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METHODISM NOT HERESY.

A brief review of our peculiarities, real or alleged, will be now expected. Believing all the articles which are reckoned orthodox by the general consent of Protestant churches, the Wesleyan societies have been nevertheless distinguished by the plain statement and advocacy of the following tenets:—

1. That a comfortable assurance of God's favour, resulting from the direct witness of the Holy Spirit, is the common privilege of believers. This is distinct from an assurance of final salvation. It is, simply, a persuasion of present pardon and acceptance. That the Gospel proclaims justification by faith, we are all agreed; but how shall a sinner know that he is justified? The Wesleyans believe that nothing less than the testimony of the Most High can suffice; that without this we cannot love God, and therefore cannot yield those fruits of righteousness which indicate a state of grace and safety. The inductive process thus supposes the direct witness; as the lunar reflection of light affords evidence of the power and brightness of the sun. We plead for the precious doctrine expressed in the ever-memorable words of St. Paul: "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" (Rom. viii. 16). "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." (Gal. iv. 6). We need only add, that wherever the attesting Spirit dwells, he produces the graces enumerated in the infallible pages; and thus arises a second witness to certify us of the first. "How can I assure," asks our father and founder, "that I do not mistake the voice of the Spirit? Even by the testimony of my own spirit, by the answer of a good conscience toward God." Hereby you shall know that you are in no delusion, that you have not deceived your own soul. The immediate fruits of the Spirit ruling in the heart are love, joy, peace; bowels of mercies, humbleness of mind, meekness, gentleness, long-suffering. And the outward fruits are, the doing good to all men, and a uniform obedience to all the commands of God.

In speaking of our "peculiarities," we adopt the language of others without intending to allow is universal accuracy. This doctrine, for the revival of which our forefathers were accounted heretics and enthusiasts, is neither novel nor sectarian. It belongs to the theology of the purest ages. Many authors, who have never been suspected of fanaticism, and whose names grace every page in which they occur, have explicitly avowed our sentiment.

"Blessed is that man," says Bishop Hooper, "in whom God's Spirit beareth record that he is a son of God, whatever troubles he suffers in this troublesome world." "Unto you," says Hooker, "because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts: to the end that ye might know that Christ hath built you upon a rock immovable, that he hath registered your names in the book of life." According to Bishop Brownrigg, "one great office of the Holy Ghost" is "to ratify and seal up to us the forgiveness of our sins." "From adoption," says Archbishop Usher, "flows all Christian joy; for the Spirit of adoption is, first, a witness; second, a seal; third, the pledge and earnest of our inheritance; setting a holy security on the soul, whereby it rejoiceth, even in affliction, in hope of glory." So Bishop Pearson: "It is the office of the Holy Ghost to assure us of the adoption of sons, to create in us a sense of the paternal love of God toward us, to give us an earnest of our everlasting inheritance." And Dr. Isaac Barrow: "This is that Spirit of adoption which constitutes us the sons of God, qualifying us so to be by dispositions resembling God, and final affections toward Him; certifying us that we are so, and raising us by a free instinct to cry, 'Abba, Father.'" We add the testimony of the late Rev. Charles Simeon, of King's College, Cambridge, principally because of the influence of his respected name among many who have discontinued our view: "He" (God) "has been pleased to give us the witness of the Spirit, in a way of immediate impression. The Spirit, as a 'Spirit of adoption,' testifies to the believer's soul that he belongs to God." And again, "As by the sealing of the Spirit, he stamps his own image on his children for the adoption of others; so by the witness of the Spirit he testifies their adoption for the more immediate comfort of their own souls." And again, "Do not condemn the witness of the Spirit merely because you cannot comprehend it. Rather pray to God that you yourselves may be his children. In this way you may hope that the Spirit will testify of your adoption."

