

WARD NO. 4.

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LITERATURE.

A SERMON,
On the Evil of Sin.*

By Rev. John A. Hearn, of Waterford, Chaplain at the
Royal Sardinian Chapel, London.

“ To thee only have I sinned.”—PSALM L. 6.

[Concluded.]

God of eternity, *she* never cursed him, *she* for-
gave him, and *she* prayed for him, wilt thou con-
demn? All earth and hell and heaven can bear
witness, that if I am merciful, I am also just.
“The bones that are humbled shall rejoice;” but
let the murderer repent, for a curse, and a heavy
burden, is resting over him who hath done such deep
injustice. O what a blight upon the world, what

a pestilence was let loose upon society, when sin
rose from the abyss. Into the homes of the happy
it had breathed its poison; in the annals of the
loved and lost we can read its curse; into what
family hath it not obtruded its withering presence.
The sister and the brother played together in the
fields of innocence, and she was happy but in the
reciprocation of his love. She looked to him as
her sole protector in this world of storms, and she
loved him with a love, affectionate as it was
enduring. They knelt by each other in the hour
of prayer, and she prayed for him entreatingly as
for herself. But a change came over him, and she
knew not why. Her endearments could not win
him, nor her music charm him. She soon knew
that he was a sinner, and she prayed and wept; but
he drove her from him, and his unkindness broke
down that once buoyant spirit. But what cared he
for the wrongs which he inflicted? She might
mourn and mourn on for many a year over the loss
of a brother's love, his degradation before society;
but what cared he? O, no, the sinner cares but
for himself. The circle of the once happy family
circle has departed—the footsteps of the sinner fall
heavily within his home—the sweet communion of
earth is broken, and the hopes of blessed re-union
in heaven, blasted. O terrible entail! O bitter
curse! even as in this beginning, sin, wherever it
appears, blights the earth around it: and, as from
it, death originally entered into the world, so does
it still, wherever it flies over earth, shake from its
sable pinions the mildew of corruption and decay.
But what are these evils compared with the
wrong which we do to God? The royal prophet
did not even notice them: he looked to heaven,
and he saw thee, my God, in thy love, thine endur-
ance, and thy mercy—he saw thee; and as the
light of thy majesty flashed upon his soul, he saw
the extent of his wrong, and exclaimed, “Against
thee only have I sinned.” Merciful God! teach
us to feel the wrong we do thee.

The mind of man never feels more embarrassed
than when it tries to describe infinitude; and as
sin is an offence against an infinite Being, it parti-
cipates in infinite malice: and hence the impossi-
bility of adequately describing its wrong. The
child who rises up against the most affectionate of
fathers—the subject who takes up the arms of
revolt against the best of princes, can give but a
feeble idea of the outrage which sin does to God.
We can calculate its malice from the penalty
attached to it by an all merciful Being. For one
sin of rebellion, and that only in thought, God in
an instant hurled myriads of the blessed spirits
of his kingdom into eternal torments without a
possibility of repentance. We know how one sin
of disobedience brought death and sorrow on
the world. We have read the sentence which