

# DISCOURSES

DELIVERED IN

## MURRAY STREET CHURCH

ON SABBATH EVENINGS,

DURING THE MONTHS OF

MARCH, APRIL, AND MAY, 1830.

BY

DR. SPRING	DR. CARNAHAN
DR. COX	DR. WOODBRIDGE
DR. SKINNER	DR. RICE
DR. DE WITT	DR. WOODS
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DR. SPRAGUE	DR. SNODGRASS
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SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK, ss.

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“Discourses delivered in Murray street Church, on Sabbath evenings, during the months of March, April, and May, 1830. By Dr. Spring, Dr. Cox, Dr. Skinner, Dr. De Witt, Dr. Miller, Dr. Sprague, Dr. Carnahan, Dr. Woodbridge, Dr. Rice, Dr. Woods, Dr. Wayland, Dr. Snodgrass, Dr. Griffin.”

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FREDERICK I. BETTS,

*Clerk of the Southern District of New York.*

## DISCOURSE VII.

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REVEALED RELIGION, THE ONLY SOURCE OF TRUE  
HAPPINESS.

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JOHN vi. 68—"Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

THERE is something in the gospel that addresses itself with prodigious power to the human conscience. Multitudes, it is true, hear it with profound unconcern; and the reason is, that they hear it without reflection: but let it once come fairly before the mind, and let the mind fasten upon it in intense contemplation as a living reality, and it instantly becomes a subject of the deepest interest. It is like a candle to the inner man of the heart, in the light of which sin, and judgment, and the wrath to come, assume the character of substantial and fearful realities. Hence it were reasonable to suppose that many would attend, for a season, on the preaching of the gospel, from curiosity, or some other

motive, who, whenever its truths should come in contact with their understandings and consciences, would turn from it in anger or disgust. An instance of this is recorded in the chapter which contains my text—an instance too which occurred in our Lord's personal ministry. Having, on a certain occasion, brought plainly to view some of the leading doctrines of the gospel, many who had before professed to be his disciples, charged him with unreasonable severity, and finally renounced their attachment to him and his cause. In reference to this apostacy, Jesus turned to the twelve who constituted his own immediate family, and said, "Will ye also go away?" Simon Peter answered, both for himself and his fellow disciples, in language of which our text is a part—"Lord to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

By the words of eternal life we are to understand the doctrine of salvation; including the fact that salvation is within our reach, and the means by which it may be obtained. The text therefore obviously suggests this truth—That the gospel, and that alone, secures the great end of religion, viz., a happy existence beyond the present life. As, however, the salvation that is perfected in heaven is begun here; as the same system which professedly discloses the means of happiness beyond the grave, professes also, in this life, to open ways of pleasantness and paths of peace, I shall consider the text as containing the general proposition that RE-

## VEALED RELIGION IS THE ONLY SOURCE OF TRUE HAPPINESS.

In illustrating this proposition, it will be necessary to keep constantly in view the moral constitution of man. Every one is conscious of possessing certain original desires, which are inherent in his very nature, and which exist independently of all circumstances, and in the gratification of which consists his happiness. The great masters of mental science, much as they have differed in respect to the means of gratifying these desires, have been nearly agreed in respect to their number; and they have generally reduced them to a few. Whatever then is best adapted to meet these original desires, is, of course, best fitted to promote man's true happiness. Taking the gospel just as we find it, I shall endeavor to show that *all these desires are successfully met in it, and in nothing else*: and if I should succeed in this, you will not doubt that my proposition is established. I hardly need say that, so far as there may be occasion, in the progress of the discussion, to compare the gospel with any other system, it will be with natural religion, and not with any thing that professes to come in the form of a revelation; for I suppose it may fairly be taken for granted that, if true happiness is not to be found in the religion of nature, we shall look for it in vain in the doctrines of Mohammed, or of any other teacher than Jesus Christ.

Here then, on the one hand, we have man with his original desires: on the other, the gospel with its various

provisions. Let us see how the one is adapted to the other.

I. The first of man's original desires which I shall notice, and the first in the order of nature, is *the desire of continued existence*.

That this is deeply seated in the soul, is evident from that natural sentiment of horror which is awakened by the thought of annihilation. Try the experiment, and bring home to your own bosom the thought of being doomed to an eternal night of unconsciousness, and tell me whether nature does not stand aghast at the suggestion! Does any one point to the suicide to disprove my position? I answer, the suicide is a monster; and from what he does no conclusions are to be drawn, which do not respect himself. But after all, the most that his conduct necessarily proves, is, that he is willing to risk a change in his existence of which he has no knowledge. Perhaps he is a universalist; and in that case, instead of proving himself willing to be annihilated, he only shows that he is willing to exchange the troubles of the world for the glories of heaven. Or even if he be an atheist, and thinks to lay himself down in his grave clothes for an eternal sleep, he proves, not that existence in itself considered is not desirable to him, but only that existence may be so burdened with calamity that he would rather sacrifice the one than endure the other. Does any one ask again, how it is, if this desire of immortality be so natural and so strong, that that article in the atheist's creed—

that death is an eternal sleep—has been eagerly embraced, and earnestly defended, by thousands, as if the gulf of annihilation were a fountain of perpetual joy? There is a ready solution of this in the fact that every sinner is compelled to read out of the book of conscience a lesson concerning the wrath to come; and as this involves the idea of a future life, it is not strange that those who are obstinately bent on vice, should regard it a privilege to be annihilated, and should actually strive to hush the clamours of guilt in the dread hope of annihilation. There is then no evidence that the infidel, who scoffs at the doctrine of immortality, is, after all, a stranger to the desire of it: there is evidence only that he had rather give up his immortality than to encounter hell. So then, in neither of the cases which I have supposed, is there the shadow of proof that the desire of continued existence is not inherent in man.

