

The Religious Intelligencer.

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REV. E. McLEOD.]

"THAT GOD IN ALL THINGS MAY BE GLORIFIED THROUGH JESUS CHRIST."

Peter.

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THE INTELLIGENCER.

"A MAN SHALL BE AS AN HIDING-PLACE FROM THE WIND."

BY THE REV. CHARLES BRADLEY.

Imagine yourself in such a desert as the prophet has here in his mind. There comes sweeping towards you the furious whirlwind. One thing only fills your thoughts—"Where can I find a shelter?" Now, suppose yourselves asked in such a moment as this, what kind of a shelter you wished for, you would naturally say, in the first place, it must be a *secure* one. You would point to the tempest that was coming on, and say, "It must be strong enough to shield me from that." And Christ is a secure hiding-place. In consequence of what he has done and suffered in human nature, and of what he is still doing in that nature, he is "able to save." "To save to the uttermost, all that come unto him." We are to turn to him as to "a stronghold," not as to an accidental shelter, a house or a common building that may or may not be able to protect us, but as to "a hold," a fortress, a place built for safety, and "a stronghold," a fortress built in anticipation of furious attacks and storms, and able to abide them. And then you would say, "The refuge I want must be a *near* one." It matters nothing to a man in a storm how secure a hiding-place may be, if it is far away from him. To be of any service to him, it must be close at hand; he must be able to get to it. And who so near at hand as the Lord Jesus Christ? Be we where we may in this howling wilderness, we are always within a step of this blessed covert. In a moment at any time, we may flee into it, and be secure from evil. Some of us, however, only half believe this. How often do we say, "It is useless for us to expect mercy, or comfort, or some other blessing, in a situation like ours!" And when we do look up to Christ for the help we want, we find him as far off as if he were in the moon. "O that I knew where I might find him!" says many a troubled soul. But the truth is, that Christ could not be nearer his afflicted people than he always is. Our refuge, if we will but enter it, is always as near to us as our danger; it is sometimes nearer. There, but a little way off, comes the overwhelming storm; but here, not a little way off, close to us, at our right hand, within one step of us, is our hiding-place. The happy psalmist well knew this. "God is our refuge and strength," he says; "not that we are perfect, but a very present help in trouble." Speaking of the church, he says again, not, "God is near her," but, "God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved; God shall help her, and that right early."

But you may ask, "Can I gain admittance into this refuge, if I flee to it?" The answer is, Yes, can. It is an open refuge, a refuge ever open, and open to all who choose to enter it. None who flee to it are denied access to it. Look through this parish. We could find hundreds here who need a shelter, and will soon be undone for ever if they do not secure one. Look over the world. O what multitudes do we see, millions on millions, suffering and perishing in it! In Christ there is room enough to shelter them all, and one is just as welcome to enter into him for shelter as another. His mercy is large, his merits infinite, his offers free, his invitations are as gracious and extensive as we can desire them or he can make them. "Look unto me," he says, "and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." "Whoever loveth me shall be saved." There is no casting out of any one who is hid in Christ; there is no keeping out of any one who wishes to hide himself in him. And it does not matter what the evil is we wish to escape. There is as good a shelter in him from what we deem a small danger, as from a great one, and we are as welcome to come to him for it. He is as much a refuge for an aching, or careworn, or fearful heart, as for a perishing, guilty soul. He is a hiding-place from every wind, a covert from every tempest.

And one thing more—he is a *well-furnished* hiding-place. "I may fly to that rock or tower," a man in the desert may say, "and it may screen me from the angry tempest; but suppose the tempest should continue, I may perish, and perish miserably, from hunger or thirst, beneath its shelter." But now, there is provision and plentiful provision in this stronghold for all who enter it. We run into it to escape danger, but what do we find when we get within it? All that can refresh, delight, and satisfy a craving soul. We almost forget it is a hiding-place; it becomes to us a pleasant dwelling-place, the seat of our richest comforts, our happy home. Even were the storm to cease, we should not wish to leave it. "We are better provided for, we are happier within our refuge than we ever were out of it, or ever can be." "It hath pleased the Father," says the apostle, speaking of Christ, "that in him should all fulness dwell." There is nothing wanting in him which can make a sinner happy. And look at the verse before us. No sooner has the prophet spoken of him as a refuge, than he thinks of the refreshment and comfort that are to be enjoyed in him. This same Man who is to be a hiding-place from the wind, is to be at the same time as "rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." The psalmist, too, connects the ideas of provision and abundance with this refuge; "I said, 'Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living.'"

