love Thee.”

All the heavy charges which have been brought against religion, have been taken from the abuses of it. In every other instance, the injustice of this proceeding would be notorious: but there is a general want of candour in the judgment of men on this subject, which we do not find them exercise on other occasions; that of throwing the fault of the erring



or ignorant professor on the profession itself.

It does not derogate from the honourable profession of arms, that there are cowards and braggarts in the army. If any man lose his estate by the chicanery of an attorney, or his health by the blunder of a physician, it is commonly said that the one was a disgrace to his business, and the other was ignorant of it; but no one therefore concludes that law and physic are contemptible professions.

Christianity alone is obliged to bear all the obloquy incurred by the misconduct of its followers; to sustain all the reproach excited by ignorant, by fanatical, by superstitious, or hypocritical professors. But whoever accuses it of a tendency to produce the errors of these professors, must have picked up his opinion any where rather than in the New Testament; which Book being the only authentic history of Christianity, is that which candour would naturally consult for information.

But as worldly and irreligious men do

not draw their notions from that pure fountain, but from the polluted stream of human practice; as they form their judgment of divine truth from the conduct of those who pretend to be enlightened by it; some charitable allowance *must* be made for the contempt which they entertain for Christianity, when they see what poor effects it produces in the lives of the generality of professing Christians. What do they observe there which can lead them to entertain very high ideas of the principles which give birth to such practices?

Do men of the world discover any marked, any decided difference between the conduct of nominal Christians and that of the rest of their neighbours, who pretend to no religion at all? Do they see, in the daily lives of such, any great abundance of those fruits by which they have heard believers are to be known? On the contrary, do they not discern in them the same anxious and unwearied pursuit after the things of earth, as in those

who do not profess to have any thought of heaven? Do not they see them labour as sedulously in the interests of a debasing and frivolous dissipation, as those who do not pretend to have any nobler object in view? Is there not the same eagerness to plunge into all sorts of follies themselves, and the same unrighteous speed in introducing their children to them, as if they had never entered into a solemn engagement to renounce them? Is there not the same self-indulgence, the same luxury, and the same passionate attachment to the things of this world in *them*, as is visible in those who do not look for another?

Do not thoughtless neglect, and habitual dissipation answer, as to society, all the ends of the most decided infidelity? Between the barely decent and the openly profane there is indeed this difference,—That the one, by making no profession, deceives neither the world nor his own heart; while the other, by intrenching himself in forms, fancies that he does



something, and thanks God that "he is  
"not like this publican." The one only  
shuts his eyes upon the danger which the  
other despises.

But these unfruitful professors would  
do well to recollect that, by a conduct  
so little worthy of their high calling, they  
not only violate the law to which they  
have vowed obedience, but occasion many  
to disbelieve or to despise it; that they  
are thus in a great measure accountable  
for the infidelity of others, and of course  
will have to answer for more than their  
own personal offences: For did they in  
any respect live up to the principles they  
profess; did they adorn the doctrines of  
Christianity by a life in any degree con-  
sonant to their faith; did they exhibit  
any thing of the "beauty of holiness"  
in their daily conversation; they would  
then give such a demonstrative proof, not  
only of the sincerity of their own obedi-  
ence, but of the brightness of that divine  
light by which they profess to walk, that  
the most determined unbeliever would

at last begin to think there must be *something* in a religion of which the effects were so visible, and the fruits so amiable; and might in time be led to "glorify," not *them*, not the imperfect doers of these works, but "their Father which is in heaven." Whereas, as things are at present carried on, the obvious conclusion must be, either that Christians do not believe in the religion they profess, or that there is no truth in the religion itself.

For will he not naturally say, that if its influences were so predominant, its consequences must be more evident? that, if the prize held out were really so bright, those who truly believed so, would surely *do* something, and *sacrifice* something to obtain it?

This effect of the careless conduct of believers on the hearts of others, will probably be a heavy aggravation of their own guilt at the final reckoning:—and there is no negligent Christian can guess where the infection of his example may stop;

or how remotely it may be pleaded as a palliation of the sins of others, who either may think themselves safe while they are only doing what Christians allow themselves to do ; or who may adduce a Christian's habitual violation of the divine law, as a presumptive evidence that there is no truth in Christianity.

This swells the amount of the actual mischief beyond calculation ; and there is something terrible in the idea of this sort of indefinite evil, that the careless Christian can never know the extent of the contagion he spreads, nor the multiplied infection which *they* may communicate in *their* turn, whom *his* disorders first corrupted.

And there is this farther aggravation of his offence, that he will not only be answerable for all the positive evil of which his example is the cause ; but for the omission of all the probable good which might have been called forth in others, had *his* actions been consistent with his profession. What a strong, what



an almost irresistible conviction would it carry to the hearts of unbelievers, if they beheld that characteristic difference in the manners of Christians, which their profession gives one a right to expect, if they saw that disinterestedness, that humility, sober-mindedness, temperance, simplicity, and sincerity, which are the unavoidable fruits of a genuine faith? and which the Bible has taught them to expect in every Christian.

But, while a man talks like a saint, and yet lives like a sinner; while he professes to believe like an apostle, and yet leads the life of a sensualist; talks of an ardent faith, and yet exhibits a cold and low practice; boasts himself the disciple of a meek Master, and yet is as much a slave to his passions as they who acknowledge no such authority; while he appears the proud professor of an humble religion, or the intemperate champion of a self-denying one,—such a man brings Christianity into disrepute, confirms those in error who might have been awakened to con-

viction, strengthens doubt into disbelief, and hardens indifference into contempt.

Even among those of a better cast and a purer principle, the excessive restraints of timidity, caution, and that "fear of man, which bringeth a snare," confine, and almost stifle the generous spirit of an ardent exertion in the cause of religion. Christianity may pathetically expostulate, that it is not always "an open enemy which dishonours her," but her "familiar friend." And, "what dost thou more than others?" is a question which even the good and worthy should often ask themselves, in order to quicken their zeal; to prevent the total stagnation of unexerted principles, on the one hand; or the danger, on the other, of their being driven down the gulph of ruin by the unresisted and confluent tides of temptation, fashion, and example.

In a very strict and mortified age, of which a scrupulous severity was the predominant character, precautions against an excessive zeal might, and doubtless

would, be a wholesome and prudent measure. But in these times of relaxed principle and frigid indifference, to see people so vigilantly on their guard against the imaginary mischiefs of enthusiasm, while they run headlong into the real opposite perils of a destructive licentiousness, reminds us of the one-eyed animal in the fable; who, living on the banks of the ocean, never fancied he could be destroyed any way but by drowning: but, while he kept that one eye constantly fixed on the sea, on which side he concluded all the peril lay, he was devoured by an enemy on the dry land, from which quarter he never suspected any danger.

Are not the mischiefs of an enthusiastic piety insisted on with as much earnestness as if an extravagant devotion were the prevailing propensity? Is not the necessity of moderation as vehemently urged as if an intemperate zeal were the epidemic distemper of the great world? as if all our apparent danger and natural bias lay on the side of a too rigid auste-



rity, which required the discreet and constant counteraction of an opposite principle? Would not a stranger be almost tempted to imagine, from the frequent invectives against extreme strictness, that abstraction from the world, and a monastic rage for retreat, were the ruling temper? that we were in some danger of seeing our places of diversion abandoned, and the enthusiastic scenes of the *Holy Fathers of the desert* acted over again by the frantic and uncontrollable devotion of our young persons of fashion?

It is not to be denied, that enthusiasm is an evil to which the more religious of the lower class are peculiarly exposed; and this from a variety of causes, upon which this is not the place to enlarge. But who will be hardy enough to assert that the class we are now addressing, commonly fall into the same error. In order to establish, or to overthrow this assertion, let each fashionable reader confess whether, within the sphere of his

own observation, the fact be realized. Let each bring this vague charge specifically home to his own acquaintance. Let him honestly declare what proportion of noble enthusiasts, what number of honourable fanatics his own personal knowledge of the great world supplies. Let him compare the list of his enthusiastic with that of his luxurious friends, of his fanatical with his irreligious acquaintance, of "the righteous over much" with such as "care for none of these things;" of the strict and precise with that of the loose and irregular, of those who beggar themselves by their pious alms with those who injure their fortune by extravagance; of those who "are lovers of God" with those who are lovers of pleasure. Let him declare whether he sees more of his associates swallowed up in gloomy meditation or immersed in sensuality; whether more are the slaves of superstitious observances or of ambition. — Surely those who address the rich and great in the way of

exhortation and reproof, would do particularly well to define exactly what is indeed the prevailing character; lest, for want of such discrimination, they should heighten the disease they might wish to cure, and increase the bias they would desire to counteract, by addressing to the voluptuary cautions which belong to the hermit, and thus aggravate his already inflamed appetites by invectives against an evil of which he is in little danger.

If, however, superstition, where it really does exist, injures religion, and we grant that it greatly injures it, yet we insist that scepticism injures it no less; for to deride, or to omit any of the component parts of Christian faith, is surely not a less fatal evil than making uncommanded additions to it.

It is seriously to be regretted in an age like the present, remarkable for indifference in religion and levity in manners, and which stands so much in need of lively patterns of firm and resolute piety,



that many who really are Christians on the soberest conviction, should not appear more openly and decidedly on the side they have espoused; that they assimilate so very much with the manners of those about them (which manners they yet scruple not to disapprove); and, instead of an avowed but prudent steadfastness, which might draw over the others, appear evidently fearful of being thought precise and over-scrupulous; and actually seem to disavow their right principles, by concessions and accommodations not strictly consistent with them. They often seem cautiously afraid of *doing too much*, and *going too far*; and the dangerous plea, the necessity of *living like other people*, of *being like the rest of the world*, and the propriety of *not being particular*, is brought as a reasonable apology for a too yielding and indiscriminate conformity.

But, at a time when almost all are sinking into the prevailing corruption, how beautiful a rare, a single integrity is, let

the instances of Lot and Noah declare !  
 And to those with whom a poem is an  
 higher authority than the Bible, let me  
 recommend the most animated picture of  
 a righteous singularity that ever was de-  
 lineated, in

— The Seraph Abdiel, faithful found  
 Among the faithless, faithful only he  
 Among innumerable false, unmov'd,  
 Unshaken, uneduc'd, unterrify'd,  
 His loyalty he kept, his love and zeal :  
 Nor NUMBERS, nor EXAMPLES with him wrought  
 To swerve from truth, or change his constant mind,  
 Tho' SINGLE. PAR. LOST, B. iv.

Few indeed of the more orderly and  
 decent have any objection to that degree  
 of religion which is compatible with their  
 general acceptance with others, or the  
 full enjoyment of their own pleasures.  
 For a formal and ceremonious exercise of  
 the outward duties of Christianity may  
 not only be kept up without exciting cen-  
 sure, but will even procure a certain  
 respect and confidence ; and is not quite  
 irreconcilable with a voluptuous and  
 dissipated life. So far many go ; and so

far as "godliness is profitable to the life" "that is," it passes without reproach.

But as soon as men begin to consider religious exercises not as a decency, but a duty; not as a commutation for a self-denying life, but as a means to promote a holy temper and a virtuous conduct; as soon as they feel disposed to carry the effect of their devotion into their daily life; as soon as their principles discover themselves, by leading them to withdraw from those scenes, and abstain from those actions in which the gay place their supreme happiness; as soon as something is to be *done*, and something is to be *parted with*, then the world begins to take offence, and to stigmatize the activity of that piety which had been commended as long as it remained inoperative, and had only evaporated in words.

When religion, like the vital principle, takes its seat in the heart, and sends out supplies of life and heat to every part; diffuses motion, soul, and vigour, through



the whole circulation, and informs and animates the entire man; when it operates on the practice, influences the conversation, breaks out into a lively zeal for the honour of God, and the best interests of mankind, especially in a man of talents, then the sincerity of heart or the sanity of mind of that person will become questionable; and it must be owing to a very fortunate combination of circumstances indeed, if he can at once preserve the character of parts and piety, and retain the reputation of a man of sense after he has acquired that of a Christian.

It is surely a folly to talk of being too holy, too strict, or too good. Where there really happens to appear some foundation for the charge of enthusiasm, (as there are indeed sometimes in good people eccentricities which justify the censure,) we may depend upon it, that it proceeds from some defect in the judgment, and not from any excess in the piety: for in goodness there is no excess: and it is as preposterous to say that any one

is too good, or too pious, as that he is too wise, too strong, or too healthy; since the highest point in all these is only the perfection of that quality which we admired in a lower degree. There may be an *imprudent*, but there cannot be a *superabundant* goodness. An ardent imagination may mislead a rightly turned heart; and a weak intellect may incline the best intentioned to ascribe too much value to things of comparatively small importance. Such a one not having discernment enough to perceive where the force and stress of duty lie, may inadvertently discredit religion by a too scrupulous exactness in points of small intrinsic value. And even well-meaning men as well as hypocrites may think they have done a meritorious service when their "mint" and "anise" are rigorously tithed.

But in observing the "weightier matters of the law," in the practice of universal holiness, in the love of God, there can be no possibility of exceeding, while

there is no limitation in the command. We are in no danger of loving our neighbour *better* than ourselves ; and let us remember that we do not go beyond, but fall short of our duty, while we love him *less*. If we were commanded to love God with *some* of our heart, with *part* of our soul, and a *portion* of our strength, there would then be some colour for those perpetual cavils about the *proportion* of love and the *degree* of obedience which are due to him. But as the command is so definite, so absolute, so comprehensive, so entire, nothing can be more absurd than that unmeaning, but not unfrequent charge, brought against religious persons, that *they are too strict*. It is in effect saying, that they love God too much, and serve him too well.

The foundation of this silly censure is commonly laid in the first principles of education, where an early separation is systematically made between duty and pleasure. One of the first baits held out for the encouragement of children is, that



when they have done their *duty*, they will be entitled to some *pleasure*; thus forcibly disjoining what should be considered as inseparable. And there is not a more common justification of that idle and dissipated manner in which the second half of the Sunday is commonly spent, even by those who make a conscience of spending the former part properly, than that, “now they have done their duty, they may take their pleasure.”

But while Christian observances are considered as tasks, which are to be got over to entitle us to something more pleasant; as a burthen which we must endure in order to propitiate an inexorable Judge, who makes a hard bargain with his creatures, and allows them just so much amusement in pay for so much drudgery, — we must not wonder that such low views are entertained of Christianity, and that a religious life is reprobated as strict and rigid.

But to him who acts from the nobler motive of love, and the animating power

of the Christian hope, the exercise is the reward, the permission is the privilege, the work is the wages. *He* does not carve out some miserable pleasure, and stipulate for some meagre diversion, to pay himself for the hard performance of his duty, who in that very performance experiences the highest pleasure ; and feels the truest gratification of which his nature is capable, in devoting the noblest part of that nature to *His* service, to whom he owes all, because from Him he has received all.

This reprobated strictness, therefore, so far from being the source of discomfort and misery, as is pretended, is in reality the true cause of actual enjoyment, by laying the axe to the root of all those turbulent and uneasy passions, the unreserved and yet imperfect gratification of which does so much more tend to disturb our happiness, than that self-government which Christianity enjoins.

But all precepts seem rigorous, all ob-

servances are really hard, where there is not an entire conviction of God's right to our obedience, and an internal principle of faith and love to Christ to make that obedience pleasant. A religious life is indeed a hard bondage to one immersed in the practices of the world, and under the dominion of its appetites and passions. To a real Christian, it is "perfect freedom." He does not now abstain from such and such things, merely because they are forbidden, as he did in the first stages of his progress, but because his soul has no longer any pleasure in them. And it would be the severest of all punishments to oblige him to return to those practices, from which he once abstained with difficulty, and through the less noble principle of fear.

There is not therefore perhaps a greater mistake than that common notion entertained by the more orderly part of the fashionable world, that a little religion will make people happy, but that an high degree of it is incompatible with all en-



joyment. For surely *that* religion can add little to a man's happiness which restrains him from the commission of a wrong action, but which does not pretend to extinguish the bad principle from which the act proceeded. A religion which ties the hands, without changing the heart; which, like the hell of Tantalus, subdues not the desire, yet forbids the gratification, is indeed an uncomfortable religion: and such a religion, though it may gain a man something on the side of reputation, will give him but little inward comfort. For what true peace can that heart enjoy which is left a prey to that temper which produced the evil, even though terror or shame may have prevented the outward act.

That people devoted to the pursuits of a dissipated life should conceive of religion as a difficult and even unattainable state, it is easy to believe. But that they should conceive of it as an unhappy state, is the consummation of their error and their ignorance: for that a *rational*

being should have his understanding enlightened ; that an *immortal* being should have his views extended and enlarged ; that a *helpless* being should have a consciousness of assistance, a *sinful* being the prospect of pardon, or a *fallen* one the assurance of restoration, does not seem a probable ground of unhappiness : and on any other subject but religion such reasoning not only would not be admissible, but would be accounted the wildest absurdity.

## CHAP. VI.

*A Stranger, from observing the fashionable Mode of Life, would not take this to be a Christian Country. — Lives of Professing Christians examined, by a Comparison with the Gospel. — Christianity not made the Rule of Life, even by those who profess to receive it as an Object of Faith. — Temporizing Writers contribute to lower the Credit of Christianity. — Loose Harangues on Morals not calculated to reform the Heart.*

THE Christian religion is not intended, as some of its fashionable professors seem to fancy, to operate as a charm, a talisman, or incantation, and to produce its effect by our pronouncing certain mystical words, attending at certain consecrated places, and performing certain hallowed ceremonies; but it is an active, vital, influential principle, operating on the heart, re-



straining the desires, affecting the general conduct, and as much regulating our commerce with the world, our business, pleasures, and enjoyments, our conversations, designs, and actions, as our behaviour in public worship, or even in private devotion.

That the effects of such a principle are strikingly visible in the lives and manners of the generality of those who give the law to fashion, will not perhaps be insisted on. And indeed the whole present system of fashionable life is utterly destructive of seriousness. To instance only in the growing habit of frequenting great assemblies, which is generally thought insignificant, and is in effect so vapid, that one almost wonders how it can be dangerous. It would excite laughter, because we are so broken into the habit, were I to insist on the immorality of passing one's whole life in a crowd. But those promiscuous myriads which compose the society, falsely so called, of the gay world; who are

brought together without esteem, remain without pleasure, and part without regret; who live in a round of diversions, the possession of which is so joyless, though the absence is so insupportable; — all these, by the mere force of incessant and indiscriminate association, weaken, and in time wear out, the best feelings and affections of the human heart. And the mere spirit of dissipation, thus contracted from invariable habit, even detached from all its concomitant evils, is in itself as hostile to a religious spirit as more positive and actual offences. Far be it from me to say that it is as criminal; I only insist that it is as opposite to that heavenly-mindedness which is the essence of the Christian temper.

Let us suppose an ignorant and unprejudiced spectator, who should have been taught the theory of all the religions on the globe, brought hither from the other hemisphere. Set him down in the politest part of our metropolis, and let him determine, if he can, except from what

he shall see interwoven in the texture of our laws, and kept up in the service of our churches, to what particular religion we belong. Let him not mix entirely with the most flagitious, but only with the most fashionable; at least, let him keep what they themselves call *the best company*. Let him scrutinize into the manners, customs, conversations, habits, and diversions, most in vogue, and then infer from all he has seen and heard, what is the established religion of the land.

That it could not be the Jewish he would soon discover: for of rites, ceremonies, and external observances, he would trace but slender remains. He would be equally convinced that it could not be the religion of Old Greece and Rome; for that enjoined reverence to the gods, and inculcated obedience to the laws. His most probable conclusion would be in favour of the Mahometan faith, did not the excessive indulgence of some of the most distinguished, in an



article of intemperance prohibited even by the sensual Prophet of Arabia, defeat that conjecture.

How would the petrified inquirer be astonished, if he were told that all these gay, thoughtless, luxurious, dissipated persons, professed a religion meek, spiritual, self-denying; of which humility, poverty of spirit, a renewed mind, and nonconformity to the world, were the specific distinctions!

When he saw the sons of men of fortune, scarcely old enough to be sent to school, admitted to be spectators of the turbulent and unnatural diversions of racing and gaming; and the almost infant-daughters, even of wise and virtuous mothers (an innovation which fashion herself forbade till now) carried with most unthrifty anticipation to the frequent and late protracted ball, — would he believe that we were of a religion which has required from these very parents, a solemn vow that these children should be bred up “in the nurture and

“admonition of the Lord?” That they should constantly “believe God’s holy word, and keep his commandments?”

When he observed the turmoils of ambition, the competitions of vanity, the ardent thirst for the possession of wealth, and the wild misapplication of it when possessed; how could he persuade himself that all these anxious pursuers of present enjoyment were the disciples of a Master who exhibited and compressed the very character and essence of his religion, as it were in a motto — “MY KINGDOM IS NOT OF THIS WORLD?”

When he beheld those nocturnal clubs, so subversive of private virtue and domestic happiness, would he conceive that we were of a religion which in express terms “exhorts young men to be sober-minded?”

When he saw those magnificent and brightly illuminated structures which decorate and disgrace the very precincts of the royal residence (so free itself from all these pollutions); when he beheld the

nightly offerings made to the demon of play, on whose cruel altar the fortune and happiness of wives and children are offered up without remorse; would he not conclude that we were of some of those barbarous religions which enjoin unnatural sacrifices, and whose horrid deities are appeased with nothing less than human victims?

Now ought we not to pardon our imaginary spectator, if he should not at once conclude that all the various descriptions of persons above noticed professed the Christian religion; supposing him to have no other way of determining but by that most natural one, the conformity of their manners to that rule by which he had undertaken to judge them? We indeed ourselves must judge with a certain latitude, and candidly take the present state of society into the account; which, in some few instances perhaps, must be allowed to dispense with that literal strictness, which more peculiarly belonged to the first ages of the Gospel.



But as this is really a Christian country, professing to enjoy the purest faith in the purest form, it cannot be unreasonable to go a little further, and inquire whether Christianity, however firmly established, and generally professed in it, is really practised by that order of fashionable persons, who, while they are absorbed in the delights of the world, and their whole souls devoted to the pursuit of pleasure, yet still arrogate to themselves the honourable name of Christians, and occasionally testify their claim to this high character, by a general profession of their belief in, and a decent occasional compliance with the forms of religion, and the ordinances of our church?

This enquiry must be made, not by a comparison with the state of Christianity in other countries; (a mode always fallacious, whether adopted by nations or individuals, is that of comparing themselves with those who are still worse;) nor must it be made from any notions drawn from

custom, decency, or any other human standard; but from a scripture view of what real religion is;—from any one of those striking and comprehensive representations of it, which may be found condensed in so many single passages of the sacred writings.

Whoever then looks into the Book of God, and observes its prevailing spirit, and then looks into that part of the world under consideration, will not surely be thought very censorious, if he pronounce that the conformity between them does not seem to be *very* striking; and that the manners of the one do not very evidently appear to be dictated by the spirit of the other. Will he discover that the Christian religion is so much as pretended to be made the *rule of life* even by that decent order who profess not to have discarded it as an object of faith? Do even the more regular, who neglect not public observances, consider Christianity as *the measure, and God as the end of their actions*? Do even what the world calls

religious persons employ their time, their abilities, and their fortune, as talents for which they however confess they believe themselves accountable; or do they in any respect live, I will not say up to their profession (for what human being does so?) but in any consistency with it, or even with an eye to its predominant tendencies? Do persons in general of this description seem to consider the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel as any thing more than a form of words, necessary indeed to be repeated, and proper to be believed? But do they consider them as indispensably necessary to be adopted into a governing principle of action?

Is it acting a consistent part to declare in the solemn assemblies that they are "miserable offenders," and that "there is no health in them," and yet never in their daily lives to discover any symptom of that humility and self-abasement, which should naturally be implied in such a declaration?