Where then shall we find the evidence, if there be any, that this desire of living is to be gratified? Shall we take the report of the *senses*? Let the senses bring back their testimony from the dying bed of your friend, and see whether it be any thing on which you dare build a single hope. Look; listen; pry as far as you can into the mysteries of the death scene, that if the evidence of a future life be there, you may not overlook it. Is it proclaimed in that convulsion in which the breath stops, and all communion with the visible world is manifestly broken off? Is it written in that

eye whose fire is all fled, and which chills your blood as you come within its frightful glare? Do you find it in that countenance unvisited by a beam of intelligence; in that frame which is moved only as a clod; in any part of that scene, in which all is dumb, and inanimate, and ghastly, and making ready for the cold horrors of corruption? And if you find it not here, transfer yourself to the sepulchre after the door is shut, and the worm has begun its revel; and let your senses brood over the process that is there going forward; and tell me whether the testimony of the sepulchre does not confirm the testimony of the death bed. Now, what you have witnessed in respect to an individual, has happened in respect to the unnumbered millions who have inhabited this earth; by a law of nature it must happen in respect to you. The senses then inform you that you shall die; but they do not, they cannot, inform you that you shall live again: for when have you ever heard a disembodied spirit speaking to you, thus assuring you of its existence? Or when have you ever seen the dust into which a human body had mouldered, rising up into an organized and living form, as if the grave had never held it in its dominion? The senses then report unfavorably to the desire of a future existence.

Let the matter be referred next to *reason*, and see whether she has any thing to say in support of the doctrine of a future life. It cannot be denied that she has: that she bears a testimony on this subject, which.



so far as it goes, is explicit; and yet, as we shall presently see, it very inadequately meets the desire of existence with which man is constituted. There is a principle in the human breast, call it what you will, that points to a retribution. That this retribution does not take place in the present life, common observation abundantly evinces: hence the necessity of a future life, in which man may be rewarded or punished according to his deserts. This is an argument which is built, not upon the philosophy of the schools, but upon a common principle of human nature; an argument for the vulgar as well as the learned; an argument which it requires no ingenuity to comprehend, and no effort to feel. It proves indeed nothing more than that man shall live after he is dead to be the subject of a retribution; but it proves that conclusively.

To this original sense—this testimony of God in the moral constitution of man, it is no doubt chiefly owing, that we are able to trace some notion of a future life in the records of every age and nation. But lest we should attribute to reason more than she can fairly claim, it is proper that we should see how the question of a future life has actually stood, where she has been left to settle it by her own unassisted powers; and to give her every advantage, we will refer to the Augustan age;—a period distinguished by the brightest constellation of genius that ever poured its splendors upon the world. The rude and the learned received alike the notice from within that they were destined to a future

existence. The vulgar, overlooking the difficulty which lay in their way from the dissolution of the body, eagerly embraced the sentiments of nature, and imagined that they should exist in another world precisely such persons as they were in this. The philosophers, on the other hand, pressed with the difficulty which the vulgar had overlooked, from the death of the body, and sensible that identity was included in the idea of future existence, denied that the body was part of the man, and maintained that the whole man survived in a pure intellectual principle. Many, however, especially those who speculated most freely on the physical reason of the soul's immortality, turned skeptics; and even some of the greatest spirits of the age are represented as doubting whether the corporeal and the intellectual would not sink in a common wreck; or rather whether the mind was any thing more than an attribute of the body which they knew perished before their eyes. You perceive then, that, leaving out of view the dreams of the poets in respect to a future life, which had a prodigious influence in forming the opinions of the vulgar, the heathen world were really in an unsettled state on this subject. They indeed abused the light which they enjoyed; but even if they had made the best of that light, it would have been insufficient to conduct them to any satisfactory conclusions in respect to the future. There was a real difficulty thrown in their way by death, of which reason in her loftiest flights could not discover a solution.

Whence then comes it to pass that nature has hopes that she is able so inadequately to maintain? The answer is easy. The religion of nature contemplated man as he originally came from his Creator's hands, without sin; of course not subject to death. But sin was introduced; and death followed in its train. Nature had made no provision for such a calamity: it came in upon her as a surprise; and it is no wonder that she should have halted at such a mighty invasion. Is it not then just what might have been expected, that she should be loth to part with her original hopes on the one hand, and yet unable to explain the difficulties with which she was pressed on the other?

You perceive now wherein the religion of nature was lame on the subject of a future existence. She could not get over the difficulty that came in by death; for this obvious reason, that death belongs to man in his fallen, and not in his original state. The gospel supplies this deficiency of nature, by revealing the doctrine of a resurrection. It contains an assurance that God is not only able but willing, nay that he has actually pledged himself, to bring back the body re-organized from the grave, and to re-unite it to the spirit by which it had been animated. Of this doctrine nature had never dreamed, before she had an intimation of it from Heaven: and yet, when once revealed, she eagerly embraces it, as clearing away her doubts, and confirming her hopes. It is the gospel then, and that only, that establishes the true doctrine of a future life on a

firm basis ; that conveys an assurance to man not only that his spirit shall live after his body is dead, but that his body shall live again, to become the organ of the spirit's operations.

But if natural religion falters on the question of a mere future existence, that is, if she is unable to solve the difficulties which it presents, she has still less to say in proof of man's *immortality*. You perceive, at once, that these are two distinct points ; and that the argument which proves the former does not necessarily prove the latter ; for though there is something within us that proclaims that we must live in a future state to be the subjects of a retribution, yet there is no principle of reason that informs us with certainty that that retribution shall be eternal. I do not say that philosophy, especially when enlightened by Revelation, may not render this exceedingly probable ; but the mass of the world have nothing to do with philosophy ; and are shut up to the plain notions of common sense. What then though we were to admit that a few gifted minds in an age might even arrive at certainty on this subject —yet how comparatively unimportant would this be, while the thousands and the millions were groping in absolute ignorance ! But there is one consideration which proves decisively that all certainty on this subject, independently of revelation, is out of the question : it is that the being who gives life is alone able to continue it : whether it shall be continued or not must depend upon his will : and his will it were impossible to

know, unless he were pleased to reveal it; for "who by searching can find out God?" He *has* revealed it in the gospel, and no where else; so that it is here, and here only, that the question of man's immortality is set entirely at rest.

Say now, has not the gospel and that alone completely met the desire of continued existence? Let the pagan, in whose breast this desire is as active as in your own, sit down and think of the future; and with all the light that he can gather from without him and within him, let him try to solve the problem, whether the desolations of the tomb shall ever be repaired; whether, at some future period, he is to be swept out of being, or else to live forever—and the result will be that he will be bewildered by conjecture, rather than cheered by hope. Let the same questions come up to your own mind, and let the Bible be spread out before you, and how very different the result! Faith looks through the darkness that reason can not penetrate: she kindles up a bright light in the inner apartment of the sepulchre, by which she sees her way into the world beyond it: she beholds "deliverance" written upon its doors, the body given back to the desire of nature, and the whole man bearing the stamp of immortality. Thrice blessed gospel, that has brought life and immortality to light! Sit down by the grave, and hold communion with the future, and say whether this is not a glorious gospel!

