

heart. Thousands amongst us are moving to eternity without God, and without hope in the world; while others rush contentedly forward, the dupes of a specious and deceitful superstition. How shall we make friends of these? I reply, by sustaining rigorously amongst us the various instrumentalities, which are in operation, to pour light upon the surrounding darkness. And while one enlightened soul may trace the proximate cause of its salvation to a tract, another to a Bible, another to a home missionary, and another to a pastor, they all may bless your name, reader, in time and eternity, for sustaining those institutions which furnished them with reading; or those men who urged successfully the truth upon their consciences. And then think of the destitute portions of our province. How many of Christ's sheep are scattered over the back settlements who long to hear the sound of the gospel, but cannot raise the means to sustain pastors, and who have none amongst themselves who possess the gift of teaching; and then their children, springing to man and woman-hood, and mingling with those who fear not the Lord, nor think upon his name, are but little in advance, in point of reverence for the ordinances of God's house and religious sensibility, of the sons and daughters of those nations, where the pure gospel is never heard. How many of those souls might by the faithful efforts of home missionaries, or colporteurs, be led to Christ, and led on earth and in heaven to bless the names of those who sent unto them the messengers of peace.

Here again, by the mammon of unrighteousness, we have a wide opportunity of making unto ourselves friends, who will meet us with joy, and greet us with unmixed affection in heaven, before the very throne of Him, whose faithful stewards we have been. And then, think of the heathen world, six hundred millions of human beings, groping their way to eternity, in worse than Egyptian darkness. The Macedonian cry, rushes upon our ears from the four winds of heaven. The fearful death-groans of tens of thousands of departing spirits who know not whither they are going, are made by the faithful press to fill the land. The pathetic pleadings of the missionaries for the benighted and the degraded and the anguished solicitations of converts from heathenism, in behalf of their perishing fellows, all, all appeal so strongly to our sympathies and our consciences, that to detain our Lord's goods in such circumstances, must be to fasten upon our souls the brand of unfaithfulness, and to constitute our gain, be it more or less, emphatically the mammon of unrighteousness.

But how many friends may we make unto ourselves in this field? And what an interesting thought is it, to look forward to the gathering together of all nations!

When the redeemed from every kindred, and tribe and tongue shall be assembled around the throne of our common Lord. And, Oh! when one simultaneous shout of praise shall burst spontaneous from the heart of the innumerable multitude—when gratitude will inspire every tongue; and pure, profound, boundless, and endless love shall impart heaven's fire to heaven's songs—when every soul is overflowing with heaven's benevolence—every countenance glowing with heaven's sympathy, and every faithful steward in the possession of the true riches—what would a sordid son of mammon do in such a company?

[FOR THE CHRISTIAN OBSERVER.]

PETER'S ADDRESS IN THE PORCH CALLED SOLOMON'S.

The principal object of the present observations is to correct a supposed misconception of Peter's avowal of the ignorance of the Jews in the murder of our Lord. But to prepare the way for this it may be proper to glance at the circumstances in which the avowal was made. Shortly after the remarkable scenes of the day of Pentecost, which must have produced an extraordinary sensation in Jerusalem, a man who was well known to all the inhabitants as having been from infancy till his fortieth year a helpless cripple, who was daily laid down at a gate of the temple to ask alms, was seen, to the amazement of the multitude who thronged the temple at the hour of evening prayer, walking and leaping in the perfect and vigorous use of his limbs. In a transport of joy and gratitude he clung to Peter and John, pointing them out as the benefactors through whom he had received such extraordinary relief. An eager crowd soon gathered around them, when Peter, disclaiming all personal merit or honour in the miracle, ascribed it to the name, the power or authority of Jesus, whose cruel death was yet fresh in the minds of all the people. Such an explanation of the event must have awakened painful if not fearful emotions in the minds of the crowd. They had seen the untarnished purity of his character, they had listened to his words and felt that never man spake like him, and they had witnessed; some of them had participated in his deeds of heavenly beneficence, yet without cause they had imbibed the bitterest animosity and malignity against him, had demanded his crucifixion, overwhelmed him with injustice and insult, and mocked his dying agonies. How startling must it have been to find that his supernatural power was not extinguished. They had wagged their heads in insolent triumph as their victim hung in apparent impotence on the cross; but here again they find the might of his name haunting them. Taken in connection with the ru-

mours they had heard of his resurrection and with what they had seen and heard on the day of Pentecost, this event must have well prepared them for the claim which Peter immediately urged that he whom they had crucified was the son of God, the promised Messiah.

"There" said he, pointing to the man, "there is the proof of it; God, reverses your unrighteous judgment, refutes your aspersions and glorifies him you rejected. Look upon this man and know certainly that he whom you killed is raised from the dead, that Jesus was all he claimed to be, and that our testimony regarding his resurrection is true! Could the name of a crucified pretender effect this notable and undeniable miracle as certainly as this man stands before you in perfect soundness, these things are so."

Peter then cuttingly alluded to the circumstances in the case which illustrated the enormity of their guilt. Even an unprincipled and unscrupulous Roman governor could not resist the claims of his manifest innocence; but Pilate's remonstrances were thrown away upon rancorous malignity. It further shewed their desperate wickedness that they had preferred to have a notorious murderer released, when Pilate, reluctant to yield to their clamour, proposed to give Jesus the advantage of a custom of pardoning a criminal in honour of the passover. Nothing would satisfy their fury but the death of one who was revealed to them as the author of life.

Here was proof, not only of a conspiracy against innocence and goodness, but of the appalling guilt of having rejected the Messiah; heaped indignity upon the head of the Son of God and of actually having murdered him whom God had sent. Here also was the proof that he was then alive, exalted at the right hand of God and invested with all power. What a position for these men! their sin had found them out. If there was justice in the universe, what had they to expect but that the head they had crowned with thorns would bow an assent to their condemnation, and that the hand they had nailed to the cross, would scatter amongst them the thunderbolts of a righteous indignation. The Spirit had come into the world to convict them of sin, because they believed not on him. It was then that Peter discharged his true office, and proclaimed repentance and the remission of sins in his name.

"And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it as did also your rulers; but those things which God before has showed by the mouth of all prophets that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled."

The admission "I wot that through ignorance ye did it," is explained as originating in Peter's fear that by "aggravating the crime they had been guilty of, beyond due bounds, he might drive them to de-