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# LOOKING AT THE THINGS WHICH ARE NOT SEEN.

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“While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.”—II. CORINTHIANS, IV. 18.

IN this passage, the Apostle explains to us the method by which he succeeded, in so dealing with the trials and afflictions of life, as to make them the means of his spiritual advancement: so that though *the outward man was perishing, the inward man was renewed day by day. He was troubled on every side, but not distressed—perplexed, but not in despair—persecuted, but not forsaken—cast down, but not destroyed. He bore about in his body the dying of the Lord Jesus; but it was that the life of Jesus might be made manifest in him.* The grievous sufferings of body which he endured; the falsehood and treachery of friends in whom he had confided; the persecuting malignity of those, whom he, in the self-denying spirit of love, was seeking to benefit; the unkind and harsh repulses of his offered ministrations of charity; the derisions and sneers with which the truths that he

delivered were received:—These, and many other like trials that he encountered, inflicted upon him severe pain, amounting at times, doubtless, to anguish; so much so, that the desolation they wrought is fitly described as the work of death. But it was the death only of the outward man; and, instead of harming that which constituted the inner and central portion of his being—his moral and spiritual nature—it only contributed to his life and joy.

How was it that this Apostle was enabled, thus, to take joyfully these trials which have prostrated others? How was it that the perishing of his outward man was made to renew his inward man day by day? Where, and how, did he get that strong assurance, that these *light afflictions* were working for him *a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory?*

How did he acquire this strange mastery over the evils of his lot—this singular power to hold the world in subjection—to triumph over temptation—to rejoice in the midst of sorrow—to welcome affliction as the minister to his spiritual good, and to endure, through all that could be laid upon him, as seeing Him who is invisible?

It was simply by *looking at the things which are not seen*, instead of looking at the things which are seen; it was by his distinct perception and strong belief of *the Truth*, joined to the habitual contemplation of it, that he was enabled to rise superior to all that is temporary, transient, and accidental. *The things that are not seen* were not to him, as they are to too many of us, the barren formulas of a creed

which he had been taught to receive—they were not the shadowy abstractions, dim and indistinct, of philosophical speculation, nor the poetic fictions, beautiful if true, of religious sentiment. They were realities, as distinctly perceived, and as certainly believed as if seen with the bodily eye. He did not doubt of their existence. His faith was to him as the evidence of eyesight, bringing to light that which was hidden, giving substance to that which was abstract, and drawing into nearness that which was far off. A future state of existence, in which the righteous shall be crowned with unspeakable and everlasting glory—instead of being, in his mind, one hypothesis among many, superior to the rest only by some slender preponderance of probability in its favor, and therefore received at one time and rejected at another, according to the influence of the changing modes of the mind upon the interpretation of evidence—was a truth which he had settled upon grounds which were never more to be disturbed, and which, by frequent reflection, had become so worked up into his intellectual and moral being that it formed a part of himself, and assisted in constituting the medium through which he looked out upon all the events of his condition and destiny. When he looked upon the death scene of some dear friend, or when he forecast his own dying hour, he was harassed by no misgivings lest death might be, after all, some kind of a leap in the dark—a plunge into some unknown and horrid abyss. “*For we know,*” said he, it is no surmise, resting on uncertain probabilities—it is no hope, cherished and

scarcely kept alive amid conflicting fears—but “*we know*, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” Everywhere in the writings and in the life of that Apostle, we observe this same thoroughness and depth of conviction. There is a sincerity and an earnestness about him which could only have resulted in the most intimate persuasion, that he was uttering that which he knew to be true—that he was delivering that the value of which he had himself tried. It is evident that, in his mind, the general truths of religion were habitually present to rule the occasions for which they were needed. This material and sensible world, instead of girding him around, like an opaque wall, to intercept every ray of light from beyond itself, was to him translucent, in every part, with the brightness of the spiritual universe that surrounds and penetrates it. Things visible were, to his eye, but the accidents and vanishing forms, of which things invisible were the true and abiding realities.

Any man who can attain to a like simplicity and strength of faith in an unseen world, will acquire a like supremacy over the objects and scenes of this present life.