2. Another of the original desires of man, which is fully met by the gospel, and nothing else, is *the desire of action*.

Man is possessed of various faculties; some of a higher, others of a lower order;—adapted to the sphere which he is destined to occupy. These faculties are designed to be employed; and there is no lack of objects, either in the material or the intellectual world, fitted to call them into exercise. Now there is in the moral constitution of man a desire exactly corresponding to this arrangement. You see it in the child, anterior to the first dawnings of intellect; and you see it in increasing strength, as the faculties are gradually developed. Man desires to be active—Where shall he look for the complete gratification of this desire but to the gospel?

Let it be observed, in the first place, that the gospel, and that only, *gives a right direction to the human faculties*. That these faculties have some how or other acquired a wrong direction—that they have received an impulse which provokes conscience, and offends God, is, with every individual, a matter of personal experience. I stop not here to inquire concerning the origin of this calamity; but he who would dispute the fact, might as well dispute any fact of which he had the testimony of sense or consciousness. Man is inclined to use his faculties in a way which defeats the design for which they were given him; which not only brings dishonor upon God, but ruin to himself: else

how will you account for the endless forms of iniquity by which Jehovah has been insulted, and his creation marred, almost from the beginning to the present hour? Nay, how else will you account for the fact that your own faculties are not exerted, or have not always been, in accordance with your conviction of right;—that a review of your life brings up so many things as matter for internal disquietude?

Let us inquire now whether unassisted reason is adequate to devise any means, by which this common calamity of our nature may be removed, and the various faculties which God has given us, be restored to their legitimate direction. And here again, in order that we may ascertain what Reason *can* do, it is fair to inquire what she actually *has* done; especially if the inquiry be instituted in reference to those nations and ages in which her efforts have been made to the greatest advantage. Fix upon the brightest periods of Grecian or Roman history, and what else do you find but a wretched complication of idolatry and crime? Admit, if you will, that there were a few cases which might be regarded as exceptions from this remark;—here and there a philosopher, like a few solitary stars shining in a dark night, who had some good moral precepts for the regulation of the life; yet even their systems of morality were miserably defective, lacking this essential characteristic—that they reached not to the heart, the fountain of all moral action; and this also, that they overlooked, in a great degree, the relation which

man sustains to his Maker and Lawgiver. Nevertheless, the systems of these philosophers were, for the most part, far better than their characters; and thus, whatever else was true of their systems, they were proved to be destitute of power. Indeed, we may safely challenge the whole heathen world to produce an instance (unless there be some solitary exceptions in which God mysteriously communicates the light of truth to the soul) of an individual rendering a spiritual worship to the true God, or discharging any of the peculiar duties of a rational piety. And if the heathen—even the wisest of them—have utterly failed in their attempts to give a right direction to the human faculties, not more successful have they been who have made the same attempt in Christian countries, professing to exclude all other light than the light of Reason; for not only have they made war in their speculations on the essential principles of morality, but they have outraged these principles in their practice, and have actually given the worst specimens of the perversion of the human faculties which the world has ever seen. We come then, in the light of facts, fairly to the conclusion that it is not within the province of Reason, to give to the powers with which we are endowed such a direction, as shall accomplish the purpose for which they were designed.

Turn now to the gospel, and see how happily this deficiency is supplied. And here too, I am willing that the matter should be decided by a reference to fact.



Just in proportion as the gospel has prevailed in its purity in any country, you will find the standard of morality has been elevated; and just in proportion as it has exerted its influence on individual character, there has been exhibited whatsoever is pure, and praiseworthy, and of good report. And the Christian can testify, from his own experience, that it is the gospel alone, by means of which his faculties become enlisted in the service of God; and that the degree of conformity which he attains to the divine image, is measured by the degree of influence which the gospel exerts over him. And as the fact is perfectly obvious, so it is easy, by a reference to the constitution of the gospel, to account for it; for while the moral influence of the truths which it reveals tends directly to such a result, there is super-added to this, a special influence of the Holy Spirit, by which this result is finally obtained. So then, the gospel does that which Reason could not do: it finds the soul in bondage to sin, and delivers it; it gives a new and different impulse to the powers of human action, which accords with the dictates of conscience, and draws down the blessing of God.

But the gospel meets the desire of action, not only by directing the faculties aright, but *by opening a noble field for their exercise*. It does this especially by shedding light upon the relations which man sustains to his fellow-man and to his God. To say nothing of the fact that where the gospel is not known, the social duties, so far as relates to the present life, are but little

understood, and still less performed, it is not to be forgotten that the fact that man is a sinner, destined to an immortal existence, invests even the social relations with their deepest interest ; and this fact, in connexion with these relations, is either wretchedly perverted, or entirely overlooked. Nor is the case better in respect to the relations which man sustains to his Maker ;—for if the Pagan world are ignorant, and have always been ignorant, of the true God, it were absurd to suppose that they should have any just idea of the relations they bear, or the duties they owe, to him ; and hence we find that the service they have rendered to their deities has been blind, debasing, cruel, according to the particular character they have attributed to them. But mark the change which the gospel has wrought on this subject. It has faithfully marked out the duties which men owe to each other in their social relations, considered with reference to the life that now is ; and it has gone farther, and contemplated the same relations in respect to the life that is to come ; regarding man as destined to an eternal retribution of happiness or wo. And more than this, it has taught man how he stands related to his Maker ; and what service his Maker requires of him ; and how he may reach the highest dignity of which his nature is susceptible. And in doing this, is it not manifest that the gospel has mightily enlarged the field of human action ? You have to do good to your fellow creatures, not only as beings who are to live here for a little season and then die, but as beings who are to

live forever, and whose eternal condition is to depend on their present character. With your lot cast in a world of such beings as these, how much is there to be done, in the various relations you sustain, for the immortal spirit; how much to deliver it from the woes to which it is exposed, and to elevate its destiny to that of the angels! And then again, in the pure and spiritual service which you owe immediately to God, how much demand is there for action—action of the holiest and noblest kind—action which transforms, while it exalts, the character, and brings the soul into intimate communion with God, and causes it even here well nigh to breathe the atmosphere of the third Heavens! And the grave, which seems to the eye of sense to constitute the farther boundary of the field in which our faculties can be employed, really opens a new field in which they are destined to a boundless and glorious operation. In that world of light which faith discovers beyond the present, I acknowledge that we know but in part in what way the glorified inhabitants shall be employed; but we have the testimony of the Bible that they will find no lack of employment: in celebrating the praises of Heaven, in casting their crowns at the Redeemer's feet, in executing the various commissions with which Jehovah may charge them; they will be completely, delightfully, perpetually, occupied. "Therefore,"—says the apostle John, to whom a revelation of the employments of the redeemed had been made—

“therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple.”

