

# RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCER,

And Bible Society, Missionary, and Sabbath School Advocate.

E. McLEOD, Editor.

That God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ.—PETER.

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better medium than our columns.

## Palestine.

(From Correspondent of the Presbyterian.)  
HEBREW BARRAN, Plains of Sharon, 1855.

Since our residence in the open country, re-  
moved from the near neighborhood of cities or  
towns, where the influence of a mixed and par-  
tially civilized population inevitably results in vari-  
ety and change in popular habits, we have become  
peculiarly interested in the primitive manners and  
customs of the native peasantry. In many re-  
spects their style of living seems to remain the  
same as in the days of the patriarchs and judges,  
and of later biblical times. The structure of soci-  
ety seems to have taken its present form in the  
same simple manner, in necessity and Providence.  
First, the father is the head and governor of a nu-  
merous household; if his flocks increase, and his  
harvest and vintage are abundant, the poor in his  
vicinity are employed by him, seek his favor and  
protection, and the more prosperous join and in-  
termarry with his children. This family association  
becomes a tribe, and afterwards the most intelli-  
gent and popular of his descendants is chosen to  
stand for his brethren in all matters of right and  
wrong among themselves, and intercourse with  
other people. These head or chief men are de-  
nominated Sheiks. Again, as they increase in  
numbers and wealth, they subdue their weaker  
neighbors, and add them to their party. There is  
no safety for individuals separate from the protec-  
tion of such associations. Their rules are various  
according to their importance and situation. The  
Sheiks have the responsibility of keeping peace  
with the Turkish Government, and collecting its  
legal taxes from their people. In some cases se-  
veral petty Sheiks acknowledged the supremacy  
of a greater. One of these head Sheiks, with  
whom we are acquainted, receives annually, as a  
tax, a fee from each of his men, two rotles of se-  
min (thirteen pounds of boiled butter), worth  
about two dollars. Another receives three mea-  
sures of wheat (one and a-half bushels); another  
barley, or grapes, or a sheep, according to the  
staple produce of his people and their ability.

We are acquainted with two classes of the  
Arabs, the Bedouins, and the Fellabeh. The  
Fellabeh reside in villages, in ruins, or huts of  
mud and stone. They cultivate the adjacent dis-  
trict, and raise most of the grain, olives, grapes,  
figs and vegetables of this country. They also go  
out of their villages as shepherds, with their flocks  
of sheep and goats, and herds of cattle, to graze  
through the day on uncultivated places, and re-  
turn for safety every night. Their villages are  
not composed of scattered dwellings and gardens  
as in America, but are built close and compact  
for security. These villages are numerous on the  
mountains and on the plains, and each village has  
its Sheik. We also know two classes of the Be-  
douins, the stationary and the roving. They re-  
side in tents of black goat's hair cloth. The sta-  
tionary have flocks and herds, and a right to cer-  
tain lands from government. They encamp near  
these lands, and sow grain and field-crops, water  
melons, &c., but do not irrigate, plant trees, or  
vineyards, or gardens. The roving Bedouins do  
not cultivate the soil in any way, but depend for  
subsistence on raising camels, horses, herds, and  
flocks, and frequently remove their encampments  
for fresh pasture and water. These all are as-  
sociated in large families, and have their Sheiks.  
Many interesting incidents occur in our daily con-  
verse with the various sick persons and their rela-  
tives; who visit us from a distance in every di-  
rection; and it would be pleasant to visit among  
them more frequently than our constant occupa-  
tion permits. Their salutations are much the  
same as we find on record in the Scriptures.—  
They frequently say to us, "Peace be both to  
thee, and peace be to thine house, and peace be  
unto all that thou hast."—(1 Sam. xiv. 6.) "May  
you live many years, and see the prosperity of  
your people." "May all blessings and good  
things come to you." These are often accompa-  
nied with, "God is good." "He is merciful, he  
is gracious: may his mercy and blessing be upon  
you."