Is it reasonable or compatible, I will



not say with piety, but with good sense, earnestly to lament having "followed the devices and desires of their own hearts," and then deliberately to plunge into such a torrent of dissipation as clearly indicates that they do not struggle to oppose *one* of these devices, to resist *one* of these desires? I dare not say this is hypocrisy, I do not believe it is, but surely it is inconsistency.

"Be ye not conformed to this world," is a leading principle in the book they acknowledge as their guide. But after unresistingly assenting to this as a doctrinal truth, at church, — how absurd would they think any one who should expect them to adopt it into their practice at home! Perhaps the whole law of God does not exhibit a single precept more expressly, more steadily, and more uniformly rejected by the class in question. If it mean any thing, it can hardly be consistent with that mode of life emphatically distinguished by the appellation of *fashionable*.

Now, would it be much more absurd (for any other reason but because it is not the custom) if our legislators were to meet one day in every week, gravely to read over all the obsolete statutes and rescinded acts of parliament, than it is for the order of persons of the above description to assemble every Sunday, to profess their belief in and submission to a system of principles, which they do not so much as *intend* shall be binding on their practice?

But to continue our inquiry. — There is not a more common or more intelligible definition of human duty, than that of “Fear God, and keep his commandments.” Now, as to the first of these inseparable precepts, can we, with the utmost stretch of charity, be very forward to conclude that God is really “very greatly feared,” in secret, by those who give too manifest indications that they live “without him in the world?” And as to the latter precept, which naturally grows out of the other—without noticing any of the flagrant breaches of

the moral law, let us only confine ourselves to the allowed, general, and notorious violation of the third and fourth commandments, by the higher as well as by the lower orders; breaches so flagrant, that they force themselves on the observation of the most inattentive, too palpably to be either unnoticed or palliated.

Shall we have reason to change our opinion if we take that divine representation of the sum and substance of religion, and apply it as a touchstone in the present trial,—“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with *all* thy heart, and with  
“*all* thy mind, and with *all* thy soul,  
“and with *all* thy strength, and thy  
“neighbour as thyself?” Now, judging by inference, do we see many public proofs of that heavenly-mindedness which would be the inevitable effect of such a fervent and animated dedication of all the powers, faculties, and affections of the soul to him who gave it? And, as to the great rule of social duty expressed in the second clause, do we observe as



much of that considerate kindness, that pure disinterestedness, that conscientious attention to the comfort of others, especially of dependents and inferiors, as might be expected from those who enjoy the privilege of so unerring a standard of conduct? a standard which, if impartially consulted, must make our kindness to others bear an exact proportion to our self-love: a rule in which Christian principle, operating on human sensibility, could not fail to decide aright in every supposeable case. For no man can doubt how he ought to act towards another, while the inward corresponding suggestions of conscience and feeling concur in letting him know how he would wish, in a change of circumstances, that others should act towards him.

Or suppose we take a more detailed survey, by a third rule, which indeed is not so much the principle as the effect of piety — “ True religion, and undefiled  
“ before God and the Father, is this : to  
“ visit the fatherless and widows in their

“affliction, and to keep himself *unspotted from the world.*” Now, if Christianity insists that obedience to the latter injunction be the true evidence of the sincerity of those who fulfil the former, is the beneficence of the fashionable world *very* strikingly illustrated by this spotless purity, this exemption from the pollutions of the world, which is here declared to be its invariable concomitant?

But if I were to venture to take my estimate with a view more immediately evangelical; if I presumed to look for that genuine Christianity which consists in “repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ;” to insist that, whatever *natural* religion and *fashionable* religion may teach, it is the peculiarity of the *Christian* religion to humble the sinner and exalt the Saviour; to insist that not only the grossly flagitious, but that *all* have sinned; that *all* are by nature in a state of condemnation; that *all* stand in need of mercy, of which there is no hope but on the Gospel terms;

that eternal life is promised to those *only* who accept it on the offered conditions of "faith, repentance, and renewed obedience;"—if I were to insist on such evidences of our Christianity as these; if I were to express these doctrines in plain scriptural terms, without lowering, qualifying, disguising, or doing them away; if I were to insist on this belief, and its implied and corresponding practices; I am aware that, with whatever condescending patience this little tract might have been so far perused, many a fashionable reader would here throw it aside, as having now detected the palpable enthusiast, the abettor of "strange doctrines," long ago consigned over by the liberal and the polite to bigots and fanatics. And yet, if the Bible be true, this is a simple and faithful description of Christianity.

Surely men forget that we are urging them upon their own principles; that while we are pressing them with motives drawn from Christianity, they seem to



have as little concern in those motives as if they themselves were of another religion. It is not a name that will stand us in stead. It is not merely glorying in the title of Christians, while we are living in the neglect of its doctrines and its precepts; it is not valuing ourselves on the profession of religion as creditable, while we reject the power of it as fanatical, that will save us. In any other circumstance of life it would be accounted absurd to adopt a set of propositions, principles, statutes, or fundamental articles, and not to make them the ground of our acting as well as of our reasoning. In these supposed instances the blame would lie in the contradiction; in religion it lies in the agreement. Strange! that to act in consequence of received and acknowledged principles, should be accounted weakness! Strange, that what alone is truly consistent, should be branded as absurd! Strange, that men must really forbear to act rationally, only that they may not be reckoned mad! Strange, that

they should be commended for having prayed in the excellent words of the Bible and of our church, for "a clean heart, and a right spirit;" and yet, if they gave any sign of such a transformation of heart, they should be accounted, if not fanatical, at least, singular, weak, or melancholy men.

After having, however, just ventured to hint at what are indeed the humbling doctrines of the gospel, the doctrines to which alone eternal life is promised, I shall in deep humility forbear to enlarge on this part of the subject, which has been exhausted by the labours of wise and pious men in all ages. Unhappily, however, the most awakening of these writers are not the favourite guests in the closets of the more fashionable Christians; who, when they happen to be more seriously disposed than ordinary, are fond of finding out some middle kind of theology, which recommends some half-way state, something between Paganism and Christianity, sus-

pending the mind, like the position of Mahomet's tomb, between earth and heaven :—a kind of reading which, while it quiets the conscience by being on the side of morals, neither awakens fear, nor alarms security. By dealing in generals, it comes home to the hearts of none : it flatters the passions of the reader, by ascribing high merit to the performance of certain right actions, and the forbearance from certain wrong ones ; among which, that reader must be very unlucky indeed who does not find some performances and some forbearances of his own. It at once enables him to keep heaven in his eye, and the world in his heart. It agreeably represents the readers to themselves as amiable persons, guilty indeed of a few faults, but never as condemned sinners under sentence of death. It commonly abounds with high encomiums on the dignity of human nature ; the good effects of virtue on health, fortune, and reputation ; the dangers of a blind zeal, the mischiefs of enthusiasm,



and the folly of singularity, with various other kindred sentiments ; which, if they do not always fall in of themselves with the corruptions of our nature, may, by a little warping, be easily accommodated to them.

These are the too successful practices of certain lukewarm and temporizing divines, who have become popular by blunting the edge of that heavenly tempered weapon, whose salutary keenness, but for their “deceitful handling,” would oftener “pierce to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit.”

But those severer preachers of righteousness, who disgust by applying too closely to the conscience ; who probe the inmost heart, and lay open all its latent peccancies ; who treat of principles as the only certain source of manners ; who lay the axe to the root, oftener than the pruning knife to the branch ; who insist much and often on the great leading truths, that man is a fallen creature, who must be restored, if

he be restored at all, by means very little flattering to human pride, — such heart-searching writers as these will seldom find access to the houses and hearts of the more modish Christians, unless they happen to owe their admission to some subordinate quality of style ; unless they can captivate, with the seducing graces of language, those well-bred readers, who are childishly amusing themselves with the garnish, when they are perishing for want of food ; who are searching for polished periods, when they should be in quest of alarming truths ; who are looking for elegance of composition, when they should be anxious for eternal life.

Whatever comparative praise may be due to the former class of writers, when viewed with others of a less decent order, yet I am not sure whether so many books of frigid morality, exhibiting such inferior motives of action, such moderate representations of faith and holiness, and such a low standard of principle, have not done religion much more harm than

good ; whether they do not lead many a reader to inquire what is the lowest degree in the scale of virtue with which he may content himself, so as barely to escape eternal punishment ; how much indulgence he may allow himself, without absolutely forfeiting his chance of safety ; what is the uttermost verge to which he may venture of this world's enjoyment, and yet just keep within a possibility of hope for the next : adjusting the scales of indulgence and security with such a scrupulous equilibrium, as not to lose much pleasure, yet not incur much penalty.

This is hardly an exaggerated representation : and to these low views of religion is partly owing so much of that bare-weight virtue with which even Christians are so apt to content themselves : fighting for every inch of ground which may possibly be taken within the pales of permission, and stretching those pales to the utmost edge of that limitation about which the world and the Bible contend.



But while the nominal Christian is persuading himself that there can be no harm in going *a little further*, the real Christian is always afraid of going too far. While the one is debating for a little more disputed ground, the other is so fearful of straying into the regions of unallowed indulgence, that he keeps at a prudent distance from the extremity of his permitted limits; and is as anxious in restricting as the other is desirous of extending them. One thing is clear, and it may be no bad indication by which to discover the state of a man's heart to himself; while he is contending for this allowance, and stipulating for the other indulgence, it will shew him that, whatever change there may be in his life, there is none in his heart; the temper remains as it did; and it is by the inward frame rather than the outward act that he can best judge of his *own* state, whatever may be the rule by which he undertakes to judge of that of another.

It is less wonderful that there are not more Christians, than that Christians, as they are called, are not better men; for if Christianity be not true, the human motives to virtue are not high enough to quicken ordinary men to very extraordinary exertions. We see them do and suffer every day for popularity, for custom, for fashion, for the point of honour, not only more than good men do and suffer for religion, but a great deal more than religion requires them to do. For her *reasonable service* demands no sacrifices but what are sanctioned by good sense, sound policy, right reason, and uncorrupt judgment.

Many of these fashionable professors even go so far as to bring their right faith as an apology for their wrong practice. They have a commodious way of intrenching themselves within the shelter of some general position of unquestionable truth: Even the great Christian hope becomes a snare to them. They apologize for a life of offence, by taking

refuge in the supreme goodness they are abusing. That "God is all merciful," is the common reply to those who hint to them their danger. This is a false and fatal application of a divine and comfortable truth. Nothing can be more certain than the proposition, nor more delusive than the inference: for their deduction implies, not that he is merciful to sin repented of, but to sin continued in. But it is a most fallacious hope to expect that God will violate his own covenant, or that he is indeed, "all mercy," to the utter exclusion of his other attributes of perfect holiness, purity, and justice.

It is a dangerous folly to rest on these vague and general notions of unlimited mercy; and nothing can be more delusive than this indefinite trust in being forgiven in our *own* way, after God has clearly revealed to us that he will only forgive us in *his* way. Besides, is there not something singularly base in sinning against God *because* he is merciful?



But the truth is, no one does truly trust in God, who does not endeavour to obey him. For to break his laws, and yet to depend on his favour; to live in opposition to his will, and yet in expectation of his mercy; to violate his commands, and yet look for his acceptance, would not, in any other instance, be thought a reasonable ground of conduct; and yet it is by no means as uncommon as it is inconsistent.

## CHAP. VII.

*View of those who acknowledge Christianity as a perfect System of Morals, but deny its Divine Authority.—Morality not the Whole of Religion.*

As in the preceding chapter notice was taken of that description of persons who profess to receive Christianity with great reverence as a matter of faith, who yet do not pretend to adopt it as a rule of conduct; I shall conclude these slight remarks with some short animadversions on another set of men, and that not a small one, among the decent and the fashionable, who profess to think it exhibits an admirable system of morals, while they deny its divine authority; though that authority alone can make the necessity of obeying its precepts binding on the consciences of men.

This is a very discreet scheme: for such persons at once save themselves from the discredit of having their understanding imposed upon by a supposed blind submission to evidences and authorities; and yet, prudently enough, secure to themselves, in no small degree, the reputation of good men. By steering this middle kind of course, they contrive to be reckoned liberal by the *philosophers*, and decent by the believers.

But we are not to expect to see the pure morality of the Gospel very carefully transfused into the lives of such objectors. And indeed it would be unjust to imagine that the precepts *should* be most scrupulously observed by those who reject the authority. The influence of divine truth must necessarily best prepare the heart for an unreserved obedience to its laws. If we do not depend on the promises of the Gospel, we shall want the best motive to the actions and performances which it enjoins. A lively belief *must* therefore precede a hearty obedience.



Let those who think otherwise hear what the Saviour of the World has said : " For " this end was I born, and for this cause " came I into the world, that I might " bear witness unto the truth." Those who reject the Gospel, therefore, reject the *power* of performing good actions. That command, for instance, to set " our " affections on things above," will operate but faintly, till that Spirit from which the command proceeds touches the heart, and convinces it that no human good is worthy of the entire affection of an immortal creature. An unreserved faith in the promiser *must* precede our acceptable performance of any duty to which the promise is annexed.

But as to a set of duties enforced by no other motive than a bare acquiescence in their beauty, and a cold conviction of their propriety, but impelled by no obedience to his authority who imposes them ; though we know not how well they might be performed by pure and impeccable beings, yet we know how they

commonly *are* performed by frail and disorderly creatures, fallen from their innocence, and radically corrupt in their very natures.

Nothing but a conviction of the truth of Christianity can reconcile thinking beings to the extraordinary appearances of things in the Creator's moral government of the world. The works of God are an enigma, of which his word alone is the solution. The dark veil which is frequently thrown over the divine dispensations in this lower world, must naturally shock those who consider only the single scene which is acting on the present stage; but is quite reconcileable to him who, having learnt from revelation the nature of the laws by which the great Author acts, trusts confidently that the catastrophe will set all to rights. The confusion which sin and the passions have introduced; the triumph of wickedness; the seemingly arbitrary disproportion of human conditions, accountable on no scheme but that which the Gospel has

opened to us — have all a natural tendency to withdraw from the love of God the hearts of those who erect themselves into critics on the divine conduct, and yet will not study the plan, and get acquainted with the rules, so far as it has pleased the Supreme Disposer to reveal them.

Till therefore the word of God is used as “a lamp to their paths,” men can neither truly discern the crookedness of their own ways, nor the perfection of that light by which they are directed to walk. And this light can only be seen by its own proper brightness: it has no other medium. Until therefore “the secret of “the Lord” is with men, they will not truly “fear him;” until he has “enlarged their hearts” with the knowledge and belief of his word, they will not very vigorously run “the way of his “commandments.” Until they have acquired that “faith, without which it is “impossible to please God,” they will not attain that “holiness, without which “no man can see him.”



And indeed if God has thought fit to make the Gospel an instrument of salvation, we must own the necessity of receiving it as a divine institution, before it is likely to operate very effectually on the human conduct. The great Creator, if we may judge by analogy from natural things, is so just and wise an economist, that he always adapts, with the most accurate precision, the instrument to the work ; and never lavishes more means than are necessary to accomplish the proposed end. If therefore Christianity had been intended for nothing more than a mere system of ethics, such a system surely might have been produced at an infinitely less expence. The long chain of prophecy, the succession of miracles, the labours of apostles, the blood of the saints, to say nothing of the great and costly sacrifice which the Gospel records, might surely have been spared. Lessons of mere human virtue might have been delivered by some suitable instrument of human wisdom, strengthened by the vi-

sible authority of human power. A bare system of morals might have been communicated to mankind with a more reasonable prospect of advantage, by means not so repugnant to human pride. A mere scheme of conduct might have been delivered with far greater probability of the success of its reception by Antoninus the emperor, or Plato the philosopher, than by Paul the tent-maker, or Peter the fisherman.

Christianity, then, must be embraced entirely, if it be received at all. It must be taken, without mutilation, as a perfect scheme, in the way in which God has been pleased to reveal it. It must be accepted, not as exhibiting beautiful parts, but as presenting one consummate whole, of which the perfection arises from coherence and dependence, from relation and consistency. Its power will be weakened, and its energy destroyed, if every caviller pulls out a pin, or obstructs a spring with the presumptuous view of new-modelling the divine work, and making it go to his

own mind. There must be no breaking this system into portions of which we are at liberty to choose one and reject another. There is no separating the evidences from the doctrines, the doctrines from the precepts, belief from obedience, morality from piety, the love of our neighbour from the love of God. If we allow Christianity to be any thing, we must allow it to be every thing: if we allow the Divine Author to be indeed unto us "wisdom and righteousness," he must be also "sanctification and redemption."

Christianity then is assuredly something more than a mere set of rules; and faith, though it never pretended to be the substitute for an useful life, is indispensably necessary to its acceptance with God. The Gospel never offers to make religion supersede morality, but every where clearly proves that morality is not the whole of religion. Piety is not only necessary as a *means*, but is itself a most important *end*. It is not only the best principle of moral conduct, but is an indispensable



and absolute duty in itself. It is not only the highest motive to the practice of virtue, but is a prior obligation, and absolutely necessary, even when detached from its immediate influence on outward actions. Religion will survive all the virtues of which it is the source; for we shall be living in the noblest exercises of piety when we shall have no objects on which to exercise many human virtues. When there will be no distress to be relieved, no injuries to be forgiven, no evil habits to be subdued, there will be a Creator to be blessed and adored, a Redeemer to be loved and praised.

To conclude, a real Christian is not such merely by habit, profession, or education; he is not a Christian in order to acquit his sponsors of the engagements they entered into in his name; but he is one who has embraced Christianity from a conviction of its truth, and an experience of its excellence. He is not only confident in matters of faith by evidences suggested to his understanding, or reasons

which correspond to his enquiries ; but all these evidences of truth, all these principles of goodness, are by the grace of God worked into his heart, and exhibit themselves in his practice. He sees so much of the body of the great truths and fundamental points of religion, that he has a satisfactory trust in those lesser branches which ramify to infinity from the parent stock, though he may not individually and completely comprehend them all. He is so powerfully convinced of the general truth, and so deeply impressed by the general spirit of the Gospel, that he is not startled by every little difficulty, he is not staggered by every 'hard saying.' Those depths of mystery which surpass his understanding do not shake his faith, and this, not because he is credulous, and given to take things upon trust, but because, knowing that his foundations are right, he sees how one truth of scripture supports another, like the bearings of a geometrical building ; because he sees the aspect one doctrine

has upon another ; because he sees the consistency of each with the rest, and the place, order, and relation of the whole. The real Christian by no means rejects reason from his religion ; so far from it, he most carefully exercises it in furnishing his mind with all the evidences of its truth. But he does not stop here. Christianity furnishes him with a living principle of action, with the vital influences of the holy spirit, which, while it enlightens his faculties, rectifies his will, turns his knowledge into practice, sanctifies his heart, changes his habits, and proves, that when faithfully received, the word of truth “ is life indeed, and is spirit “ indeed !”





REMARKS  
ON THE  
SPEECH OF M. DUPONT,  
MADE IN THE  
NATIONAL CONVENTION OF FRANCE,  
ON THE SUBJECTS OF  
*RELIGION AND PUBLIC EDUCATION.*

**THE PROFITS OF THIS PUBLICATION, WHICH  
WERE CONSIDERABLE, WERE GIVEN TO THE  
FRENCH EMIGRANT CLERGY.**



A  
PREFATORY ADDRESS  
TO THE  
LADIES, &c. OF GREAT BRITAIN,  
IN BEHALF OF THE  
*FRENCH EMIGRANT CLERGY.*

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IF it be allowed that there may arise occasions so extraordinary, that all the lesser motives of delicacy ought to vanish before them; it is presumed that the present emergency will be considered as presenting one of those occasions, and will in some measure justify the hardness of this Address from a private individual, who, stimulated by the urgency of the case, sacrifices inferior considerations to the ardent desire of raising further supplies towards relieving a distress as pressing as it is unexampled.

We are informed by public advertisement, that the large sums already so liberally subscribed for the Emigrant French Clergy are almost exhausted. Authentic information adds, that multitudes of distressed Exiles in the island of Jersey, are on the point of wanting bread.

Very many to whom this Address is made have already contributed. O let them not be weary in well doing! I know that many are making generous exertions for the just and imperative claims of the widows and children of our own brave seamen and soldiers. Let it not be said, that the present is an *interfering* claim. Those to whom I write have bread enough, and to spare. You, who fare sumptuously every day, and yet complain that you have little to bestow, let not the bounty now solicited be subtracted from another bounty, but subtract it rather from some superfluous expence.

The beneficent and right-minded want no arguments to be pressed upon them; but it is not those alone whom I address;

I write to persons of every description. The prevailing luxurious habits of living, which really furnish the distressed with the fairest grounds for application, are too often urged by those who practise them as a motive for withholding assistance, and produced as a plea for having little to spare. Let her who indulges such habits, and pleads such excuses in consequence, reflect, that by retrenching *one* costly dish from her abundant table, by cutting off the superfluities of *one* expensive desert, omitting *one* evening's public amusement, she may furnish at least a week's subsistence to more than one person \*, as liberally bred perhaps as herself, and who, in his own country, may have often tasted how much more blessed it is to give than to receive — to a once affluent minister of religion, who has been long accustomed to bestow the necessaries he is now reduced to solicit.

\* Mr. Bowdler's letter states, that about Six Shillings a week includes the expences of each Priest at Winchester.



Even your young daughters, whom maternal prudence has not yet furnished with the means of bestowing, may be cheaply taught the first rudiments of charity, together with an important lesson of economy: they may be taught to sacrifice a feather, a set of ribbons, an expensive ornament, an idle diversion. And if they are on this occasion instructed, that there is no true charity without self-denial, they will *gain* more than they are called upon to *give*: for the suppression of one luxury for a charitable purpose, is the exercise of two virtues at once, and this without any pecuniary expence. — An indulgence is abridged and Christian charity is exercised.

Let the sick and afflicted remember how dreadful it must be, to be exposed to the sufferings they feel without one of the alleviations which mitigate *their* affliction. How dreadful it is to be without comforts, without necessities, without a home, — *without a country!* While the gay and prosperous would do well to recollect, how

suddenly and terribly those unhappy persons for whom we plead, were, by the surprising vicissitudes of life, thrown down from heights of gaiety and prosperity equal to what *they* are now enjoying. And let those who have husbands, fathers, sons, brothers, or friends, reflect on the uncertainties of war, and the revolution of human affairs. It is only by imagining the possibility that those who are dear to us may be placed by the instability of human events in the same calamitous circumstances, that we can obtain an adequate feeling of the woes we are called upon to commiserate.

In a distress so wide and comprehensive as the present, many are prevented from giving by that popular excuse — “That it is but a drop of water in the ocean.” But let them reflect, that if all the individual drops were withheld, there would be no ocean at all ; and the inability to give much ought not, on any occasion, to be converted into an excuse for giving nothing. Even moderate cir-

cumstances need not plead an exemption. The industrious tradesman will not, even in a political view, be eventually a loser by his small contribution. The money now raised is neither carried out of our country, nor dissipated in luxuries, but returns again to the community ; returns to our shops and to our markets, to procure the bare necessities of life.

Some have objected to the difference of *religion* of those for whom we solicit. Such an objection hardly deserves a serious answer. Surely if the superstitious Tartar hopes to become possessed of the courage and talents of the enemy he slays, the Christian is not afraid of catching, or of propagating the error of the sufferer he relieves. — Christian charity is of no party. We plead not for their faith, but for their wants. But while we affirm that it is not for their popery but their poverty for which we solicit ; yet let the more scrupulous, who look for desert as well as distress in the objects of their bounty, bear in mind, that if



these men could have sacrificed their conscience to their convenience, they had not now been in this country ; and if we wish for proselytes, who knows but it may be the first step towards their conversion, if we show them the purity of our religion, by the beneficence of our actions.