But herein lies the difficulty. The greater part of mankind live by sense, and draw their motives of action, not from the remote conclusions of reason, but from their present feeling, from the impressions made upon them by the things which they deal and converse with every day. In this lies all

the force and strength of worldly temptations—for, were the things of this world and of another equally distinct and near, there could be no competition between them. But the things of this world sport and play before the senses. No man can avoid seeing them, and feeling, to some extent, their influence; and many men feel and see nothing else. They are obtrusive, thrusting themselves upon our notice, and offering to us a seeming good which our hearts crave. But the spiritual world is hidden from our vision. It cannot be perceived by sense. It requires thought and reflection to find it, and, when found, it can be kept before the mind only by a continual resistance to the temporary impressions to which we are subject. The things of this world have, in this respect, an important advantage, and our moral position is rendered thereby one of extreme difficulty and hazard.

The spiritual system to which we belong is but partially disclosed to the most patient and earnest seeker. They who know the most of it, know only in part. And in that small part which is open to our survey and comprehension, we find much to perplex and embarrass us. The general idea to which we come, of moral order and the feeling that we ourselves are subject to its requisitions, are so often confounded and set at nought by the anomalies and disorders which we see prevailing around us; there is so much that seems to be fitted to sustain and sanction a life that is shaped only in accordance with the demands of passion and the views of worldly prudence; that we are in continual dan-

ger of losing sight of the paramount nature and claims of general principles, amidst doubtful instances and apparent exceptions. Truth, virtue, justice, and all the general ideas and laws which belong to our moral nature, come thus to be looked upon as fragments of an hypothesis that but partially explains our condition, rather than as expressions of the true reality; and they fail, therefore, to obtain such a practical hold upon our feelings as is needful for our sure and steady guidance. We find it difficult to retain at all times and through all temptations, such a conviction of their reality and importance as to make us conform our conduct to them.

The man who is tempted to increase his wealth by some fraudulent act, which he imagines he may safely commit, yields to the temptation because of his want of faith in honesty as a real principle of action. He is sure of the wealth that he will gain, he is sure of the good which this wealth will procure him, but he is not sure that the notion of honesty is anything more than a mere notion, or a convenient hypothesis that may be dispensed with on pressing occasions; or, at best, it is involved in so much of doubt and uncertainty, that it yields to the more palpable existence and claims of the things that are seen. If he truly believed in the law of honesty, he would feel that he could never violate this law without incurring loss and damage that would infinitely outweigh the temporary and partial benefit of transgression. But, to the eye of sense, the benefit is near and certain—the loss is distant and doubtful; and, through the want or the



weakness of faith, that which is seen prevails over that which is not seen.

So, too, in every instance in which men act under the influence of views and motives that leave out of account a future state of being, they disclose the feebleness of their faith in another world. If it be true that the soul of man is immortal, and that it is now undergoing a process of discipline to fit it for its eternal state, then nothing can be clearer than that the whole importance of this life is derived from its relation to the life that is to come. All things here are but means to the attainment of the true ends of our being; and all schemes and plans, all desires and affections, that terminate in the present life, without due reference and subordination to our immortality, are founded upon an untrue estimate of our condition. They involve, of necessity, a wrong judgment of the understanding, and impeach the soundness of the intellect no less than the purity of the heart.

Doubtless, it was possible that God could have so made and placed us, that we should have been delivered from the blindness and uncertainty which now beset our conclusions on moral subjects. We can conceive that, without any enlargement or modification of our present faculties, we might have been permitted to hold intercourse with other moral beings who have had a larger experience than ours, and enjoyed a closer intimacy with the principles and purposes of the Divine governments. The millions of spiritual creatures that walk the earth unseen, might have been commissioned to

manifest themselves unto us, and strengthen *our* faith by the communication of theirs. The government of God might have been laid bare so widely and fully to our inspection, and the consequences of every action, whether for good or evil, so clearly shown, that it would have been impossible for any mind to throw off the conviction of the invariable obligations of virtue and the folly of vice; such light might have been poured around us, such revelations made of things not now seen, as would at once supersede many of our greatest difficulties and put an end to our fickle vibrations from one side to the other. We see no reason why such disclosures of truth might not be made even here as would be sufficient to confirm the faltering virtue of all who love the truth, and throw off those that hate it into irreconcilable and deadly opposition.