Moreover, the gospel meets the desire of action in man, *inasmuch as the employments to which it points are fitted, in a high degree, to improve his faculties, and thus render him capable of more vigorous and successful action.* It is a law of our nature that while the employments to which an individual voluntarily gives himself, strongly indicate his character, so his character must receive its complexion in a great degree from the nature of his employments. Now the employments which the gospel marks out, are of the noblest kind: they are fitted not only to exalt and purify the affections, but to quicken and brighten every faculty: and hence, not only the moral but the intellectual character—the whole man will, no doubt, under this influence, be forever advancing from glory to glory. Is it not reasonable to suppose that the period will arrive, when that mind, now just beginning to develope its powers, will, by being trained in the employments to which it is destined, have gathered the might of an angel;—that it will act with an energy which will make its most vigorous efforts in the present life seem like the imbecile operations of the mind of an infant?

If it be so then, that the gospel alone gives a right direction to the human faculties;—if it opens the noblest field for their exercise;—and if the employments

to which it points are fitted to invigorate and improve them forever ; there is surely no room for doubt that the gospel, and that only, successfully meets the desire of action.

3. Let us proceed to another of the original desires of man, viz., *the desire of knowledge*, and see how far the gospel has made provision for this.

That this *is* an original desire, no one can doubt, who watches the operations of his own mind, or observes those of others. The child discovers it in its earliest exercise of the powers of speech, by its almost numberless inquiries, many of which would baffle the highest human intellect. And this desire grows with the growth, and strengthens with the strength. And as you see its operation in others, so also you feel it in your own bosom ; often exciting to earnest and persevering efforts. By what means can this desire be most successfully gratified ?

I am not disposed to question that man may advance far in many departments of knowledge, with no other light than the light of nature. He may analyze the very elements of the material world, and ascertain the laws to which they are subject ; he may number the flowers of the field, and the beasts of the earth ; he may penetrate the unfathomable ocean, and mount up among the stars, and call them by their names, and even guide the lightning ; he may understand well the organization of his own frame, and may have skill to

dislodge disease in its more inveterate forms ; he may be familiar with the operations of mind, and may be able to arrange its various powers, and show the reciprocal influence of the understanding, the will, and the affections, upon each other. And he may go farther still, and may know something of God ; he may trace the evidences of his power, wisdom, and goodness, in the sun, moon, and stars ; in the world around him, and in the world within him ; and as I have already intimated, he may know something, or I should rather say, conjecture something, concerning immortality and retribution. But in this latter department of knowledge, I mean that which respects the character of God, and man's eternal relations, human Reason is at best but an inadequate instructor. And he who is left solely to her teaching, will, as all experience proves, be left on some of the most important of all subjects, to ignorance, doubt, or error.

But if Reason does not meet, to the full extent, man's desire of knowledge, let us inquire whether *this* deficiency also be not supplied by the gospel.

Of the knowledge to be derived from the Bible, one of the first attributes is, that it is, in the highest degree, *practical*. There are various kinds of knowledge which can be turned to no account beyond the gratification of curiosity : the philosopher may amuse himself, for instance, by ascertaining, with microscopic eye, the organic structure of an insect ; but it would be difficult

for him to bring the result of his inquisitive labor to bear upon the more important objects of life. Not so with the knowledge which the gospel furnishes : every truth which it brings to light or confirms, is capable of being reduced to practice ; it is adapted to influence the affections, and through them to reach the life. Moreover, its truths are all interwoven with the best interests of man : they relate to God as his Creator, Redeemer, and Judge ; and to himself in all the relations which he bears to this world and to another. In short, the Bible contains every thing that it is necessary he should know, that he may attain the end of his existence, both as it respects the life that now is, and that which is to come.

Let it be observed, in the next place, that the knowledge which the gospel communicates, is as *sublime* as it is practical. The subjects to which this knowledge relates, beyond any other which the mind ever conceived, bear the stamp of moral grandeur. There is the character of God, who is without beginning of days or end of years ; arrayed in the majesty of infinite perfection ; ruling in all worlds, and controlling all events ; sustaining at once the mote that glitters in the sunbeam, and the orb of glory from which sunbeams emanate. There is the creation of the world ; the formation of the heavens, and the earth, and the ocean ; the rising up out of nothing of the ten thousand forms of beauty and grandeur, which we behold around us. There is the

soul of man, destined to an eternal existence, and an eternal retribution. There is the law of God, a transcript of the moral perfections of the Highest ; reaching all moral beings through every period of their existence. There is the mediatorial dispensation, which originated in the counsels of infinite wisdom ; which is founded in the expiatory death of the Son of God ; whose influence extends probably to every world, and whose results are to be known in the final consummation of all things. These are some of the subjects on which the Bible gives us information ; and the truths which it reveals respecting them, are not less sublime than the subjects themselves ; and the manner in which the revelation is made, partakes of the same unparalleled sublimity. Say then whether the knowledge to be derived from the gospel, does not, in this respect, far outrun every other species of knowledge ? Let Reason do her utmost, and her discoveries, compared with those which the Bible makes, are tame and grovelling.

Let not the infidel here arraign Christianity on the charge of being a religion of mysteries ;—of requiring a blind faith in doctrines which she does not condescend to explain. It is a slander upon the gospel to say that it requires our belief in any thing for which it does not give us the fullest evidence. It does indeed reveal many facts which may suggest inquiries which it meets only in silence ; nevertheless, so far as it goes, it is explicit. For instance, the fact that Jesus Christ died



as a propitiatory sacrifice, is perfectly intelligible; and it is entitled to full belief, because it comes to us on the testimony of God: but if we undertake to ascertain the entire influence of this measure on the divine government, or how the Son of God assumed human nature that he might become a sufferer, we can gather no light from the gospel to assist in the prosecution of such inquiries. And so it is of many other doctrines:—of the fact we are abundantly certified: of the manner, circumstances, reasons of the fact, we are left in entire ignorance.