Another much-honoured class of English Divines may be introduced.—Dr. Owen says: "If the Spirit declare us our sons in us and to us, we cannot know it: How doth he then bear witness to our spirits? What is the distinct testimony? It must be some such act of his as evidenceth itself to be from him, immediately, to them that are concerned in it; that is, those to whom it is given." Again, he asserts, that this immediate communication of joy is made "without the consideration of any other acts or works of his; or the interposition of any reasonings, or deductions, or conclusions;" and that it "does not arise from our reflex consideration of the love of God, but rather gives occasion thereto." "This divine communication," John Howells styles "delectable, as it includes in it the manifestation of God's love to the soul in particular." Poole remarks, on Romans xv. 16, "This is not the testimony of the graces and operations of the Spirit, but of the Spirit itself." Finally, the excellent Doctors Watts and Doddridge have taught a thousand congregations to address the Comforter in these admirable petitions:—

"Assure my conscience of her part
In the Redeemer's blood;
And hear thy witness with my heart,
That I am born of God."
"Come, sacred Spirit, seal the name
On mine expanding heart;
And show, that in Jehovah's grace
I share a filial part.
Cheer'd by a sign so divine,
Unwavering I believe,
Thou know'st I 'Abba, Father,' cry,
Nor can the sign deceive."

2. That entire holiness is attainable in the present life. Neither we nor our fathers have ever represented this privilege as excluding either the infirmities of human nature, or temptation, or error, or the danger of falling, or the obligation of further advancement in grace. But we plead for a perfection in love, the maturity of the Christian virtues, a heart cleansed from all sin; and we are bold to ask, Is the holy oracles silent on this glorious theme? Is the believer never called to "love the Lord his God with all his heart," "son," "and," and "strength?" never encouraged by rich promises to "perfect holiness in the fear of God?" never gladdened with the hope of being "filled with all the fullness of God?" That view which is often described as exclusively Wesleyan, is certainly honourable to the Redeemer, and animating to his militant saints. And while an inspired author prays, that "the very God of peace" may "sanctify us wholly;" and that our "whole spirit, and soul, and body may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" while he urges those whom his context obviously supposes to be believers, to cleanse themselves "from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit;" while that very phraseology which has been deemed most offensive, is derived from the "true sayings of God" while our esteemed opponents zealously maintain that this state is to be continually sought, though they believe that it cannot be found; while the tenet undeniably consists with an adoring and ceaseless dependence on Christ; while no valid reason can be assigned why sin should not yield to an Almighty Renewer, or why the cold hand of death should finish the Saviour's work; while the sacramental liturgy of the national Church provides the sublime collect, "Cleanse the thoughts of our heart by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy name;" while substantial attestations of our view may be quoted, in large number, from Divines, ancient and modern, foreign and English;—we must hold fast the precious truth, and beseech the pardoned people of God to "follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." (Heb. xii. 14.)

3. We believe the universality of the atonement. Though we prefer the name of our clerical Founder to that of the learned, and (we fearlessly add) the truly evangelical, Professor in the University of Leyden; yet we are, on the five points, Arminians. To others we freely concede a like freedom to that which we use in stating the reasons of our belief. Passing by the considerations in favour of the liberal theology, which are drawn from the unlimited mercy which "maketh the sun to rise on the evil and on the good," and from the unvaried helplessness and necessity of mankind, we respectfully claim attention for the following suggestions:—The strongest assertions of general redemption occur in inspired language, the passages being too numerous for citation. The same terms describe the extent of human depravity, and the extent of the Saviour's gracious purpose. On the other hand, we are not acquainted with a single text which intimates that Jesus died for a part only of Adam's race. A conditional election obviously harmonizes with the Scriptures, which assert a ransom for all; but those Scriptures can never be reconciled to the notion of irreversible and limiting decrees. Once more: our honoured Calvinistic friends find reason for qualifying their theory, and for perpetually veiling its offensive aspect; and, in their practical writings and best passages, (of which many impressive examples will occur to the memory of every diligent reader,) they are happily inconsistent with the articles they acknowledge. It is due to our founders to add, that they held the doctrine of universal atonement, with the allied views of human freedom and responsibility, as one part of a theological system which ascribes the undivided glory of our salvation to grace. At an immeasurable distance from cold Pelagianism, they taught us to glorify slightly mercy in the penitential groaning which cannot be uttered; in the struggle and victory of faith; in all the ripening graces of the new man; and in the spirit's final flight from Calvary to Zion.

The discipline of the Methodist societies was unpremeditated. A few individuals, awakened and anxious, besought Mr. Wesley's counsel and prayer.

