

the vaults beneath the building, and placed a slow-match in connection with it. All had withdrawn at a distance—and in a few moments there was a most joyful sight to thousands! The walls and turrets of the massive structure rose majestically towards the heavens, impelled by the tremendous explosion—and fell back to the earth, an immense heap of ruins. The Inquisition was no more!

### Religious Miscellany.

(From an Appeal to Conscience; By a Free-Will Baptist.)

#### RELIGIOUS PORTRAITS.

##### NUMBER I.

Brother O is rather a punctual man in all his business, and generally attends meetings, but, though he is generally there, there is not the least dependence to be put in him, as to his taking any part in meeting. He acts entirely from the impulse of the moment. One would suppose to hear him talk, that the word of God made no impression upon his mind! And indeed it does not. It makes no difference how clear the command is, if he does not feel what he calls the spirit to make a new revelation of the command to his mind; God's law is laid aside, because he does not feel to obey it. For instance, the plain command, "Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching." Heb. 10:25. And "let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name." 13:15. Here are clear and plain commands. The most unlearned can readily comprehend their meaning. But brother O says he cannot speak or pray unless he feels to. He reads the texts, but on he goes, knowing that he is going directly contrary to the plain word of God! But is he justifiable in such a course? If he is then others are. The moral precepts are alike binding upon all, or on none. If it is right to obey the law of God, it is wrong to disobey. Then when men lay aside the word of God and go according to their feelings, and their feelings lead them contrary to the plain commands of God, it shows a disregard for the Scriptures, and is adding sin to sin.

But, perhaps you say, Br. O does not feel condemned, but enjoys his mind well. Let us see where this method of disposing of gospel truth will lead us. "Repent and be converted"—"Thou shalt not steal"—"Thou shalt not kill"—"Abstain from fornication." Thus does God address the wicked. Now, if brother O is right, we may expect to hear the wicked dispose of these commands something like this: "Lord, I knew that thou hast commanded me to repent, not to steal, not to kill, and to abstain from fornication; but I do not feel to. I feel at ease, and my carnal feelings are well suited with my present course of sin. I take the timbrel and harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ. I spend my 'days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave.'" Job 21:12, 13. Is the sinner clear? Has God given man a law of so little consequence that it may be trodden under foot with impunity, and the feelings of man set up as the rule of life in its stead? No! No!! God forbid that man should thus presume to legislate for Heaven! A professed Christian going directly contrary to the plain command of God, because that command does not coincide with his feelings! How heaven-daring! Reader, will you, dare you, thus trifle with the law of God? We charge you, as you wish to glorify God—as you prize the joys of heaven, or dread the horrors of hell—not thus to trifle with Bible truth.

##### NUMBER II.

Brother P says this all looks reasonable to him, and he thinks people should be active in all meetings where the laity have an opportunity to improve their gifts. He is particularly active in times of revivals. If his daily life was such as a Christian's should be, he might be useful; for he has a good gift in prayer and exhortation; but it is not. Months pass, and he does not attend a prayer meeting or conference; but as soon as there is a little prospect of revival, he is sure to be there and occupy more time than any member of the church! But O how deathly its effects! He is often the greatest obstacle in the way of a reformation, of anything in the place. The people generally have no faith in him. Yet, without the least confession, or retraction, he takes an active part in all meetings, so

much so that a stranger would think him a man of deep feelings and exalted piety, while those who are best acquainted with him, strongly suspect him to be a hypocrite. "Unstable as water," he cannot excel; and there is so much of his life so far beneath the dignity of a Christian that the unconverted cannot bear to hear him speak or pray. We should think that he would see that his influence is against the prosperity of Zion, but he still pursues his course. What a pity that he should thus destroy himself. The church are living in hope that he will do better; and they bear long with him.

##### NUMBER III.

Brother S is not generally very highly esteemed as a Christian. Some, however, approve of his piety. It is certain that he has some very inconsistent views. It is very uncertain about his attending meeting, even upon the Sabbath. He says it is no satisfaction for him to hear the minister, he has heard him so much; and he can enjoy himself as well to stay at home and read his Bible. He likes to go to meeting or not, just as he can enjoy himself the best. There would be some propriety in this, if God had not given us a better rule. "Glorify God in your body and spirit, which are his." The conscience is liable to be seared, or become an evil conscience. Hence, how we may best enjoy our minds is not the test; but how we may live most agreeably to the Scriptures, and glorify God. His absence from meeting has a most unhappy influence. It is often the case that it prevents his family from attending; and is setting an unholy example before his neighbors. How much more like a Christian he would appear, to be constant at the house of God, to cheer the heart of his minister by his presence; and help him by his prayers. But, what is the most striking feature in this brother is, if a new minister comes along, he appears much interested in meetings—speaks loud of the precious gospel—witnesses to the truth; and a stranger would think him one of the most active members of the church! If he attends meetings away from home, he manifests a similar zeal. This looks like hypocrisy?