Their style of hospitality reminds us of Ab-  
raham and Lot in the entertainment of visitors.—  
"The fattest calf" is killed, and the unleavened  
cakes, on account of haste, are made and served  
out. The practice of killing a fattest calf or lamb,  
or kid, when receiving strangers, or upon festive  
occasions, is still so much observed, that even the  
poor often keep a kid in the house, and feed it  
with a portion of any provision they may have,  
like the poor man in Nathan's parable.—(2 Sam.  
xii. 3, 4.) Also like the case of the witch of En-  
dor.—(1 Sam. xxviii. 24.) The same custom is  
also mentioned by our Saviour in the parable of  
the prodigal son.—(Luke xv. 23.) The killing of  
the fattest calf, or lamb, or kid, in a religious way,  
as a kind of sacrifice, is also still practised. Some-  
times when a man has no child, he will vow to  
make such a sacrifice, or offering, for the benefit  
of the poor, and sacredly fulfil it when his prayer  
is answered. At other times, when a beloved re-  
lative is dangerously ill, the same vow is made  
and fulfilled in the event of recovery. An in-

telligent Arab brought his young wife to us  
seriously indisposed, for medicine. A simple re-  
medy restored her to health. He soon after kill-  
ed his fattest kid, and invited the poor to his feast.  
He informed us that it was a sacrifice he had pro-  
mised to the Lord to make when he brought his  
wife to medicine, if she should recover. He stated  
that it was their custom on such occasions to  
kill a sacrifice, and make a feast for the poor.—  
They never eat in the presence of others without  
dividing their morsel, esteeming it a sin to do oth-  
erwise, and a general hospitality is regarded as a  
religious duty.

In their common business and converse, they  
constantly recognize the supremacy and provid-  
ence of God. Afflictions and losses they univer-  
sally express as coming from him justly in chastise-  
ment for their sins. "Min Allah! min Allah!"  
they repeat in a subdued manner. "From God,  
from God," as an end of all complaint, and a so-  
lance to the afflicted. When they build, or plant,  
or commence any work, or hazard themselves, as  
in descending a well, or starting on a journey, they  
invoke aloud divine protection upon their effort.—  
To such an extent is this reverent and constant  
mention of the Creator, that the peasant who brings  
his donkey-load of produce for sale at the gate,  
when offered a lower price than he is willing to  
take, only answers, "May God give us good for  
that price." An observer may stand for hours in  
the morning at the Jaffa gate, and hear the  
country Arab give the one same reply, with little  
variation, to the shrewd city retailers.

The fashion of their dress appears to be very sim-  
ilar to that worn in the time of Moses and the pro-  
phets. The wisdom and love of God gave to his  
people minute regulations, "on account of the  
hardness of their hearts," such as the restoration of  
the outer garment, taken in pledge, before the sun  
was set, for the reason, "it is his covering only,"  
"wherein shall he sleep."—(Exod. xxii. 27.) So at  
this time, this loose heavy outer garment is fre-  
quently offered in pledge; and, among the poor, it  
is the only thing with which he is covered at night.  
They ingeniously wrap themselves from head to  
foot, without bed or pillow beside. Every woman  
wears a piece of thin cloth, of various colour and  
material, according to the caste of the wearer, ap-  
pended to the head as a veil. It is generally about  
the size of a common shawl. With this they sud-  
denly cover themselves at the approach of the other  
sex, as did Rachel.—(Gen. xxiv. 68.) It is often  
used by the poor to tie up their bundles of grain or  
fruit, as in the example of Ruth iii. 15. It is also  
the practice for poor women to glean in harvest  
time after the reapers, and in the evening beat out  
with a short stick what they have gleaned, and carry  
the grain home in their veils.—(Ruth ii. 17.) Many  
poor women come to our large courtyard to  
beat out their grain for protection. The girdle so  
often mentioned in the Scripture is universally worn.  
The profuse ornaments of the head, "the wearing  
of gold" and precious stones (by the rich) at-  
tached to and braided with the hair, is still the  
fashion. Also the painting of the eyes, or eyelids,  
is common on all festive and dress occasions.—  
Bright-coloured and expensive stuffs are worn by  
men, folded in enormous turbans, as alluded to in  
Ezek. xxiii. 15; in round tires as in Isa. iii. 18, and  
2 Kings ix. 30.