The number increased; and, for a reason easily imagined, they were directed to come at an appointed hour. Such was the origin of class-meetings. The thought subsequently occurred, that a similar practice had existed among Christians from the beginning. Not a few scriptural allusions favour this opinion. "In the absence of every arrangement of this kind, how can we exhort and edify one another?" how "hear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ?" how "rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep?" The characteristic of our classes, bands, and love-feasts, is the free and simple communication of mutual experience; and here, in the judgment of some of the wisest, is found their unspeakable plea.—Let the inquirer see, scattered over the writings of the best practical Divines, admissions to the effect that reserve and silence, on the subject of spiritual exercises, are most prejudicial; that the devices of Satan are of tenfold difficulty when they are shrouded in concealment; and that it is eminently advantageous to hear and to tell of God's dealings with the soul. The world may direct against those who "speak often one to another" its impotent scorn; but they are abundantly compensated by the sweetness of the social privilege, and the "joys with which a stranger intermeddeth not."

From the New York Observer.

THE CONVERSION OF CHILDREN NOW.

"It is very strange that so many children are converted to God." If any one thinks there is some mistake in this remark, and reads it over again to correct the error, we shall not be disappointed. But we repeat, it is very strange that so many children are converted to God. True, there are very few thus early brought into the kingdom, and the reason may be that Sunday School teachers, and parents, and others, have no expectation that children will be converted. They believe in the propriety of sowing the seed in the morning, of instilling the principles of piety into the tender heart, of throwing around the child the restraints of early associations, and they hope that, by and by, the seed will spring and bear fruit, and in youth or in riper years, they will be saved. All this is very well. These things ought to be done. But the mistake to which we have referred, consists in overlooking the fact that these children may be, and ought to be, converted now. And so rare is the impression that the salvation of the soul may be secured in childhood, so few are the parents who look for the early conversion of their children, that we feel justified in saying there is reason for astonishment that so many are brought in. And if, for a wonder of mercy, a child is converted, the fact is not unfrequently discredited by parents and pastors, as if it were a hard thing for God to renew the heart of one so young.

How soon a child may exercise godly sorrow for sin and faith in the blood of Christ, we would not undertake to say. Some children are capable of receiving intelligent views of divine truth at an age much earlier than others. There are well-authenticated cases of children who, at the age of four or five years, have given strange but precious evidence that the Holy Spirit had renewed their hearts. A few days ago we were sympathizing with a clergyman, who had just buried his only son, eight years old; he said that, for a year past, his son had given sweet evidence that he was a child of God. And as we went on to relate the facts, on which he built his belief, that that child is now an angel in heaven, we thought how much more precious to a father's heart must be such a hope, than the prospect of an earthly throne for a living child. The reading and perhaps the observation of every one will furnish numerous instances of early conversions; though we would not conceal a fear that very many cases are recorded as such that will not stand the test of the great day. It will not be denied that as soon as a child is old enough to know and feel that he has sinned against God, he is old enough to feel sorrow on account of sin, and faith is an exercise far simpler to the mind of a child than a philosopher. The child, with a heart broken on account of sin, finds no difficulty in understanding how God is willing to forgive him, for what Christ has done; and when this truth is rested before his mind in language level with his comprehension, he loves to rest upon it with a sweet—a childlike confidence. The Gospel plan of salvation is exceedingly simple, if contemplated in the naked terms in which the Saviour always offered it; and all the mystery with which the subject has been invested, is the result of the vain attempts of men to be wise above that which is written, and the result of every attempt to make the Gospel more plain than the Bible makes it. Has been to darken counsel by words without knowledge. "These have been the most successful in winning souls to Christ, who have approached men as you would approach children, and have brought the simple Gospel directly in contact with the heart." We have said nothing in these remarks of the constant and indispensable necessity of the Holy Spirit to begin and complete the work of conversion; that necessity is absolute in the case of the child, and is increased every year as the heart hardens and the will becomes more obstinately inclined to sin. Nothing therefore is gained, but much is lost every way, by delaying the use of means to secure the immediate salvation of those souls committed to our care.