But if infidelity will not yield this charge against the gospel, let her pause and inquire whether the ground which she herself occupies is not giving way beneath her;—whether Christianity may not stand up and confront her with her own accusation. Reason teaches that there is a God, and that he exists every where; but ask Reason how the Infinite Spirit pervades all space, and she is as dumb as the gospel is to the question, how two distinct natures are united in the person of the Son of God. Reason has ascertained the principle of gravitation in the material world; that is, she has ascertained that such a principle exists; but advance a step further, and ask for an analysis of this wonderful principle,—a physical cause of this universal attraction,—and she has literally nothing to say. The truth is that, by the light of nature, God has brought certain facts within our reach, which he has not conde-

scended to explain ; and, by the light of Revelation, he has brought certain other facts within our reach, of the reasons of which he has left us in the same absolute ignorance. So that nature has her mysteries as well as Revelation ; and if you reject either, you must reject both, on the same ground. There is reason to believe that the gospel has revealed as much, as man, with his present limited capacities, would be able to understand ; and he who is disposed to complain of the deficiencies of Revelation, had better set himself to answer the question, why he was not created an angel rather than a man.

It is another attribute of the knowledge which the gospel imparts that it is *forever progressive*. Let an individual make the Bible his study through life, and you can scarcely calculate the amount of knowledge which he will gain. The Bible differs from every other book in this—that its treasures are inexhaustible. The more you study it, the richer the reward which crowns your efforts ; every step you advance conducts you into a region of brighter and still brighter glory. Nor is it an objection to this statement, that he who sets himself down to the Bible, with a spirit of skepticism, or a spirit of indolence, does not become a proficient in divine knowledge, or even denies the truths which it reveals, and seals this fountain of heavenly light against himself ; for though the treasures of knowledge are there, such is the ordinance of God that

only the diligent and the docile have access to them. *They* advance—I appeal to the experience of the humble and faithful of every age—they advance in the knowledge of all that is great, and noble, and worthy of their immortality, from glory to glory.

But he who walks in the light of the gospel here, is destined to walk in the brighter light of Heaven hereafter. In that world, for whose communion and joys the gospel will have served to prepare him, his advantages for acquiring knowledge will be greatly increased. The intellect, no longer clogged by a timent of clay, or misled in its investigations by the workings of corruption, will have mounted up towards the dignity and energy of a seraph. What was here attended with doubt, will there be attended by certainty: what were here objects of faith, will there be objects of vision. The great subjects of knowledge will indeed, in a general sense, be the same: the mediation of the Son of God, in its various connexions and influences, will occupy the mind forever; but the knowledge of these subjects will be immensely extended; and will become more and more so through eternal ages. Think of a mind whose powers are forever brightening, destined to pass an eternity in the full blaze of Jehovah's glory, and estimate, if you can, the amount of knowledge, which, with such advantages, it must ultimately acquire!

I ask now, my friends, what more could have been done to gratify the desire of knowledge, than has been done in the gospel? Must not human Reason here own her deficiency; and may not the gospel reasonably claim to have supplied it to the utmost? If the knowledge which it communicates here be the most practical, the most sublime, in every respect the most important, to us; and if it offers itself as a guide to bring us to a world, where there will be no darkness at all, and where the light will shine, not only with eternal, but ever increasing brightness, I ask again, has it not done all in this respect that we could ask, or even desire?

4. Another of the original desires of man for which the gospel, and that alone, effectually provides, is *the desire of the approbation and esteem of other beings*. You see the operation of this desire too in the earliest stages of childhood;—in the unuttered joy of the infant, when its mother smiles upon it; and in its deep susceptibility to every look of displeasure. It is active also in every period of life, and in every individual; or if there be any cases to be excepted, they are those in which vice has turned men into monsters, and invaded even their original constitution.

I assume it here as a truth, that men are constituted with an original sense of right and wrong; the perception of each being accompanied by a corresponding feeling of approbation or disapprobation. Men may

abandon themselves entirely to vicious habits ; but they cannot approve of their own conduct in doing so, or respect themselves, so long as they continue it. And it is equally beyond their power to regard with approbation a similar course in others, or to esteem the characters of those by whom it is exhibited. However depraved the feelings of men may be, their natural convictions are in favor of a virtuous life ; and he who adopts any other course, so long as the moral constitution of man remains as it now is, can never expect to obtain the substantial regards of his fellow men.

Now I do not say that man, by the light of nature, may not ascertain many of the duties that belong to his social relations ; and certainly all that Reason has to say on this subject is in favor of a life of virtue. Nevertheless, I dare appeal to the records of Paganism, from the beginning, for evidence that, if Reason has discovered to man, in some degree, his duties, she has not been able effectually to enforce them. Wherever the gospel has not existed, malice, envy, revenge, every evil passion, has held the soul in dominion, in spite of all that Reason could do to redeem it. But the gospel, just in proportion as it has prevailed, has brought into exercise a spirit of forgiveness towards enemies, and a spirit of benevolence towards all men ; in a word, it has changed man from an enemy into a brother to his fellow man ; and in so doing has given him a character which commends him to universal esteem. Not

those only who live within his sphere of benevolent action—the wretched and the friendless, who are relieved by his bounty, or others who may be immediately blessed by his influence—but all to whom his character is known, will give him the tribute of their favorable regard. Even the wicked, much as they may be reproved by the lustre of his virtues, will nevertheless, at least secretly, respect and honor him ; and the good will regard him with complacency and delight. If such a character is formed by the gospel, and that only, is it not manifest that the gospel alone meets the desire of the approbation and esteem of other beings. at least so far as relates to our fellow men ?

I admit that there are qualities belonging to human nature, upon which men may bestow a kind of admiration : there are characters formed by other influences than those of the gospel, which emblazon the page of history, and have the privilege of a sort of earthly immortality. There is, for instance, the man of military renown, whose business is conquest ; who breathes most freely on the field of battle, and values his laurels the more for having been drenched in blood. Take, if you will, the case of the man whose very name was lately a terror among the nations ; who would never have been contented till he had drank the blood of every kindred, and nation, and people, under heaven : the memory of that man will live till the heavens and the earth shall pass away : and some in every age will

dwell with enthusiasm on his fearfully matchless exploits ; and will see, or think they see, a glory hanging around his name. But compare his history with that of another man, and one of his contemporaries ;—a man scarcely less known than himself, but known, not for deeds of cruelty, but deeds of mercy ;—a man whose record is not in the annals of military glory, but in the annals of dungeons and lazarettoes ;—a man, in short, in whose character the benevolence of the gospel was a living, breathing, speaking reality ;—and tell me which of the two you really believe has most effectually gained the favorable regards of mankind. I envy not the man who would dare soberly to say that he would rather leave behind him the character of Buonaparte than of Howard ; that he would rather live in the remembrance of posterity as the conqueror, than the philanthropist.