The custom of the principal men and elders sit-  
ting at the gate is still practised in walled towns  
like Jaffa. Here all matters of news, disputes and  
variance, are discussed and settled. When one  
person wishes to speak with another on business of  
importance, it is common for him to sit down at the  
gate and wait for his passing, as did Boaz.—(Ruth  
iv. 1.) The manner of threshing grain, by the tread-  
ing of cattle, is still the same. The threshing  
floors are a smooth elevated place in the open field,  
and in threshing time they are always watched day  
and night, and the owners sleep near the grain to  
protect it, as did Boaz.—(Ruth iii. 7.) The prac-  
tice of pouring water on the hands for washing, in-  
stead of a using a vessel or basin, is still the cus-  
tom, and the rich have an attendant for this pur-  
pose, as Elisha was called by Jehoshaphat, "the son  
of Shaphat" who poured water on the hands of  
Elijah.—(2 Kings iii. 11.) They wash before and  
after eating. As knives and forks are rarely known  
they use their fingers very expertly. The same  
"red pottage" of lentils, like that for which  
Eau sold his birthright (Gen. xxv. 30, 34) is still  
a common and favorite dish among all classes.—  
When the Arabs have occasion to visit their supe-  
riors to crave a favour, they consider it disrespect-  
ful to go "empty-handed," but often take a lump  
of figs, or dates, a cluster of grapes, and a few  
loaves of bread "in their hand," as a complimentary  
present. The same regulation that was given by  
Moses (Deut. xxii. 10), about ploughing with  
diverse animals together, would be necessary now  
as the natives often yoke a sturdy ox and a feeble  
donkey (or ass) together before the plough. The  
manner of life of the Bedouins particularly much  
resembles the patriarchal dwelling in tents, which  
like the tents of Kedar, are black.—(Sol Song i. 5.)  
They are shepherds chiefly supported by their  
flocks and herds as were Jacob and his sons. In  
this land, the cultivators of the soil give the same  
share of their produce, "the fifth" (Gen. xlvii. 24),  
as rent or tax to the government, that Joseph in-  
stituted when governor of Egypt. Their religious  
sentiment and veneration is prominent. They de-  
votely adore Jerusalem "El Koodis," the holy, and  
have a great reverence for the sacred localities men-  
tioned in Bible history. They greatly venerate the  
Scriptures, and regard them of divine authority.

The more familiar we become with the people,  
the more numerous are similar features recognised  
among them, which would be impossible to men-  
tion in my present limits. The query often arises  
in our minds, how these ancient usages have been  
so perpetuated among such an uncivilized people?  
We cannot but regard the fact as strong testimony  
that the present natives of the agricultural districts  
of Palestine are a mixed race, in part descended  
from its early possessors. In the Old Testament  
we have frequent mention of the intermarriage of  
the Jews with the people of the land and surround-  
ing nations. (See the times of Nehemiah and Ezra.)  
In the Acts we read that the father of Timothy was  
a Greek, and his mother a Jewess. It is probable  
that many obscure individuals remained, notwith-  
standing the general dispersion and destruction by

the Romans, and became amalgamated with other  
people. Most of the Jews with whom we have had  
acquaintance in Hebron, Jerusalem, and Jaffa have  
been either themselves, or their fathers, emigrants  
from other countries, who retain their different  
language and customs.