Preachers should feel the importance of aiming at the conversion of children. Too much of the preaching of the present day goes over the heads, and of course does not reach the hearts of the young. Seldom are children made the special subjects of instruction or appeal from the pulpit. If the pastor should assemble the children of his congregation frequently, that he might adapt his remarks to their capacities and wants, he would soon discover that the usual preaching on the Sabbath is not calculated to catch their attention and awaken their interest. Hence, it is not strange that they are not converted under the truth they hear from the pulpit. Perhaps all they learn at church is that they cannot understand the minister. But when the pastor visits them at the fire-side, or meets with them in the lecture room, they are awake and attentive, and receive the instructions of his lips with greediness. He is not surprised, when he sees the readiness with which they drink in his words, that they are soon concerned for their souls, nor is he disposed to send them away when they come to him to ask that they may have a seat with the people of God, around the table of the Lord.

Sabbath-school teachers should labor with the expectation of immediate results. Much is lost by the teacher from a want of directness in the instruction communicated. If the impression is prevalent that the children of his class are too young to be converted, he will of course adapt his labors to those who are not at present required to repent and believe. The commands of the law will not be pressed upon the conscience, the duty of immediate submission to God will not be urged; prayer will not be offered with earnestness in their behalf; and, almost as a matter of course, the class will not be awakened under the instructions thus given. Let the examination be made of the conversions that have occurred in any Sabbath School, and the result will show most vividly that those who expect no early fruit, are permitted to gather none; while those who labor and pray for the immediate salvation of the children of their charge, are permitted to see the work prospering in their hands.

The same general truths apply to parental hopes. How few, how very few pious parents are concerned for the conversion of those children who are not yet ten years of age. If they see their sons or daughters embarking on life's dangerous sea without the grace of God to guide them heavenward, they would be distressed; but for those who are still in their arms, they feel slight concern. They have no thought that these little ones can be converted now; and, therefore, these little ones may grow up in sin, and go out into the world in sin, and perhaps perish in sin. It is needless to follow this subject further. We have been much impressed with the fact that here is a great error in the instruction of children, and we have endeavored to point it out. It is a subject that comes home to the heart of every one to whom God has entrusted immortal souls, and we hope that some good and no evil may be the result of calling attention to it.

The following article is on a subject not often treated, and though we do not think it is altogether correct, there is enough of truth in it to make it useful.—Ed.

From the Presbyterian of the West.

SENSUALITY IN RELIGION.

The daily occupations of life tend to form a sensual habit of mind, of which it is difficult to divest ourselves in the exercise of religion. This probably presents one of the greatest difficulties of walking by faith. It produces a constant tendency to form an image of the object of thought in the mind, and thus, to walk by sight. The image is designed to render the object of worship definite; and hence the practice is defended as an auxiliary to devotion. Wherein does this differ from the crucifix of the Roman Catholic? In this only—the one is external and the other internal; but, the design of both is the same. Many persons, when they think of God, form conceptions of Him in their imaginations, as a grave, august personage, clothed in white, and seated upon a throne; and, it must indeed be confessed, that the figurative language of Scripture tends to foster these mental images; but the Christian must learn to distinguish between a figure, which is used in adaptation to our mental infirmity, and the invisible, spiritual substance represented thereby. God is a spirit; and as soon may we form an image in our minds of the particular shape of our own souls, as of that of the Most High. Besides, God demands spiritual worship at our hands. He must be worshipped "in spirit and in truth." We must bring up our minds to the spiritual nature of the objects, and not reduce the sublimely spiritual objects of religion to the gross conceptions of carnality.

From this habit of mind arises that longing desire, which possesses many, for some extraordinary manifestation of divine approbation, as a ground of hope that they are the true children of God; something similar to the desire of Moses, when he said, "I beseech thee, show me thy glory."—Ex. xxxiii. 18. Their mental habit leads them to seek communion with Christ through another medium than the mirror of his promises, which is an exercise too purely spiritual for so gross a state of mind. The writer for a long time la-