But this desire in man, of which I am speaking, has respect to the favorable regard, not only of his fellow men, but of other beings, especially of GOD ; for such are the relations which man sustains to God, that, without *his* favor, that of all other beings would ultimately be of no advantage to him.

Here let me recur to a thought to which I have already had occasion to direct your attention—that there is in every human bosom a sense of guilt : man is conscious of having offended his Maker ; and in proportion as his conscience becomes enlightened, he dreads

the result. The question then in which he is more deeply interested than any other, is, whether it be possible that forgiveness should be extended to him ; and if so, on what conditions ? Admit, if you will, that our natural notions of God's goodness could inspire some faint hope of pardon, yet, certainly it could give us no positive assurance of it ; for man has incurred the penalty of God's law ; and for aught that Reason can prove to the contrary, the penalty must take effect, or the honor of the law, and of course the honor of the lawgiver, must be trampled in the dust. The gospel, and that alone, *proclaims the doctrine of forgiveness* : it reveals a plan by which the exercise of mercy is rendered consistent with the rights of justice ;—a plan by which the sinner is forgiven upon repentance and faith in the Saviour ; and not only forgiven, but made the heir of innumerable positive blessings. For “ God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have everlasting life.” And again, “ God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.” The fact then that man can be received into the favor of God, and the conditions on which he may be thus received, are disclosed in the gospel, and no where else.

But the gospel meets this desire of man, considered in reference to God, in another way : *it imparts to him a character which renders him an object of divine*



*complacency.* God cannot but approve his own moral image wherever it exists: this image, effaced from the character of man by the apostacy, it is the tendency of the gospel to restore;—an effect which the highest efforts of human Reason have been inadequate to produce. Under the influence of the word and Spirit of God, the heart gradually yields up its rebellion, and the various passions and affections of the soul are restored to their original harmony. And He who is the source of all moral purity, looks down upon this spiritual renovation, the work of his own almighty grace, and pronounces it “very good.” And He communicates tokens of his favor; in that peace which passeth understanding; in that hope which is an anchor to the soul; in that joy which is unspeakable and full of glory. The infidel, I know, will call this enthusiasm; but the Christian (and he alone, having had experience, is competent to judge) will testify that it is a most consoling and precious reality.

Do we not then fairly arrive at the conclusion that the gospel, and that alone, meets man’s inherent desire of the approbation and esteem of other beings? Whether we would secure the favorable regards of our fellow men or of God, whither shall we go for direction but to the Bible?

5. I observe, again, that another of the original desires of man, for which the gospel and that only makes adequate provision, is *the desire of society.* You see

the operation of this, as of the desires that have already been noticed, in the very budding of the human faculties. The child, long before it has left the arms of its mother, discovers its aversion to solitude, and its relish for society; and if the social principle reaches its maturity at an earlier period than some others, it always continues active, thus proving itself to be an original principle of human nature.

There is an impression, I well know, abroad in the world, to a considerable extent, that Christianity is unfriendly to social enjoyment;—that the life which she recommends and enjoins is a life of seclusion from the world. That individuals professing Christianity have adopted such a course of life it were in vain to deny: that in some ages, a large part of the professed disciples of Christ have shut themselves up in cells and monasteries, is a fact well authenticated in the history of the church: nevertheless, it was not the genuine gospel, but a perversion of it, which, in every instance, led to this result. Christianity, in its very nature, is social: it contemplates man indeed in the closet, but it contemplates him also in the family, in the church, and in the world; and he who shuts himself out from society under the pretence of escaping the temptations of the world, and of serving God more faithfully in his closet, has wretchedly perverted the gospel, and made shipwreck of his Christian obligations.

Observe then, in the first place, that *a large part of the duties which the gospel enjoins are social duties*; —duties which we owe to those who are united with us in the various relations of life. It is not enough that we enter our closets and pray for our fellow men; but we are required to go out into the world, and do them good; to discharge duties towards them which imply that we are meeting them in our daily walks, and mingling with them in frequent intercourse. Moreover, many of the duties which devolve on Christians, require that they should associate in the performance of them; and in general, they are commanded to be fellow helpers together unto the kingdom of God. So you perceive that the social principle in man is consulted in the general constitution of the gospel.

Nor let it be forgotten that it is the tendency of the gospel *to refine and exalt the social affections*, as well as to delineate and enforce the social duties. What is it that embitters the intercourse of men with each other? Is it not a spirit of pride, ambition, envy, revenge? These and all other unhallowed principles that lodge in the soul, we have already seen, it is the tendency of the gospel to exterminate; and at the same time to bring into exercise the gentler affections, and to cherish a spirit of universal good will. Thus while Christianity enjoins duties which require that man should be social, she also sends a purifying influence to

the very elements of his social nature ; at once marking out a field for him, and fitting him to occupy it.

Moreover, Christianity meets the desire of society in another respect ;—I mean, *in the establishment of the Church*. Here the disciples of Christ are united by a bond of holy brotherhood, for the very purpose of being helpers of each other's faith and joy. What though they may belong to different ranks of society, and may have been born in different countries, and educated, in many respects, to different habits ; what though they may have been brought together, for the first time, from the remotest parts of the earth ; if they speak the same language, they instantly recognise each other as members of the same sanctified community. And they have common hopes, and joys, and sorrows, and wants, and interests, which bring them together in common acts of contrition, and supplication, and thanksgiving, at the throne of grace. But the sweetest of all their acts of communion is that in which they commemorate the foundation of all their hopes—the death of Jesus Christ their Saviour. Oh when they meet around the sacramental table, and together lift up their hearts in devout thanksgiving, and renew the pledges of their christian affection, and pour their hearts into a common offering of gratitude and love to the Saviour, methinks this is the purest, noblest, sweetest, exercise of which the social affections are here susceptible. It is a communion which no doubt resembles more nearly than any thing

else on earth the communion of the redeemed in glory.