## Young Men's Christian Associations.

We copy the following interesting correspondence  
relative to the Convention of delegates from Young  
Men's Christian Associations, at Paris, during the  
sessions of the late Christian Conference in that  
city, from the *News of the Churches*:—

The general convention of delegates of Young  
Men's Christian Associations was held in this city  
on the 20th of August and following days. The de-  
legates of so many Christian young men, come  
together from many various localities, are too im-  
portant to be altogether omitted, although it may  
appear rather late now not to mention them. About  
one hundred young men were present as delegates  
or members of thirty-eight distinct associations,  
from England, Scotland, America, Belgium, Hol-  
land, Switzerland, Germany, and different parts of  
France. The proceedings were characterized by a  
great deal of Christian love, united to much vigor  
and youthful zeal. The object of the Convention  
was to bring together the young men of the various  
associations, and to receive reports on the spread of  
the work they have begun in various Protestant  
countries. Six of these were presented, and the  
facts they contained were most encouraging.—  
Though the institution has been scarcely in ex-  
istence for more than ten years, and no agency  
has been employed to promote its principles, there  
are already fifty-three associations in France, with  
seven hundred members; forty-two in England, with  
6,000 members; fifty-four in America, with nearly  
20,000 members; active or associate; fourteen in  
Holland and Belgium, with 300 members; sixty in  
Switzerland, with 600 members; and 130 in West-  
phalia and Prussia, besides many more, in other  
parts of Germany.

At the fourth sitting of the Convention, a general  
system of correspondence proposed by an American  
association was unanimously adopted; but this did  
not satisfy some delegates, who thought themselves  
warranted by the unity of principles and of feeling  
of all present to go one step further and propose a  
general confederation on a common basis of all  
Young Men's Christian Associations in the world.  
This seemed very grand but almost impossible, for  
what common basis could secure at the same time  
the evangelical integrity of the associations, a lib-  
erality sufficiently large to admit their diversities  
of theological opinions, and the utter exclusion of  
any disturbance of unity from causes not essen-  
tially connected with their specific design? However,  
the thing is worth trying. The Convention had  
recourse to a season of special prayer; a very deep  
influence of God seemed to descend upon the meet-  
ing; then difficulty after difficulty gave way, and  
after much consideration, both in committee and  
full sessions, a general basis of confederation was  
finally adopted by a unanimous vote. I give it here  
entire, though part of it has already appeared in  
the columns of the *News*:—

"The representatives of various Young Men's  
Christian Associations of Europe and America as-  
sembled in Paris this 23d day of August, 1855,  
feeling that they are one in principle and in op-  
eration, recommend to their respective societies to re-  
cognise with them the unity existing among their  
associations; and whilst preserving a complete  
independence, as to their particular organization  
and modes of action, to form a confederation on  
the following fundamental principle, to be regarded  
as the basis of admission of other societies in the  
future:—

"The Young Men's Christian Associations seek  
to unite those young men who, regarding Jesus  
Christ as their God and Saviour, according to the  
Holy Scriptures, desire to be his disciples in their  
doctrine and in their life, and to associate their ef-  
forts for the extension of his kingdom among young  
men."

"The above principle being recognized and acted  
upon, the Conference further suggests:—

"1. That any difference of opinion on other  
subjects, however important in themselves, but not  
embraced by the specific designs of the associations,  
should not interfere with the harmonious relations  
of the confederated societies.

"2. That a travelling certificate of member-  
ship be provided, by which members of any one  
association shall be entitled to the privileges of any  
other.

"3. That associations according to the above  
terms shall be comprehended in the system of cor-  
respondence which has been adopted by this Con-  
vention."

I am happy to say that these recommendations  
have already been adopted by some associations,  
and I have no doubt they will be universally well  
received, so that the unity of the young Protestant  
men of Christendom is well nigh accomplished,  
whilst it is rendered secure by the fact that their  
union is connected with practical institutions having  
through work on hand, and therefore likely to be  
kept vigorous.

