

of teeth." Surely, my dear sir, you do not think yourself *that* unprofitable servant? You would be more concerned if you did. Instead of standing there playing with your watch-chain, and with religious phraseology too, you would be in your closet, on your knees in an agony, crying, "God be merciful to me, a sinner!" Then you must mean another. Then what other? In Luke xvii. 10, the Master said, "So, likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, 'We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.'" Is it with these you place yourself? But you see these have done *all those things* which were commanded them. You dare not say that. Yet it was among these you were tacitly placing yourself, as you credited yourself with a little amiable humility and said, "I am an unprofitable servant." Before you use this much-abused language again, pause and consider in which connection you place yourself. The persons who may fitly say this, have done their duty; and if any one should laud and magnify them, as charitable corporations and collecting agents are apt to do when "generosity" and "munificence" have been displayed, this is to be their modest renunciation of all merit. You do not stand *there*; and there is no other "unprofitable servant," but he who is doomed to outer darkness.

We have had numerous biographies of profitable servants, sometimes, indeed, a little one-sided, and highly colored, but yet in the main good. Shall we ever get a sketch of an *unprofitable* servant? It should be perfectly fair, recounting all the favorable points; the unblemished life; the steady regular habits, the business qualities that achieved success; the family launched in life; the perfectly colorless character that never rebuked a wrong, and never made an enemy among a world of rebels against God; with a pathetic paragraph on dying without a struggle; and then it should enumerate the talents buried, the opportunities spurned, the good undone, the positive evil strengthened, the godliness made respectable, the evil example handed down, the natural selfishness of others shielded and sanctioned, the tone of Christian living lowered, the good impulses of others checked, and the general "aid and comfort" given to the King's enemies, the brake put upon the wheels of His chariot, and that by persons claiming to be of the King's servants. It should draw to a close with a calm exposition of the 73rd Psalm, with particular emphasis on verses 4 and 17, "they have no bands in their death,"—"until I went into the sanctuary, then understood I their end." Alas! that there should be so many subjects among avowed Christians for such a record!

The unprofitable servants never think of how much they owe to the Lord for spiritual benefits, and they feel no obligation to render again to Him on this ground. Any religion they have came to them by circumstances, and they assume it will reach others as far as necessary—in the same way. They never give any heed to calls for aid in Sabbath schools, or Bible classes. They fully believe that Sunday is a day for a little extra sleep. They see no necessity for burdening the church with collections, and for their part they will not take any trouble about such things. When the church is to be rebuilt they see no occasion for it; it served their fathers, who were just as good as they were. As for increasing the minister's salary, they are sure they have given as much as ever they got;