If you will permit me to press upon you such high motives, (and it were to be wished that in every action we were to be influenced only by the highest,) perhaps no act of bounty to which you may be called out, can ever come so immediately, and so literally under that solemn and affecting description, which will be recorded in the great day of account, — *I was a stranger, and ye took me in.* —

The following is an exact Translation from  
a SPEECH made in the National Con-  
vention at Paris, on Friday the 1st of  
December 1792, in a Debate on the  
Subject of establishing Public Schools  
for the Education of Youth, by Citizen  
DUBOIS, a Member of considerable  
Weight; such as the Doctrines contained  
in it were received with unanimous Ap-  
plause, except from two or three of the  
Clergy, it may be fairly considered as an  
Exposition of the Creed of that Enlight-  
ened Assembly. Translated from the  
Moniteur of Sunday the 10th of Decem-  
ber 1792.

What! Thrones are overthrown! Sep-  
tate broken! Kings expire! And yet the  
altar of God remains! (Here there is a  
tumult from some members; and the  
Abbe Lezon demands that the person  
speaking may be called to order.) Tyrants  
in courage to depart, continue to burn an  
impious incense on those altars! (Some

*The following is an exact Translation from a SPEECH made in the National Convention at Paris, on Friday the 14th of December 1792, in a Debate on the Subject of establishing Public Schools for the Education of Youth, by Citizen DUPONT, a Member of considerable Weight ; and as the Doctrines contained in it were received with unanimous Applause, except from two or three of the Clergy, it may be fairly considered as an Exposition of the Creed of that Enlightened Assembly. Translated from Le Moniteur of Sunday the 16th of December 1792.*

WHAT ! Thrones are overturned ! Sceptres broken ! Kings expire ! And yet the altars of GOD remain ! (Here there is a murmur from some members ; and the Abbé ICHON demands that the person speaking may be called to order.) Tyrants, in outrage to nature, continue to burn an impious incense on those altars ! (Some



murmurs arise, but they are lost in the applauses from the majority of the Assembly.) The thrones that have been reversed, have left these altars naked, unsupported, and tottering. A single breath of enlightened reason will now be sufficient to make them disappear; and if humanity is under obligations to the French nation for the first of these benefits, the fall of Kings, can it be doubted but that the French people, now sovereign, will be wise enough, in like manner, to overthrow those altars and *those Idols* to which those Kings have hitherto made them subject? *Nature* and *Reason*, these ought to be the gods of men! These are my gods! (Here the Abbé AUDREIN cried out, "There is no bearing this;" and rushed out of the Assembly.—A great laugh.) Admire *nature* — cultivate *reason*. — And you, Legislators, if you desire that the French people should be happy, make haste to propagate these principles, and to teach them in your primary schools, instead of those fanatical

principles which have hitherto been taught. The tyranny of Kings was confined to make their people miserable in this life—but those other tyrants, the Priests, extend their dominion into another, of which they have no other idea than of eternal punishments; a doctrine which some men have hitherto had the good-nature to believe. But the moment of the catastrophe is come—all these prejudices must fall at the same time. *We must destroy them, or they will destroy us.*—For myself, I honestly avow to the Convention, *I am an atheist!* (Here there is some noise and tumult. But a great number of members cry out, “What is that to us—you are an honest man!”) But I defy a single individual, amongst the twenty-four millions of Frenchmen, to make against me any well-grounded reproach. I doubt whether the Christians or the Catholics, of which the last speaker, and those of his opinion, have been talking to us, can make the same challenge.—(Great applauses.) There is another

consideration—Paris has had great losses. It has been deprived of the commerce of luxury; of that factitious splendour which was found at courts, and invited strangers hither. Well! We must repair these losses. — Let me then represent to you the times, that are fast approaching, when our philosophers, whose names are celebrated throughout Europe, PETION, SYEYES, CONDORCET, and others—surrounded in our Pantheon, as the Greek philosophers were at Athens, with a crowd of disciples coming from all parts of Europe, walking like the Peripatetics, and teaching—this man, the system of the universe, and developing the progress of all human knowledge: that, perfecting the social system, and shewing in our decree of the 17th of June 1789, the seeds of the insurrections of the 14th of July, and the 10th of August, and of all those insurrections which are spreading with such rapidity throughout Europe—so that these young strangers, on their return to their respective countries, may



spread the same lights, and may operate, *for the happiness of mankind*, similar revolutions throughout the world.

(Numberless applauses arose, almost throughout the whole Assembly, and in the galleries.)

REMARKS  
ON THE  
SPEECH OF M. DUPONT  
ON THE  
RELIGION AND PUBLIC EDUCATION

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dit the existence of such principles, dispute its authenticity, and accuse these remarks, if unaccompanied by the speech, of a spirit of invective and unfair exaggeration. At the same time it must be confessed, that its impiety is so monstrous, that many good men were of opinion it ought not to be made familiar to the minds of Englishmen; for there are crimes with which even the imagination should never come in contact, and which it is almost safer not to controvert than to detail.

But as an antient nation intoxicated their slaves, and then exposed them before their children, in order to increase their horror of intemperance; so it is hoped that this piece of impiety may be placed in such a light before the eyes of the Christian reader, that, in proportion as his detestation is raised, his faith, instead of being shaken, will be only so much the more strengthened.

This celebrated speech, though delivered in an assembly of politicians, is

not on a question of politics, but on one as superior to all political considerations, as the soul is to the body, as eternity is to time. The object of this oration is not to dethrone kings, but HIM by whom kings reign. It does not excite the cry of indignation in the orator that *Louis* the Sixteenth reigns, but that *the Lord God omnipotent reigneth*.

Nor is this the declaration of some obscure and anonymous person, but it is an exposition of the creed of a public leader. It is not a sentiment hinted in a journal, hazarded in a pamphlet, or thrown out at a disputing club; but it is the implied faith of the rulers of a great nation.

Little notice would have been due to this famous speech, if it had conveyed the sentiments of only *one* vain orator; but it should be observed, that it was heard, received, *applauded*, with two or three exceptions only — a fact, which you, who have scarcely believed in the existence of atheism, will hardly credit,

and which, for the honour of the eighteenth century, it is hoped that our posterity will reject as totally incredible.

A love of liberty, generous in its principle, inclines some well-meaning but mistaken men still to favour the proceedings of the National Convention of France. They do not yet perceive that the licentious wildness which has been excited in that country, is destructive of all true happiness, and no more resembles liberty, than the tumultuous joys of the drunkard resemble the cheerfulness of a sober and well-regulated mind.

To those who do not know of what strange inconsistencies man is made up; who have not considered how some persons, having at first been hastily and heedlessly drawn in as approvers, by a sort of natural progression, soon become principals:—to those who have never observed by what a variety of strange associations in the mind, opinions that seem the most irreconcilable meet at some unsuspected turning, and come to



be united in the same man ; — to all such it may appear quite incredible, that well-meaning and even pious people should continue to applaud the principles of a set of men who have publicly made known their intention of abolishing Christianity, as far as the demolition of altars, priests, temples, and institutions, *can* abolish it. As to the religion itself, this also they may traduce and reject, but we know, from the comfortable promise of an authority still sacred in this country at least, that *the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*

Let me not be misunderstood by those to whom these slight remarks are principally addressed ; by that class of well-intentioned but ill-judging people, who favour at least, if they do not adopt, the prevailing sentiments of the new Republic. You are not here accused of being the wilful abettors of infidelity. God forbid ! “ we are persuaded better things “ of you, and things which accompany “ salvation.” But this *ignis fatuus* of

liberty and universal brotherhood, which the French are madly pursuing, with the insignia of freedom in one hand, and the bloody bayonet in the other, has bewitched your senses, is misleading your steps, and betraying you to ruin. You are gazing at a meteor raised by the vapours of vanity, which these wild and infatuated wanderers are pursuing to their destruction; and though for a moment you mistake it for a heaven-born light, which leads to the perfection of human freedom, you will, should you join in the mad pursuit, soon discover that it will conduct you over dreary wilds and sinking bogs, only to plunge you in deep and inevitable destruction.

Much, very much is to be said in vindication of your favouring in the *first instance* their political projects. The cause they took in hand seemed to be the great cause of human kind. Its very name insured its popularity. What English heart did not exult at the demolition of the Bastile? What lover of his species

did not triumph in the warm hope, that one of the finest countries in the world would soon be one of the most free? Popery and despotism, though chained by the gentle influence of Louis the Sixteenth, had actually slain their thousands. Little was it then imagined, that anarchy and atheism, the monsters who were about to succeed them, would soon slay their ten thousands. If we cannot regret the defeat of the two former tyrants, what must they be who can triumph in the mischiefs of the two latter? Who, I say, that had a head to reason, or a heart to feel, did not glow with the hope, that from the ruins of tyranny, and the rubbish of popery, a beautiful and finely framed edifice would in time have been constructed, and that ours would not have been the only country in which the patriot's fair idea of well-understood liberty, the politician's view of a perfect Constitution, together with the establishment of a pure and reasonable, a sub-



lime and rectified Christianity, might be realized?

But, alas ! it frequently happens that the wise and good are not the most adventurous in attacking the mischiefs which they are the first to perceive and lament. With a timidity in some respects virtuous, they fear attempting any thing which may possibly aggravate the evils they deplore, or put to hazard the blessings they already enjoy. They dread plucking up the wheat with the tares, and are rather apt, with a spirit of hopeless resignation,

“ To bear the ills they have,  
“ Than fly to others that they know not of.”

While sober-minded and considerate men, therefore, sat mourning over this complicated mass of error, and waited till God, in his own good time, should open the blind eyes ; the vast scheme of reformation was left to that set of rash and presumptuous adventurers, who are generally watching how they may convert

public grievances to their own personal account. It was undertaken, not upon the broad basis of a wise and well-digested scheme, of which all the parts should contribute to the perfection of one consistent whole : it was carried on, not by those steady measures, founded on rational deliberation, which are calculated to accomplish so important an end ; not with a temperance which indicated a sober love of law, or a sacred regard for religion ; but with the most extravagant lust of power, with the most inordinate vanity which perhaps ever instigated human measures — a lust of power which threatens to extend its desolating influence over the whole globe ; — a vanity of the same destructive species with that which stimulated the celebrated incendiary of Ephesus, who being weary of his native obscurity and insignificance, and preferring infamy to oblivion, could contrive no other road to fame and immortality, than that of setting fire to the exquisite Temple of Diana. He *was* remembered in-

deed, as he desired to be, but it was only to be execrated; while the seventh wonder of the world lay prostrate through his crime.

But too often that daring boldness which excites admiration, is not energy, is not virtue, is not genius. It is blindness in the judgment, it is vanity in the heart. Strong and unprecedented measures, plans instantaneously conceived, and as rapidly executed, argue, not ability, but arrogance. A mind continually driven out in quest of presumptuous novelties, is commonly a mind void of real resources within, and incapable of profiting from observation without. New principles cannot be ascertained without experiment, and experiment requires more time than the sanguine can spare, and more patience than the vain possess. In the crude speculations of these rash reformists, few obstructions occur. It is like taking a journey, not on a road, but on a map. Difficulties are unseen, or are kept in the back-ground. Impossibilities



are smothered, or rather they are not suffered to be born. Nothing is felt but the ardour of enterprize, nothing is seen but the certainty of success. Whereas if difficulties grow out of sober experiment, the disappointments attending them generate humility ; the failures inseparable from the best-concerted human undertakings, serve at once to multiply resources, and to excite self-distrust ; while ideal projectors, and actual demolishers, are the most conceited of mortals. It never occurs to them that those defects of old institutions, on which they frame their objections, are equally palpable to all other men. It never occurs to them that phrenzy can demolish faster than wisdom can build ; that pulling down the strongest edifice is far more easy than the reconstruction of the meanest ; that the most ignorant labourer is competent to the one, while for the other the skill of the architect, and the patient industry of the workman must unite. That a sound judgment will profit by the errors of our predecessors, as

well as by their excellences. That there is a retrospective wisdom to which much of our prospective wisdom owes its birth; and that after all, neither the perfection pretended to, nor the pride which accompanies the pretension, "is made for man."

It is the same over-ruling vanity which operates in their politics, and in their religion, which makes Kersaint\* boast of carrying his destructive projects from the Tagus to the Brazils, and from Mexico to the shores of the Ganges; which makes him menace to outstrip the enterprizes of the most extravagant hero of romance, and almost undertake with the marvellous celerity of the nimble-footed Puck,

"To put a girdle round about the earth

"In forty minutes."——

It is the same vanity, still the master-passion in the bosom of a Frenchman, which leads Dupont and Manuel to undertake in their orations to abolish the

\* See his speech, enumerating their intended projects.

Sabbath, to exterminate the priesthood, to erect a pantheon for the world, to restore the Peripatetic philosophy, and in short to revive every thing of ancient Greece, except the pure taste, the profound wisdom, the love of virtue, the veneration of the laws, and that high degree of reverence which even virtuous Pagans professed for the Deity.

It is the same spirit of novelty, and the same hostility to established opinions, which dictated the preposterous and impious doctrine that *death is an eternal sleep*. The Prophets and Apostles assert the contrary. David expressly says, “when I *awake* up after thy likeness I shall be satisfied;” implying, that our true life will begin at our departure out of this world. The destruction or dissolution of the body will be the revival, not the death, of the soul. — It is to the *living* the Apostle says, “*awake* thou that  *sleepest*, and arise from the DEAD, and Christ shall give thee light.”

It is surely to be charged to the inade-



quate and wretched hands into which the work of reformation fell, and not to the impossibility of amending the civil and religious institutions of France, that all has succeeded so ill. It cannot be denied perhaps, that a reforming spirit was wanted in that country; their government was not more despotic, than their church was superstitious and corrupt.

But though this is readily granted, and though it may be unfair to blame those who in the *first outset* of the French Revolution, rejoiced even on religious motives; yet it is astonishing, how any pious person, even with all the blinding power of prejudice, can think without horror of the *present* state of France. It is no less wonderful how any rational man could, even in the beginning of the Revolution, transfer that reasoning, however just it might be, when applied to France, to the case of England. For what can be more unreasonable, than to draw from different, and even opposite premises, the same conclusion? Must a revolution be equal-

ly necessary in the case of two sorts of Government, and two sorts of Religion, which are the very antipodes of each other? — opposite in their genius, unlike in their fundamental principles, and completely different in each of their component parts.

That despotism, priestcraft, intolerance, and superstition, are terrible evils, no candid Christian it is presumed will deny; but, blessed be God, though these mischiefs are not yet entirely banished from the face of the earth, they have scarcely any existence in our happy country.

To guard against a real danger, and to cure actual abuses, of which the existence has been first plainly proved, by the application of a suitable remedy, requires diligence as well as courage; observation as well as genius; patience and temperance as well as zeal and spirit. It requires the union of that clear head and sound heart which constitute the true patriot. But to conjure up fancied evils, or even greatly to aggravate real ones, and then

to exhaust our labour in combating them, is the characteristic of a distempered imagination and an ill-governed spirit.

Romantic crusades, the ordeal trial, drowning of witches, the torture, and the inquisition, have been justly reprobated as the foulest stains of the respective periods in which, to the disgrace of human reason, they existed; but would any man be rationally employed, who should now stand up gravely to declaim against these as the predominating mischiefs of the present century? Even the whimsical Knight of La Mancha himself, would not fight windmills that were pulled down; yet I will venture to say, that the above-named evils are at present little more chimerical than some of those now so bitterly complained of among us. It is not, as Dryden said, when one of his works was unmercifully abused, that the piece has not faults enough in it, but the critics have not had the wit to fix upon the right ones.

It is allowed that, as a Nation, we do



not want faults ; but our political critics err in the objects of their censure. They say little of those real and pressing evils resulting from our own corruption, of that depravity which constitutes the actual miseries of life ; while they gloomily speculate upon a thousand imaginary political grievances, and fancy that the reformation of our rulers and our legislators is all that is wanting to make us a happy people. Alas !

How small, of all that human hearts endure,  
That part, which Kings or Laws can cause, or cure.

The principles of just and equitable government were, perhaps, never more fully established, nor was public justice ever more exactly administered. Pure and undefiled religion was never laid more open to all, than at this day. I wish I could say we were a religious people ; but this at least may be safely asserted, that the great truths of religion were never better understood ; that Christianity was never more completely stripped from all its incumbrances and

disguises, or more thoroughly purged from human infusions, and from whatever is debasing in human institutions, than it is at this day in this country.

In vain we look around us to discover the ravages of religious tyranny, or the triumphs of priestcraft or superstition. Who attempts to impose any yoke upon our reason? Who seeks to put any blind on the eyes of the most illiterate? Who fetters the judgment or enslaves the conscience of the meanest of our Protestant brethren? Nay, such is the power of pure Christianity, that genuine Christianity which is exhibited in our liturgy to enlighten the understanding, as well as to reform the heart; and such are the advantages which the most abject in this country possess for enjoying its privileges, that the poorest peasant among us, if he be as religious as multitudes of his station really are, has clearer ideas of God and his own soul, purer notions of that true liberty wherewith Christ has made him free, than the mere disputer of this

world, though he possess every splendid advantage which education, wisdom, and genius can bestow. I am not speaking either of a *perfect* form of Government, or a *perfect* Church Establishment, because I am speaking of Institutions which are human; and the very idea of their being human, involves also the idea of imperfection. But I am speaking of the best constituted Government, and the best constituted National Church with which the history of mankind is yet acquainted. Time, that silent instructor, and experience, that great rectifier of the judgment, will more and more discover to us what is wanting to the perfection of both. And if we may trust to the active genius of Christian Liberty, and to that liberal and candid spirit which is the characteristic of the age we live in, there is little doubt but that a temperate and well-regulated zeal will, at a convenient season, correct whatsoever sound policy shall suggest as wise and expedient to be corrected.



If there are errors in the Church, and it does not perhaps require the sharp-sightedness of a keen opposer to discover that there are, there is at least nothing like fierce intolerance, or spiritual usurpation. A fiery zeal and an uncharitable bigotry might have furnished matter for a well-deserved ecclesiastical philippic in other times; but thanks to the temper of the present day, unless we conjure up a spirit of religious chivalry, and sally forth in quest of imaginary evils, we shall not apprehend any danger from persecution or enthusiasm. If grievances there are, they do not appear to be those which result from polemic pride and rigid bigotry, but are of a kind far different.

If the warm sun of prosperity has unhappily produced its too common effect, that of relaxing the vigour of religious exertion; if, in too many instances, security has engendered sloth, and affluence produced dissipation; let us implore the Divine grace, that the present alarming crisis may rouse the careless, and quicken

the supine ; that our pastors may be convinced that the Church has less to fear from external violence, than from internal decay ; nay, that even the violence of attack is often really beneficial, by exciting that activity which enables us to repel danger, and that increase of diligence is the truest accession of strength. May they be convinced that the love of power, with which their enemies perhaps unjustly accuse them, is not more fatal than the love of pleasure : that no stoutness of orthodoxy in opinion can atone for a too close assimilation with the manners of the world ; that heresy without, is less to be dreaded than indifference from within : that the most regular clerical education, the most scrupulous attention to forms, and even the strictest conformity to the established discipline and opinions of the Church, will avail but little to the enlargement of Christ's kingdom, without a strict spirit of personal watchfulness, habitual self-denial, and laborious exertion.

Though it is not here intended to animadvert on any political complaint which is not in some sort connected with religion; yet it is presumed it may not be thought quite foreign to the present purpose to remark, that among the reigning complaints against our civil administration, the most plausible seems to be that excited by the supposed danger of an invasion on the liberty of the press. Were this apprehension well-founded, we should indeed be threatened by one of the most grievous misfortunes that can befall a free country. The liberty of the press is not only a most noble privilege itself, but the guardian of all our other liberties and privileges, and, notwithstanding the abuse which has lately been made of this valuable possession, yet every man of a sound unprejudiced mind is well aware that true liberty of every kind is scarcely inferior in importance to any object for which human activity can contend. Nay, the very abuse of a good, often makes us more sensible of the value of the good



itself. Fair and well-proportioned Freedom will ever retain all her native beauty to a judicious eye, nor will the genuine loveliness of her form be the less prized for our having lately contemplated the distorted features and false colouring of her caricature, as presented to us by the daubing hand of Gallic patriots.

But highly as the freedom of the press ought to be valued, would it really be so very heavy a misfortune, if corrupt and inflammatory publications, calculated to destroy that virtue which every good man is anxious to preserve, that peace which every honest man is struggling to secure, should, just at this alarming period, be somewhat difficult to be obtained? Would it be so very grievous a national calamity, if the crooked progeny of treason and blasphemy should find it a little inconvenient to venture forth from their lurking-holes, and range abroad in open day? Is the cheapness of poison, or the facility with which it may be obtained, to be reckoned among the real advantages of

medicinal repositories? And can the easiness of access to seditious or atheistical writings, be seriously numbered among the substantial blessings of any country? Would France, at this day, have had much solid cause of regret, if most of the writings of Voltaire, Rousseau, and d'Alembert, the prolific seed of their wide-spreading tree, had found more difficulty in getting into the world, or been less profusely circulated when in it? And might not England at this moment have been just as happy in her ignorance, if the famous orations of Citizen Dupont and Citizen Manuel had been confined to their own enlightened and philosophical countries?\*

\* *Extract from Mons. Manuel's Letter to the National Convention, dated January 26, 1793.*

“ The priests of a republic are its magistrates, the law its gospel. What mission can be more august than that of the instructors of youth, who having themselves escaped from the hereditary prejudice of all sects, point out to the human race their inalienable rights, founded upon that sublime wisdom which pervades all nature. Religious faith, impres-

To return to these orations:— We have too often, in our own nation, seen and deplored the mischiefs of irreligion, arising incidentally from a neglected or an abused education. But what mischiefs will not irreligion produce, when, in the projected schools of France, as announced to us by the two metaphysical legislators above-mentioned, impiety shall be taught by SYSTEM? When out of the

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sed on the mind of an infant seven years old, will lead to perfect slavery; for dogmas at that age are only arbitrary commands. Ah! what is belief, without examination, without conviction? It renders men either melancholy or mad, &c.

“Legislators! Virtue wants neither temples nor synagogues. It is not from priests we learn to do good or noble actions. No religion must be taught in schools which are to be national ones. To prescribe one, would be to prefer it to all others. There history must speak of sects, as she speaks of other events. It would become your wisdom, perhaps, to order that the pupils of the republic should not enter the temples before the age of seventeen. Reason must not be taken by surprise, &c. Hardly were children born before they fell into the hands of priests, who first blinded their eyes, and then delivered them over to kings. Wherever kings cease to govern, priests must cease to educate.”



mouths of babes and sucklings the monstrous opinions, exhibited by Dupont and Manuel, shall be perfected? When the fruits of atheism, dropping from their newly-planted tree of liberty, shall pollute the very fountains of knowledge? When education, being poisoned in all her springs, the rising generation will be taught to look on atheism as decorous, and Christianity as eccentric? When atheism shall be considered as a proof of accomplished breeding, and religion as the stamp of a vulgar education? When the regular course of obedience to masters and tutors will consist in renouncing the hope of everlasting happiness, and in deriding the idea of future punishment? When every man and every child, in conformity with the principles professed in the Convention, shall presume to say with his tongue, what hitherto even the fool has only dared to say in his heart, *That there is no God.*\*

\* It is a remarkable circumstance, that though the French are continually binding themselves by

Christianity, which involves the whole duty of man, divides that duty into two portions,—the love of God, and the love of our neighbour. Now, as these two principles have their being from the same source, and derive their vitality from their union; so impiety furnishes the direct converse,—*That* Atheism which destroys all belief in, and of course cuts off all love of and communion with God, disqualifies for the due performance of the duties of civil and social life. There is, in its way, the

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oaths, they have not mentioned the name of God in any oath which has been invented since the Revolution. It may also appear curious to the English reader, that though in almost all the addresses of congratulation, which were sent by the associated clubs from this country to the National Convention, the success of the French arms was in part ascribed to Divine Providence, yet in none of the answers was the least notice ever taken of this. And to shew how the same spirit spreads itself among every description of men in France, their Admiral Latouche, after having described the dangers to which his ship was exposed in a storm, says, *we owe our existence to the tutelary Genius which watches over the destiny of the French republic, and the defenders of liberty and equality !!*

same consistency, agreement, and uniformity, between the principles which constitute an infidel and a bad member of society, as there is between giving "glory to God in the highest," and exercising "peace and good will to men."