bourted under this state of mind, before the joys of hope came. He refused to be comforted, unless he could have some direct intimation of God, making it evident to his senses that he was accepted of Him. A light from Heaven, a voice, a sudden and remarkable suggestion of portions of Scripture to his mind, adapted to his particular case, were eagerly sought for; and it was not until he abandoned all hope of such an interposition on the part of God, in his case, and brought his mind to rely wholly upon the declarations of Christ in his promises, that full comfort and assurance of hope came. Such a desire is a disparagement of the wisdom and benevolence of God, and consequently the habit of mind which generates it should be sedulously guarded against. It insinuates that God has not revealed sufficient ground of hope and consolation in the Gospel, and consequently something additional is sought for—something which may result wholly from an illusion of the imagination, and which constitutes no Scriptural evidence of genuine religion. "That only," says Dr. Edwards, "is to be trusted to, as a certain evidence of grace, which Satan cannot do, and which it is impossible should be brought to pass by any power short of divine."

This sensuality of mind often, when not overcome, leads to a false hope; something extraordinary is sought after, and if it is experienced, though it may be all a mental illusion, produced it may be by the craft of Satan, yet it is taken as a direct expression of divine approbation, and the mind is comforted.

A case in point occurs to my mind. A person with whom I was particularly acquainted, sought and obtained his hope in this extraordinary way.—While labouring under great terror of mind, on account of sin, he thought he saw, while on his bed at night, the dark visage of the devil hovering over him, about to seize and drag him to hell. Immediately one in shining raiment appeared, drove him away, and whispered, fear not, I will save you. He awoke rejoicing, and soon became an active and zealous professor of religion. While in the zenith of his profession, he related his experience to me. I immediately expressed a doubt of the genuineness of his hope, the truth of which the event confirmed. In a few years he was overcome by the sins of adultery and intemperance, and died of *delirium tremens*, tormented on his dying bed by those frightful Satanic images, from which he fancied he was once delivered by the bright and shining One. Having rested his hopes of Heaven upon an unscriptural foundation, he was at length abandoned of God, to reap the consequences of his delusion. Let us beware how we resolve faith into sight, and mould the purely spiritual religion of Heaven to the sensual habits of our own minds, lest we provoke the Lord to abandon us to our idols.

It is not denied that God may use some external events to awake us to suitable reflection; but, if so, it is not that the event should be a ground of hope, but Christ in the promises of the Gospel, to which we are driven by the event. A kind of vague idea prevails with many, that the Spirit bears witness with our spirit to our adoption, in some external manner, separate from our spirit; which is not the fact. He bears witness in conjunction with our spirit, and by means of it. By our spirit here, the Apostle means our conscience: "For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity," &c. 2 Cor. i. 12. The Spirit of God, by quickening our conscience, makes it the messenger to us of our approbation with God. We are then not to look for a voice from Heaven, or any other extraordinary circumstances in testimony of our acceptance; but, within, to hear what a conscience, enlightened by the word and Spirit of God, says; and "if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God," and shall assure our hearts before him.—1 John iii. 21, 19.

THE GREAT AND FINAL BATTLE.

Archbishop Usher is said to have had a foreboding of the impending final struggle between Popery and Protestantism. As the anticipations formed by this eminent Prelate of the issue of this conflict are of an encouraging nature, and have evidently a bearing upon the subject which has been under discussion, I will submit them to your thoughtful consideration:—

"The greatest stroke upon the Reformed Churches is yet to come; and the time of the utter ruin of the See of Rome shall be when she thinks herself most secure." One presuming to inquire of him what his general apprehensions were concerning a very great persecution, he answered, "That a very great persecution would fall upon all the Protestant Churches in Europe;" adding, "I tell you, all you have seen both the beginning of sorrow, to what is yet to come upon the Protestant Churches of Christ, which will ere long fall under a sharper persecution than ever." Therefore, "said he, 'look you be not found in the outer court, but a worshipper in the temple, before the altar; for Christ will measure all those that profess his name and call themselves his people; and the outward worshippers he will leave out to be trodden down of the Gentiles. The outer court is the formal Christian whose religion consists in performing the outward duties of Christianity, without having an inward life and power of faith uniting him to Christ; and these God will leave to be trodden down and swept away by the Gentiles. But the worshippers within the temple, and before the altar, God will hide in the hollow of his hand, and under the shadow of his wings. And this shall be one great difference between the last and all the other preceding persecutions. For, in the former, the most eminent and spiritual ministers and Christians did generally suffer most, and were most violently fallen upon. But in this last persecution, these shall be preserved by God, as a seed to partake of that glory which shall immediately follow, and come upon the church, as soon as ever this storm shall be over. For, as it shall be the sharpest, so it shall be the shortest persecution of them all; and shall only take away the gross hypocrites and formal professors; but the true believers shall be preserved till the calamity be over."