Hitherto, under this article, I have considered the gospel as meeting the social desire of man in the present life: but it does more than this—it meets the same desire *through every period of his existence*. For aught that appears to the eye of sense, when the intercourse of friends ceases in this world, it ceases forever; and Reason, in her most improved state, can do nothing better than dream on this subject. A notion that has prevailed to a considerable extent, in the pagan world, is that, if the spirit survives the body, it passes into some other body, and becomes the animating principle, perhaps of a beast or a reptile: how unfriendly this doctrine is to any thing like social enjoyment in a future world, I need not stop to show. And even the philosophers who believed in the immortality of the soul as a pure intellectual principle, having had no other idea of social intercourse than through the medium of the senses, must have been, as we know they were, exceedingly perplexed on the question, whether the intercourse of friends could ever be renewed in a future life. Now the gospel has set this question fully at rest. It has revealed the delightful truth, that every christian friendship is formed for eternity;—that the Christian, to whose languid faith the dark valley sometimes seems doubly dark, because he leaves on the hither side of it, his beloved friends in Jesus, may console himself with the reflection that he has friends in

Heaven too waiting his arrival ; and that even those whom he leaves behind, are destined soon to follow in his upward track. To say nothing of the intercourse which redeemed spirits may enjoy with each other in their disembodied state, of which it must be confessed that we know comparatively little, what advantages for social enjoyment must be furnished by that state on which the Christian will enter at the final consummation ! Yes, the gospel bids the believer in Jesus anticipate a meeting hereafter, not with his beloved friends only, with whom he had here endured the conflicts and trials of the christian life, who had been the helpers of his faith and the sharers of his joy ; but with the innumerable multitude who constitute the general assembly and church of the first born ; with patriarchs and prophets, apostles and martyrs ; all of every name and from every clime, who have been ransomed by the blood, and sanctified by the Spirit of Christ. Oh, what a community must that be in which the Christian is destined to mingle ! And then again, his own character, and the character of each one of that glorified assembly, will have been so purified and exalted, that there will be a susceptibility of enjoyment from this blessed communion, surpassing all our present conceptions. And this susceptibility will be constantly increasing, as they unitedly cast their crowns before the throne, and walk over the plains of immortality, shouting the praises of redemption.

*The angels*—they are of a higher nature than man—nevertheless the gospel bids the Christian anticipate a communion with them also. We are assured that they are not indifferent to his interests in the present life; that they are ministering spirits sent forth to minister to them who are the heirs of salvation. We know, moreover, that they regard with deep interest the scheme of man's redemption, and are represented as eagerly prying into its mysteries. How natural that when the Christian is admitted to that world of which they are native inhabitants—they should desire to associate with him, not only from the general benevolence of their nature, but to learn more of that wonderful plan by which he has been redeemed. The gospel assures us that they *will be* his associates; and in the Revelation of St. John they are represented as even joining in the new song:—"And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing."

I may say also reverently that the gospel opens up to the believer the prospect of a holy intimacy with JEHOVAH himself, especially in the character of a Redeemer. Such an intimacy indeed, in one sense, it

secures to him here: all this sacred intercourse, however, is carried on through the medium of faith; but hereafter faith will give way to vision, and the glorified saint will be permitted to contemplate his unveiled majesty; and to commune with him, I had almost said, as a man communes with his friend. Between the Christian and his Redeemer there will indeed always be the whole distance that there is between finite and infinite; nevertheless there will be a delightful and eternal communion between them;—a communion which is all condescension on the one hand, and all reverence, gratitude, and love, on the other.

I inquire now, is not the social desire in man completely gratified by the gospel? And in this view of the gospel, what light and consolation does it shed over the valley of death! Mark that Christian whose eyes are glistening in death, and whose lips are open, for the last time on earth, to bid farewell to his beloved friends, his companions in the christian life—Do you wonder that it is a cheerful farewell? Ah, the secret of it is, that he realizes that the separation is to be only temporary; and faith anticipates a meeting with other christian friends who have gone before him, and who stand waiting at the threshold of heaven to greet his arrival. And you too, brothers, sisters, friends in Christ, who stand weeping around that death bed, break not your hearts at the departure of that friend, as though you were never to see him again. but rather be com-



forted by the reflection that the interruption of your intercourse will be but short, and that you will soon go to mingle with him in the joys of a purer and more elevated friendship; and not with him only, but with all the happy inhabitants of Heaven. What thanks do we not owe for these blessed hopes which the gospel inspires?

To the several original desires to which your attention has been called, might be added the desire of happiness; but I shall omit a distinct consideration of this, as I choose, in the present discussion, to regard happiness as the end to be attained, and the gratification of the other desires as the means of its attainment. If I have succeeded in showing that the gospel meets the desire of continued existence, the desire of action, the desire of knowledge, the desire of the approbation and esteem of other beings, and the desire of society, nothing more surely need be said to show that it meets the desire of happiness: and here I may safely rest the argument of the discourse. Man is constituted with various original desires, on the gratification of which his happiness depends. These desires the gospel, and that only, exactly meets. **Therefore REVEALED RELIGION IS THE ONLY SOURCE OF TRUE HAPPINESS.**

On a brief review of this subject, let me ask, in the first place, whether it does not furnish *a conclusive argument for the divinity of the gospel*? We have seen that the gospel makes provision for all the original

desires of man ; and that it removes all the difficulties which lie in the way of the gratification of these desires, in consequence of man's having become a sinner. For instance, man desires an immortal existence ; but as a sinner he has become liable to death : the gospel has abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light. Again, man desires the gracious approbation of God ; but as a sinner he has become obnoxious to the divine displeasure : the gospel reveals a way by which he can be forgiven and accepted. Is it so then, that the gospel not only contemplates man with the inherent desires which belong to his nature, but that it contemplates these desires in connexion with the fact of his being a fallen creature ? In short, does it regard him just as he is, and make provision for him just as he is ? Who then will dare say that this could have been the product of any human intellect ; or that any other being than He who formed man with his original desires could have framed a system by which those desires should be completely gratified ? And then again, are not the attributes of Jehovah imprinted on the very constitution of the gospel ? Where will you look for the evidence of infinite knowledge, if it be not in that perfect acquaintance with the human heart that is displayed by the author of the Bible ? Where for the evidence of infinite wisdom, if not in the exact accommodation of means to ends which the gospel discloses ; especially where the case to be consulted was

so complicated, so difficult, and had defied the powers of the most exalted intellects on earth? Where for the evidence of infinite benevolence, if not in the provision which the gospel offers for all the moral wants of man; provision to relieve him from miseries of which he has himself been the voluntary cause? He who can contemplate facts like these, and yet withhold his assent to the divinity of the gospel, must be sadly deficient either in reason or conscience: he must either belie his own convictions, or else he must be incapable of estimating evidence which is brighter than the sun at noon-day.