My fellow Christians! This is not a strife of words; this is not a controversy about opinions of comparatively small importance, such as you have been accustomed at home to hear even good men dispute upon, when perhaps they would have acted a more wise and amiable part had they remained silent, sacrificing their mutual differences on the altar of Christian charity: But this bold renunciation of the first great fundamental article of faith, this daring rejection of the Supreme Creator and Ruler of the World, is laying the axe and striking with a vigorous stroke at the root of all human happiness. It is tearing up the very foundation of human hope, and extirpating every true principle of human excellence. It is annihilating the very existence of virtue, by



annihilating its motives, its sanctions, its obligations, its object, and its end.

That atheism will be the favoured and the popular tenet in France seems highly probable ; whilst in that wild contempt of all religion, which has lately had the arrogance to call itself toleration, it is not improbable that Christianity itself may be tolerated in that country, as a sect not persecuted perhaps, but derided. It is, however, far from clear, that this *will* be the case, if the new doctrines should become generally prevalent. Atheists are not without their bigotry ; they too have their spirit of exclusion and monopoly in a degree not inferior to the most superstitious monks. And that very spirit of intolerance which is now so much the object of their invective, would probably be no less the rule of their practice, if their will should ever be backed by power. It is true that Voltaire and the other great apostles of infidelity have employed all the acuteness of their wit to convince us that

irreligion never persecutes. To prove this, every art of false citation, partial extract, suppressed evidence, and gross misrepresentation, has been put in practice. But if this unsupported assertion were true, then Polycarp, Ignatius, Justin, Cyprian, and Basil, did not suffer for the faith once delivered to the Saints. Then the famous Christian apologists, most of them learned converts from the pagan philosophy, idly employed their zeal to abate a clamour which did not exist, and to propitiate emperors who did not persecute. Then Tacitus, Trajan, Pliny, and Julian, those bitter enemies to Christianity, are suborned witnesses on her side. Then Ecclesiastical History is a series of falsehoods, and the Book of Martyrs a legend of romance.\*

\* It may be objected here, that this is not applicable to the state of France; for that the Roman Emperors were not atheists or deists, but polytheists, with an established religion. To this it may be answered, that modern infidels not only deny the ten pagan persecutions, but accuse Chris-

That one extravagant mischief should produce its opposite, is agreeable to the ordinary course of human events. That to the credulity of a dark and superstitious religion, a wanton contempt of all decency, and an unbridled profaneness, should succeed; that to a government absolutely despotic, an utter abhorrence of all restraint and subordination should follow, though it is deplorable, yet it is not strange. The human mind, in flying from the extreme verge of one error, seldom stops till she has reached the opposite extremity. She generally passes by with a lofty disdain the obvious truth which lies directly in her road, and which is indeed commonly to be found in the mid-way, between the error she is flying from, and the error she is pursuing.

Is it a breach of Christian charity to conclude, from a view of the present

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tianity of being the only persecuting religion; and affirm, that only those who refuse to embrace it discover a spirit of toleration.



state of the French, that since that deluded people have given up God, God, by a righteous retribution, seems to have renounced them for a time, and to have given them over to their own hearts' lusts, *to work iniquity with greediness?* If such is their present career, what is likely to be their appointed end? How fearfully applicable to them seems that awful denunciation against an ancient, offending people—"The Lord shall smite thee with madness, and blindness, and astonishment of heart!"

It is no part of the present design to enter into a detail of their political conduct; but I cannot omit to remark, that the very man in their long list of kings, who seemed best to have deserved their assumed appellation of *most Christian*, was also most favourable to their acquisition of liberty\*: his moderation

\* Of this the French themselves were so well persuaded, that the title of *Restorateur de la Liberté Française*, was solemnly given to Louis the XVIth by the Constituent Assembly.

and humanity facilitated their plans, and increased their power, which, with unparalleled ingratitude, they employed to degrade his person and character in the eyes of mankind, by the blackest and most detestable arts, and at length to terminate his calamities by a crime which has excited the grief and indignation of all Europe.

On the trial and murder of that most unfortunate king, and on the inhuman proceedings which accompanied them, I shall purposely avoid dwelling, for it is not the design of these remarks to excite the passions. I will only say, that so monstrous has been the inversion of all order, law, humanity, justice, received opinion, good faith, and religion, that the conduct of his bloody executioners seems to have exhibited the most scrupulous conformity with the principles announced in the speeches we have been considering. In this one instance we must not call the French an inconsequent people. Savage brutality, rapine, trea-

son, and murder have been the noxious fruit gathered from these thorns; the baneful produce of these thistles. An overturn of all morals has been the well-proportioned offspring of a subversion of all principle.

But, notwithstanding the consistency, in this instance, between cause and consequence; so new and surprising have been the turns in their extraordinary projects, that to foretel what their next enterprise would be from what their last has been, has long baffled all calculation, has long bid defiance to all conjecture. Analogy from history, the study of past events, and an investigation of present principles and passions; judgment, memory, comparison, combination, and deduction, afford human sagacity but very slender assistance in its endeavours to develope their future plans. We have not even the data of consistent wickedness on which to build rational conclusions. Their crimes, though visibly connected by uniform depravity, are yet



so surprisingly diversified by interfering absurdities, as to furnish no ground on which reasonable argument can be founded. Nay, such is their incredible eccentricity, that it is hardly extravagant to affirm, that improbability is become rather an additional reason for expecting any given event to take place.

But let us, in this yet happy country, learn at least one great and important truth, from the errors of this distracted people. Their conduct has awfully illustrated a position, which is not the less sound for having been often controverted, that no degree of wit and learning, no progress in commerce, no advances in the knowledge of nature, or in the embellishments of art, can ever thoroughly tame that savage, the *natural human heart*, without RELIGION. The arts of social life may give sweetness to manners, and grace to language, and induce, in some degree, a respect for justice, truth, and humanity; but attainments derived from such inferior causes are no more than the sem-

blance and the shadow of the qualities derived from pure Christianity. Varnish is an extraneous ornament, but true polish is a proof of the solidity of the body on whose surface it is produced. It depends greatly on the nature of the substance, it is not superinduced by accidental causes, but in a good measure proceeds from internal soundness.

The poets of that classic country, whose style, sentiments, manners, and religion the French so affectedly labour to imitate, have left keen and biting satires on the Roman vices. Against the late proceedings in France, no satirist need employ his pen ; that of the historian will be quite sufficient to reprobate them : Truth will be the severest satire ; fact will put fable out of countenance ; and the crimes which are usually held up to our abhorrence, and are rejected for their exaggeration in works of invention, will be regarded as flat and feeble by those who shall peruse the records of the tenth of August, of the second and third

of September, and of the twenty-first of January.

•If the same astonishing degeneracy in taste, principle, and practice, should ever come to flourish among *us*, Britain may still live to exult in the desolation of her cities, and in the destruction of her finest monuments of art; she may triumph in the peopling of the fortresses of her rocks and her forests; may exult in being once more restored to that glorious state of *liberty and equality*, when all subsisted by rapine and the chase; when all, O enviable privilege! were equally savage, equally indigent, and equally naked; her sons may extol it as the restoration of reason, the triumph of nature, and the consummation of liberty, that they are again brought to feed on acorns, instead of bread! Groves of consecrated misletoe may happily succeed to useless corn-fields; and Thor and Woden may hope once more to be invested with all their bloody honours.

Let not any serious reader among us



feel indignation, as if pains were ungenerously taken to involve their religious with their political opinions. Far be it from me to wound, unnecessarily, the feelings of people, many of whom are truly estimable : but it is much to be suspected, that certain opinions in politics have a tendency to lead to certain opinions in religion. Where so much is at stake, they will do well to keep their consciences tender, in order to which they should try to keep their discernment acute. They will do well to observe, that the same restless spirit of innovation is busily operating under various, though seemingly unconnected forms ; to observe, that the same impatience of restraint, the same contempt of order, peace, and subordination, which makes men bad citizens, makes them bad Christians ; and that to this secret, but almost infallible connection between religious and political sentiment, does France owe her present unparalleled anarchy and impiety.

There are doubtless in that unhappy country multitudes of virtuous and reasonable men, who rather silently acquiesce in the authority of their present turbulent government, than embrace its principles or promote its projects from the sober conviction of their own judgment. These, together with those conscientious exiles whom this nation so honourably protects, may yet live to rejoice in the restoration of true liberty and solid peace to their native country, when light and order shall spring from the present darkness and confusion, and the reign of chaos shall be no more.

May I be permitted a short digression on the subject of the conduct of Great Britain to these exiles? It shall only be to remark, that all the boasted conquests of our Edwards and our Henries over the French nation, do not confer such substantial glory on our own country, as she derives from having received, protected, and supported, among innumerable multitudes of other sufferers, at a time and

under circumstances so peculiarly disadvantageous to herself, *seven thousand priests*, of a nation habitually her enemy, and of a religion intolerant and hostile to her own. This is the solid triumph of true Christianity ; and it is worth remarking, that the deeds which poets and historians celebrate as rare and splendid actions, which they record, as sublime instances of greatness of soul, in the heroes of the Pagan world, are but the ordinary and habitual virtues which occur in the common course of action among genuine Christians ; quietly performed without effort or exertion, and with no view to renown or reward ; but resulting naturally and consequently from the religion to which they belong.

So predominating is the power of an example we have once admired, and set up as a standard of imitation, and so fascinating has been the ascendancy of the Convention over the minds of those whose approbation of French politics commenced in the earlier periods of the



Revolution, that it extends to the most trivial circumstances. I cannot forbear to notice this in an instance which, though inconsiderable in itself, yet ceases to be so when we view it in the light of a prevailing symptom of the reigning disease.

While the fantastic phraseology of the new Republic is such, as to be almost as disgusting to sound taste, as their doctrines are to sound morals, it is curious to observe how deeply the addresses, which have been sent to it from the Clubs \* in this country, have been infected with it, as far at least as phrases and terms are objects of imitation. In the more leading points it is but justice to the French Convention to confess, that they are hitherto without rivals and without imitators; for who can aspire to emulate that compound of anarchy and atheism which in their debates is mixed up with the pedantry of a school-boy, the jargon of a cabal, and the vulgarity and

\* See the Collection of Addresses from England.

ill-breeding of a mob? One instance of the prevailing cant may suffice, where an hundred might be adduced; and it is not the most exceptionable — To demolish every existing law and establishment; to destroy the fortunes and ruin the principles of every country into which they are carrying their destructive arms and their frantic doctrines; to untie or cut asunder every bond which holds society together; to impose their own arbitrary shackles where they succeed, and to demolish every thing where they fail. — This desolating system, by a most unaccountable perversion of language, they are pleased to call by the endearing name of *fraternization*; and fraternization is one of the favourite terms which their admirers in this country have adopted. Little would a simple stranger, uninitiated in this new and surprising dialect, uninstructed by the political Lexicographers of modern France, imagine that the peaceful terms of *fellow-citizen* and of *brother*, the winning offer of *freedom* and

*happiness*, and the warm embrace of *fraternity*, were only watch-words by which they, in effect,

Cry havoc,  
And let slip the dogs of war.

In numberless other instances, the fashionable language of France at this day would be as unintelligible to the correct writers of the age of Louis the XIVth, as their fashionable notions of liberty would be irreconcilable with those of the true Revolution Patriots of England of his great contemporary and victorious rival, William the Third.

Such is indeed their puerile rage for novelty in the invention of new words, and the perversion of their taste in the use of old ones, that the celebrated Vossius, whom Christina of Sweden oddly complimented by saying, that he was so learned as not only to know whence all words came, but whither they were going, would, *were he admitted to the honours of a sitting*, be obliged to confess, that he



was equally puzzled to tell the one, as to foretell the other.

If it shall please the Almighty in his anger to let loose this infatuated people, as a scourge for the iniquities of the human race ; if they are delegated by infinite justice to act “as storm and tempest” “fulfilling his word;” if they are commissioned to perform the errand of the destroying lightning or the avenging thunder-bolt, let us try at least to extract personal benefit from national calamity ; let every one of us, high and low, rich and poor, enter upon this serious and humbling inquiry, how much his own individual offences have contributed to that awful aggregate of public guilt, which has required such a visitation. Let us carefully examine in what proportion we have separately added to that common stock of abounding iniquity, the description of which formed the character of an ancient nation, and is so peculiarly applicable to our own—*Pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness.* Let

every one of us humbly inquire, in the self-suspecting language of the disciples to their Divine Master — *Lord, is it I?* Let us learn to fear the fleets and armies of the foreign enemy, much less than those iniquities at home which this alarming dispensation may be intended to chastise.

The war which the French have declared against us, is of a kind altogether unexampled in every respect ; insomuch that human wisdom is baffled when it would pretend to conjecture what may be the event. But this at least we may safely say, that it is not so much the force of French bayonets, as the contamination of French principles, that ought to excite our apprehensions. We trust, that through the blessing of God we shall be defended from their open hostilities, by the temperate wisdom of our rulers, and the bravery of our fleets and armies ; but the domestic danger arising from licentious and irreligious principles among ourselves, can only be guarded against by the personal care and vigilance of

every one of us who values religion and the good order of society in this world, and an eternity of happiness in the next.

God grant that those who go forth to fight our battles, instead of being intimidated by the number of their enemies, may bear in mind, that "there is no restraint with God to save by many or by few." And let the meanest among us who remains at home remember also, that even he may contribute to the internal safety of his country, by the integrity of his private life, and to the success of her defenders, by following them with his fervent prayers. And in what war can the sincere Christian ever have stronger inducements and more reasonable encouragement to pray for the success of his country, than in this? Without entering far into any political principles, the discussion of which would be in a great measure foreign to the design of this little tract, it may be remarked, that the unchristian principle of *revenge* is not our motive to this war; *conquest* is not our



object; nor have we had recourse to hostility, in order to effect a change in the internal government of France.\* The present war is undoubtedly undertaken entirely on defensive principles. It is in defence of our king, our constitution, our religion, our laws, and consequently our *liberty*, in the sound, sober, and rational sense of that term. It is to defend ourselves from the savage violence of a crusade, made against all religion, as well as all government. If ever therefore a war was undertaken on the ground of self-defence and necessity—if ever men might be *literally* said to fight *pro ARIS et FOCIS*, this seems to be the occasion.

The ambition of conquerors has been the source of great and extensive evils: religious fanaticism, of still greater. But little as I am disposed to become the apologist of either the one principle or the other, there is no extravagance in

\* See the Report of Mr. Pitt's Speech in the House of Commons on Feb. 12, 1793, published by Woodfall.

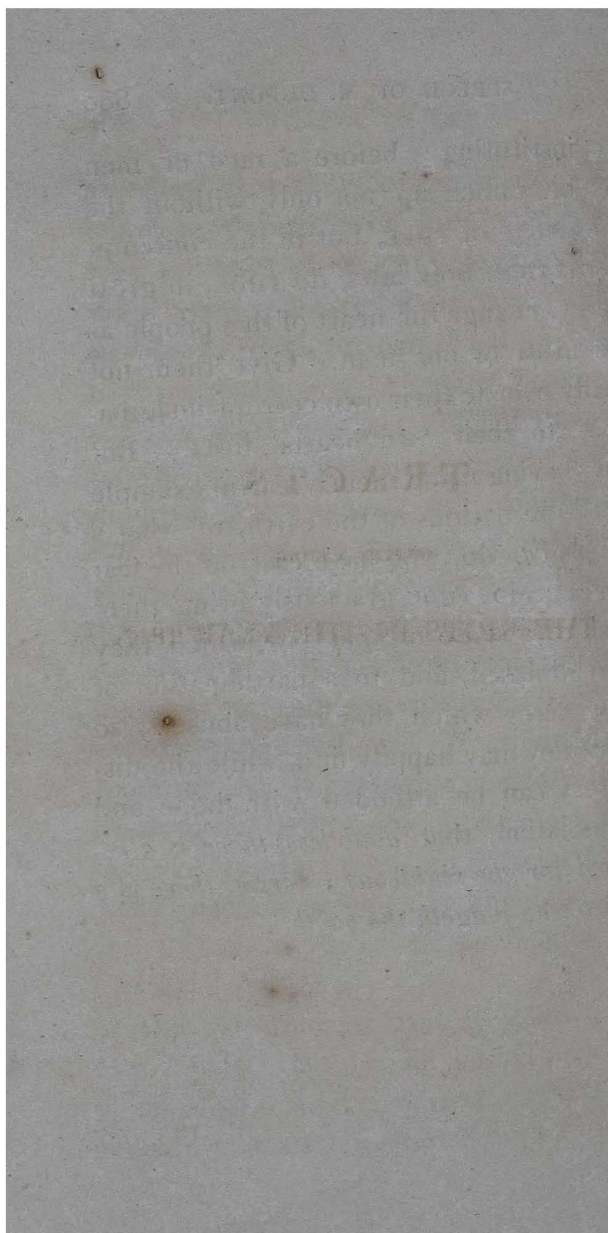
asserting, that they have seemed incapable of producing, even in ages, that extent of mischief, that variety of ruin, that comprehensive desolation, which *philosophy, falsely so called*, has produced in three years.

Christians ! it is not a small thing — *it is your life*. The pestilence of irreligion which you detest, will insinuate itself imperceptibly with those manners, phrases, and principles which you admire and adopt. It is the humble wisdom of a Christian, to shrink from the most distant approaches to sin, to abstain from the very appearance of evil. If we would fly from the deadly contagion of atheism, let us fly from those seemingly remote, but not very indirect paths which lead to it. Let France choose this day whom she will serve ; *but, as for us and our houses, we will serve the Lord*.

And, O gracious and long-suffering God ! before that awful period arrives, which shall exhibit the dreadful effects of such an education as the French nation

are instituting ; before a race of men can be trained up, not only without the knowledge of THEE, but in the contempt of THY most holy laws, do THOU, in great mercy, change the heart of this people as the heart of one man. Give them not finally over to their own corrupt imaginations, to their own hearts' lusts. But after having made them a fearful example to all the nations of the earth, of what a people *can* do, who have cast off the fear of THEE, do THOU graciously bring them back to a sense of that law which they have violated, and to a participation of that mercy which they have abused ; so that they may happily find, while the discovery can be attended with hope and consolation, that *doubtless there is a reward for the righteous ; verily, there is a God who judgeth the earth.*





TRACTS

WRITTEN DURING

THE RIOTS IN THE YEAR 1817.

It will not soon be forgotten that in the  
year 1817, many dangerous affairs were  
acted in this country by the mischievous  
agency of a handful of dissipated per-  
sons. The temporary decay of trade  
in the country arising from incident  
persons - circumstances and which as be-  
lieved in this country had a tendency to  
bring about a general depression in  
commerce were attributed to foreign  
and, and looked on as a pretence for  
removing authority, and reason  
from a wish to raise an insurrection  
against the nation and blasphemous  
sophists were circled with terrible  
words, and read with anxiety. In con-  
sequence of which the writer of the  
cheap Repository, Tracts of the day  
and of the French Revolution, was again  
openly called upon to contribute for



IT will not soon be forgotten that in the year 1817, very dangerous alarms were excited in this country by the mischievous activity of a number of disaffected persons. The temporary decay of trade, and the scarcity arising from inclement seasons—calamities over which no human power had any control; instead of being considered as the visitations of Providence, were attributed to Government, and seized on as a pretence for promoting anarchy, riot, and treason. With a wish to raise an insurrection, a multitude of seditious and blasphemous pamphlets were circulated with incredible industry, and read with avidity. In consequence of which the writer of the Cheap Repository Tracts at the beginning of the French Revolution, was again earnestly called upon to contribute her

feeble aid towards furnishing antidotes to this spreading poison. The following little pieces were written with this view.



THE  
DEATH OF MR. FANTOM,

THE GREAT REFORMIST,

*Who departed this Life, March the 20th, 1817. \**

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SOME of my readers may perhaps remember, that in the former part, the worthy Mr. Trueman quitted Fantom suddenly in high disgust. After having exhausted every argument, used every persuasion, and pressed every motive both rational and religious, in order to convince the understanding, touch the heart, and alarm the conscience of this misguided man, he left his house, with a fixed determination to drop his acquaintance. But though he resolved to discontinue all intercourse with him, as

\* See the first part of this history in Volume the Fourth.



unavailable to Fantom and disreputable to himself, he often reflected on his state with deep concern. He never ceased to pray that it might still please God to open his eyes, and to change his heart. Prayer, said he to his wife, fervent prayer is never altogether thrown away; even if it produces no effect on him for whom the petition is offered, it is never wholly useless to him who offers it. It subdues enmity, cools resentment, and inspires compassion for the object of our prayer. Who can rise from his knees, after imploring pardon for his own sins, without feeling an overflowing pity for others whom sin has blinded?

In this tender disposition of mind, with a heart full of hatred of sin and pity for the sinner, Mr. Trueman was surprised, about six months after his last visit to Mr. Fantom, to receive the following letter from the excellent wife of that unhappy man:—

DEAR SIR,

I write to you in the anguish of my spirit, to inform you that Mr. Fantom is dangerously ill. He is reduced to the most deplorable state both of body and mind; the torments of the one, evidently increasing the sufferings of the other. But, whether he is more or less agitated, the ruling desire of his soul is to see Mr. Trueman. O, Sir, it would be an act of the truest charity, if you could forget the past, and come to see, and console your afflicted friend. Your counsels, I trust, may not be always in vain. He has not, he never had any one Christian friend but yourself. To you alone in this world can he look for pity or assistance. Several of his new friends have been to visit him, but the very sight of them aggravates his sufferings. Dear Sir, I have often longed for the comfort of a little private conversation with you when you were here; but the fear of offending my husband restrained me, yet I should not

have touched on any subject which could injure him. I only wanted the encouragement of Christian counsel, to support me in my duty. O, Sir, do not refuse my earnest request, &c.

MARY FANTOM.

Mr. Trueman had always respected Mrs. Fantom for her prudence, humility, and benevolence. These indications led him to give her credit for more piety than she dared disclose in her husband's presence. Whenever he began to debate, she always appeared more than usually unhappy, well knowing he would be sure to take the wrong side; on these occasions she never failed to quit the room, when she could do it without incurring his displeasure.

Trueman required no second summons. Whenever there was a prospect of doing good, that is a sober, rational, practicable prospect, such as was within the reach of his humble station, talents and means, he neither refused nor delayed his assistance.



Having spent the evening in making such prudent arrangements as that his business might not suffer by his absence, he set out next morning, not forgetting to put into his portmanteau a frock for his little godchild, Jenkins's daughter. "The liberal soul deviseth liberal things," was a favourite text of his; so he generally contrived to add some little collateral kindness to any benevolent object he was pursuing.

On his arrival, he found Mr. Fantom even worse than he expected. A paralytic stroke during the preceding night, had nearly deprived him of the use of one side; but though he lay in a deplorable state, Trueman was glad to find that his intellects were not impaired. As soon as this kind guest entered the room, he exclaimed — "O, Trueman, how good you are! I would not have gone to you under the same circumstances. I always shunned every scene of misery. But you act on other principles. Sin

“ has not hardened your heart as it has  
“ mine. You see me a miserable wretch.  
“ No wonder I should be deserted of  
“ God, when he has been so long de-  
“ serted by me.”

Mr. Trueman desired him to be composed. “ Composed !” said he, “ have  
“ I any right to expect composure ?  
“ What right have I to expect peace, I  
“ who would have overturned the peace  
“ of society ? I who would have rooted  
“ up the very foundations of religion and  
“ government ? *No tyranny* was our  
“ motto. And what does that imply ?  
“ No king on earth, no God in heaven.”  
Here he fell into such an agony, that  
Mr. Trueman was obliged to insist on  
his keeping himself quiet. A medicine  
was administered, which soon relieved  
him.