The passage above quoted is taken from the appendix to a scarce Treatise, entitled "Apocallyptic Key," by Robert Fleming, published first in 1701, and re-published in 1803. In this same book is an extraordinary extract from Dr. Goodman's Exposition of the Revelation, published in the year 1630:—

"Whether the wine-press will be brought into this country, He only knows who is the Lord both of the harvest and the vintage. Only this may be more confidently affirmed, that those carnal Protestants, in England and other places, who, like the outward court, have been joined to the people of God, shall yet, before the expiration of the beast's kingdom and number, be more or less given up to the Papists, and be made to veil to them; if not all of them by bloody wars and conquests, yet by some base and unworthy yielding to them, as a just punishment of their carnal profession of the Gospel."—Archdeacon of Ely's Charge at Cambridge, in May, 1635.

FELIX NEFF, PASTOR OF THE HIGH ALPS.

Neff's labours among the Roman Catholics were unceasing, and in some instances crowned with success. His hands were greatly strengthened by the active co-operation of several of his youthful converts. The following extracts from his journal refer to these pious youths and their labours:—

"In Champraur, where the protestants compose but a very small portion of the inhabitants, mixed with a multitude who are not only bigoted but often rudely violent in their conduct, our young brethren, since the revival, have eagerly embraced every opportunity of giving testimony to the truth, not only in private houses and on the public roads, but also frequently in the presence of the priests themselves. Their conversations were lively and animated, yet always characterized by good sense, and an extensive knowledge of the Scriptures. Our friend P.—was on terms of intimacy even with the cure of the parish in which he resided, who frequently called at his cottage to converse with him. One day the following dialogue took place:—'Upon what foundation,' asked the cure, 'do you protestants build your faith, since you acknowledge no human authority?' 'Upon the Bible,' replied our brother; adding that the apostles themselves did not believe that their successors would be infallible, or they would never have left them so many written epistles, expressly intended for their guidance and instruction. 'But, wherefore,' it was asked, 'do you repose with greater confidence on the apostles than upon their successors?' 'Because,' replied he, 'the apostles were inspired by the Holy Ghost.' 'Well, we are also endowed with the same influences.' 'What, are you inspired?' 'Yes!' rejoined the priest. 'Oh! indeed! I added our friend; 'why then do you go to college?' 'At another time, the cure questioned Mary, one of my communicants at Gneyras, respecting the object of her faith and hope; and as she replied to all his queries by naming the Saviour, the priest becoming quite impatient, exclaimed, 'What! always Jesus Christ! always Jesus Christ! do you believe that Jesus Christ is every thing to you?' 'Yes, I do,' replied Mary, in her usual mild manner; 'we are in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us, wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. What do we want more?'"

THE PREACHER PREACHED UNTO.—The celebrated Dr. Mantou was appointed on a public occasion to preach before the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of London. His sermon was learned, ingenious, and elegant. As he was returning home, a plain old gentleman pulled him by the coat, and desired to speak to him. The doctor stopped, and the stranger thus addressed him: "I was one of your auditory to-day. I went to be fed with the gospel, as usual; but have returned empty." Dr. Mantou was not Dr. Mantou this morning. There was, indeed, much of the Doctor, of the florid and learned man, in the discourse; but little or nothing of Jesus Christ; it was, in short, no sermon to me." "Sir," answered the Doctor, "if I have not preached to you, you have now preached a good sermon to me: such as, I trust, I shall never forget, but to be the better for, as long as I live."

BE PUNCTUAL.—King George the Third is said never to have been a minute behind any of his appointments. Another king, by his dilatory habits, fixed on his name the disgraceful stigma, "Etheled the Unready."

CHRIST THE PURIFIER.