O brethren, have mercy on yourselves! A refuge is near you, an open and a safe one. There is something in Christ that can bring you strength and comfort in all you now endure or fear; there is enough in him to save your souls alive. He invites you to come to him, that you may partake of all that is within him, that he may make you now and for ever safe, peaceful, and happy men. You are as welcome to enter this hiding-place, as you were this morning to enter this church. There is nothing to keep you out of it, except it be your own unwillingness to go in. But enter it, your own, or destruction will overtake you. It is not hearing of it, or looking at it, or admiring it, that can save you; you must get within it. In other words, you must flee to Christ as a Saviour for your own guilty souls. With a lively faith in his willingness and power to save you, you must commit your souls to him to be saved. Think of a man in a wide desert discovering a fearful storm rising, and flying to the only shelter he can get for safety; and when he gets up to it, finding an open door, and joyfully, though perhaps fearfully, venturing in. There is a picture of a sinner who has really come to Christ

for salvation. And think of another man in the desert. He is told of the coming storm, and he professes to believe that it is coming; but he is amusing himself with his fellow-travellers, or he is picking up the pebbles at his feet, and you cannot move him; you cannot get him off; or he does look at it, and you even prevail on him to move towards it, he stops, sits down in the way, and talks about it, and says, "I am resolved to enter it by and by." There is a picture of thousands who hear of Christ and his salvation, and sink down in the grave without an interest in them. They perish within sight of a refuge; almost saved, but altogether lost.

THE BIBLE.

There are some people in our day who sneer at the Bible and its teaching. Are they wise people, and are they wise teachers of others? Consider, I. We have no way of learning anything about ourselves, our world—how we came to be what we are—why we die, and what is to become of us after death, but by the Bible. Before we get rid of the Bible, we had better find some other way of getting information on these subjects.

2. Common sense would tell us, what indeed it tells the most savage people—that we, our world, and all things that we see above and around us, had a great Creator. It would be as absurd to say that everything has made itself, or has come into existence, by accident, as to say that a watch, a steam-engine, a ship, or any other object showing skill, contrivance, and purpose, made itself, or that it grew in the fields. We should call any man a fool who asserted that machinery grew like trees, or was formed in the earth like coal, iron, &c. Every workman knows what brain-work and head-work must be employed in its construction. Such a fool is the man who should say that man made himself—that the world, the sun, the stars, made themselves, &c.

3. The Bible is the oldest book in the world. It has been preserved for us by the Jews—the oldest people in the world. They have always guarded it with the greatest care, numbering the books, chapters, verses, words, and even letters, lest any portion of it should be lost or changed; and although it testifies against them—it exposes their sin against God—it tells of God's threatening against them—it contains prophecies regarding their treatment of Jesus, and their being banished from their own country, and scattered over the earth—yet they cling to that Bible as the book of their fathers—yet they are ready to die for the truth of every word in that Bible, which, as they say, came from God. God commanded holy men to write thousands of years ago.

4. The Bible is the oldest book of history in the world. We should know nothing of man's condition, or of the state of the world many ages after the creation, but for the Bible. We know that what the Bible tells us about the Jews, the Arabs, the Egyptians, the Babylonians, the Persians, the Greeks, the Romans, is true. Older ancient histories and records, some of them dug up out of ruins, such as those of Babylon, Nineveh, &c., completely attest the truth of Scripture. Since the time of our Lord, multitudes of books have been written by believers and unbelievers, which testify that what the Bible says of His life, sufferings, death, and resurrection, is incontestably true. The Bible was altogether written by Jews, and is a history of Jews, and the Jews exist to our day, and are scattered everywhere, in testimony of the Bible's history, miracles, prophecies, doctrines, and laws.

5. The Bible tells us why man is what he is. The account which it gives of the matter is the only one suited to the case. Man is the most unruly and the most unhappy of all earthly beings. The beasts, birds, and fishes follow the instincts which God gave them at the first; they enjoy their being, neither regretting the past, nor troubling themselves about the future. Not so with man; his reason either does not guide him, or often, when it does, it leads him astray. He thinks of the past with pain, and often with humiliation. He is discontented with the present, and he either longs for the future only to be disappointed, or he dreads it because his conscience speaks to him of sin, of sorrow, of death, and of judgment. The Bible alone accounts for this. It tells us that man, the last and best of God's works, has alone rebelled against his Maker, and therefore his condition in the world is one of greater pain and unhappiness than that of all other creatures.