But whether possible or not, such is not our actual lot, nor would such an unrestrained and overwhelming revelation consist with the obvious purpose of God in relation to us. It is evident that our present state was intended to be one of trial and discipline; and it appears to be, so far as we can judge, essential to such a state that there should be so much reserve as to leave room for the conflict of antagonist principles. The infidel has asked with a sneer, "Has God spoken? Then why has not man believed?" As if the possibility of disbelief were a proof that the voice could not have come from God. But what if it were not the purpose of God so to speak as to compel the attention of those who are unwilling to hear? Had He broken

in upon the stillness of this nether world in a voice of thunder, compelling every man to hear and regard, it would have frustrated the design with which He has placed us here. Instead of this, He has spoken in a voice so distinct, that all who listen earnestly for it, may hear and understand; but so still, that men may, if they choose, close their ears to its teachings. We are left to choose whether we will believe or disbelieve. The popular notion that belief is independent of the will, and, therefore, not a proper ground for praise or blame, is so far from being true, that, on the contrary, that which it is most important for us to believe is that which we need not believe, unless we are willing to do so. Whosoever will, may acquaint himself with the truth; but neither reason nor revelation forces it upon the notice or acceptance of any one who is reluctant to find, or unwilling to receive it. Things eternal are so far revealed as to manifest themselves to the eye that freely seeks and fixes upon them, while they are unseen by all who choose to turn away and pass on in heedless disregard. Vice is often so disguised in the shape of virtue, and error counterfeits so nearly the semblance of truth, that the one may be easily mistaken for the other.

Such is our actual position: and it is worse than useless to repine or murmur under its privations and hardships. We are shut up here as prisoners in a small part of God's dominions; and, though light from beyond steals in through here and there a window of our prison-house, it does not come with

such noon-day blaze as to obscure at all times the taper-lights of our own kindling; it does not enter in all directions—it does not disclose to us fully all that we desire to know. But if we will receive freely and gladly its mild beams, and train our eyes long and steadily to its use, we can learn to see clearly all that it is necessary for us to know; and if, on the other hand, we turn away in proud dissatisfaction from the openings through which this light enters, and waste our strength in important attempts to break at other points through the dark walls by which we are bound in, or if we only casually and carelessly attend to it, as it seems to flash now and then before us, we shall soon become altogether incapable of perceiving it. False lights will shed their glare around us, and so illuminate the gaudy pomps and trickeries by which we are surrounded—so magnify the false attractions and urgent interests of the passing moment, that our prison will become to us as our home. The things that are seen, though they are but temporal, will become to us more important than the eternal things which are unseen. The facility with which we can so dispose of the convictions of reason and conscience as to permit ourselves, without the most pungent remorse, to live on the indulgence of an undue regard for the things of this world,—the ease with which we can turn the light that is within us, into darkness, and call good, evil, and evil, good,—is one of the most alarming features of our depravity. It would seem impossible that any thoughtful mind could reflect upon this peculiarity of its nature,

without being startled into instant prayer to God, accompanied with the most patient and earnest seeking after truth. It is only thus that we can hope to attain right views of our condition, and of those truths that are to rule our destiny.

It needs no argument to prove that the great majority of men act habitually under the influence of erroneous judgments. They attribute a fixedness and value to the things of this life that do not really belong to them. They hold the great moral truths, by which the soul of man ought to live, so loosely that they give way continually to the clamorous demands of passion and interest. Looking only, or chiefly at the things that are seen, their standards of judgment are commensurate only with the wants of a temporal life, and are, therefore, essentially defective and false. Their habitual interests are the product, not of truth, but of fancy, and the scenes which surround them are as unreal as the phantasies of a dream. Their lives are a vain show. It is true that there is a material world—the visible objects before us have a real existence; there *is* such a thing as wealth, and worldly honour and human applause; there is love and friendship, the domestic fireside, and the warm household affections that grow up beside it, literature and science, and a thousand other objects of desire and sources of pleasure. We do not call in question the real existence of these things that are seen. But what are they? What is their intrinsic nature? What is their true value? Here the men of this world fall into grievous error and delusion. The world, in its

largest sense, as comprising all the objects which here appeal to our desires and affections, is to us whatever our judgment of it makes it to be. And the judgment which the majority of men form of it is radically false. They world is not, in truth, what they take it for. It stands before them clothed with a light, and endowed with qualities which do not really belong to it. They commit an error like that of the child who leaps up to grasp the rainbow. There is a rainbow, but it is not what he supposes it to be. And so the things that are seen, in the shapes that they assume before the minds of men, as objects of desire, and motives to action, do not really exist. Their conceptions of them are not framed in accordance with their true nature and qualities, and the judgments founded upon these conceptions are all more or less unsound. He who thus spreads abroad the colors of his own fancy, and who looks habitually at things temporal and finite out of their relations to that which is eternal and infinite, can only have a knowledge about as approximate to the reality, as that which belongs to the animalculæ to whom the dew drop is an ocean. We can have no true knowledge of ourselves unless we study ourselves in our relation to God. We can never know what this world truly is, unless we look at it in its connexion with the world that is to come.