Some ladies in Dublin, who met together from time to time, at each other's houses to read the Scriptures, and to make them the subject of profitable conversation, when they came to the third chapter of Malachi, had some discussion over the second and third verses, respecting the method of purifying the precious metals. As none of the company knew anything about the process, one undertook to inquire of a silversmith, with whom she was acquainted, how it was effected; and, particularly, what was the business of the refiner himself, during the operation. Without explaining her motive, she accordingly went to her friend, and asked how the silver was cleared from any dross with which it might have been mixed. He promptly explained to her the manner of doing this. "But," said the inquirer, "do you not sit, sir, at the work?" "Oh, yes," he replied, "for I must keep my eye steadily fixed on the furnace, since, if the silver remain too long under the intense heat, it is sure to be damaged." She at once saw the propriety and beauty of the image employed—"He shall sit as a refiner of silver;" and the moral of the illustration was equally obvious. As the lady was returning with the information to her expecting companions, the silversmith called her back, and said he had forgotten to mention one thing of importance, which was, that he only knew the exact instant when the purifying process was complete, by then seeing his own countenance reflected in it. Again the spirit and meaning shone forth through the beautiful veil of the letter. When God sees his own image in his people, the work of sanctification is complete. It may be added, that the metal continues in a state of agitation until all the impurities are thrown off, and then it becomes quite still, a circumstance which heightens the exquisite analogy of the case, for O how

"Sweet to lie passive in his hand,
And know no will but his!"

The subject was embodied in the following stanza, at the urgent request of a friend, who, with her young family, was about to leave her native country, and settle in a distant part of the globe; but the writer's mind had received the ineffaceable similitude and the inference, in the year 1832, from the lips of another dear friend when she was nearly in her last agony, who applied it to herself and her afflictions, which had been long and excruciating, yet borne by her as such pains can only be borne, in God's furnace and under his eye—"He shall sit as a refiner of silver."—Mal. iii. 3.

"He that from dross would win the precious ore,
Bends o'er the crucible an earnest eye,
The scale, searching process to explore,
Lest the ore brilliant moment shall pass by,
When in the molten silver's virgin mass
He meets his pictured face as in a glass.

"Thus in God's furnace are his people tried;
Thrice happy they who to the end endure!
But who the fiery ordeal may abide?
Who from the crucible come forth so pure,
That He, whose eyes of flame look through the whole,
May see his image perfect in the soul!"

"Not with an evanescent glimpse alone,
As in the mirror the refiner's face,
But stamp'd with heaven's broad signet there be shown
Immanuel's features full of truth and grace;
And round that seat of love this motto be,
'Not for a moment, but—eternity!'"

MORALS OF INFIDELS.

Bolingbroke was a libertine, of intemperate habits and unrestrained lusts. Temple was a corrupter of all that came near him—given up to ease and pleasure. Emerson, an eminent mathematician, was "rude, vulgar, and frequently immoral." "Intoxication and profane language were familiar to him. Towards the close of life, being afflicted with the stone, he would crawl about the floor on his hands and knees, *continens praying, sometimes swearing.*" The morals of the Earl of Rochester are well known. Godwin was a lewd man by his confession, as well as the unblinking advocate of lewdness. Shaftesbury and Collins, while endeavouring to destroy the gospel, partook of the Lord's Supper; thus professing the Christian faith for admission to office! Woolston was a gross blasphemer. Blount solicited his sister-in-law to marry him; but being refused, shot himself. "Dindal was originally a Protestant—then turned Papist—then turned Protestant again, merely to suit the times—and was, at the same time, infamous for vice in general, and total want of principle. He is said to have died with this prayer in his mouth: 'If there is a God, I desire that he may have mercy on me.'"
Hobbes wrote his Leviathan to serve the cause of Charles I.; but finding himself fail of success, he turned it to the defence of Cromwell, and made a merit of this fact to the usurper; as Hobbes himself unblushingly declared to Lord Clarendon. Need I describe Voltaire—prince of scoffers, as Home was prince of scorpions; in childhood initiated into infidelity; in boyhood, infamous for daring blasphemy; in manhood, distinguished for a malignant and violent temper, for cold-blooded disruptions of all the ties and deceives of the family circle; for the ridicule of whatever was affecting, and the violation of whatever was confidential! Ever increasing in duplicity and hypocritical management with age and practice,—those whom his wit attracted, and his buffoonery amused, were either disgusted or polluted by his loathsome vices. Lies and oaths in their support were nothing to his wau. Those whom he openly called his friends, he took pains, secretly, to calumniate; flattering them to their faces, and ridiculing and reviling them behind their backs. Years only added stiffness to the disgusting features of his impiety, coldness to his dark malignity, and fury to his impetuous temper. Throughout life he was given up "to work all uncleanliness with greediness."—Such was the witty Voltaire, who, in the midst of all his levity, had feeling and seriousness enough to wish he had never been born.—Doeght.