6. The Bible tells us what God thinks of man, how He deals with him, and what purposes He has regarding him and his world. If all that the Bible has told us of the past and the present is proved to be true, we may be sure that what it tells us of the future will be true also. The Jews did not believe God and His Son, Jesus Christ, and they have been severely punished for it; so shall we be, if we believe not what God's books say to us. It tells us we are sinners; we know that to be true. It tells us that the wages of sin is death; every graveyard tells us that that is true. It tells us that if we die in our sins we shall never see God or heaven; many will find that to be true. It tells us that God sent His Son Jesus Christ, to be a sacrifice for sinners, so that they might be delivered from condemnation and death. It tells us that there is no salvation for sinners but in Jesus; and it tells us that unless we are redeemed by Him, and sanctified by the Holy Ghost, we must be separated from God for ever. The greatest proof we have had that these things are true, is that all people who through God's grace have been led to believe them, have found in them peace, confidence, joy; and this in spite of this world's sorrow, sickness, death; while those who have not believed them, have suffered trouble, discontent, fear, in spite of all the possessions and pleasures which the world could give them.

7. The Bible tells us about the future—that is, the condition of man beyond this world. I never met a man or woman, and I hope I never shall, who would like to live and die like a beast, without the prospect of life hereafter. Even the worst people whose death-beds I have attended hoped to go to heaven, and live for ever there. The Bible is the only book that tells us anything about the eternal world; and its teachings on the subject are true, because the Son of God, who is one with God, came down from heaven to inform us. He died and rose again, and thus He became the Author of resurrection life to all His believing people. He overcame death for them; He ascended to heaven; and He will come again to raise them from their graves, and to receive them into His glorious kingdom, to dwell with Him in hap-

piness for ever. All who read the Bible by the light of God's Spirit, can say, as that blessed book teaches them to say, "O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory?"

To the working classes I would commend God's book as peculiarly suited to their dangers, necessities, and trials. I never knew a working man or woman who did not find in "the truth as it is in Jesus" something to lighten toil, to elevate them in the scale of being, to satisfy them with their lot, and to fill their heart with thankfulness and joy. There are potent friends of the working classes who would rob them of the book, by teaching them to doubt and despise the Bible; when challenged on the subject they have nothing to put in its place.

S. A. WALKER.

WHICH DEATH?

Death is terrible or beautiful—terrible when a sinner rushes into eternity into the immediate presence of a rejected Saviour and an offended God; beautiful when a Christian walks through the valley of the shadow of death fearing no evil, and with sins forgiven, and robes made white in the blood of the Lamb, enters into the rest that remains for the people of God. Sudden death may cut off the impenitent in the midst of his sins, or take the believer quickly home to glory; disease may fail to lead a hardened soul to Christ, or it may be a continued and ever-increasing blessing to him who through faith goes on from conquering to conquering, until death is robbed of its sting and the grave of its victory. Sometimes God places the deaths of his children and of his believers in striking contrast, as if to show his own, and the righteous retribution which must come upon the guilty sinner. The two facts which follow illustrate this, and they are told in the simplest manner, for God's own hand has given them the most vivid coloring.

In southern New Hampshire a noble mountain rises heavenward in solitary grandeur. Its sharp outline of bare and massive rock rests in bold relief against the clear blue sky, and from its far-reaching base stretches out, on every side, that diversified scenery of hills and valleys, glistening lakes and silvery streams, for which the Switzerland of America is so justly celebrated. From the summit of this mountain the scene is one of unsurpassed beauty. Here, if anywhere, man will feel that he is alone with his God, and cold must be his heart, and his soul a dreary waste of sin, if he does not feel like praising Him who "made the earth by his power, established the world by his wisdom, and stretched out the heavens by his disposition." "Thou art great," have gazed upon it for long hours, I have involuntarily said, in the words of Coleridge to Mount Blanc—

"Tell thou the silent sky,
And tell the stars, and tell the rising sun,
Earth with her thousand voices praises God!"