## The Reformation in Ireland.

The *Connought Watchman* publishes the sub-  
joined cheering intelligence:—

BALLINAKILL.—The missionary here thus writes:  
—"As I was leaving a house some time since,  
between twelve and one o'clock, where I had been  
endeavouring to direct the attention of a poor dy-  
ing man to the Lord Jesus Christ as his only hope,  
a convert who had been present joined me, and  
after speaking with him for some time of the sin-  
ner's only foundation, and thanking God that he  
had such a Saviour, he told me that he never  
could forget his own father's death-bed, and the  
difference between his hope and that of the be-  
liever in Jesus. 'For will you believe it, sir,'  
said he, 'my poor father, when he was dying,  
was actually praying to the Archbishop of Tuam  
(Dr. McHale) to have mercy upon him! My mo-  
ther told him to pray to the Bishop of heaven, but  
he did not know any thing about him.' But,  
thanks to our heavenly Father, this gross dark-  
ness is being rapidly dispelled. One of our Con-  
nemaun settlers observed to me the other day,

"The people now, with very few exceptions, be-  
lieve that the priest is a man; when I came here  
first, they all believed him to be a god! The  
readers have been in general well received since  
I last wrote, but we have a great many bigoted  
people to contend with. A man who lately be-  
came a convert, and publicly attended our serv-  
ices and lectures, was driven out of the house in  
which he lived, and was obliged to spend an en-  
tire night by the side of a ditch, his people refus-  
ing to harbour him any longer under their roof.  
He is, however, thank God, independent of them,  
and is highly thought of by the person in whose  
employment he labours. Many would willingly  
attend our lectures were they not more afraid of  
their neighbours than they are of the priests. The  
parish priest was lately very angry when one of  
his congregation entered into conversation with  
him on the subject of the eucharist, and told him  
that he did not believe that the body of the Lord  
was actually present, but that he received the  
bread in remembrance of Christ. The priest asked  
him who put such things into his head, and  
cautioned him against the heresies of the 'Jum-  
pers.' Our national Board adversaries have most  
wantonly and unnecessarily opened another school  
in the immediate neighbourhood of Letterfrance,  
under the patronage of Mr. (late Archdeacon) Wil-  
berforce. I feel assured, however, that God  
will bring good out of this, in his own time,  
and that the communication even of secular  
instruction will materially assist in delivering the  
people from the bondage of Romanism, and will  
help on the great work of reformation in our  
beloved land."

ACHILLE.—"We desire to thank the Lord," say  
one of the missionaries at Achille, "for the great  
measure of success that has attended the efforts of  
his servants throughout this extensive mission.  
The opposition which has been brought to bear upon  
the several agencies engaged is of the most deter-  
mined character. This is useful: it proves the  
reality of the work, and the sincerity of the con-  
verts. Though the priests are making daily efforts  
to draw them into bondage again, old and young  
are determined to stand fast in the liberty where  
with Christ hath made them free. Though the  
priests have set up schools in opposition to those of  
the missions, yet there are numbers of children  
who invariably prefer attending the latter, simply  
because they value the light of the gospel. The  
adult converts attend service regularly, and are  
making good progress in religious knowledge. The  
good seed sown has not been unfruitful, a great  
moral reformation is invariably the effect: our  
enemies are not insensible to this fact, which is  
calculated to disarm their prejudices. Even the  
priests are more quiet in their department; horse-  
whip and stick are now seldom made use of. The  
inhabitants generally respect the readers, and give  
them a kind reception. The two nephews of the  
parish priest attend school and service regularly;  
their progress in scriptural knowledge is most  
cheering."

## Ministerial Fidelity.

Miss B— was a young lady of beauty, fash-  
ion and accomplishment. Being possessed of a  
large estate, she was able to gratify every desire  
of her heart, and to move continually in the midst  
of flattering admirers. She had for several years  
cherished the hope that she had passed from death  
unto life. But yet the hope she had did not pur-  
ify her, nor did it check the vanity of her life and  
conversation. She loved the dance, the party,  
the gay promenade, the idle discourse of the  
drawing-room, and all the things which may be  
called the insignia of worldliness. Notwithstanding  
this, she still claimed the Christian name, and  
argued smartly for every vain delight she loved.  
She was so influential, by reason of her wealth  
and personal attractions, that few, if any, ever  
durst deal honestly with her conscience.