PIETY IN CHURCH CHOIRS.

Employing ungodly choirs of singers in the church is a barrier to the progress of the gospel. Singing is a very important part of divine worship. It is either adoration, confession, deprecation, intercession, supplication, or giving of thanks; and should therefore be conducted by pious persons who "sing with the spirit and with the understanding also." Christians would not think it right for ungodly men to engage in public prayer in the sanctuary of God, but would be greatly shocked with such an impropriety; and yet there would be no more impropriety in that, than for an ungodly choir to lead the singing of public worship; for in both cases the Holy God is to be addressed and worshipped. Far too little attention is paid to this subject in every section of the church; and hence, in many of our places of worship, when that Being is to be praised before whom angels veil their faces, we have no devotional singing, but a grand performance of stately concerted, vain, and giddy young people, who praise God with their lips, whilst their hearts are far from him. Their spirit, gestures, and general behaviour, as well as much of their music, would be more accordant with the opera than the house of God; and yet, strange to say, many of them are remunerated for their valuable services.—Rev. Robert Young.

MORAL ELEVATION OF SCOTLAND.

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries Scotland was the most barbarous and bigoted of European nations, and its priesthood (Romanish) held two-thirds of the landed property of the kingdom. But in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries it became the most thoroughly reformed and best-educated nation in Europe. This change was produced by the "moral machinery of pastors, schoolmasters, elders, deacons, and catechists." Between 1638 and 1660, says Kirkcaldy, "every parish had a minister, every village a school, every family almost a Bible; yea, in most of the country all the children of age could read, and were provided with Bibles, either by their parents or ministers. I have lived many years in a parish where I never heard an oath, and you might have rode many miles before you heard any. Also you would not, for a great part of the country, have lodged in a family where the Lord was not worshipped by reading, singing, and prayer. Nobody complained more of our church government than our taverners, whose ordinary lament was, that their trade was hopeless, people were become so sober."—So much for the conducting of schools on the principles of religion—the only principle on which they can become permanently beneficial to the community.—Boston Recorder.

OFFICE OF ANGELS.—Heaven has, no less than earth, its active duties: the blessedness of Heaven is a useful and energetic blessedness; and they are sometimes painted as feasting in the kingdom and enjoying the presence of their Maker, and at others described as engaged in battle with the great dragon and his adherents; as stopping, in the cause of the saints, the mouths of lions, and smothering the violence of fire; as keeping guard around the prophets of the Lord, and as bearers of his orders to them; as ministering to the Son of God after his temptation and in the hour of his mortal agony; as consoling witnesses of his kingdom upon earth; as calling the Gentile Cornelius to be the first fruits of Christian adoption; as smiting with an invisible sword the arrogant and persecuting Herod, and breaking down before the Apostle Peter the chains and gates of his captivity.—Bishop Hilder.

FICTITIOUS WORKS.—Professor Hitchcock, of Amherst, in a lecture recently delivered in New-York, stated that the whole number of original works published in this country in 1834 was 623, of which 126, or one-fifth of the whole, were novels and tales. In Great Britain, in 1833, the whole number of publications was 1,112; of which 71, or one-fifteenth, were novels and tales. In France, of 7000 works issued in a single year, 335, or one-twentieth, were novels. These facts were cited as an evidence of the prevailing taste, especially prominent in this country, for works of fiction.—Vermont Chronicle.

* For fuller citation of several testimonies here selected and compressed, the reader is referred to Watson's Reply to Southey, section 1v.