But there was a man living in summer-time upon that mountain side, who thought not of God except to profane his name. His little dwelling stood just at the end of the horse path, where travellers are wont to rest themselves before making the tedious ascent on foot. On a summer afternoon a party was descending the mountain, and stopped at this house. The keeper was indulging in most shocking profanity. His visitors were horror-struck at his oaths, and one of them ventured to remonstrate with him kindly. He asked him if he had no thought of a future state, no belief in a God, in a heaven and a hell; if he had no fear of death, and that he might be cut off in his sins. With an oath, and shaking his clenched fist toward the sky as if in defiance of God, he exclaimed, "I will live a hundred years for all God Almighty, man or the devil!" No more was said, and the party, leaving the wicked man in his dwelling, passed on. Soon afterward another group of mountaineers stopped at the house. The well-known face of the keeper did not appear. They entered, and there lay the man—dead! No trace of disease, no marks of violence, were to be seen. God had called him in such an hour as he thought not. The miserable man had defied his Maker, and was quickly summoned to the bar of God to receive his awful sentence. Punishment followed speedily in the footsteps of sin; there was no time for repentance; his soul was lost.

That death was terrible! When a boy I loved to visit at the house of an aged woman, a devoted Christian. No little children were there with whom I could play, but the good-hearted old lady always made me happy. Every wrinkle on her face seemed a smile to me, every look and every word was full of kindness. Love to God had taken complete possession of her, and she lived a pleasure to herself, and a blessing to all who knew her. She lived quietly and happily, and as she walked on into the sunset of life, she had nearer glimpses of heaven, and patiently waited till the Lord should call her home. He did call her, and how gently! One morning she did not appear at the usual time. Her son went to her room, and there he saw the good old lady kneeling at her bedside, her head inclined forward upon the pillow, and an open Bible in a chair beside her. She was dead! God had taken her to himself even while she was praying; her soul and her prayer went together to her home in heaven; her hope was changed to glad fruition, her faith to sight, her prayer to praise! That death was beautiful!

"How blest the righteous when he dies,
When sinks a weary soul to rest;
How mildly beams the closing eyes,
How gently heaves the expiring breast.
So fades a summer cloud away,
So sinks the gale when stormy seas are o'er,
So gently shuts the eye of day,
So dies a wave along the shore."

Reader, which shall be yours, the death of the Christian or of the impenitent? It may come suddenly or may not; God tells us neither the day nor the hour; he only says, "Be ye also ready."

"There are no acts of pardon passed
In the cold grave when we have fast,
The present is all we can call our own.
God invites us by his providence and his word to make our peace with him now. 'Now' is the only time God gives us. That word rings out clear in all his commands to us; on it hangs our hope of salvation; 'Now' is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." "Whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might, for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave whither thou goest."

Let each one pray, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his." Let

each one make sure that he will be ready if the Master should say, "This night thy soul shall be required of thee!"

THE LAMB THAT BUILT A COLLEGE.

BY THE REV. JOHN TODD, D. D.

"What a beautiful building!" said I, as we paused—my friend and I, in our walk under the trees in the college grounds, and looked at a new building, just finished. It was handsome, and useful, and will probably stand there for generations to come. "That building," said my friend, "was built by a little lamb." "Do explain yourself?" "Well, many years ago there was a poor boy who lived in the south part of the country. He was a motherless boy, his mother having died when he was four months old. He was living with a married sister at the age of twelve years, when a young law student agreed with him that if he would catch and put out his horse for a given length of time, he might ride his horse to see his friends at Thanksgiving. So they made the bargain. In the same spring there was a beautiful lamb born, and sporting on the hills near by. When Thanksgiving had arrived, and young Nathan, the boy, was mounted for his journey, his friend, the student calls to him, 'Nathan, have you any money to spend, if you need it?'

"Yes, sir, I have three nine-penny pieces." "The student knew that he had been very faithful, and handed him a silver dollar. Nathan took it, surprised, glad, wondering! How large it looked! He had never been so rich before! How carefully he put it in his pocket, and how often he let the horse walk that he might trust his hand in his pocket and feel of it, and turn it over, and then take it out and look at it! What would he do with it? At last he thought of the beautiful lamb, and determined to buy it. And buy it he did. But he had no horse around his neck and led it to an honest man who took it and agreed to give him half the increase. For just forty years he held on to his sheep, letting them out here and there to people who wanted them. Then he found how he could increase his property if he had his sheep in money. The little lamb had increased to one thousand and sixty-four! And he sold them for fifteen hundred and ninety-six dollars! From that time his property increased very fast. He is now an old man; but at his own expense he has just reared that beautiful building, and has done much for the college besides!"