The necessity of the diligent study and contemplation of the truths that connect us with another world, is estimated by the Apostle when he says, "we *look* at the things that are not seen." The

original word implies deep and careful consideration. It is the same word that is used by our Saviour when he delivers the solemn injunction, "*look,*" or *take heed* "that the light that is within thee be not darkness." If we bestow only casual and hurried glances upon the things that are not seen, in the intervals of our zealous pursuit after the things that are seen, we assuredly shall never obtain such a knowledge and belief of them as will enable us to use them for practical purposes. We cannot snatch the meaning of these high truths by such random and careless efforts. We must look long and fixedly upon them before we can penetrate their essence, and so saturate our souls with their meaning, as to make them effective in regulating our feelings and our conduct. In proportion to the distinctness and fulness of the knowledge which we acquire of religious truth, will be the strength of our faith, and the degree of influence which it will exert over us. We cannot be said properly to understand any moral truth unless we feel it, nor can we understand or feel unless we believe. The belief, the knowledge, and the practical effect of any moral truth or principle, are co-extensive, and any one of them may be taken as the strict measure of the others. And here we see the indispensable necessity of regeneration through the influence of the Holy Spirit. Without a new heart we are incapable of the actual intuition of truth, because we are destitute of the holy affections through which alone it can be comprehended. No exercise of the mere reasoning intellect can ever give us a correct

apprehension of moral qualities and truths. Our consciousness is here, as in other things, the master light of all our seeing. Unless our own experience has taught us the meaning of holy love, how can we frame any adequate conception of God, who is love? And how can we understand any moral truth unless our own feelings have been such as to illustrate its meaning? It is one of the prerogatives of the truths of revelation, that the principle of knowledge is likewise a spring and principle of action. It necessarily implies a right moral state of heart.

Without a regenerate heart men believe in the truths of the Bible, only as they believe in the beauties of a fine country through which they travel in darkness. They may believe from the description and testimony of others that they are surrounded by the most lovely scenery, but their notions of it are too vague and indistinct to awaken the emotion that attends the actual inspection of beauty, until the rising sun has revealed to them the varied richness of the scene that encircles them. So it is with the truths of Scripture. The natural man comprehendeth them not, for they are spiritually discerned. There is a vail upon the unregenerate heart through which it sees not at all, or only with a dim and uncertain vision like his to whom men seemed like trees walking. But let the day-star arise, let Him who caused the light to shine out of darkness, shine into his heart; and the truths that were but darkly perceived, brighten at once into new light. He professed before to be-



lieve in the existence and attributes of God, but this truth now bursts upon him in a richness and fulness of meaning of which he had had no previous conception; and he feels that to know God is to love him. He professed before to believe that Jesus Christ had died to redeem us from death, but now he sees the grace and glory of the Saviour in such a light as makes him feel the surprise of a new discovery amid the truths of man's redemption.

It is in the new birth that we must seek the commencement of all true knowledge of spiritual things. We enforce then this primary lesson of Christianity, "ye must be born again," as an indispensable prerequisite to any adequate or effective consideration of the things that are not seen. And this new birth is to be sought by prayer and by the diligent use of all the means of grace with which God has favored us, not forgetting as chief and foremost among these, the study of divine revelation. Though the natural man comprehendeth not the things of the Spirit, yet the outward forms of truth, with such glimpses of their interior meaning as he can gain, are not without their value. There is a reality and power in the teachings of the Bible, addressed to the natural conscience with the authority of "thus saith the Lord," which tend to scatter the visions of that vain and deceitful show which exists only in the deluded imagination, yet from which sin draws its chief enticements. Any man who will give himself to fervent prayer and the earnest study of God's holy word, has every reason to believe that

God will break the chains of his bondage, and scatter the darkness which broods over him, and lead him forth to walk in the liberty of the sons of God, and exult in the open daylight of eternity.