While in this state, it so happened that a meet-  
ing for a religious conversation was held at the  
house in which she lived. The Spirit of the Lord  
was there, and scores of anxious souls were assem-  
bled to be instructed in the way of life. This  
lady sat in the room not as one that needed any  
thing, but as one that felt disposed to patronize the  
efforts that were being made to save souls.

A minister of Christ was there, who was not wont  
to cover or hold back the truth through fear of  
man. He took his seat by the side of the lady  
above named. He knew her, and had often heard  
of the pride and worldliness which filled her heart.  
He asked her how it was with her soul; to which  
she replied that it was well. As the conversation  
proceeded, she was drawn out into a bold and ar-  
gumentative defence of the most fashionable plea-  
sures of sin. These, she said, did not interfere  
at all with her religious enjoyments. The man  
of God heard her for a season in patient silence,  
until she had finished; and then, because he felt it  
to be his duty, and not that he had much hope  
of opening her eyes to her true character, he said,  
"My friend, your religion is false, it will never  
take you to heaven." He then proceeded to tear  
away her refuges of lies, and expose her misera-  
ble condition as a self-deceived sinner. He left  
her, and passed on to others, not expecting to hear  
from her again in this world.

A few weeks after she went to the house of  
this minister, and on meeting him burst into tears!  
She told him she had not seen a moment's com-  
fort since she saw him in the meeting. She had  
been led to see her sinfulness, and the vanity of  
her hopes; and she trusted that, on the day before  
this interview, she had indeed found her Saviour.  
The minister was broken down with emotion, and  
for a season nothing was heard in that room but  
sobs; it was indeed a *Bochim*. Then the lady  
said, "What can I do for God? I have money,  
how shall I use it?" She was directed to the  
various benevolent societies, and commended to  
God in prayer. From this time she became a

praying, active, benevolent Christian. She finish-  
ed her course in faith, and now rests from her la-  
bors.

## Sin—The Certainty of Retribution.

It is somewhere stated that a thief once entered  
the chambers of a rich gentleman, who could not  
move on account of the gout. The robber proceeded  
to rifle the secretary; and, having obtained a rich  
booty in gold and silver, he retired unobserved by  
any of the household, rejoicing in fancied security.  
But the gentleman, skilled in the use of the pencil,  
had sketched the villain's portrait on his cham-  
ber-hall. When his servant came in the next morn-  
ing, he recognized the features of the thief, arrested him,  
and cast him into prison. Thus, justice trod unexpect-  
edly on the heels of crime and the adroitness and self-security for the  
criminal availed him nothing.

The fact may serve to illustrate the great truth,  
that retribution always follows in the footsteps of  
sin. So sure is sin "to find out" the offender, that  
to sin with impunity is an impossibility, for the face  
of the offender is known to the Avenger. Revelation  
asserts this, and human experience confirms the  
assertion. Look at the human conscience! Behold  
its mystic tribunal in the soul! Listen to its awful  
voices thrilling the guilty with terror! Observe,  
too, how God has environed every sinner as with a  
web from whose iron meshes escape is impossible,  
except by the aid of Christ. Even nature herself  
makes war on the unrepentant offender. Her  
beauty pours no gladness, her light sheds no  
cheerfulness into his soul; while with ten thousand  
tongues she charges him with the guilt of ingrati-  
tude to her Author. How storms thunder cen-  
sures in his ears, and compel him to stand trem-  
bling in her presence. Then, behind him his sin march-  
—a countless host of many shapes—with incessant  
tramp, that they may haunt his dreams, stand be-  
fore him in the hour of death to "turn aside his  
prayers," rise with him at his resurrection and  
confront him in the judgment. Before him rises  
the judgment itself; while from beneath, hell "moves  
to meet him at his coming." Thus environed,  
how can he escape?