"Ah!" said I to myself, "if that boy had spent his first dollar on something to eat, or drink or to smoke, how different might have been his whole life! How much may turn on the skip of the lamb that drew his eyes to it, or to a word dropped by some friend! He might have wasted his dollar, but now that building will stand and be doing good long, long after he is dead and gone! The baby now in his mother's arms will come here and be a student, and bless that man who blessed that sheep. Such a way of doing good is like that of Jacob in digging his well. It gave drink to himself, and to his children, and to his cattle, but it remained, to give drink to every generation, till Christ came to it, and met the poor wicked Samaritan woman there, and gave to those who drink of that well, the waters of eternal life." "As I mused and thought of it, I seemed to hear a voice say, 'Write out this story; perhaps it may fall under the eye of some boy who will take his first dollar, and so use it, that he may yet found a school, rear a college-building, or endow a Professorship, where there will be faithful teaching, and immortal minds trained up for God's glory, long, long after he has gone to the dead!'

Who can tell the results!—Sunday-School Times.

"PRAY FOR ME."

The life of the faithful minister of Christ is checkered with strange experiences. His lights and shadows are perhaps more deeply marked than fall to the lot of others. He is at times the witness of scenes well nigh too bright for mortal eyes to gaze upon; and again he is called to look upon the most appalling sights, in the presence of which it would seem angels must weep. Several years ago, as I was returning home from public worship one Sabbath afternoon, I was requested to call on a lady who was supposed to be dying. On entering the room where she lay, I at once encountered a look of intensest agony. In tones of despairing eagerness she begged me to pray for her. As she was not a member of my parish, and I was perfectly ignorant of her spiritual state, I asked a few questions, and learned that she had once been a member of the church of Christ, but after her marriage had grown remiss in the discharge of religious duties, had withdrawn from the sanctuary, and, after a time had become a Universalist. Now death was staring her in the face, and she had no hope. I bowed by her bedside in prayer. There I pointed her to Christ; spoke of the infinite fullness there is in him, and his willingness to receive the chief of sinners; and urged her to cast all unbelief away, and accept of Christ as her Saviour. But my exhortations seemed to fall powerless on her ear. She believed that the blood of Christ would avail for others, but not for her. I recited to her the promises, but she refused to grasp them. She said she had trampled on the blood of Jesus, and now he would not hear her cry. And then, rolling over, and moaning, and fixing her glittering eyes on several ladies who were ministering to her, she called to them in quick, harrowing, pleading tones, "Pray for me; pray for me!"

But, alas! her attendants were they with whom she had sported and scoffed in brighter days, and they made no answer to her entreaties. I spent the afternoon with her frequently, bearing her to the mercy-seat in prayer, and directing her eyes to Christ as the only Being who had power to save. But all in vain. A dreadful sound was in her ears. She seemed to have a premonition of coming woe, which shut out all voices of mercy, and made trustful prayer an impossibility. She was the picture of utter despair. She wore away the afternoon, oft reiterating the same woeful call to her old companions to pray for her, and peering, as it were, with eyes visibly protruding, into the pit which was yawning to receive her. Disease soon did its work, and as the night began to thicken, her spirit was borne away to its recompense of reward.

On my way home, after the closing scene, I reflected sadly on the folly of those who put off repentance till the dying hour. I thought of the contrast between the death of the Christian and the death of the Universalist. And I understood better than ever before the fearful significance of the Scripture which describes the doom of the apostate:—"For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain looking-for of judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries."

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"WHAT IS YOUR LIFE?"

The life of man on an average, is little more than thirty years, and as there are (according to the latest estimates) one thousand millions of human beings upon the face of the earth, it will be found, by a very simple calculation, that at the rate of ninety-one thousand three hundred and twenty-four of our race die every day! Every hour that passes over our heads, about three thousand eight hundred immortal souls go out of this world, and a greater number come into it, to inhabit mortal bodies in their room, as the population of the earth is on the increase—a consideration which should show the necessity of preparation for yielding our places to others, and for joining the invisible flight of spirits who are continually leaving the earth; for no one can tell but that the next moment his soul may be called on to become one of the number. Yet few apply the warnings which daily pass before them to their own case, forgetting that when the rich fool said, "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry," God said unto him, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee!" There have been instances of circumstances apparently trivial in themselves, and nowise unknown before, that have caused the mind to consider with a new and deep attention the fact of death, and have in consequence led to a change of life in preparation for it. Guerrius, a celebrated divine, hearing the fifth chapter of Genesis read, wherein are recounted the sons and descendants of Adam, in these words, "The whole life of Adam was nine hundred and thirty years, and he died; the life of his son Seth was nine hundred and twelve years, and he died;" and so on of all the rest, began to think with himself that if such and so great men, after so long a time, ended in death, it was not safe to lose more time in this world, but imperative on him to prepare for the future state to which he must soon inevitably remove.