But regeneration is only the commencement of our spiritual life. The work is but begun which, in dependence upon Divine Grace, we are to carry on to completion. We have a hard struggle to maintain in our conflict with the things that are seen and temporal; in our liability to be overtaken by erroneous judgments, arising out of a limited and partial view of our condition, and thus to be surprised into a forgetfulness of our deliberate convictions. We can guard against this danger only by looking steadfastly at the things that are not seen. The more we contemplate them, the more will we understand of their nature and value, the firmer will become our belief in them, and the more influence will they exert in the control of our feelings and conduct. Faith cannot go beyond knowledge, and the life cannot be stable beyond the power of faith. If our comprehension of truth is imperfect or erroneous, in like degree will our faith be weak and fluctuating, and our walk uncertain and inconsistent; and our knowledge of truth—taking for granted the continual presence in the mind of a sense of dependence upon God, which will be manifested in prayer for divine aid, and a right state of the affections, without which we can learn nothing—will be in proportion to the degree in which we devote ourselves to the earnest contemplation of the things that are not seen.

How many Christians are there who have never yet pondered these things sufficiently to enable them to see them, except with such dimness and distortion that they walk with timid and halting step—they fight uncertainly, as one beating the air! How many who understand so little of the true nature of the things that are seen, that they look upon wealth, elevated station, and worldly pleasure as good and desirable possessions in themselves, not knowing, or forgetting, that every view of these things which does not take in their relation to eternal realities, is nothing more than a delusive trick of the imagination.

How many whose formal faith is correct, but whose real belief, as proved by the main current of their feelings, and the ordinary tenor of their walk and conversation, attaches a degree of magnitude and interest to worldly things, that is altogether inconsistent with their just appreciation!

We cannot doubt that there are many Christians who separate between the material and the spiritual world, for the purpose of attributing to each a kind of distinct and independent existence, each containing its own treasures and furnishing its own motives to action. On the one side lies this world, governed by invariable laws, and, to their view, complete in itself; and, therefore, fitly entered upon and pursued with principles and dispositions that have their origin and their end within its boundaries. And, on the other hand, they believe in a spiritual world, not encircling and absorbing this, but existing separate and remote from it, and touch-

ing upon the present order of things only at particular points, and by anomalous interpositions. Hence worldly affairs are one thing, and religion quite a different one. Each stands by itself. The spiritual system, instead of interposing itself entirely through the objects and interests of the present state, is seen in connection with them only on special occasions. It is a thing of Sabbaths, of divine worship, of the formal discharge of religious duties, of seasons of deep affliction, or of such other particular exigencies as seem to call for the decencies and consolations which belong to it. It is this meagre knowledge, and, of course, weak faith, which produces that kind of religion which permits men to press forward on the busy paths of this world, with as much bustling and earnest anxiety as if all their treasures were to be found here, and which brings the things of another world to bear upon them only with sufficient distinctness and force to overcloud their hours of reflection, and lay upon them the occasional sorrows of repentance.

Our religion cannot but partake very much of this character, unless we reflect much upon divine truth. It is no doubt true that the spiritual world encompasses us on every side, so that if our souls should now escape from our bodies, like the bird breaking through the shell which had shut it in, we should at once find ourselves breathing the air of immortality, and looking upon the face of God. It is true that every object here can be properly defined or understood only through its relation to our spiritual interests. It is true that the

sound and din of worldly things, the glare and pomp in which they flash before us, are but the unrealities of a distempered imagination. But how can we attain the conviction of these truths in any other way than by frequent reflection upon them? The great interests and permanent realities by which we ought to be actuated, are not visibly and tangibly present to us like the scenes of our passing life, and we have no other means of making them present than by deliberate, oft-repeated reflection upon them.