Finding himself better in the afternoon,  
he desired to see Mr. Trueman. After  
much conversation of nearly the same  
purport as the last, by the soothings and  
arguments of his guest, he grew calmer.

He adverted to his early life, and, though with no little pain, spoke as follows : —

“ I was bred up soberly, and what some  
“ would call religiously. That is, I was  
“ sent to church once on a Sunday, but  
“ was left to follow my own devices, and  
“ seek my own company the rest of the  
“ day. Things, however, went on pretty  
“ well, till I became an apprentice to  
“ Mr. —, on Snow Hill. This man  
“ was a professor of religion, but I soon  
“ discovered that his profession and his  
“ practice were at utter variance. He  
“ kept up a tolerable character ; indeed  
“ there was nothing very censurable in  
“ his outward conduct, but all was false  
“ and hollow ; and to those who saw the  
“ interior of things, he could not but be  
“ laid open. He was so plausible, that  
“ he could set off both his character and  
“ commodities to the best advantage. I  
“ was at first astonished to hear him  
“ strongly assert the goodness of articles  
“ in his shop, which he knew to be  
“ positively bad. He was covetous, and



“ made little scruple to employ any arts  
“ which might improve his fortune, with-  
“ out laying open his character. Having  
“ an opinion of my discretion, he em-  
“ ployed me in many illegal practices.  
“ This contradiction between principle  
“ and practice laid the foundation of  
“ all the corruptions of my own cha-  
“ racter ; for the effect produced on my  
“ mind, was not so much that my master  
“ was a bad man, and made use of a  
“ shew of religion to cover his vices, as  
“ that religion itself was an imposture,  
“ that it was a cloak and not a principle.  
“ I concluded that every religious man  
“ was as hollow as my master, that there  
“ was no real difference between those  
“ who professed it, and those who pro-  
“ fessed it not, except that the former  
“ added hypocrisy to their other vices.  
“ O fatal deadly error ! It has been the  
“ ruin of my soul.” Here he stopt  
through grief and weakness.

*Trueman.* If there is one sin of a  
darker complexion than another, it is

when a man, putting on the mask of religion to answer some worldly purpose, proves that his heart is as far from God, as his conduct is from common honesty. He brings more reproach upon Christianity than many who are openly immoral. This character, however, is far from being common. And there is so little credit obtained for it among worldly men, that very few would risk the adopting it, where hypocrisy is not likely to be a thriving game. The mischief is — that the profane are glad to lay hold on an accidental discovery of hollowness in a high professor, to apply the reproach to every truly pious character, till real Christianity is brought into disgrace.

Mr. Fantom resumed: — “ Just about  
“ this time Thomas Paine published his  
“ two well-known works, the one intended to overturn all governments,  
“ the other to abolish all religion. I  
“ was just in that state of mind ready to  
“ be acted upon by such books. Their  
“ bold novelty, their audacious asser-

“ tions, their presumptuous falsehoods,  
“ just suited my own turn of mind.  
“ Rash, ambitious, vain, ill instructed,  
“ full of contempt for religion of which  
“ I knew nothing ; eager to distinguish  
“ myself, which I found I could not do  
“ in the old beaten path ; impatient to  
“ dash into some new career, yet so  
“ covetous as to desire to add the profits  
“ even of an unlawful trade to the re-  
“ nown I expected from turning philo-  
“ sopher and reformist ; the sight of my  
“ shop mortifying my pride, while its  
“ gains gratified my avarice — all these  
“ things determined me in my new pur-  
“ suit. The road to glory now seemed  
“ to lie open before me. As I was sober,  
“ and not openly immoral, I maintained  
“ for a time that degree of character  
“ which may be preserved without a  
“ single good principle. I became an  
“ infidel from the same cause from which  
“ I became a jacobin, that is, a hatred  
“ of every thing greater than myself,  
“ whether in heaven or earth, in church



“ or state, in rank or fortune. Pure  
“ jacobinism would never have main-  
“ tained its ground in this country, had  
“ it not been accompanied, and even  
“ introduced by impiety. In the party  
“ I joined, superstition, bigotry, and  
“ priestcraft, were the watch-words for  
“ destroying Christianity, as oppression,  
“ injustice, and tyranny were, for over-  
“ turning government.”

*Trueman.* Do you think that this wicked fraternity will always hold together, as they have bound themselves by oath to do?

*Fantom.* How can oaths be binding, when those who take them swear by a Being in whom they profess not to believe? The oath will be a rope of sand, when the object it was meant to promote shall be defeated, and the poor creatures whom we have deluded find that the shower of gold we promised is not ready to fall on them. Our leaders knew mankind too well not to know that our surest road to success was to begin by extin-

guishing all sense of religion; to make them believe that Christianity was a fable, the Saviour an impostor, and the church an engine of superstition and spiritual tyranny.

During this speech Mr. Trueman, who had frequently interrupted him, seeing he was overpowered, not more by disease, than by his own feelings and reflections, desired he would not exhaust himself at present by talking any longer.

Soon after, a little recovering his voice, he added, “ From a writer in the cause, “ I at length became a speaker. This “ was the crown of my mad ambition. “ To read in the papers an account of “ such and such a meeting — ‘ Mr. Fantom “ spoke next,’ to see my speeches in “ print with the bewitching interruptions “ of ‘ hear, hear,’ — the enchanting sound “ of ‘ loud applause’ — ‘ repeated accla- “ mations’ — which, by the way, I often “ paid the printer for inserting when it “ was not true — all this quite trans- “ ported me. I never reflected on what

“ ought to have humbled me, that these  
“ applauses, even when they *were* uttered,  
“ were those of silly boys, and of men  
“ who, though too ignorant to read my  
“ speeches when printed, were taught,  
“ like parrots, to pronounce certain words  
“ of which they did not know the pur-  
“ port. Annual parliaments, universal  
“ suffrage, elective franchise, were to  
“ them terms without a meaning. They  
“ only inferred, from *their* being directed  
“ to echo them, that they promised  
“ plenty without working ; vice without  
“ restraint ; liberty without a superior ;  
“ plunder without a prison to punish it ;  
“ and a jovial course of sin on earth  
“ without any dread of a hell hereafter.  
“ — Oh ! what a vain egregious villain  
“ have I been, and what egregious dupes  
“ have I helped to make !”

— Here Trueman interrupted him, and  
said, “ I see how much these painful  
“ confessions distress you. This strain  
“ of conversation is too much for your  
“ weak frame ; but allow me to say, I



“ feel a dawn of comfort in your repent-  
“ ance.”—“ Comfort,” interrupted he,  
“ don’t talk of comfort! Repentance!  
“ how do I know that I do repent? How  
“ do I know that my sorrow is not forced  
“ from me by my sufferings, and not by  
“ my sins? How do I know that re-  
“ stored health and strength might not  
“ make me relapse into all the guilt which  
“ I seem to have repented of and for-  
“ saken? What forsaking is it when I am  
“ not able to pursue it? when a tortured  
“ mind may be owing only to a tortured  
“ body, and not to real remorse? But  
“ no, I think, I believe I am sure, that  
“ nothing should ever tempt me to re-  
“ turn to those principles and habits  
“ which have undone my soul.”

*Trueman.* Sir, this is a salutary fear.

*Fantom.* O Trueman, I have one fear  
which swallows up all other thoughts—  
the fear of death. Other fears occur at  
times, and the thing we fear may not  
happen, but the fear of death is the tor-  
ment of every hour; what must neces-

sarily happen at some time, may happen the next hour. All my comforts have been in this life ; and what misery is that man's lot who every moment fears to lose all he has enjoyed here with no hope for hereafter. Here his kind friend left him, with an earnest recommendation that he should try to get some rest, but his reflections were too painful to admit of sleep.

Trueman having observed the assiduous attentions of Mrs. Fantom about her sick husband, was shocked to see him constantly turn away from her with looks of extreme distress whenever she approached him. He could not forbear telling him how thankful he ought to be for the comfort of so kind and excellent a wife. "Comfort !" exclaimed he, with excessive agitation ; "the very sight of her is an addition to my misery : I cannot bear it." The poor woman wept plentifully as she quitted the room, and Trueman was shocked as well at her distress as at the cruel expressions of her

husband. "Don't mistake me," said Fantom; "it is her patience, her forbearing spirit, her unwearied goodness, that plants daggers in my heart. You can't be ignorant of my meaning; so often as you have been here, she must, no doubt, have opened her heart to you, she *must* have told you what a monster I have been to her."—"Never," said Trueman; "I did not know but you had been on the best terms, though it is visible enough that your minds are ill suited to each other."—"This generosity," replied the sick man, "wounds me more than the most bitter complaints she could have made. What has she not borne from me! and how have I rewarded her! I have not only been an unkind, but an unfaithful husband, and she has known it. Yes, Trueman, I will seek some relief to my soul by the confession. If there is a God, O how dreadful to think that he who has been the witness of my guilt will be my Judge! Yes, I will tell you—reputation is now nothing in my eyes, and



“ sin is every thing. There *is* a woman  
“ —she was virtuous when I seduced her  
“ from her husband, who is since dead.  
“ My love of money has been so inordi-  
“ nate, that I have left this poor woman  
“ and her child destitute of the comforts  
“ which she enjoyed while she lived in  
“ peace and credit with her husband. My  
“ excellent wife, who has had an allow-  
“ ance from her father on his finding she  
“ had little from me, has more than once  
“ conveyed her money when she was sick ;  
“ and I have seen on the child gowns  
“ which I knew to have been my wife’s,  
“ and which she had made up with her  
“ own hands for this poor girl. I have not  
“ seen the unhappy woman these six  
“ months, and how she has subsisted I  
“ have never enquired. O my stony  
“ heart !”

Here his agitation became so great that he was near fainting. Mr. Trueman found the case so every way bad, that he was at a loss what to say. He did, however, endeavour, as well as he was able, to calm the terrors of the sick man, with-

out attempting to diminish his guilt.  
“ Oh, Sir,” cried the wretched sufferer,  
“ have patience with me, though I de-  
“ serve nothing but your abhorrence. Do  
“ a last office of kindness. A Christian I  
“ am told can do things impossible to  
“ other men. Do pay a charitable visit to  
“ this unhappy creature. She is well  
“ behaved, and will not shock you by  
“ any outward appearance of depravity.  
“ For Heaven’s sake, warn her of that  
“ wrath to come of which I already feel  
“ a foretaste. Snatch the wretched child  
“ from being hereafter a partaker of her  
“ mother’s infamy.”

Trueman always admired, and to the utmost of his power, imitated, the example of Job in that beautiful part of his character, “ the cause which he knew  
“ not, he searched out.” He promised to see her that very day. He was as good as his word, after having got a direction where to find her. The woman seemed far gone in a decline. Every thing about her bore the marks of penury. When Mr. Trueman opened the nature of his

visit, she burst into tears, wrung her hands, and said, "O, Sir, I have long  
" been weary of a life of sin. That good  
" Mrs. Fantom, whom I have so cruelly  
" injured, has often, when her husband  
" was from home, called on me in this  
" solitude. She has brought clothes for  
" my child, and given me what money  
" she could spare out of her own slender  
" purse. This I told Mr. Fantom, who  
" then only laughed at her credulity.  
" But the motive of her visits was of a  
" higher kind than merely to relieve my  
" worldly wants. She gave me that Bible  
" and Prayer-book, with another little  
" volume, entitled, 'Alleyne's Alarm  
" to the Unconverted.' At first I ridi-  
" culed all this in secret, but concealed  
" my contempt of her spiritual counsels,  
" lest it should lead her to withhold her  
" relief to my temporal wants. She earn-  
" estly advised me to pray for forgive-  
" ness to God, through Jesus Christ, at  
" the same time telling me my prayers  
" would avail nothing while I continued



“ my present course of life ; she often  
“ repeated, ‘ If I regard iniquity in my  
“ heart, the Lord will not hear me.’  
“ She never used harsh language to me,  
“ except as truth itself (which she would  
“ never soften) is harsh to sinful ears.  
“ Little cause has she had to spare her  
“ husband : she never allowed herself to  
“ revile him. From her Christian con-  
“ duct under severe trials, from the good  
“ books she gave me, and from a habit  
“ of fervent prayer for pardon for the  
“ past, and grace for the time to come,  
“ it has pleased God to open my eyes  
“ both to the infamy of my way of life,  
“ and to the truth and beauty of the  
“ religion of the Gospel. I never more  
“ intend to see Mr. Fantom, and was  
“ just about to remove to some distant  
“ place, when the report of his illness  
“ reached me. Will you, good Sir, assist  
“ me in removing from hence. The  
“ meanest condition, the most laborious  
“ life, I shall joyfully embrace, so I may  
“ devote the remainder of my days to

“ penitence ; my only worldly wish is  
“ to preserve my child from want, lest  
“ she should be driven to follow my  
“ wretched example.” Mr. Trueman  
told her she need not fear any disturb-  
ance from Mr. Fantom. A paralytic  
stroke would soon put an end to his mor-  
tal existence. “ Dying !” cried the poor  
woman, “ what will become of his im-  
“ mortal soul ? O, I would pray for him  
“ day and night, if I could hope the  
“ prayers of such a wretch, the associate  
“ in his guilt, could be heard. Yet the  
“ last time Mrs. Fantom was here, I re-  
“ member how my heart was cheered at  
“ a passage she read—‘ Though your sins  
“ be as scarlet, they shall be as white  
“ as snow ; though they be red like  
“ crimson, they shall be as wool.’ Oh,  
“ Sir, I only desire to live and die at  
“ the foot of the Cross.”

Mr. Trueman was pleased to observe  
the state of her mind, and took his leave,  
assuring her that he would not forsake  
her, but would endeavour to provide her

a situation suited to her case. At parting, he slipped a crown into her hand.

He had plentiful matter for meditation in his ride back. His pity for this unfortunate woman, his compassion for the terrible state of the dying man, his regret at the small comfort he was able to offer him without compromising the truth, and misleading him to build his hope on a false foundation, all this filled his mind with mournful thoughts. He was humbled to think how little comparative good, not only himself, but the best individual could do, and what incalculable evil may be effected by one bad one. "Have not half a dozen men, at this very time," said he, "caused more terror and disturbance to the country, and unsettled the faith of more souls, in a few months, than all the good ones in it will be able to redress in a long time?"

On his return, he could not help looking on Mrs. Fantom with additional respect, when he found her supporting the



ghastly form of her husband, who had just recovered from a violent fit. The lady retired on his entrance. Trueman thought it might afford him some little comfort, to be informed of the piety and deep repentance of the poor woman. "O blessed news!" answered he, in a voice scarcely articulate. "This is the first ray of something not quite like despair, that I have yet felt." Trueman then acquainted him with the effect his excellent wife's Christian counsel and conduct had produced on this unhappy woman. "I do, I do," replied he, "feel one moment's mitigation of my torture; but no—my pangs are aggravated in recollecting my treatment of such a wife! O how I laboured, but in vain, to destroy her principles! O that I had not exchanged the solid blessings of domestic life, for a scheme of wild vanity and eccentric ambition! What had I to do with plans of reform as foolish as they were wicked, as impracticable as

“ they were mischievous? How many  
“ thoughtless, but not ill-intentioned  
“ young men, have I led from the sober  
“ duties of life, to run after a vision, a  
“ shadow, a dream! Even if I could  
“ repent, my repentance would be fruit-  
“ less as to them. What restitution can  
“ I make them for loss of time, of cha-  
“ racter, of principle, perhaps of life?  
“ How can I restore by my remorse,  
“ seditious subjects to their king, rebels  
“ to submission to the laws, atheists to  
“ the blessings of religion, or apostates  
“ to the favour of God? My mischiefs  
“ are widely diffused, and I know not  
“ where to find the objects of them. I  
“ can only bequeath my dying advice to  
“ those whom I have deluded; tell them  
“ of my deep remorse. As my life has  
“ been their snare, propose my death as  
“ their warning. Pray publish my so-  
“ lemn recantation.”

Then, after a long pause, he added —  
“ Poor Jenkins, the gardener, is, indeed,  
“ within reach. I wonder if he can for-

“ give my cruelty at the fire. Oh that  
“ fire! O my hard heart! That fire was  
“ not accidental; his house was burnt  
“ down by some of our crew, because  
“ he refused to join in plundering the  
“ clergyman’s barn. William, my ser-  
“ vant, I brought to the gallows. And  
“ yet you would have me pray. — To  
“ pray without hope, oh! how fruitless!”

Here the nurse came in to say that a  
strange gentleman, who called himself  
Saunders, was below, and said he had  
particular business with Mr. Fantom.  
“ O the worst of business!” cried he.  
“ He is the most hardened of our hard-  
“ ened set. Some of them have called  
“ before, but I had now rather meet  
“ death than one of my fellow-sinners.  
“ Atheism and sedition have made them  
“ lose the natural feelings of humanity.  
“ If I recover, they say I shall recover  
“ my contempt for priestcraft and  
“ slavery; if I die, I am sure of an  
“ eternal sleep. O, Trueman, ‘ they are  
“ ‘ forgers of lies, they are physicians of



“ ‘no value,’ as my wife read yesterday  
“ in her book. O! I should be glad to  
“ compound for that eternal sleep.  
“ Dreadful as annihilation is, it is less  
“ dreadful than the undying worm, less  
“ dreadful than the unextinguishable  
“ fire, better than everlasting burnings.  
“ What must that state be, if it is worse  
“ than what I now endure! An accusing  
“ conscience, an incensed God!  
“ Think of the poor credulous fellows  
“ that have swallowed my pestilent doctrines. Trueman, I now feel the full  
“ force of your remark, that *a bad principle may continue to corrupt, when a  
“ bad action is forgotten.* I now hope my  
“ writings have not ability to do lasting  
“ mischief; but I *intended* all possible  
“ mischief; and if, as I have heard, hell  
“ is paved with good intentions not put  
“ in practice, what will it be with evil  
“ ones realized?”

Here Mr. Trueman reminded him that Mr. Saunders was waiting below. “Go  
“ down to him, dear Trueman,” replied

he, "but tell him I will never see him." The stranger, who naturally judged of Trueman's principles by the house in which he found him, approached him with the most disgusting freedom and levity. To check this, he began to describe the state of the sick man with all that minuteness of detail into which a feeling friend is so apt to enter, and of which the selfish and the worldly are so impatient. "Sir," said he, "your friend's case is desperate; I do not think he can live three days."—"Poor Fantom!" replied he, "sorry for him, sorry for him; but, Sir, such a loss is easily repaired.

"I trust we have within our band,

"Five hundred as good as he.

"But the worse he is, the more occasion is there for pressing my business. I have called upon him for his arrears." "Sir," said Trueman, "I dare say he is ready to pay all his lawful debts."—"Lawful!" rejoined Saunders, "they are of a higher strain than lawful, — they

“ are honourable. Sir, I heard from the  
 “ servant that you are an old friend of  
 “ his, so no reserve is necessary.”

*Trueman.* Sir, I am an acquaintance  
 of many years' standing.

*Saunders.* Then, I doubt not, you  
 know his engagements.

*Trueman.* He has just made me a full  
 and confidential recital of all.

*Saunders.* Then I need not scruple  
 to deliver you this little bill (presenting  
 a paper), which includes our present de-  
 mand : —

Mr. Fantom	Debtor to —	£.	s.	d.
Travelling expences of Delegates	-	8	0	0
Cockades	- - - - -	2	10	0
Paying for signatures from unwilling, but distressed persons	- - - - - } 14	6	0	
Flags	- - - - -	4	12	0
Two hundred children for signing peti- tions, 1d. each	- - - - - } 0	16	8	
Supplying Hawkers with Tracts against religion and government	- - - - - } 6	0	0	
Supplying ditto with a few godly Tracts to put at the top of their baskets, to conceal the others	- - - - - } 1	4	0	
Hiring blankets to travel to London	- - - - -	3	0	0
Pikes not yet paid for	- - - - -			
Total		£40	8	8



Trueman, after perusing the items of the bill, calmly said, "Sir, I did not mean to take you in. I never employ deceit even in a good cause. When I told you that Mr. Fantom had opened his whole heart to me, I was going to add, that in this avowal he had expressed the deepest remorse at his engagements with your party; I was going to tell you, that he utterly renounces all his pernicious notions, but your impatience to get your money would not allow me to speak. The discovery you have made, has added little to my knowledge of your proceedings."

Saunders, in a great rage, cried out — "O what Fantom has *'peached*, has he? The greatest rogue always turns king's evidence." Fearful, however, of provoking Trueman to deliver him up to justice, he affected to laugh it off, as a good joke, saying it was the only way to get money from that covetous fellow. He went on: "Fantom did us some good to be sure. We have friends of all sorts, Sir; some

“ help the good cause with their wit;  
“ those who, like Fantom, have a plentiful  
“ lack of that article, assist us with a little  
“ cash. This was the case with this  
“ apostate; indeed he did something by  
“ his interest with journeymen, and he  
“ did pretty well with his tongue; a good  
“ off-hand man enough, but a poor pen-  
“ and-ink man, so that our party will  
“ gain little good, and your’s little injury  
“ by his writings. His tracts are so  
“ stupid, that he may spare his lament-  
“ ations as to their effect. He puts me  
“ in mind of a French author of our  
“ school, who had written volumes in  
“ the cause; on his death-bed he was  
“ weeping and wailing to a friend, what  
“ mischief his works would continue to  
“ do after he was dead. ‘ Make your-  
“ self quite easy on that score,’ said his  
“ friend, ‘ for they are so dull, that  
“ ‘ nobody will read them.’ ”

*Trueman.* But, Sir, do you feel no  
compassion for a dying friend? or is

cruelty, indeed, as poor Fantom assured me, the chief ingredient in the character of your party?

*Saunders.* It would be absurd in me to affect feeling for a worthless individual, when I have the cause of a whole kingdom at my heart, and in a good measure, indeed, on my hands.

*Trueman.* I cannot help observing, that the compassion of your party is always excited in the wrong place, and on the wrong objects. There is Buonaparte now, I frequently hear his situation in a healthy pleasant island, with his chosen friends about him, with the accommodations and luxuries of a king, spoken of with all the cant of false feeling, while every reproach is lavished on the wise measure which placed him there. But never do I hear from any of you a syllable of sorrow, for all the thousands, I may say millions, both in his own country and out of it, who fell through his bloody ambition.

*Saunders.* Sir, he is a great man, a



patriot, and a hero, and the kings and governments who confine him, are no better than common gaolers.

*Trueman.* Again, we hear more of the damps of Cold-Bath-Fields, where some of your friends have found a suitable lodging, and which by the way is perfectly dry, than of all the glorious sufferers in the field of Waterloo. To descend to a still more trumpery compassion: a dirty boy, who was properly chastised for his officious impudence in pulling down a loyal placard, is whined over with all the slang of pity, and a ridiculous affectation of justice and mercy, while I see no compunction for the miseries you were preparing for your entire country, if a merciful God, and a vigilant government, had not spoilt *your* pleasure, and snatched *us* from ruin. I am sick of the nauseous puling pity for contemptible objects. I have my feelings, Sir. I feel for the peace, the safety, the principles of this great empire. I feel for those deluded creatures, whose souls

you have ruined by your impiety, and whose necks you have endangered by your meetings and your plunder. I pity the unhappy man above stairs, who laments that he was ever drawn into your snares.

*Saunders.* He is a cowardly, sneaking, contemptible fellow. Bellingham and Cashman for me. They died like men, like heroes.

*Trueman.* Sir, they died like demons; hard, impenitent, hopeless, graceless. By their hardness, they seemed to be studiously preparing themselves for the society of lost spirits.

*Saunders.* You appear to me to be as dead to the cause of freedom, as you are ignorant of politics.