It is a consideration which gives much additional importance to this argument for the divinity of the gospel, that it is one which is within the reach of every mind, and is capable of being readily brought home to every bosom. It requires no deep research, no patient investigation, to feel its full force; for the original desires of the human breast are continually active; and we have only to open the Bible to see that it reveals a system which effectually provides for them. Hence one reason why the obscure and the unlearned may and do attain to just as deep a conviction of the truth of the gospel, as those who are given to profound research. They may know little or nothing of the philosophical evidence of Christianity, and perhaps may never have had their thoughts turned to many of the most common arguments in its favor; but they know that it is precisely what they need; that it calms their

fears, and assuages their sorrows, and pours light upon their darkness, and lifts up their souls to an unearthly joy; and you might as well attempt to convince them that noonday was midnight, as that this system had not God for its author. Blessed be God that he has thus written the evidence of Christianity in our very nature; and that he who pronounces it a fable is obliged to shut his eyes upon the light within him, as well as the light around him!

Again: *How malignant is the spirit of infidelity!* Suppose Christianity were really a fable—it would discover malignity in the unbeliever to oppose it even then; for upon no principle can it be charged with any injurious tendency, and there are millions to testify that it is a source of rich enjoyment. It exerts a general influence on society altogether favorable to happiness; and those by whom it is practically embraced, find, or if you please, think they find, in it a joy that is unspeakable and full of glory. It is a malignant thing for the atheist to oppose it upon his principles; for if death really blots man out of being, why not suffer him to take comfort in his delusions as long as he can? What harm will result to him, after he has ceased to exist, from the fact that his mind was revelling to the last on the bright visions of immortality? Nor is it a less malignant work in the deist to oppose the gospel; for the gospel leaves him at liberty to make as much of the religion of nature as he can; she closes

not against him a single source of consolation which human Reason has opened; and if others find Reason an insufficient guide, and choose to avail themselves of the aid which they suppose the gospel proffers, and in doing so find a rich addition to their happiness, wherefore should he desire to lay an icy hand upon their joys? If he is safe with the religion of nature, they surely cannot be brought into jeopardy by believing the gospel, even though the gospel be a fable; and so long as their believing it does him no harm, and does the world no harm, why not leave them to all the enjoyment they can obtain?

But admitting the gospel to be *true*, who can measure the malignity which they discover who oppose it? for they are not only chargeable with opposing with all their might the best interests of man in the present life, but of doing their utmost to blast all the hopes of the life to come. Behold infidelity abroad in the earth, and see how the wrecks of human happiness thicken around her! Into that cabin in which the widow is feeding upon her last crust, and holding communion with tears, but nevertheless sustained by the consolations of a good hope through grace, infidelity goes to wrest from her those living consolations, and thrust into her hands the cup of despair. At that dying bed where the Christian is just going off to heaven in a chariot of glory, and is already becoming entranced with the vision of angels, infidelity would fain plant

herself down to prove that all that triumph is delusion, and that instead of rising to the glories of an immortal existence, he is sinking into the hideous abyss of annihilation. Into that circle of mourners bending over the grave of departed friendship, whose hearts, saddened by bereavement, are yet cheered by the prospects which the gospel opens, infidelity rushes, tiger-like, to say that there will be no meeting with that friend beyond the grave, or that every thing in relation to the future is matter of wild conjecture. And universally, she lays the axe at the root of human happiness; and finds her triumphs not in closing, but opening sources of human wo. Once she was let loose upon the world; and blessed be God the report of her exploits is known among the nations. The wild tempest that she produced in the moral world, has even now scarcely died away upon the ear; and the two millions of graves that she peopled, yet bear witness that blood is her appropriate nourishment. The sceptre has indeed fallen from her hands: nevertheless she is on the earth, breathing out the blasphemy, and moving about in the livery, of the pit. She is heard now speaking forth from the dark haunts of pollution, and is seen belching out her poison through tracts and newspapers; and if she had courage and strength enough, you would see her levelling with the dust all our noble institutions, breaking down all the altars of God, burning every christian church, lifting her standard on every hill and

in every valley, and planting a guillotine by the side of it. Let every one then, especially let every youth, beware how he looks upon infidelity even with indifference. Become an infidel, and you are lost ;—lost to honor—lost to happiness—lost to heaven !

Finally : *How blessed the employment of extending the gospel!* It were a noble employment if it were only for the benign influence which the gospel exerts upon man in the present life ; for the consolation which it yields him in trial, and for its general tendency to improve and elevate human society. But when regarded in its connexion with the interests of eternity, as meeting all the desires of an immortal being, what language can adequately describe the importance that belongs to every effort that is made to extend it. Friends of the Saviour, ye are laboring to diffuse happiness throughout the earth ; and not only so, but ye are sowing seed which, though possibly it may not germinate till you are in your graves, will certainly yield a harvest of immortal glory. Go on then and prosper. Let your hands never tire, your hearts never faint, in this godlike enterprise. Fear not the scoffs, nor the menaces, of infidelity. The day is at hand when she will hide her head in confusion ; and another day is hastening on, when she will wail because of her infatuation, and will call upon the rocks and the mountains to fall on her, and cover her from the wrath of the Lamb. In the intensity of her despair, and in

the bitterness of her wailing, she will see the complete triumph of that cause which she opposed, while you will lift up your head in ecstasy that the day of your final reward is come. Bless God that you are permitted to labor for the extension of the gospel, and give him all the glory of your success !

From the height to which this subject elevates us, my brethren, we have a right to cast an eye abroad over the world, and raise the shout of triumph. Hear you that sound that comes from over the mountains, and from the depths of the forest, and from the islands of the sea ? It is the sound of salvation—it is the new song trembling on the lips of the converted pagan—it is a deep current of praise and thanksgiving coming forth from a heart, which has but just learned to thrill at the name of Jesus. Perceive you that stirring in every christian land, such as the world has not seen before ? Believe me, it is the stirring of a spirit which is destined to send the gospel to the ends of the earth. There is no mistake on this subject—there *can* be none ; for already the thrones of Paganism begin to totter ; the cloud that stretches over the nations is fringed with the bright hues of the Sun of Righteousness ; while infidelity alternately shakes with terror, and is convulsed with rage, as she bends over, and looks into her own grave. Yes, Paganism shall die ; Infidelity shall die ; Mahommedism shall die ; but Christianity shall live to sing her song of triumph over the grave of each ;



and after this world is burnt up, she shall ascend to the third Heavens, to hold an eternal reign of love and glory. In the prospect of such a triumph, let all on earth, and all in Heaven. shout, 'ALLALUJAH !'