No man can pursue any great interest in which important consequences are at stake, without a profound and thoughtful intentness of mind upon his end, and upon the means by which he is seeking to attain it. How especially true must this be in regard to the great interests of religion and eternity! How can we hope, amid the entanglements and difficulties that beset us, to make any real progress in the establishment of a character fashioned after the ideas and laws of an unseen world, without a fixed and habitual thoughtfulness—a thoughtfulness that will never permit us to forget, for any length of time, our true position, or to lose the consciousness of our relation to more glorious beings, and higher interests, than are to be found upon the earth. This must be our habit,—something more than an occasional musing and reverie, at set times, when we force ourselves to the task. It must be the uniform condition of the mind. Through the prevalence of such a predominant habit of thoughtful attention to divine

things, we may acquire a paramount interest in the truth, and incorporate it into the frame and constitution of our souls; so that while we are enlarging our apprehension of God, his providence, and his purposes, we shall at the same time so work our conceptions into the substance of our intellectual constitution, as to make them the very medium of our vision, the pervading and actuating motives of our lives. Religion will thus become to us the one present thought, motive, and impulse—the one great light by the reflection of which all things will be seen and judged. Then will our temptations be conquered in the strength of that faith which is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen. Then will our repinings of heart, under the hardships and losses to which we are here exposed, be exchanged for joy in view of our coming glory. Then, when environed with difficulties and dangers which hem us in on every side, instead of crying out, with the servant of the prophet, “Alas! my Master! what shall we do?” our eyes will be opened to see the horses and chariots of fire that are about us, and we shall feel secure in the persuasion that they that be with us are more than they that be against us. Then shall we feel that we are running our race, not obscurely, but compassed about with a great cloud of witnesses,—by patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and martyrs; by all the spirits of the just made perfect; by the dear friends who have gone before us to heaven; by angels, principalities, and powers; and, above

all, by the great Captain of our salvation, who was himself made perfect, through sufferings, and who is ever near to encourage and to help us. Then shall we lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith, who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. Heaven, which we are too much disposed to throw far off, will then draw nigh us and lie around us, and come into contact with the affairs and feelings of every day, and give us songs in the night, and light in the hour of darkness, and rob us of our sorrows by putting us in possession of its joys.

Brethren, these things are not pictures: I believe, in my soul, that they are realities—that they are the only abiding realities; and, what is infinitely more important than my belief or any other man's, God, with whom alone is certain knowledge—who is himself, in his self-subsistence and eternity, the only permanent basis of reality—has revealed them to us as the only certainties to which we can trust. Nothing else possesses the worth which it seems to have, and all things else are unstable and frail. Wealth takes to itself wings and flies away; popular applause depends upon popular caprice; the pleasures of domestic affection lie at the mercy of death; all things visible change while we are looking upon them, and we ourselves are passing away—“Man dieth and goeth to his long home, and the

mourners go about the streets;" whole generations of men sweep over the face of the earth, like the shadow of the fast-sailing cloud flying over the plain; the earth itself and the heavens, so real and solid seeming, are growing old, and shall soon reel to and fro like a drunkard, and be utterly broken down and clean dissolved. But through all these commotions and changes among the things that are seen—the surging, ever-shifting phenomena of time and sense; through the fires of the last day, the things that are unseen pass unchanged, and there they stand upon the high table-land of eternity, like him who is himself their sum and substance, without variableness or shadow of turning, "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever."

Blessed, thrice blessed are they who are now steadfastly looking at these things. How much, on the contrary, are they to be pitied who are living only for the things that are seen, unmindful of the destruction that lieth in wait for them! Pilgrims of the earth! heirs of immortality! can ye not be made to see that ye are spending your strength for that which is not bread, and laboring for that which satisfieth not? Oh, that ye could gain somewhat of that view with which ye will look back from beyond the vail, upon these transitory scenes that now fix your chief regard! Oh, how will ye then curse that gold and honour, and sinful pleasure, of which there will then remain only the memory to eat like fire into the soul!

Yes, Christian brethren, though ye can now see only as through a glass darkly, yet these imperfect



glimpses of eternal things are more worth to you than all beside. The visions, in which the mystic ladder is set from earth to heaven, comprise the real truths of our condition; and its dreamy illusions are the trusted views of its waking sense. Let us labor, then, with due diligence and prayer, with much inward reflection and study of God's holy word, that we may ever keep this world before our minds in its just relation to the world to come; and if prone to murmur under the meagreness of our knowledge and the weakness of our faith, let our conscious sense of disparity between the possibilities and the actual achievements of our lot lead us to look forward to the grave as the portal through which we are to pass from this outward vestibule through the inner veil, where we shall look, with the open intuition of a free spirit, upon that glory which now only dimly reveals itself to us through the opaque symbols by which we are here surrounded. Towards that day, which is to succeed the long night of our restless, feverish tossings, let us bend and look forward, like those that watch for the morning. Blessed day! when we shall see as we are seen, and know as we are known!