*Trueman.* I remember to have read in some book, a magazine, I suppose, for my reading does not go far, of a great scholar of the last age, Locke, I think, was the gentleman's name, who used to say, that every man should be well acquainted with two things — religion, and

his own business. Now, if I remember right, though this gentleman was both a philosopher and a politician, and a very great friend to liberty, yet he never said a word about every man's studying politics ; I suppose by that he thought it a deep study, fit only for such wise men as himself. I myself have heard sensible men say — that to understand politics, it is necessary to understand many other things, more than are to be picked up in a Saturday's Register. Now, as I am no proficient in history, geography, law, and foreign relations, I act upon Mr. Locke's advice. I follow my trade for the sake of my family, and my religion for the sake of my soul. My trade, I trust, with the blessing of God, will carry me in credit through this world, and my religion with safety to the next. But though my Bible and my Ledger fill up most of my time, I spare a little to read a few other good books : these have given me such a disgust to bad ones, that I



stick to the former from choice, as much as from principle.

“ Well,” said Saunders, “ I see that “ fanatics can make long speeches as “ well as reformers.”

*Trueman.* If by fanatics you mean, as is commonly the case, religious men, it is a great pleasure to me to have observed, that not one sound Christian of any denomination seems ever to have joined you.

*Saunders.* We don't desire their company : they are all cowards, and nothing but fear keeps them in order. But have you no feeling, no pity for the thousands that are perishing ?

*Trueman.* *We*, Sir, not only pity, but relieve them. *You* create the distress, and then make it a ground of complaint. I see by your bill you collect money enough for every thing but charity. You have money in plenty for mischief, but it is remarked that your names are never seen in any collections for the poor. It is cheaper to ridicule soup-shops than to

subscribe to them. It is more popular to hire blankets for deluded travellers, than to give them to those who are quiet in their cottages.

During this time, it was evident that Saunders was studious to avoid coming to close quarters about the bill. He kept his eyes constantly towards the door, dreading an arrest. The recent suspension of that act \*, which while it was in force made his party so fearless, now made his heart beat with apprehension. He had, however, the presence of mind to appear quite at ease ; and thought to conceal his fear by assumed indifference.

*Saunders.* And so you are a decided enemy to liberty, and the rights of men!

*Trueman.* Sir, I am a true friend to true freedom. Let me give you one piece of advice : The only way to become really free is to turn Christian. Then you will be free indeed ; free from the tyranny of ambition, of unruly tem-

\* The Habeas Corpus.

pers, and sinful passions. There is no tyranny equal to that of sin and Satan. Our Divine Deliverer from both these, came into this world to do for the souls of men what you vainly pretend to do for their bodies — He came to proclaim liberty to the captives, and to open the prison-doors for them that are bound.

*Saunders (Laughing).* Of all places in the world I least expected to find a preacher in Fantom's house.

*Trueman.* Poor Fantom ! and so you won't take one look at your old friend ? To witness his abhorrence of his past sins and his dread of eternal punishment, might be a salutary sight to the stoutest infidel. His ghastly appearance, the despair stamped on his distorted face, even though he should not speak, might leave a useful lesson on your heart.

*Saunders.* You invite me to a most engaging sight, to be sure : it is a pleasure I shall not accept. I am only sorry that he disgraces our noble cause by his cowardice ; I don't care for the man, I



am only sorry he does not *die game*. But to have done with you, will you get Fantom to pay the bill?

*Trueman.* Whether it is a lawful bill shall be tried in a court of justice. If the Attorney-General approves it, as I am to be Fantom's executor, I will see you paid.

*Saunders.* Then return me the bill, if you won't pay it.

*Trueman.* No, Sir, it shall never be out of my hands till I place it in those of the law.—*Exit* Saunders in a violent rage. His horse was at the door, and he was out of sight in an instant. "The wicked flee when no man pursueth."

Now, lest some reader should question Trueman's prudence in letting him depart, I can only say that they were in a lone house, and the only man-servant from home. Saunders was a stout young man, himself declining in years; he knew not what weapons he might have about him; so he thought it enough to have

secured the bill as a sufficient testimony of his guilt.

When he went up to the sick man, he suppressed, out of tenderness to his weak state, the most offensive parts of their conversation. He said enough, however, to throw him into a dreadful paroxysm. He looked wildly, and said, "Tell me  
" truly, dear Trueman, do you think  
" there will be hereafter a worse hell  
" than that I now feel? Don't deceive  
" me."

*Trueman.* I should injure my own soul, and perhaps cut off all hope of your's, if I did. As sure as there is a heaven, so sure there is a hell. Many of those who read the Scriptures, have tried to soften down this awful truth, to diminish its horrors, to limit its duration, and even to do it entirely away. Thus sinful man affects to be more merciful than God himself. Let such persons only read the 9th chapter of St. Mark, and they will there see — that He who is not only true, but THE TRUTH, has pro-

nounced this dreadful certainty in words more full, more explicit, and more repeatedly, than even the prophets and apostles themselves.

*Fantom.* Then there is no hope for me. Nothing left but utter despair.

*Trueman.* Say not so. Despair would be the worst of all your sins. While I would not conceal from you the terrors of the law, nor the threatenings of the gospel, I dare not limit the mercies of God in Christ Jesus, to the truly believing penitent, because the gospel has set no such limits.

Here the sick man lifted up his eyes, and grasping Trueman's hand with the one of which he had still some use, cried out, "What! is there a shadow, a glimpse, a possibility? No, no, no. But will it be everlasting? No mitigation, no interval, no transient respite, no hope, no end?"

Here he sunk down; he appeared to be gone. But it was only a fit; on recovering from which he fell asleep. Next



morning, when he appeared somewhat better, Mr. Trueman thus addressed him.

“ Allow me to recommend to you to do,  
“ without loss of time, what the Ephe-  
“ sian sorcerers did when they began to  
“ feel the guilt and danger of sin.\* *They*  
“ *burnt their books*, their magical books,  
“ with which, like you, they had be-  
“ witched the people. Do this; for  
“ though it can only be the means of de-  
“ stroying a few copies, yet it will enable  
“ me to proclaim to your party, and to  
“ their deluded followers, what was your  
“ opinion of them and their doctrines,  
“ when an awakened conscience and an  
“ approaching death had taken away the  
“ scales from your eyes, and shown you  
“ things in their true light.”

Fantom eagerly caught at the proposal. Then turning to his wife, who obeyed him with more alacrity than her exhausted spirits seemed capable of admitting, he desired her to order the servant to bring three

\* See 19th chap. Acts of the Apostles.

large trunks into his room. When they were brought in, he desired Mr. Trueman to take out the contents. The first he opened was nearly filled with *Paine's Age of Reason*, and the *Rights of Man*. "There," said Fantom, "there is the seed-plot, there is the prime dunghill from which all our noxious weeds have sprung up in such abundance."—"Yes," said Trueman, "but you seem even to have outgone your pattern," as he took out of the second box the *Sinecurist's Creed*, the *Parody on the Litany*, the ———; but, though Mr. Trueman repeated to me all their titles, when I sat down to write this history, I will not pollute my pages even with their names. There was one large box entirely filled with his own writings. For a moment he looked as if he felt the natural fondness of a bad author for a bad book, but instantly correcting himself, he cried, "Burn this first. O what a mercy that I am spared to do it. Let it not appear

“ against me in this world, but O, I fear,  
“ it will rise against me in judgment.

“ Now, Trueman,” said he, in a faint voice, “ let my servants, workmen, and  
“ neighbours be called together. Do you  
“ collect them in the large court-yard  
“ under my window. Burn all these  
“ papers and books in their presence.  
“ Proclaim a solemn declaration of my  
“ penitence, and give an awful warning  
“ to those whom I have corrupted, to  
“ shun all pestilent tracts, all wicked  
“ advisers, all artful seducers, who would  
“ draw them from the plain path of  
“ duty.”

Mr. Trueman lost not a moment, he not only called in the neighbours, but had given notice to the whole adjoining village to meet in Mr. Fantom’s yard. *The call to a meeting* had a very alluring sound, and drew numbers together. Mr. Trueman made a speech of great solidity. I have never been able to obtain an exact copy, but the sense of it may be inferred



from his known pious, upright, and loyal character.

As soon as he heard the people were assembled in the yard, Mr. Fantom desired to be taken out of his bed, and to be carried in his easy-chair to the window. The papers and books were raised to a large high pile, and Mr. Trueman himself, after delivering his speech (which produced the happiest effects), took a torch, and with his own hand set fire to this combustible heap. It was an affecting sight, for the window was opened, to behold the dying man exhibiting his distorted frame to the people, lifting up his one whole hand, and waving it with an expression of anguish. At this moment, the fire still blazing with fury, some one called out, and told him that two hundred men were just taken up for seditious practices. "O dreadful thought!" said Fantom, "that I have my full share in  
" all that is past, and in all that may  
" follow! My punishment is greater  
" than I can bear." Then, making a

strong effort, and pointing to his dead hand, as it fell motionless by his side, he exclaimed, loud enough to be heard by those without, "O this sinful hand! (holding it up with the other) O that I had never had the use of it! What guilt had I been spared, had I lost it before it had written so much blasphemy against my God, before it had signed so many petitions against my king, before it had ruined the principles, and perhaps the lives of many to come. O Cranmer, Cranmer!\* thy hand, which in a moment of human weakness did sign thy recantation, thou didst thrust into the flames, not as an expiation for sin, but as an act of penitence. *Thy* flames were soon extinguished, and thou didst ascend to everlasting glory. *My* fire will begin where thine ended; mine will burn to all eternity: O mercy, mercy!" Here his hand fell, his voice failed, his eyes closed, his

\* A real Reformer, who was burnt for adhering to the true religion.

breath stopped — he was gone for ever. ———

\* \* \* \* \*

I forbear to make any observations on this awful death. It carries its own comment with it. Mr. Trueman, to their great content, is left sole trustee to Mrs. Fantom and her daughter. His first care was to enquire after a safe retreat for the unfortunate woman whom Fantom had seduced. His interest with the Magdalen Institution in London, would doubtless have obtained a reception for her there, but she died of a broken heart before she could be removed. During her illness, Mrs. Fantom never lost sight of her. She sent her a constant supply of whatever was proper for her situation, and frequently visited her sick-bed, where she administered to her all the Christian consolation her case required. She died an humble penitent. Mr. Trueman hopes to secure for her poor child admittance into that excellent charity the



Orphan Asylum, at Bristol. In the mean time, Mrs. Fantom, who buried the mother at her own expence, maintains the child. Mr. Trueman had the pleasure of seeing Jenkins settled in his new cottage, prosperous, grateful, and pious, and of presenting him with half an acre of land, which Mrs. Fantom gave him as some compensation for the burning of his old cottage.

## THE DELEGATE.

MR. JAMES DAWSON is a man whose character stands high among his brethren, the weavers of Spital-fields. He is skilful in his business, industrious in his calling, sober in his habits, and punctual in his engagements: laborious in earning his money, and prudent in the use he makes of it. But what makes his good qualities and right habits uniform and consistent is, because they are built on the sure foundation of genuine Christianity. He is not one of those popular characters who are called *good-hearted*, because they have high animal spirits; who are reckoned no one's enemy but their own, because they spend all their gains in jovial company, and whose favourite motto is — a short life and a merry one.

The right actions which some worldly men perform—and happy is it for society

that they are performed on *any* motive — are like summer showers, very refreshing where they fall, but soon exhausted, and are never to be depended upon : while the virtues of a real Christian do not depend upon circumstance or accident, but flow from the perpetual fountain of a living principle ; and though much imperfection, much infirmity mixes with his best actions, yet his views will be right, his eye single, his motives pure. This was the case with James Dawson : he had received a better education than most in his rank of life ; this, together with the perusal of good books, and the conversation of good men, had greatly improved his natural understanding, as well as strengthened his pious dispositions. But his principal advantages arose from the preaching and the private instructions of the excellent clergyman who has the care of that parish in which his favoured lot had cast him.

A few years ago he married a prudent, well-disposed young woman, who had



saved something in a genteel service where she had lived several years. They went on prosperously, and had got rather beforehand with the world. They always adopted that prudent custom of living within their income, whether wages were higher or lower. This they well knew was the great secret of independence, for the man who exceeds his income, whether it be great or small, lays himself open to temptations which he may not always be able to resist. But this can only be avoided by a regular course of self-denial, cutting off all unnecessary indulgences, and governing his whole behaviour in small things as well as great ones by an habitual religious principle.

But the wise man truly observes, that as "the race is not always to the swift," so is not bread always to the man of understanding. In the common course of events, Providence usually blesses honest industry with success; but the whole history of the world proves that outward prosperity is no certain mark of God's

favour. Indeed were this universally the case, we should want one of the strongest arguments for a future state. But if the divine dispensations are mysterious, we know that they are holy, just and good. If clouds and darkness are round about the throne of God, yet righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his seat.

Dawson's wife had been visited with a lingering sickness, during the whole of which his affection had led him to procure for her the best advice; and to supply her with every comfort which might alleviate her sufferings. At length she recovered, and things began to look cheerily. But while he was blessing and praising God for her restoration other troubles came upon him. Poor Dawson fell dangerously ill himself, and became a partaker in the general distress with which it has pleased Divine Providence to visit this country during this last year. The times grew more and more unfavourable. Dawson never murmured, never expressed or indulged a

hard thought of the great Disposer of events, but by a cheerful continuance in well doing, shewed where all his trust and confidence were placed. The alteration in his little affairs appeared only in his resolute self-denial, and his voluntary privations, for he made every struggle to keep his head above water; he resisted every temptation to unnecessary expence; and because he did not repine, people never suspected he was poor. It is the clamorous who draw attention.

But in this last autumn of 1816, things every where grew worse, till with rapid strides distress seemed to overtake the industrious as well as the idle; the sources of industry being dried up by the decline of trade, and the consequent failure of employment. Poor Dawson had that spirit of independence which every honest man feels, not from pride, but from a higher principle. Besides, he saw himself surrounded with the distresses of others, which his charity made him think heavier than his own, and which his humility made him think were



less deserved. He did not apply for parochial relief, having observed that where men were eager in their applications of this nature on every slight grievance, the spirit sunk with the circumstances, and there was ever after little desire of struggling with difficulties, and of keeping clear from a dependence to which they had once been reduced. It is not that parish assistance really degrades the man, but it is a blessing on which he is too apt to repose, after having once broken the ice, and reconciled his mind to the habit of dependence, a habit which slackens industry and nourishes sloth.

He had another reason for abstaining in this temporary distress. He knew that many of his neighbours were still worse off than himself. He was sick, indeed, but he had no children, most of them had several, and his conscience was so tender that he feared what might be given to him would be taken from them.

Christmas however was just at hand. A quarter's rent was due, and he saw with grief, that, for the first time in his life, he should not be able to meet the demands of his landlord, who, to say the truth, was not much richer than himself. This made him consider it as a duty to apply for help, as soon as he should be sufficiently strong to go out. His well-furnished but small apartment began to be stripped, piece by piece, of his neat furniture. While he was conversing one evening with his wife on the approach of absolute want, she burst into tears, and said, "O James, our creditable bed, which I had so much pleasure in buying with the money I saved in service, that I might have something to bring into the common little stock, that I fear must go next." He took her by the hand, saying, "I hope not Sarah; but even if that should be our sad case, we shall be no worse off than our blessed Master was, who had not where to lay his head. Let us remem-

“ber that He is our example for holiness, as well as our sacrifice for sin :  
“be comforted. As we are not just now, through the decline of trade, allowed to labour for the meat that perisheth, let us labour more assiduously for that which endureth to eternal life.”

“Our clock,” said Mrs. Dawson, “is already gone,” and she wept as she spoke. “True, my dear Sarah,” replied her husband, “but if we are deprived of the pleasure of counting time, we are not debarred from the advantage of meditating on eternity, in which time will be soon swallowed up.”

They then mournfully cast their eyes round the room, to see what they had more to part with. Sarah, whether by design or accident, I never could exactly learn, directed her's to a large handsome Bible, which Dawson had taken in every week in numbers during his apprenticeship, and got neatly bound as a present



to his wife on their marriage. They cast on each other a look of anguish, but spoke not for some time. James hesitated not a moment between the bed and the Bible ; but he trembled lest his wife should bring them into competition. At length, clearing up his voice, he said, " Sarah, when there is a storm at sea, " and the ship is likely to go to the " bottom, what is the practice of the " sailors ? They first throw overboard " all the heavy lading, then their most " precious commodities, all this as the " sole chance of saving that which is of " most value — their lives. O Sarah ! " this book is the life of our souls, and " we will keep it till the vessel sinks." Sarah said not a word, but shed tears, and looked very contrite.

Dawson went on. " I will put another " case to you, my dear Sarah : Suppose " for the present you were in distressed " circumstances, but that your father had " bequeathed you an estate, of which " you would be sure to come into pos-

“ session at no distant day. Suppose he  
“ had made over to you by a great conveyancer, the certain enjoyment of  
“ this estate in a book which contained  
“ your title-deeds, as the only means by  
“ which your right to the estate could  
“ be made infallibly sure, of which no  
“ human power could dispossess you,  
“ and which would secure to you the  
“ certain, though not the immediate entrance on this estate, for what consideration would you sell this title-deed ?”  
— “ O, not for the wealth of the whole  
“ world !” exclaimed Sarah. “ Forgive  
“ me, O my heavenly Father, that such  
“ a thought, for I cannot call it a wish,  
“ entered my mind.”

“ Sarah,” said her husband, “ I have  
“ always admired a certain renowned  
“ king of Sweden, who never would  
“ allow any thing handsome in his tent  
“ except his Bible, which was magnificent : and amidst wars and camps, in  
“ which his whole life was spent for the  
“ defence of his country, no day ever

“ passed, not even though a battle was  
“ to take place, without his reading a  
“ portion of Scripture. This book, Sarah,  
“ has been the consolation of prisoners  
“ in dungeons, and martyrs at the stake,  
“ and shall it not support us under our  
“ inferior trials?” Here Dawson, starting up, said, “ One of the worst effects  
“ of sickness and sorrow is — they are  
“ apt to make one selfish. Talking of  
“ our own concerns, I had quite forgot  
“ that I have not been to visit Mrs.  
“ Brown since breakfast. Let us go and  
“ see how she is.” So saying, they went into the adjoining apartment.

In that apartment lodged Mrs. Brown, a widow gentlewoman, who had seen better days, but who had been gradually sinking into extreme poverty, from the failure of a tradesman to whom she had intrusted her small fortune. She had been compelled to give up a decent house of her own, for this single room. At first she bore this change in her circumstances with extreme impatience.



Solitude, sickness, and poverty, were indeed a severe trial to one always accustomed to ease and plenty. Her constant repining aggravated her sufferings. But the kind offices, and the pious conversation of Mr. and Mrs. Dawson, had afforded great support and comfort to her dejected mind. Since matters had been so bad with these poor neighbours, they had agreed to make one fire suffice for both apartments, though it was now the coldest season of the year, and it was settled that it should be lighted alternately in each other's room ; Mrs. Dawson kindly undertaking the little cookery for them all. This worthy couple treated this afflicted woman with a delicacy which religion only could have taught them ; for in her present destitute situation, they never forgot that she had been their superior.

Having provided her with what poor necessaries they had to spare, they returned to their own room, and sat down cheerfully to their scanty dinner of po-

tatoes and water, but not till they had blessed God that they were not left quite destitute. While James was saying grace there was a loud knocking at the door, and immediately there entered, self-introduced, a couple of smart-looking dashing young men. They had overheard at the door the devout ejaculation of Dawson, and when they beheld the banquet over which it had been pronounced, they burst out into a brutal laugh. "Are these the delicacies for which you are so thankful?" said one of the strangers. "We are come to put you in a way of getting something worth saying 'thank you' for." Dawson was offended at this prophane levity, but made no reply.

"You must know," said one of them, "that this gentleman is a DELEGATE." "A Delegate," said Dawson, "what is that? From what government, from what constituted authority, what body corporate, what bench of magistrates does he come, and where are his credentials?"

“ We come,” said the stranger, “ commissioned by the highest authority in the world — the sovereign majesty of the people ; and as to our credentials, here they are ;” both of them taking out of their loaded pockets resolutions, speeches, and a number of petitions for signature. “ Are not these authorities high enough to please you, Mr. Dawson ?” said the spokesman, “ *vox populi* ; you know Latin enough to understand that, I suppose ?”

“ I neither understand your Latin nor your English,” said Dawson. “ Then I will explain both to you,” replied the stranger : “ You must know, then that my friend and I are beating up for recruits.” “ Recruits ! I thought the war had been over,” said Dawson, with much simplicity. “ We have nothing to do with that wicked warfare,” said the Delegate, “ in which our governors have so long involved this bleeding country ; but we have taken a leading part in a plan for healing all



“ her wounds : we are pledged to diffuse  
“ to all, universal plenty, liberty, equal-  
“ lity, and the rights of man. Dawson,  
“ I know you to be a man of sense, one  
“ of the first of the *thinking people*.  
“ You have a high character, and great  
“ influence over your neighbours in this  
“ populous district ; and if, as I doubt  
“ not, you are a true patriot, you will  
“ readily join the cause of liberty, in  
“ which I have the honour to be one of  
“ the standard-bearers. Scores, I doubt  
“ not, will follow your example. Come,  
“ come, Dawson, I will pledge myself  
“ that you shan’t be thankful for pota-  
“ toes and water any more. You shall  
“ eat of the fat of the land, and may de-  
“ pend on a fair share in the division of  
“ property which is about to take place.  
“ No harm will happen ; we shall only  
“ cross over, change hands, and figure  
“ in — that’s all ; you will be whisked  
“ into affluence in a twinkling, without  
“ knowing or caring how you came by  
“ it. You are my friend, countryman,

“ and fellow-citizen ; moreover, you are  
“ a man of knowledge and reading, and  
“ may expect to rise to every thing if  
“ you will join us. I will take care to  
“ secure you a good birth.” — “ Sir,” re-  
plied Dawson, “ you are pleased to say,  
“ that I am a man of reading. I did in  
“ my youth read a stage play, which was  
“ taken from true history, where the  
“ Orator, the man of the people, used  
“ just such obsequious complimentary  
“ language to the mob as you use to us.  
“ Friends, Romans, countrymen, was the  
“ slang employed to cajole the popu-  
“ lace, whom the speaker despised, and  
“ laughed at in his sleeve. All’ this  
“ fulsome talk the mob swallowed just as  
“ a few of them do now, and were weak  
“ enough to believe, that the man who was  
“ so kind and condescending, was open-  
“ ing the door to freedom and plenty,  
“ when they were the very blessings of  
“ which he was labouring to deprive  
“ them. To his canting speeches he  
“ added crocodile tears, all for the sake

“ of his *dear Romans, countrymen, and*  
“ *fellow-citizens* ; and to mock them the  
“ more completely, in return for the sub-  
“ stantial benefits of which he was rob-  
“ bing them, he offered them a *walk in*  
“ *his pleasure-grounds* : just such a *take-*  
“ *in* as your offer of a bit of land, which  
“ will never be your’s to give, and which,  
“ if it were, would be a miserable ex-  
“ change for all we must part with.”

Here the Delegate, to show his learning,  
said, “ ’Tis not a case in point. Antony  
“ wanted to make the people slaves ; we  
“ want to make our slaves free.” Here  
Dawson’s English blood was heated.  
“ Sir,” replied he, “ ’tis true the Roman  
“ people were slaves, but the Patriot  
“ only wanted to make them change  
“ masters, not to set them free. Britons  
“ are free already, and you would make  
“ them slaves. No, Sir, as the song  
“ says,

“ Britons never shall be slaves.”

The Orator was resolved not to lose  
his point, by losing his temper ; and,



therefore, began again to try the power of flattery over Dawson's mind, and repeated, that by joining them, he might expect to rise to public notice. "Sir," replied Dawson, "when gentlemen speak kindly to the poor, it is soothing and comfortable; but when they flatter them, and set them above themselves, and try to fill them with high conceits, so as to make them discontented with their lot in life, it is clear they have some design upon them, some bad end to answer. This should lead every prudent man to look about him, and say, how can these things be? Is there not a snake in the grass?"

The more he opposed, the more desirous were the strangers to gain him over. "Sir," said the Delegate, "I have a friendship for you; you speak well, though on the wrong side. To what advantage would your talents appear, were you to exert them in the cause of the people! You may advance your fortune. You can speak

“ well. Join our meeting next week.  
“ I will hire a handsome coat for you  
“ for the day, as you seem a little out at  
“ elbows. Without flattery, when you  
“ are well dressed, I know few men who  
“ will make a better figure. The Pawn-  
“ broker, at the three blue balls, is my  
“ friend, and often obliges me, for the  
“ sake of the cause, with the loan of a  
“ hat or a coat, without fee or reward,  
“ when I want to dress out a man of a  
“ good figure, like you, but to whom  
“ Fortune denies her favours.”

“ I know of no such power as For-  
“ tune,” said Dawson. “ I suppose you  
“ mean Divine Providence, the author  
“ and giver of every good gift.”

“ Stuff! stuff!” replied the stranger.  
“ That nonsense is done away now. We  
“ all believe and act as seemeth good in  
“ our own eyes. Can you really believe  
“ — that if there were such a being as  
“ him on whom you profess to depend,  
“ he would suffer such a worthy man as  
“ you to want bread? You have been

“ led by priestcraft long enough. Men’s  
“ eyes are now opened. Paine, Cobbett,  
“ and Spence, and those other great en-  
“ lighteners of the human mind, whose  
“ writings I shall leave with you (taking  
“ a fresh bundle out of his pocket), have  
“ clearly exposed the folly of the old  
“ school and the old book there, (point-  
“ ing to the Bible,) which have kept so  
“ many noble minds in the trammels of  
“ superstition for ages.” Here Sarah,  
who had never spoken a word, quietly  
took up the Bible, pressed it to her heart,  
and dropt on it a silent tear of love and  
reverence.

“ Sir,” said Dawson, “ I shall ‘care-  
“ fully avoid entering on any religious  
“ disputes with you, because I should  
“ despair of opening your eyes; but I  
“ will this night earnestly pray God to  
“ convince you of your sin and danger.  
“ Though I can bear any ill language  
“ offered to myself, I cannot brook an  
“ insult on my Maker and my Redeemer;  
“ I cannot listen to prophaneness towards



“ my God, with the same temper that I  
“ can encounter reproach and ridicule  
“ on myself; and, as we are not likely  
“ to convince each other, we will, if you  
“ please, drop the conversation.”

“ O !” returned the Delegate, “ you  
“ are afraid, you begin to feel the weak-  
“ ness of your own cause, and the  
“ strength of mine.” “ No, Sir,” said  
Dawson, “ I feel the strength of my  
“ cause does not stand in need of so weak  
“ an advocate as myself. Besides, you  
“ know who has commanded us not to  
“ throw *pearls before swine*.” “ Now it  
“ is out,” said the other, “ you mean that  
“ turn-coat Patriot, who called the peo-  
“ ple *the swinish multitude*.” Dawson,  
quite shocked at his ignorance, an-  
swered, “ No, Sir; the words were ut-  
“ tered by the Redeemer of the world,  
“ and he applied them not to the popu-  
“ lace of whom his followers chiefly con-  
“ sisted, and for whom he had the ut-  
“ most tenderness, but to the prophane,  
“ the scoffer, and the infidel. Unbelief,

“ Sir, is the mother of pride, and disobedience and rebellion the offspring.”

“ Well, well,” said the Delegate, “ we won’t quarrel about trifles. These are matters of inferior consideration. You may believe in your own way, provided you will act in our’s. Will you, or will you not, bring a posse of your friends to our meeting next Monday? Let me know which of the gentlemen want coats or hats, and I will take care they shall be well fitted.”

“ Sir,” replied Dawson, “ I will cut the matter short. He who is devoted to his God, will be faithful to his king. Did you never observe? — you *must* have observed, had you ever looked into the Bible, how beautifully the religious, the loyal, and the social duties are entwined as it were one within another, so that you cannot tear them apart without violence. ‘ Fear God, love the brotherhood, honour the king.’ Here is a summary of the duties of a Christian citizen. No one will keep

“ either of these commands in perfection  
“ who does not keep all.”

“ All this,” cried the Orator, “ was  
“ very well once in the days of ignorance  
“ and error. But it is all done away  
“ now; the lower classes think and read,  
“ and their understandings are opened.”  
“ ‘No, Sir,” replied Dawson, “ all this is  
“ not done away, nor will it be done  
“ away while a gracious and long-suffer-  
“ ing God, notwithstanding all our sins  
“ and provocations, is pleased to con-  
“ tinue to us that Sabbath which he at  
“ first mercifully instituted. It will not  
“ be done away while we have ten or  
“ fifteen thousand public instructors,  
“ who, I trust, will labour on that Sab-  
“ bath to counteract all the mischiefs  
“ which your party are propagating  
“ throughout the week. Working men  
“ do, as you observe, read, and though  
“ a few of them are drawn in, to read  
“ those pernicious tracts and papers  
“ which your gentry are cramming down  
“ their throats; yet, by the blessing of



“ God on the national and other institu-  
“ tions for general education, and on  
“ those excellent societies which place  
“ the Bible within every one’s reach, I  
“ agree with you, that the general under-  
“ standing is improving, and that our  
“ beloved King’s pious wish will, I hope,  
“ soon be fulfilled, that every man in  
“ England may be able to read his  
“ Bible.”

*Delegate.* — Oh! oh! You are one of the saints, I find.

*Dawson.* No, Sir; I am one of the sinners; for I am a human creature, of course corrupt. But I do not, I trust, willingly commit any known sin; now *rebellion is a known sin.*

“ Well, Dawson,” said the orator, “ I  
“ have done with you. I was mistaken  
“ in your character. You are a low-mind-  
“ ed fellow, in love with ignorance, hug-  
“ ging your chains, and deserving of the  
“ poverty, from which you will not assist  
“ to extricate yourself and your country.  
“ You will soon sing another note. Your

“ potatoes cannot last for ever.” “ Sir,” replied Dawson, “ they are already exhausted. You see there the end of our stock. But I remember an old saying of a good writer, which is not the less true for being quaintly expressed — that *man’s extremity is God’s opportunity*. He who feeds the ravens, will not suffer us to perish for want: but though he slay me, I will trust in him.”

“ Well,” said the orator, “ if you prefer beggary to affluence, obscurity to fame, and no bread at all to a quartern loaf for three-pence, we must leave you to perish on your own dunghill. I would have restored your health, and made your fortune — that’s all.” “ Sir,” replied Dawson, “ I once read, in the Spectator, I think, of a gentleman who had been long ill, and despaired of his own recovery; one of those quacks, with which that age abounded, who professed the magic art, offered the patient to make a perfect cure of him, if he would put himself into his hands.

"Sir," replied the gentleman, "I had rather suffer by the hand of God, than be cured by the hand of the devil — I leave you to make the application."

"You have one comfort however," said the stranger, "though your food fails, your beverage is likely to hold out. If the rain continues as it has done the last ten months you won't want drink."

"Sir," said Dawson, "the bad weather, like our other trials, is of God's sending. The use you have made of these dispensations of Providence, by ascribing them to causes not only absurd, but impossible, has been one of your grand instruments for unsettling the faith and disturbing the peace of weak minds, and will sooner or later bring down its punishment on the head of the inventors." — "You are an incorrigible fellow," said the Delegate, "and so we will leave you to the enjoyment of your *luxuries*; and be sure don't forget to say grace after *meat*, laying a strong emphasis on the word *meat*."



With this cruel scoff he went away, just staying, however, to hear Dawson say—  
“ That I shall not forget to do, though  
“ nothing but the water was left me.”

During this long altercation the potatoes had ceased to smoke. This was the day for the fire to be in Mrs. Brown's room, and while Sarah warmed them, Dawson related to the poor lady all that had passed.

About an hour after the strangers had taken leave, another knocking at the door was heard. On opening it, what was his joy to see his own excellent minister. This good man had missed Dawson at church the last two or three Sundays. On any absence of this sort it was his custom to call and enquire the cause. But he had now an additional reason. He was accompanied by another of those benevolent gentlemen, who are giving not only their money, but what is to them of far more value, their time, in searching into the distresses of the Spital-fields weavers, and, like their good angels,

were every where to be seen exploring and relieving misery.

It happened, as I said before, to be Dawson's day to have no fire. The gentlemen cast an eye on the empty grate and sighed but spoke not. As for Dawson, the joy of seeing his reverend friend filled his whole mind. The gentleman said, "we feared you were in distress, and are come to assist you." "Oh! thank you, Sir," said Dawson, "I am indeed distressed, but the greatest distress is in the next room. I was not bred to great things, and of course do not feel so keenly the pressure of want as those who are fallen from affluence; as is the unhappy case of this lady. Mr. G——, in Threadneedle Street, in whose hands her fortune was placed, is become a bankrupt. If you please I will introduce you to her." So saying, he opened the door. They were affected at the shabby gentility which the room displayed. They addressed her in the most kind and soothing language.

Mrs. Brown, who had been used to talk of nothing but her pains and her wants, so that she had driven from her bedside her few friends, now uttered no complaints, but spent what little strength she had in praising her God, and expressing her gratitude to Mr. Dawson. "His wife," said she, "made her last bit of tea for me this morning, but would not touch a drop herself. To this good man I owe under God, not only my patience under the sufferings of this life, but my hope of happiness in a better. His uniform example, his submission under the severest trials, have been to me a living sermon! He has proved to me that religion is a REALITY. When I was in prosperity, Sir, I did not think of these things. I sometimes went to church, and then I thought all was done: but the world had fast hold of my heart. Mr. Dawson reads the Bible to me every morning, and then shews me by his conduct through the day, that he believes in



“ it, that he acts upon it, that it has made him wise unto salvation.” Poor Dawson could not stand this, but had slunk into his own room.

The gentlemen then gave her a liberal present, which she desired might be given into the hands of Dawson, who she knew would lay it out to the best advantage. They then went into Dawson’s room, after she had told them of his extreme distress. He had been contriving to make a little blaze in the chimney, by a few sticks he had hoarded, and the gentlemen sat down. “ Mr. Dawson,” said the unknown gentleman, “ you must allow me to reprove you for not letting us know how much you were distressed. We should have paid immediate attention to any afflicted fellow-creature, but a man of your character we certainly should not have neglected.” “ I humbly thank you, Sir,” said Dawson; “ feeling myself now able to walk, I did propose to wait on the Rev. Mr. ——— to-morrow; but for near three

“ weeks I have not been able to stir  
“ for the rheumatism.” “ And have you  
“ been suffering so long,” said the lay-  
gentleman, “ without knowing what we  
“ have been doing ?” “ I know nothing,  
“ Sir,” replied he, “ but that I heard  
“ the gentlemen talked of raising a sub-  
“ scription to relieve the most distressed.”  
“ *Talked,*” said the gentleman, “ why it  
“ is *done* ; we have gone from house to  
“ house among the rich to raise money,  
“ and among the poor to distribute it.  
“ We have collected a large sum, and  
“ divided the neighbourhood into dis-  
“ tricts, which different gentlemen super-  
“ intend. We attribute the general pa-  
“ tience and subordination of our people  
“ to the religious instruction which so  
“ many of them attend.”— Dawson  
broke out in thanks to God, and to his  
benefactors, that so many of his fellow-  
creatures had been so mercifully relieved.  
The gentleman, with that humility which  
ever accompanies true piety, disclaimed  
the praise so justly his due, by saying,

that the distressed had found friends and benefactors in every part of the kingdom. After leaving a small present relief they departed.

This was a day of events. After sitting a quarter of an hour with Mrs. Brown, they were summoned back to their own room by a slight noise. A lad was placing on the table a large dish with a cover, and before they had time to ask any questions, he stepped to the door and brought in a pot of porter; then uncovered the dish, which contained a large smoking beef-steak. All this, which seemed to come by magic, really came from the cook's shop next door, sent by the two gentlemen. Speechless, they carried all into Mrs. Brown's chamber.

Reader! if a heart of flesh makes a part of thy anatomy; if impiety and jacobinism have not turned that heart to stone, thou wouldst have had its best feelings excited, hadst thou beheld this plentiful supper, cheerfully devoured by this little grateful party. Still more, if that heart of thine



is alive to the overflowing thankfulness of pious Christians, for unexpected mercies, would that heart have rejoiced to unite in their devotions, before they retired to rest. It would have touched thy inmost soul, to hear Dawson read the 103rd Psalm; he then read the 145th: but when he came to those two verses, "the Lord upholdeth all such as fall, and lifteth up all those that are down;" — and again, "the Lord will fulfil the desire of them that fear him, he also will hear their cry, and will help them:" his voice faltered, and he could scarcely articulate. He then prayed that "the hearts of the disobedient might be turned to the wisdom of the just." But did he call down fire from heaven on those "unreasonable and wicked men," when he prayed that their evil designs might be frustrated? No; he kept his promise, in imploring God to change the hearts of the Delegate and his friend, that they might not be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin; but that they might repent, before

repentance was too late. He concluded with a fervent petition for his country, for the Church and the State, and prayed that no weapon formed against them might prosper, — *a petition which, at this critical time, the writer of this little history humbly recommends to all the readers of it.*

Next morning, they found on their table a little provision of tea and sugar, and soon after arrived a supply of coals. — A few days afterwards one of the gentlemen called again; he told them he had taken down the name of the person in whose hands Mrs. Brown's money was when he failed. He had waited on the assignees, and had the satisfaction to learn that, though the pressure of the times had produced a temporary distress, yet Mr. G—— had satisfied his creditors, that he should immediately pay fifteen shillings in the pound, and probably before the year was out the whole demand. Of course, Mrs. Brown's dividend would be forth-coming. "Then," exclaimed she, "Mr. Dawson, your quarter's rent, that

“ sits so heavy at your heart, shall be discharged the first thing. No thanks, I insist ; for may you not say to me, as St. Paul did to Philemon, ‘ thou owest unto me even thine own self?’ ” The gentleman then informed them, that he had engaged a warehouse to employ Sarah in plain work, and assured Dawson that he should have regular assistance till his health was restored. He even gave him hope, that trade would soon revive, and that he would not be long without employment. Dawson, with tears of gratitude, could only repeat his favourite adage, ‘that MAN’S EXTREMITY, IS GOD’S OPPORTUNITY.





THE  
VALLEY OF TEARS;

OR,

*BEAR YE ONE ANOTHER'S BURTHENS.*

A VISION.

---

ONCE upon a time methought I set out upon a long journey, and the place through which I travelled appeared to be a dark Valley, which was called the Valley of Tears. It had obtained this name, not only on account of the many sorrowful adventures which poor passengers commonly meet with in their journey through it; but also because most of these travellers entered it weeping and crying, and left it in very great pain and anguish. This vast Valley was full of people of all colours, ages, sizes, and de-

scriptions. But whether white, or black, or tawney, all were travelling the same road; or rather they were taking different little paths which all led to the same common end.

Now it was remarkable, that notwithstanding the different complexions, ages, and tempers of this vast variety of people, yet all resembled each other in this one respect, that each had a burthen on his back, which he was destined to carry through the toil and heat of the day, until he should arrive, by a longer or shorter course, at his journey's end. These burthens would in general have made the pilgrimage quite intolerable, had not the Lord of the Valley, out of his great compassion for these poor pilgrims, provided, among other things, the following means for their relief:

In their full view over the entrance of the Valley, there were written, in great letters of gold, the following words:

BEAR YE ONE ANOTHER'S BURTHENS.

Now I saw in my vision that many of the travellers hurried on without stopping to read this inscription, and others, though they had once read it, yet paid little or no attention to it. A third sort thought it very good advice for other people, but very seldom applied it to themselves. They uniformly desired to avail themselves of the assistance which by this injunction others were bound to offer them, but seldom considered that the obligation was mutual, and that reciprocal wants and reciprocal services formed the strong cord in the bond of charity. In short, I saw that too many of those people were of opinion that they had burthens enough of their own, and that there was therefore no occasion to take upon them those of others; so each tried to make his own load as light, and his own journey as pleasant as he could, without so much as once casting a thought on a poor overloaded neighbour. Here, however, I have to make a rather singular remark, by



which I shall plainly shew the folly of these selfish people. It was so ordered and contrived by the Lord of this Valley, that if any one stretched out his hand to lighten a neighbour's burthen, in fact he never failed to find that he at that moment also lightened his own. Besides, the benefit of helping each other, was as mutual as the obligation. If a man helped his neighbour, it commonly happened that some other neighbour came by-and-by and helped him in his turn ; for there was no such thing as what we call *independence* in the whole Valley. Not one of all these travellers, however stout and strong, could move on comfortably without assistance, for so the Lord of the Valley, whose laws were all of them kind and good, had expressly ordained.

I stood still to watch the progress of these poor way-faring people, who moved slowly on, like so many ticket-porters, with burthens of various kinds on their backs ; of which some were heavier, and

some were lighter, but from a burthen of one kind or other, not one traveller was entirely free. There might be some difference in the degree, and some distinction in the nature, but exemption there was none.

#### THE WIDOW.

A sorrowful widow, oppressed with the burthen of grief for the loss of an affectionate husband, moved heavily on ; and would have been bowed down by her heavyload, had not her surviving children with great alacrity stepped forward and supported her. Their kindness after a while, so much lightened the load which threatened at first to be intolerable, that she even went on her way with cheerfulness, and more than repaid their help, by applying the strength she derived from it to their future assistance.

## THE HUSBAND.

I next saw a poor old man tottering under a burthen so heavy, that I expected him every moment to sink under it. I peeped into his pack, and saw it was made up of many sad articles ; there were poverty, oppression, sickness, debt, and, what made by far the heaviest part, undutiful children. I was wondering how it was that he got on even so well as he did, till I spied his wife, a kind, meek, Christian woman, who was doing her utmost to assist him. She quietly got behind, gently laid her shoulder to the burthen, and carried a much larger proportion of it than appeared to me when I was at a distance. It was not the smallest part of the benefit that she was anxious to conceal it. She not only sustained him by her strength, but cheered him by her counsels. She told him, that “ through much tribulation we must enter into rest ;” that “ he that over-



“ cometh shall inherit all things.” In short, she so supported his fainting spirit, that he was enabled to “ run with patience “ the race that was set before him.”

## THE KIND NEIGHBOUR.

An infirm blind woman was creeping forward with a very heavy burthen, in which were packed sickness and want, with numberless other of those raw materials, out of which human misery is worked up. She was so weak that she could not have got on at all, had it not been for the kind assistance of another woman almost as poor as herself; who, though she had no light burthen of her own, cheerfully lent an helping hand to a fellow-traveller who was still more heavily laden. This friend had indeed little or nothing to give, but the very voice of kindness is soothing to the weary. And I remarked in many other cases, that it was not so much the degree of the help af-

forded, as the manner of helping, that lightened the burthens. Some had a coarse, rough, clumsy way of assisting a neighbour, which, though in fact it might be of real use, yet seemed, by galling the traveller, to add to the load it was intended to lighten; while I observed in others that so cheap a kindness as a mild word, or even an affectionate look, made a poor burthened wretch move on cheerily. The bare feeling that some human being cared for him, seemed to lighten the load. But to return to this kind neighbour. She had a little old book in her hand, the covers of which were torn out by much use. When she saw the blind woman ready to faint, she would read her a few words out of this book, such as the following — “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” — “Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.” — “I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.” — “For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh out for us a far more

“exceeding and eternal weight of glory.” These quickened the pace, and sustained the spirits of the blind traveller: and the kind neighbour, by thus directing the attention of the poor sufferer to the blessings of a better world, helped to enable her to sustain the afflictions of this, more effectually than if she had had gold and silver so bestow on her.

## THE CLERGYMAN.

A pious minister, sinking under the weight of a distressed parish, whose worldly wants he was totally unable to bear, was suddenly relieved by a charitable widow, who came up and took all the sick and hungry on her own shoulders as her part of the load. The burthen of the parish thus divided became tolerable. The minister, being no longer bowed down by the temporal distresses of his people, applied himself cheerfully to his own part of the weight. And it was pleasant to see



how those two persons, neither of them very strong, or rich, or healthy, by thus kindly uniting together, were enabled to bear the weight of a whole parish; though singly, either of them must have sunk under the attempt. And I remember one great grief I felt during my whole journey was, that I did not see more of this union and concurring kindness, more of this acting in concert, by which all the burthens might have been so easily divided. It troubled me to observe, that of all the laws of the Valley, there was not one more frequently broken than *the law of kindness.*

#### THE NEGROES.

I now spied a swarm of poor black men, women, and children, a multitude which no man could number; these groaned, and toiled, and sweated, and bled under far heavier loads than I had yet seen. But for a while no man helped them; at

length a few white travellers were touched with the sorrowful sighing of those millions, and very heartily did they put their hands to the burthens. One heroic genius gave an impulse to the whole; he first conceived the project of their deliverance, he guided the counsels, directed the movements, sustained the opposition, and stood in the fore front of this hard-fought battle. He and his friends never lost sight of those poor heavy-laden wretches; though often repulsed, they returned again to the charge; though discomfited, they renewed the effort, and some even pledged themselves to an annual attempt till the project was accomplished; and as the number of these generous helpers increased every year, I felt a comfortable hope, that before all the blacks got out of the Valley, the whites would fairly divide the burthen, and the loads would be effectually lightened.—At length the triumph was complete, and this darkest stain on the British character wiped out.

Among the travellers, I had occasion to

remark, that those who most kicked and struggled under their burthens, only made them so much the heavier, for their shoulders became extremely galled by those vain and ineffectual struggles. The load, if borne patiently, would in the end have turned even to the advantage of the bearers, for so the Lord of the Valley had kindly decreed; but as to these grumblers, they had all the smart, and none of the benefit; they had the present suffering without the future reward. But the thing which made all these burthens seem so very heavy was, that in every one, without exception, there was a certain *inner packet*, which most of the travellers took pains to conceal, and kept carefully wrapped up; and while they were forward enough to complain of the other part of their burthens, few said a word about this; though in truth it was the pressing weight of this *secret packet* which served to render the general burthen so intolerable. In spite of all their caution, I contrived to get a peep at it.



I found in each that this packet had the same label ; the word SIN was written on all as a general title, and in ink so black that they could not wash it out. I observed that most of them took no small pains to hide the writing, but I was surprised to see that they did not try to get rid of the load, but the label. If any kind friend who assisted these people in bearing their burthens, did but so much as hint at the *secret packet*, or advise them to get rid of it, they took fire at once, and commonly denied they had any such article in their portmanteau ; and it was those whose *secret packet* swelled to the most enormous size, who most stoutly denied they had any.

I saw with pleasure, that some who had long laboured and prayed heartily to get rid of this *inward packet*, at length found it much diminished ; and that the more this packet shrunk in size, the lighter the other parts of their burthens gradually became.

And now there appeared suddenly, as

if by the stroke of a magician's wand, burthens of a new and unexpected nature. While these poor travellers were beginning to pluck up their spirits, and to be thankful for the close of a long war which had unavoidably increased their load, the old burthens were suddenly enlarged, and innumerable fresh ones appeared. It made one's very heart ach to see so many travellers, lately so light-hearted, who though they *had* burthens, scarcely felt them, now sinking almost prostrate. Poverty in all its forms now bowing down to the earth, not only the sick, and the idle, and the depraved, but the industrious, the young, and the healthy. But was there no helping hand left, no compassionate friend to be found? or did the prosperous, like the Priest and the Levite, pass by on the other side? No, the good Samaritan himself, He who is touched with the feeling of our infirmity, He who in all our afflictions is himself afflicted, moved the hearts of the affluent in favour of their more heavy-laden brethren. But

though God is always better to us than our fears, it most unfortunately happened, that the kind helpers themselves were more heavily burthened than they had ever been before. — You would have thought that so many suffered there would be none to assist. But this was not the case.

There was now nothing but bustle in the Valley. All were touched as with one common feeling. If there was much misery, there was much mercy also. — O! it was a sight to melt the hardest heart to see one common sentiment of brotherhood and Christian charity influence all the superior inhabitants of the Valley: all was activity. Here you might see princes, and nobles, and merchants, in a country “whose merchants are “princes,” all contriving to make those burthens supportable which they could not wholly remove. There you might see individuals pressing to cheer individuals, societies to relieve societies, beautiful ladies putting their hands to lighten



the load of mothers, and even children helping children. I saw that all this kindness gave consolation to every feeling and grateful heart, and Hope once more shed a ray of peace through the Valley.

But alas ! a dark cloud now began to spread over the whole Valley, and to overcast the brightening prospect. It was not of God's sending ; for though nothing happens without his permission, many things happen to oppose his will. The real burthens of these poor travellers were now grievously aggravated by imaginary ones. Artful men were upon the watch how they could turn the actual sufferings of the travellers to their own account. They contrived a method by which the load on their backs might be swelled out to any size, by a material, of no weight in itself, but which by cunning heads practising on weak ones might be made to feel as if it were a heavier weight than all their real hardships.

Their old tumours then were swelled

out, and new ones raised by certain papers and little books which had the power over many silly travellers to infuse into them more pain and repining than all their solid sufferings. These papers purported that the present visitations of the Valley were not sent by God, but were the invention of their rulers. They told them that the sure way to get rid of all their burthens was to get rid of their governors both in heaven and earth, that every one of these poor men ought to be his own providence, his own law-giver ; in short, that mis-rule and confusion, (which they took care to call by other names,) would make them all free, rich, and happy at once.

Now these hollow-hearted men had every one of them a very large *secret packet*, which they took special care to conceal by covering them with a large and very thick cloak. They thronged about some of the more ignorant and heavy-laden, with the most fawning expressions of affection, and the most deceit

ful promises of certain help ; nay, they were so absurd that they promised to take off their whole burthens which their ancestors had carried from the days of Adam. They then thrust a list of their imaginary troubles into their bundles. The poor dupes received them gladly ; but what is very remarkable, the less there was in them, the heavier they were made to appear. The more extravagant the delusion, the more easily it was swallowed ; and it was curious to see poor fellows poking with eagerness the list of fancied sorrows into bags that really seemed before full of real ones. They who would not believe that a better season would bring more bread, were made to believe that it was in the power of the promiser by some hocus-pocus art, to produce it at once ; they were brought to believe that men who had no riches of their own, could cause a shower of gold to fall on the heads of the poor, and that with a *hey-presto-pass*, every thing could be made to change hands in an hour.



I remarked however with pleasure, that the number of the deluded was comparatively small ; that it consisted chiefly of raw youths who were caught by novelty, and of idle men who were fond of a mob and an ale-house.

But it rejoiced me to see that the *generality* even of the heavy-laden did not lose their understanding with their prosperity ; that whatever they had lost, they had preserved their English character, their good principles, and good sense. So the small party stuck by the TALKERS and the PROMISERS for a little time, and the great majority by the DOERS and the GIVERS.

Then methought, all at once, I heard as it had been the voice of an angel, crying out, and saying to the overburthened travellers, " Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." — " Cast thy burthen upon the Lord, and he shall nourish thee." Then the angel seemed to address himself in a tone of encouragement

to the liberal *helpers* of those who were oppressed with their load — “ Inasmuch  
“ as you do it to one of the least of these  
“ you do it unto me.” This cheering approbation seemed to add to the bounty, as well as to purify the principles, and elevate the motives of the benefactors.

The heavenly voice then seemed to address itself to all the travellers of every rank and description. “ Ye afflicted  
“ pilgrims, why are ye troubled about  
“ the burthen which you, in common  
“ with every child of mortality, are  
“ doomed to bear through this Valley of  
“ Tears? Know ye not that as soon as  
“ you have escaped out of this Valley,  
“ the whole burthen shall at once drop  
“ off. But though I speak to *all*, this  
“ shall only be the case of those who by  
“ watching and prayer have, by the aid  
“ of divine grace, subdued the *secret*  
“ *packet, the burthen of sin*; who have  
“ looked to a better righteousness than  
“ their own for eternal salvation. Study  
“ then the word, and obey the will of the

“ Lord of this Valley. Learn from his  
“ own teaching how your heaviest bur-  
“ thens may now be lessened, and how  
“ they shall soon be removed for ever.  
“ Be comforted. Faith and Hope can  
“ cheer you, not only through this Val-  
“ ley, but through the dark Valley of  
“ the Shadow of Death. The passage,  
“ though it seems long to weary travel-  
“ lers, is comparatively short, for there  
“ is beyond it a Land of everlasting rest,  
“ where ‘ ye shall hunger no more,  
“ neither thirst any more, where ye shall  
“ stray in green pastures, where ye shall  
“ be led by living waters,’ and ‘ God  
“ himself shall wipe away all tears from  
“ your eyes.’ ”



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 A KING OR A ROYALTY on

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## A KING OR A CONSUL?

A NEW SONG — to the Tune of *Derry Down*.

*Written when Bonaparte was made First Consul of France.*

---

COME all ye brave Englishmen, list' to my story,  
You who love peace and freedom, and honour and  
glory!

No foreign usurper they hither shall bring,  
We'll be rul'd by a *native*, our Father and King.

Derry down, down, down, derry down!

No Corsican Despot in England shall rule,  
No Disciple avow'd of the Mussulman school;  
A Papist at Rome, and at Cairo a Turk,  
Now this thing, now that thing, as best helps his  
work. Derry down,

Shall Atheists rule Britons? O never, no never,  
Forbid it Religion for ever and ever;  
Their heathenish Consuls then let them not bring,  
Our Country is Christian, and Christian our King!  
Derry down,

In England when wounds are the sailor's sad lot,  
 Their wounds and their sufferings are never forgot;  
 To a Palace far nobler our Vet'rans we bring,  
 Than is kept for himself by our merciful King.

Derry down,

Let any compare, if my saying he blames,  
 The splendors of Greenwich\* with those of St. James.  
 — Once *Buoni* trepann'd his poor troops to the East,  
 O'er deserts too sultry for man or for beast;

Derry down,

When the battle was over, and hundreds were found,  
 By the fortune of war gash'd with many a wound;  
 Diseas'd and afflicted — now what do you think  
 This tender Commander oblig'd them to drink?

Derry down,

You fancy 'twas grog, or good flip, or good ale;  
 No 'twas *poison*, alas! was the soldiers' regale;  
 See *Jaffa* † — see *Haslar* ‡ — the difference to prove,  
*There* poison, *here* kindness, *there* murder, *here*  
 love.

Derry down,

\* A magnificent hospital for sailors.

† Where French soldiers were *poisoned* in the hospital.

‡ The Royal Portsmouth hospital, where English sailors are treated like princes.



And lest we should publish his horrible tricks,  
With our freedom of printing a quarrel he picks;  
But *we* keep no secrets, each newspaper shews it,  
And while we act fairly we care not who knows it.

Derry down,

To Frenchmen, O Britons, we never will trust;  
Who murder their Monarch can never be just;  
That freedom we boast of, the French never saw,  
'Tis guarded by order and bounded by law,

Derry down,

That *Buoni's* invincible, Frenchmen may cry,  
Let Sidney the brave give each boaster the lie;  
Tho' the arrows of Europe against us are hurl'd,  
Be true to yourselves and you'll conquer the world.

Derry down,

Tho' some struggles we make, let us never repine,  
While we sit underneath our own Fig-tree and Vine;  
Our fig-tree is Freedom, our vine is Content,  
Two blessings, by nature, for Frenchmen not meant.

Derry down,

French liberty Englishmen never will suit,  
*They* have planted the tree, but *we* feed on the fruit;  
Then rail not at taxes, although they cut deep,  
'Tis a heavy Insurance to save the brave Ship.

Derry down,

Let narrow-soul'd *party* be banish'd the land,  
And let Englishmen join with one heart and one  
hand ;

Let each fight for his Wife, for *we* marry but *one*,  
The French wed so many, they oft care for none.

Derry down,

One King did not suit them, three Tyrants they  
chose,

And their God they renounce, while their King  
they depose ;

Then we ne'er will submit to the Corsican's rod,  
Britons want but one Wife, and one King, and one  
GOD.

Derry down, down, down, derry down !

# FAIR WORDS

## AND

# FOUL MEANINGS.

---

I'm a tradesman well known, tho' I boast not my wit,  
I've too much by the jacobin crew to be bit ;  
Now forget for a while the foul doctrines of Spence,  
And hear my appeal to your sober good sense.

I'd gladly advise you, my friends, if I could,  
I've no end to answer, I seek but your good ;  
The honest among you are caught by surprise,  
How rejoic'd should I be could I open your eyes !

I've heard wise men say, that 'tis *terms* which confuse ;  
We should then be correct in the *words* which we use ;  
Come let us examine the meaning of terms,  
The perversion of which has help'd on our alarms.

A REFORMER ! 'twas once a most glorious name !  
In him 'twas Religion that kindled the flame ;  
He burnt at the stake, to the scaffold was driven,  
In defence of the faith which he knew led to Heaven.



448. FAIR WORDS AND FOUL MEANINGS.

Perhaps you may think *that* high spirit still lives,  
That the old in the modern Reformer survives ;  
Then pray turn the picture, behold the reverse,  
A Reformer *now* makes the good bad, the bad worse.

That church from the ancient Reformers which grew,  
Is vilified, hated, and scorn'd by the new ;  
Whatever *exists* they can no way endure,  
Whate'er is *establish'd* is wrong they're quite sure.

A Reformer, in short, as has lately been shewn,  
Is a being who never can *let well alone* ;  
To *things as they are*, he is never a friend,  
So with him to destroy, is the short way to mend !

The things in *my* mind which make objects sublime,  
Prescription, old usage, long trial, much time,  
These upstart reformers, these new-fangled sages  
Despise, just because 'tis the wisdom of ages.

And now to pursue this plain notion of mine,  
Some other hard terms let us try to define ;  
A PATRIOT ! this once was a name of renown,  
One who bled for his country, and fought for the crown.

While the good *old* Reformer to prison was sent,  
To send *others* thither the *new* one is bent ;  
While that state for whose sake the *old* Patriot bled,  
The *new* would destroy, by destroying its head.

A true modern Patriot loves uproar and rout,  
A modern Reformer all order will scout;  
While the good *ancient* Patriot corrected abuses,  
The *modern* converts the best things to worst uses.

There's one thing provokes me in those who deceive,  
Of what they protest, not one word they believe:  
And while with such zeal their false notions they teach,  
They laugh in their sleeve at the doctrines they preach.

Should the freedom to vote be extended to all,  
Would it make our trade rise, or the price of bread fall?  
Would you take the direction of all from His hand  
Who governs so wisely the world he first plann'd?

What would annual parliaments add to our quiet?  
Would idleness, drunkenness, check the wild riot?  
One long Saturnalia \* would fill human life,  
One uproar eternal, one durable strife.

How wretched would then be each working-man's lot!  
His children forsaken, his duties forgot!  
No house but the alehouse he'd seek every night;  
No shop but the gin-shop by day would delight!

Thus all *moral* corruption, our land would endure  
From the change, which you think all corruption would  
cure;

\* One day in the year devoted at Rome by the lower class to riot, debauchery, and the abuse of the higher ranks.

450 FAIR WORDS AND FOUL MEANINGS.

And Britain, a name now admir'd by the world!  
To the pit of destruction would quickly be hurl'd.

Our laws so rever'd, these new Patriots abuse;  
To submit to obey them they're proud to refuse;  
Is this then the gift to posterity due?  
'Twas not such that your fathers transmitted to you!

If our laws *do* exceed, as has lately been try'd,  
They exceed (what a *fault*!) on the merciful side;  
That they're mild in th' extreme you may easily see,  
When such rebels as these are allow'd to go free!



THE  
MARKET-HOUSE ORATOR;  
OR,  
*THE LOYAL WEAVERS.*

---

THERE liv'd a young Weaver, I name not the place,  
For fear I should bring a good town to disgrace;  
All day he was idle, the neighbours can tell,  
And he spent every night at the sign of the Bell.

Inflam'd by the papers which lay on the table,  
He read, and he drank, and he spouted while able;  
With th' exploits of Spa-fields his fancy was fir'd,  
Till to deeds as heroic himself was inspir'd.

" I've heard people say, again and again,

" That 'tis reading great actions which makes your great  
" men,

" So I study our Champion, who gives such rare laws,

" And who is, his own self, the great pattern he draws.

" In the country I'd rather be first in renown,

" Than stoop to be second in London's great town;

" So I'll straight set to work, and if I succeed,

" *My* name in the papers ere long you may read.

“ A candidate I for unperishing fame,  
“ The friend of the people, my glorious name !”  
Half muddled with politics, dizzy with drink,  
He form’d his new plan, though scarce able to think.

Next morning he sallied forth into the street,  
And each man he met condescended to greet ;  
He had sent out his scouts to assemble his neighbours,  
And promis’d a recompence due to their labours.

Great numbers were met, and he saw with delight  
The Market-place fill’d — what a ravishing sight !  
With the old pompous words he began his oration,  
“ Friends, countrymen, lose not this glorious occasion !”

Then rung all the changes, so much now the fashion,  
Of sinecure, pension-list, representation ;  
You’d have thought that these causes (to hear him complain),  
Had ruin’d the harvest, and rotted the grain.

“ Come follow the leader who now stands before ye,  
“ I’ll bring you to plenty, I’ll lead you to glory ;  
“ You want but a head, then straight follow me,  
“ I’ll make you all rich, all happy, all free.”

To plenty they show’d no objection, ’tis true,  
But with glory they thought they had little to do ;  
So they stirr’d not a foot — disappointed they stood,  
“ Why, I fancied you all had been true men, and good.”

"We only want work," they replied, "'tis that fails."

"I'll give you all work, we'll go pull down the jails ;

"I'll exchange your vile bondage for freedom and joy,

"Each frame we'll demolish, each loom we'll destroy.

"But my good old companions—why are they not here?

"Not one should be wanting whene'er I appear ;

"Where's Tim Jenkins?" one answer'd, as still as a  
mouse,

"He is gone for his dinner to yonder great house :

"Two days in a week he is fed by the 'Squire,

"Whose kindness appears as it never would tire."

"Where's Jerry and Dick?" — "They're not far away,

"The parson distributes potatoes to-day :

"He cannot afford entirely to *give*,

"But he sells at half-price, so thou see'st we may live."

"Where's Lovell?" — "He's nursing the babies at home,

"That his wife to the flannel subscription may come."

"Where's Jack Wilkes?" — "He got drunk at the  
"nightly potation,

"By attending the meeting for mending the nation ;

"Spent all — would have died — till at last forc'd to  
"stoop,

"His health is restor'd by the gentlefolks' soup."

"And where is Will Thompson? the foremost of all,

"To stand up for his country whenever I call?"



One answer'd — " Poor Will, once so fond of a riot,  
" From his church and his Bible has learnt to be quiet."

" They're a pack of tame knaves then," the Orator  
cried,

" But I'll do without *them*, with you at my side:

" I shall lead, you will follow, come, give in your names,

" Now away for the workshops, now death to the frames!

" Not a loom shall be left, and if any oppose us,

" They shall bear the disgrace, and shall get bloody  
" noses;

" I'll arm you, good fellows, with right trusty blades,

" Throw away those base tools, of what use are those  
" spades?"

One gravely replied, " I will tell thee their use,

" So keep back thy nonsense, and stop thy abuse:

" Our gentlemen see that the times are so hard,

" That to work at our trade, for a time we're debarr'd:

" They pity our case, and assemble each neighbour,

" To help our distress, and provide us with labour;

" Their kind dispositions they've feelingly show'd,

" So some work in their gardens, and some on the road.

" The heights we will level, th' obstructions we'll clear,

" Till a fine gravel walk the highways shall appear:

" If they can't give full wages, they'll give what they can,

" For the rents of the great, all come short to a man.

" Mr. Orator spokesman — *employment* you'd find,  
 " Is good for the body, and good for the mind :  
 " Who loves work, abhors riot, our trade will return,  
 " But how shall we weave, if our workshops we burn?"

In a rage, quoth the Patriot, " You're scoundrels and  
 " knaves ;

" Do you know, you vile drudges, you'll live and die  
 " slaves ?

" So you won't pull the jails down?" — They answer'd,  
 " That's true,

" We'll leave them to hold such vile fellows as you.

" We know what you mean by your grand word RE-  
 " FORM,

" Why 'tis pestilence, hurricane, tempest, and storm ;

" Thy counsel our necks to the gallows would bring,

" So take up your spades, boys ; and God save the  
 " King !"

THE  
LOYAL SUBJECT'S  
POLITICAL CREED;

OR,

*What I DO, and what I do NOT think.*

---

Mock Creeds and Liturgies I'm told,  
That make a Christian's blood run cold,  
By Atheists and their friends are plann'd,  
To shake the faith of Briton's land.

I'll tell you what *I* too believe,  
*My* Creed no mortal shall deceive;  
No jesting *mine* with sacred things,  
But what my own experience brings.

*I do* believe these times are sent  
For warning, and for punishment;  
Of God's displeasure they're the token,  
Because His holy laws are broken.

The Newgate Calendar I read,  
Where crimes on crimes so thick succeed!  
E'en boys commit, these records say,  
"The oldest sins the newest way."



I *think* Heaven's punishments are due  
To Atheism and sedition too ;  
I think for these 'tis God's own sending,  
And *not* because our laws want mending.

I *think* that lies, and oaths, and stealing,  
More wound the soul, and shock the feeling,  
Than yielding to the powers that be,  
Or reverencing authority.

I do *not* think with *Mister Spence*,  
Our piety is too *intense* ;  
Nor do I think our Church wants mending,  
But I *do* think it wants attending.

I *think* those men that magnify  
Our wants, and raise a hue and cry,  
Intend to make those wants a cause,  
To shake our government and laws.

I *do* believe what hurts the grain,  
Is not the *pensions* — but the *rain* ;  
I do *not* think that rotten Boroughs,  
Can mar the wheat, or drench the furrows.

I *think* that pensions ill applied  
Are wrong, whichever be the side ;  
But as rewards for faithful trust,  
I think they're fairly earn'd and just.

I doubt if Peers with general summons,  
Do fill th' elective House of Commons;  
But this, whate'er that's wrong it yields,  
Stops not the trade in Spitalfields.

If Birmingham *ten* Members had,  
Think you the times would be less bad?  
That annual Parliaments would tend  
The price of bread or malt to mend?

I rather, and with reason, think  
'Twould tend to *raise* the price of drink;  
I'm sick of mending a *whole* nation,  
Without more *private* reformation!

If general suffrage should proceed,  
What general blessings would succeed?  
Then rich and poor, and young and old,  
Their share of government would hold!

What joy to hear th' inferior branches  
Loud clamouring for th' elective franchise!  
The RIGHTS OF BOYS, and RIGHTS OF WIVES,  
Would crown the comfort of our lives!

For should the low expel the great,  
And wise mechanics rule the state,  
I think the son may well aspire,  
To dispossess his *equal* sire!

If man alive can prove me wrong,  
I'll change my note, and burn my song;  
But if my reasoning's sound indeed,  
Till death I will maintain my Creed !



## LOOK BEFORE YOU LEAP.

---

ONCE Rome was disturbed, for what country but  
yields  
It's Demagogues, Palace-Yards, Chiefs of Spa-Fields?  
Though not yet a Republic, yet Rome loved a riot;  
Where many are rulers, not any are quiet.

The folks discontented began to rebel,  
A Parliament Man strove the tumult to quell;  
I'd tell you his name, but 'tis really so hard,  
'Twould trouble the reader, and puzzle the bard.\*

This Parliament Man, such another as Pitt,  
Like him saved the land by his courage and wit;  
Oh! Pitt, guardian Angel, what didst thou perform;  
Heav'n's peace to "the pilot that weathered the storm."

This man, who was one of the wisest of Romans,  
Once told this short story in Rome's House of Com-  
mons;

Thus he spoke to cut short a seditious oration;  
"Once the BELLY and LIMBS on a certain occasion —"

\* Menenius Agrippa.

Here he stopt, for loud hisses, and louder applause  
Would have check'd him, but still he was true to his  
cause,

He went on, "My good friends, a short tale I will tell ye,  
"Of a quarrel that chanced 'twixt the Limbs and the  
"Belly.

"Said the Limbs, you are idle, and live in proud state,  
"While we members do nothing but work, or but wait,  
"You've got a rare time on't, you sit at your ease,  
"And drive us poor drudges about as you please.

"'Tis a sin and a shame, so pray lend us an ear,  
"This usage, this bondage, no longer we'll bear."  
Said the FEET, in a rage, "I have nothing to do  
"But to trudge in the dirt, and to labour for you.

"I bring to the door the provisions you eat,  
"'Tis I get the trouble, but you get the meat:  
"You'd better change manners, proud Sir, do you see,  
"You can't stir a step, not an inch, without me."

Said the TEETH, "I'll not bite," said the THROAT, "I'll  
"not swallow,

"And if I don't feed you, your death will soon follow."  
Said the HANDS, "For a glutton no longer I'll work,  
"If I strike a fresh stroke, may I die like a Turk."

"I've such heavy burthens to carry," says BACK,  
"That my sinews and bones are all ready to crack ;

" Brother KNEES I desire you no longer will bow,  
" At a tyrant's command, we'll resist him I vow."

" The least of the FINGERS now gave *themselves* airs,  
And cried, " Let us manage the public affairs."  
Nay, the rights of the TOES was now pleaded as great,  
" We TEN are quite sure we can govern the State."

So they straightway for outrage began to prepare,  
And each wall was placarded with diligent care;  
But lest they should seem due affection to want,  
FRIENDS, BROTHERS, and COUNTRYMEN, still was the  
cant.

They depart, they agree that revenge they will seek,  
" We'll prove his destruction, we'll meet every week:"  
So they rush'd out in fury, resolved to resist,  
And they published fresh papers to add to their list.

The Belly, 'tis true, soon became somewhat lank,  
But then every member with him also shrank:  
With scarce any strength left, they dragg'd to next  
meeting,  
How sunk were their spirits, how sad was their greeting!

At length they discovered 'twas what they deserved,  
That the limbs with the Belly was more than half-  
starved;

The Feet got the palsy, the Hands got the gout,  
Not an inch but was faint from the toe to the snout.



How different was this from each former profession,  
No shouting, no hissing, no talk of oppression :  
Said the Hands, " Brother Feet, let's e'en seek our Old  
" Friend,"

Says the Feet, " I'm scarce able the call to attend."

" I can work, but not govern," the Hands meekly  
cried.

" I can run, but not manage," the Feet then replied ;  
" 'Tis you, Brother TONGUE, would have ruined us all,  
" Like poor silly sheep, we all ran at your call."

Quoth the Knees, " You had better submit, Brother  
" Back,

" You are now a free horse, they'll soon make you a  
" hack,

" We all know what we are, but what we shall be,  
" If we change, is a secret to you and to me."

The Tongue remained turbulent, noisy, and stout,  
But at length, left alone, he was forced to give out,  
And when he no more was allowed to complain,  
He was silent, and gave up the cause to the BRAIN.

Then they sought their old friend, and with cheerful sub-  
mission,

Presented for pardon this sober petition :

" We're resolved for the future to make no more fuss,  
" We can't do without you, — you can't do without us."

So the good-natured Belly forgave them the wrong,  
And soon with the Limbs grew both healthy and strong;  
They're a match for the world, when together they join,  
But sep'rate they're nothing — they both ~~must~~ combine.

Here the Orator ceased, the applauses were loud;  
And with joy and affection, dispersed the whole crowd.

Qb  
A18

THE END.