"Like to a ship that leaves no trace,
Or bird that seeks her resting-place,
Thou too, O man, thy life, and man may see
In fleeting things its brevity:
The ship is past—the bird is flown—
The arrow sped—the guest is gone."

DRINK AND AWFUL DEATH.

A most dreadful accident, with loss of life, occurred lately in Matlock, near Cromford. John Spencer, butcher and publican, of the Gate Inn, Brassington, left his home in the afternoon, in his conveyance, and proceeded on business to Matlock Bath, when after spending some time at an hotel, he went out infuriated with drink. Upon being cautioned with regard to his usual rash mode of driving, he declared he would drive to hell in a quarter of an hour; and after proceeding about a mile in the most madman-like manner, he came near the Scarning Torrick Road, where he so far misguiding his horse as to bring one of the wheels in contact with a lamp-post. The sudden stoppage hurled him from his seat. A dray loaded with timber passing over his body. He was taken up and conveyed to the Greyhound Inn, Cromford, where in a few minutes he expired. He leaves a wife and eight children to lament his sad end. An inquest was held the day following, and a verdict of "Accidental death" was given. In a letter in the *Derry Gazette*, we find the following: "Sir, you gave in your paper a short paragraph of an awfully sudden death on the road in this county. I have been acquainted with some facts respecting the wicked man who was so suddenly driven down in his sins. He had made some money in his trade, and then he took to a public-house, where, though steady before, he soon took to drinking habits. About a week before the accident, he told his wife he should be in hell in a week. On the Monday before his death, he went into a public-house near to his own, and there on his knees prayed God to damn him, his wife, and family; and just starting from the public-house before he was killed, upon being cautioned as to his driving, he said, 'he would drive to hell in a quarter of an hour.' This was literally fulfilled. I have troubled you with these very painful particulars simply for this purpose—to sound a solemn warning to all sinners, whether open blasphemers or undecided worldly procrastinators about their souls' spiritual safety."

THE FATAL POWER OF SIN.

As sin grows, conscience declines in vigour. The power that perceives sin partakes of the general injury which sin inflicts on the soul. It does not remain stationary while the other elements of our being—the desires, affections, moral energies, are in downward motion. It does not resemble a spectator standing on the shore, who can discern the slightest motion of the vessel in the stream, but rather to the other powers. Conscience stands in the relation of a fellow-voyager, who cannot perceive in his companions the motion of which he himself partakes. Or, as in fever and other diseases that affect the brain, the disease soon unhinges the power by which the patient is made conscious of his ravages; so sin is a malady which can not proceed far without injuring the moral consciousness by which its presence can be known. Even to the natural conscience, weak and enlightened though it be, sin in many of its forms, has an ugly look at first, but its repulsiveness rapidly wears off by familiarity. To the call of duty, the voice of religion, the first announcement of the solemn truths of death and judgment and retribution the mind, even in its natural and renewed state, can never be altogether insensible; but if unregarded, the impression soon fades, and the solemn sounds grow fainter and fainter to the ear. By every act of disobedience to its dictates we sin away something of the sensitiveness of conscience; and it is quite possible for the process of disobedience to go on until even from the grossest sins all the first recoil of dislike is gone, and to the voice of warning and instruction there rises not the faintest echo of compunction in the soul. Just as in winter, the

cold may become so intense as to freeze the thermometer, and thereby to leave you without the means of marking the subsequent increases of cold. So there is a point in the lowest temperature of the inward consciousness where the growing coldness, hardness, selfishness of a man's nature can no longer be noted—the mechanism by which moral variations are indicated becoming itself insensible and motionless. And then—then in an awful sense—does his sin become a hidden thing to the sinner; then is attained a dreadful freedom, an ominous emancipation from all restraint. The soul has reached that condition in which it can sin on unchecked, contracting a daily accumulating debt of guilt, yet all unconsciously, inflicting deeper and more unhealing wounds upon itself, yet without pain; heaping up, without remorse, wrath against the day of wrath. No matter how rapid its fatal descent, no warning can retard it now; no matter how terrible the ruin before it, no prognostic of danger can startle it now. "The light that was in it" has become "darkness, and how great is that darkness!"