Yet, strange delusion! many men flatter them-  
selves that their sins will yield them no sorrow.  
They were committed in veiled secrecy; and who,  
they ask, shall expose them? They are old sins,  
perpetrated so long ago as to be almost forgotten;  
who shall bring them to light? They were pleasant  
and profitable sins; and where, they inquire, is  
their threatened fruitage of evil? Vain self-con-  
fidence! God was in that secret place, the invisible  
witness of that hidden sin, and he, then and there,  
provided for its visitation, exposure, and punish-  
ment. Long-suffering mercy may have delayed the  
avenging stroke. But delay is not impunity. Re-  
tribution only slumbers. It will awake, erewhile,  
for the divine witness is true, and he testifies to  
every man, "Be sure your sin will find you out!"  
Alas for the offender when his sins confront him!

Why, then, do men sin? When they are sane,  
they do not plunge into the deep, because they  
know it will drown them; nor into the fire, because  
it will burn them; neither do they drink poison,  
because it will kill them. Why, then, do they sin?  
Retribution is more fatal than fire or poison—more  
terrible than death. Why, then, we ask again,  
will men sin? Impenitent reader! will you an-  
swer the question?

## Evil Associations, and Power of Truth.

We think it well to publish the following let-  
ter, addressed to one of the pastors of this city, af-  
ter a Sabbath evening discourse, which he had risen  
from a sick bed, without preparation, to deliver.—  
Let your young men read it, and see the tremen-  
dous power of evil passions and sinful habits over  
the human soul. Let parents read it, and see how,  
in the lowest depths of sin and degradation, the  
memories of home cling to the heart, and awaken  
desires for reformation. Let ministers read it, and  
be encouraged, however unprepared to speak ear-  
nestly and faithfully to sinful men.—St. Louis Pres-  
byterian.

St. Louis, Sept. 16th, 1855.

"Sunday Evening."

Rev. Sir—To-night, for the first time in four years,  
I have been seated in God's holy sanctuary, and listened  
to the outpourings of scriptural wisdom and  
goodness. Your lips are the first that have given  
utterance to the mighty, and sublime truths of the  
gospel of Jesus Christ, in my presence, for several  
weary, wicked years of my life.

A sinner at religion and Christianity, a profane,  
profligate, and licentious man, I have, for more than  
five years, wallowed in the very cess-pool of deprav-  
ity and sin. Stamped with crimes the most hideous  
and appalling, I deemed myself forsaken of God, de-  
spised by the world, and bereft of friends. "Thine  
true mother's" holy love, a father's hope in his son,  
and a sister's devotion, have clung to the poor  
wreck of my former self, and striven to withdraw  
me from the fearful vortex down which I am plung-  
ing, lower, lower, lower still.

But they are far from me: the influence which  
they might exert over me, were I near them, loses  
its magic powers in the distance; and until to-  
night, until the past hour, I have given loose  
rein to my wildest passions, and unmindful and  
reckless of every thing, have let myself be driv-  
en towards the fathomless gulf of perdition, care-  
less of the present, and indifferent of the life to  
come.

My associates are of a description worthy of a  
wretch like me. Gamblers, drunkards, and pro-  
fane swearers, are, and have been, my constant  
companions; with them, hand in hand, and side by  
side, have I sailed madly and desperately from ev-  
erything holy and good, toward a sinner's death, a  
sinner's grave, and a sinner's awakening before the  
judgment throne of Almighty God!

I know not why I entered your place of worship  
to-night. I was passing as they were singing, with  
my thoughts far away from every thing good or pi-  
ous; but the sound struck upon my ear, and arrest-  
ed my feet. Mechanically, as it were, I mounted  
the steps, and stood before the door. I had then no  
thought of entering, but the gentleman in attend-  
ance invited me to a seat; scarce thinking what I  
was about. I followed him, and before I recovered  
my presence of mind, found myself seated in