#### THE INQUIRING-MEETING.

While we were listening to this conversation, the attention of the pastor was turned to a lady in a remote corner of the room. She was past the meridian of life, the mother of several children, and much of a gentle woman in her appearance and mien. One of her daughters was present, who had already expressed the hope of reconciliation to God. I perceived that her pastor addressed her with familiarity, and as though she had often been at the inquiring-meeting before.

Taking a seat on a bench immediately before her, he said, "Well, madam, I hope you have given up the controversy, and enjoy peace with God."

She shook her head, and remained silent.

"Do you feel willing to be left behind, while so many are pressing into the kingdom of God?"

She replied, "I do not see that I can do anything more than I have done."

"Do you think, that when you come to stand at the bar of God you will feel that you have done all that you could?"

"What can I do more?" was her only reply.

"And what have you done?" said her pastor. "What have you done, except sin against God all your days? And what are you doing now, when his Spirit is so tenderly striving with you, except contending with your Maker?"

"But sir, I cannot change my own heart. So the Bible teaches me, and so you have instructed me often."

"Pardon me for inquiring," said the pastor, "what is the object of this remark? Do you make it because you see and feel it to be true, or because you want an excuse for not loving God? If it is a mere excuse for not giving your heart to God, it behoves you to be satisfied that it is such an one as God will accept. If it is not such as you yourself are persuaded God will accept, then do not utter it. Never, never utter it again. But if it is not because you want an excuse; if you feel this weighty truth; if you are deeply sensible that you are in the hands of God; if you know that you are so vile that unless the living God, by the power of his grace, take from you the heart of stone, and give you a heart of flesh; then do you indeed see that you are in a lost condition."

"O sir," she exclaimed, "I am just this lost

creature! Why did God create me? Why did he give me existence only to make me miserable?" And she burst into a flood of tears.

There was no small emotion in the room. Every person saw what it was to contend with God. Numbers seemed moved by sympathy; but their ears were open to instruction. The lady continued weeping, while her pastor entreated her no longer to contend with God, and resist that sovereign power which alone could save her from despair.

Just at this moment an incident took place, the mention of which I may not suppress. The daughter of this lady was present, and had herself, a few days before, found peace and joy in believing. During the previous conversation, unobserved, she had removed from a remote part of the room, and occupied a seat near her mother. She was deeply affected by her mother's state of mind, and with one arm thrown around her neck, and in a low beseeching tone of voice, said, *Dear mother! O the fulness there is in Christ! Come with us to this ocean of mercy!* We were all in tears. We literally turned away to weep. "O Mrs. M—," said her pastor, "the blame is on your side, and not on God's. God is right and the sinner is wrong. That ocean of mercy! Will you not repair with your children to that ocean of mercy?"

There was a young lady occupying a seat near the centre of the room, who had gathered around her six or seven others not far from her own age, with whom she was conversing, though in a subdued and scarcely audible voice.

One of their little cluster I observed wept bitterly. What a group! thought I. How delightful if this little company should all be seeking Jesus! if this youthful loveliness, these honors as they just begin to bloom, should be devoted to him!

"Sarah," said her pastor, "do you retain your hope of the Divine favor still?"

"O sir," said she, "I have been very happy since I last saw you. A little while after you left me I was again oppressed with a sense of my desperate wickedness. I looked up and saw against what a God I had been sinning all my life, and I was oppressed and filled with shame. O what a God he is! How good! how lovely! and yet how fearful! These thoughts of God filled my mind with great joy, and it seemed as though I could do nothing but admire the excellency and loveliness of God. God was very near to me. I could not help thinking how delightful it was to live in God's world—to be his creature—to be in his hand—to be his child—to call him my Father, and to love and trust him forever."

"The Bible," observed her pastor, "if I mistake not, speaks of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

"Yes, sir," said she, "I see an infinite fulness and sufficiency in this salvation. He is a hiding-place from the storm, a covert from the tempest, as rivers of water in a dry place, and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. I think I can say, Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief. But, sir, these dear friends of mine—I thought I could certainly persuade them all to come to Jesus; it seemed to me so easy to come to him, and so wicked to stay away; and Christ appears so lovely. But O, sir, I cannot persuade them. I desire to take them all in my arms and carry them to Christ." It seemed as though the young ladies could scarcely refrain from loud weeping. I was waiting to hear what my friend would address to this interesting circle, but he simply repeated the following lines:

"Welcome, welcome, dear Redeemer,  
Welcome to this heart of mine;  
"Lord, I make a full surrender,  
"Every power and thought be thine;  
"Thine entirely,  
"Through eternal ages thine."

Dr. G. Spring.

To a young infidel who was scoffing at Christianity, because of the conduct of some of its professors, the late Dr. Mason once said,—"did you ever know an uproar to be made because an infidel went astray from the paths of morality?" The infidel admitted that he had not. "Then by excepting professors of Christianity to be holy, you admit it to be a holy religion, and thus pay the highest compliment in your power!" The young man, of course, had no reply to make.

The area of the ancient city of Babylon was 235 square miles, and that of Nineveh 216 square miles, while that of London and its environs is only 114 square miles.