GLORY OF THE WORLD.

In a magnificent oration of Chrysostom, sound thoughts are suggested in the contemplation of that transitory glory which is the gift of wealth, and force, and power, all which is destined to perish. "It is at this moment," says the illustrious patriarch of Constantinople, addressing the court of his day, as corrupt as it was splendid, "it is at this moment, more than ever, we are justified in saying with the wise man, 'Vanity of vanities; all is vanity.' Where is now the splendour of the consulate?—Where the brilliancy of lamp and torches? The feast of joyous assemblies? Where are the crowns and magnificent ornaments? Where the flattering reports of the city—the acclamations of the circus—the adulation of thousands of spectators? All have passed away! The wind by one blast has swept the leaves, and now they show to us a dead tree, torn from its roots—so violent has been the tempest. It lies a broken ruin. Where are the pretended friends—the swarms of parasites—the tables charged with luxury—the wine circulated during entire days; where the various refinements of feasting—the supple language of slaves? What has become of them all? A dream of the night, which vanishes with the day! A flower of Spring, which fades in the Summer! A shade which passes! A vapor which scatters! A bubble of water which bursts! A spider's web which is torn down! Palaces, on your streets, on your houses; on your windows, on your doors; inscribe them on your consciences, in order that they may represent it incessantly to your thoughts. Repeat them in the morning; repeat them in the evening, and in the assemblies of fashion let each repeat to his neighbor—'Vanity of vanities; all is vanity.'"

REFUSING THE LIGHT.—I once happened to be on a visit to a great estate, situated on the top of a hill. There was a steep cliff, at the bottom of which was a rapid river. Late one night, there was a woman anxious to get home from that castle, in the midst of a thunderstorm. The night was blackness itself; the woman was asked to stop till the storm was over, but she declined; next they begged her to take a lantern, that she might be able to keep upon the road from the castle to her home. She said she did not require a lantern, but could do very well without one. She went. Perhaps she was frightened by the storm—I know not the cause—but in darkness she wandered from the path, and fell over the cliff; the next day that swollen river washed to the shore the poor lifeless body of this foolish woman!

How many foolish ones are there who, when the light is offered them, only say, "I am not afraid; I fear not my end!" and how many have perished because they have refused the light of God's truth, which would have guided them on the road to heaven!—Bishop Villiers.

"WHIP OLD GRAY THEN."—There was a farmer who had a four-horse team. The horses, once excepted, were difficult to drive. He changed drivers often, but to little purpose. His last driver was sent to draw a log from the clearing to the saw-mill, and on his return, the wagon and horses stopped in a valley, and a man on a hill top seeing the halt cried out, "What's the matter?" "Matter enough," was the ready response, "There's but one horse in the team that'll pull." "What horse is that?" "Old Gray." "Whip Old Gray, then; it's no use to whip the others."

As in the team case, in most churches, there is some Old Gray who is willing enough to do the work, and does a great deal, but the trouble is, he can't draw all the load and the balky horses too. He would like to foot the preacher's salary, the sexton's bill, the wood, coal, candle, and oil bills, but his pocket isn't long enough, nor strong enough. Yet there is always some man willing enough, in every society, to play the censor, and cry out, while he does nothing himself, "There's but one man in the church who will give anything—Old Gray. Whip Old Gray; if he don't pull, the load will never move."—Western Advertiser.

THE LIVING WORD.—On the door of the great mosque in the old city of Damascus are inscribed these remarkable words:—"Thy kingdom, O Christ! is an everlasting kingdom, and Thy dominion endureth throughout all generations." For twelve centuries that mosque, once a Christian church, has ranked among the very holiest sanctuaries in the Mohammedan world. For twelve centuries the name of Christ has been regularly blasphemed in it, and the disciples of Christ have been regularly cursed in it. The inscription, nevertheless, has remained, unimpaired by time, undisturbed by man, as if to prove that no amount of human power, that no refinement of human cruelty, could destroy Christ's kingdom. That inscription was unknown during the long reign of Mohammedan intolerance and oppression; but just at the time when religious liberty was partially restored, and Christian missionaries were enabled to establish a church in that city, it was again brought to light, and served to encourage them in their work of faith and labour of love, remembering and applying the prophecy:—"And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations."