

without poignant grief, arising from consciousness of its enormity and punitive deservings. This cannot have place in our hearts without leading us to obliterate (if it be possible,) all remaining traces of our sins, particularly in those cases in which personal loss or suffering may have flowed from them. When conviction of sin is most pungent, it produces purposes in strict accordance with this representation. Were "to do" in that moment as easy, as "to will" is correct, satisfaction to the full would be promptly made by the mourning seeker of salvation. If this course be not subsequently pursued, it discovers either that the moral sense is violated, or that it has become fatally obtuse. As long as its monitions are disregarded, we must be strangers to those holy joys which are the gifts of God to those whose eye is single and whose heart is pure. It may be replied, "Restitution, then, must precede conversion." Not the act, but certainly the purpose. God accepts the purpose until occasion for its execution arrive; then, our bringing forth this great fruit so eminently meet for repentance, evinces its reality—we are confirmed in the enjoyment of our gracious privileges, and thus, by works is faith made perfect. James ii. 22.

Thirdly,—From the intimations of the will of God concerning restitution. It must surprise all who have not specially attended to this subject, to find in sacred writ so frequent and explicit reference to it. To transcribe consecutively all those portions of the Word of God is unnecessary. The authority of a scriptural duty depends not on its being often, but clearly enunciated. One section of Jewish law is very full to this point: Ex. xxii. 1-6—"If a man steal an ox, or a sheep, and kill it or sell it; he shall restore five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep. If a thief be found breaking up, and be smitten that he die, there shall no blood be shed for him. If the sun be risen upon him, there shall be blood shed for him; for he should make full restitution; if he have nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft. If the theft be certainly found in his hand alive, whether it be ox, or ass, or sheep, he shall restore double. If a man shall cause a field or vineyard to be eaten, and shall put in his beast, and shall feed in another man's field; of the best of his own field, and of the best of his own vineyard, shall he make restitution. If he break out, and catch in thorns, so that the stacks of corn, or the standing corn, or the field, be consumed therewith; he that kindled the fire shall surely make restitution." Other applications of the principle embodied in these statutes, may be found in the context. In some cases of injury, *four fold* was to be restored—doubtless for the double purpose of "making satisfaction for the man's loss, and maintaining the ends of civil government: by repairing the hurt the crime had done, and for preventing the evil it might otherwise do." The law was so inflexible on these matters, that if any were unable to satisfy for his wrongs by other means, he was to be sold for his theft, but his servitude could not be compelled for a longer term than six years. The prophet Ezekiel has a fine description of the effects of repentance. In it restitution is made a peremptory condition of divine forgiveness. The words authorise the ancient aphorism, "No remission without restitution." Again, "When I say to the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; if he turn from his sin, and do that which is lawful and right; if the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die. None of his sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him; he hath done that which is lawful and right; he shall surely live." Ezek. xxxiii. 14-16. No other shall now be added to this class of scriptures, but the well known declaration of Zaccheus, which requires only these prefatory remarks:—1. It is generally understood, that until the day this avowal was made, Zaccheus "was a sinner," or, as we would say, "unconverted." 2. The quadruple return for his wrong was in conformity with the Roman law of the supposed case, when proved. 3. "Though he speaks only of restitution in case of exaction, the same reason exists why restitution should be made for all other kinds of injury." 4. His exemplary voluntariness in the act; and, 5. The unqualified approval of Christ, manifested by his communicating immediate salvation. "And Zaccheus stood, and said unto the Lord: Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give unto the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by

false accusation, I restore him fourfold. And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house; forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham." Luke xix. 8, 9.

No weighty objections can be brought against a duty thus established. Indeed, none would be offered except by those whose former actions may have made restitution necessary. What is urged refers rather to the inconvenience of making satisfaction, than to the authority for it. Some pretend shame for delaying this duty. But it is the shame of an ignoble mind. We cannot hide that we are sinners, and it may be, we need not claim the particular sin in question—for if it were private, so may be the satisfaction. We may be as prudent as we please, in making reparation, so that it be effectually done. The doing it will not be dishonourable, but the contrary. Instead of being matter of shame, it will be just occasion of commendation.

Others may consider that to restore the right, would so greatly diminish their possessions, that they therefore decline it. It is well to be careful of property, but much better to be careful of our souls. One of the most detestable characters of antiquity was he who "loved the wages of unrighteousness." The same kind of odium attaches to those who unrighteously retain what was iniquitously acquired. Instances of this sort have been so unhappily frequent, as to have called for distinct notice in the word of God. What can vanquish our covetousness, or correct our selfishness, if these passages do not? "A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked." Ps. xxxvii. 16. "As the partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not; so he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool." Jer. xvii. 11.

As nothing of importance can be produced against the making of satisfaction, so much may be said of its beneficial effects. Restitution, when necessary and practicable, is of direct and mighty influence on our peace of mind. The tranquillity that is alone valuable, because it alone is real arises from a just persuasion of our sincere obedience to those divine requirements with which we have become acquainted. Neglect of the duty before us must for ever preclude us from participating in this peace. We shall have "a thorn in our heart;" "and if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things." Whatever prevents our Christian comfort will proportionably diminish our moral power—for "the joy of the Lord is" our "strength." He who does not rejoice in the Lord, and has not "the spirit of power," can have no ground to hope that he will be instrumental in teaching transgressors the way of the Lord, and in converting sinners to him. Thus the great ends of our existence, to be happy and to be useful, will be defeated. Whereas the righteous shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger. Job xvii. 9.

One principal use of these reflections is, to deter men from sin, especially of that kind which involves loss to our neighbour. Then will they not be laid under the painful obligation to restitution. It is far easier to avoid crimes than to satisfy for them. Fraud is too commonly practised, and some appear to glory in it. Neither directly nor indirectly should we be parties to iniquity. Injustice and falsehood may sometimes be followed by temporal profit and transient pleasure, but "he who swims in sin, shall sink in sorrow."

Finally, brethren, "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Those things do: and the God of peace shall be with you."—Phil. iv. 8, 9.

E. B.

THE SOUL A LIVING TEMPLE.

THE incomparable beauty and mournful truth of the following passage from "Howe's Living Temple," must be admitted by every serious mind:—

"That God hath withdrawn himself, and left this his temple desolate, we have many sad and plain proofs before us. The stately ruins are visible to every eye, that bear in the front (yet ex-

tant) this doleful inscription—"Here God once dwelt." Enough appears of the admirable frame and structure of the soul of man, to shew that Divine presence did sometime reside in it; more than enough of vicious deformity to proclaim, he is now retired and gone. The lamps are extinct; the altar overturned; the light and love are now vanished; the golden candlestick is displaced, and thrown away as a useless thing, to make room for the throne of the prince of darkness; the sacred incense, which sent rolling up in clouds its rich perfumes, is exchanged for a poisonous heliath vapour. The comely order of this house is turned into confusion—the beauties of holiness into noisome impurities—the 'house of prayer into a den of thieves.' 'Behold the desolation! all things rude and waste. If God be here, why is it thus? The faded glory—the darkness—the disorder—the impurity—the decayed state, in all respects, of this temple—too plainly shew the GREAT INHABITANT is gone."

SCRIPTURE ILLUSTRATIONS.

ARTIFICIAL MOURNING IN THE EAST.

Matt. ix. 23.

"And saw the minstrels, and the people making a noise."

BIDDULPH, a Chaplain to the English factory at Aleppo, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, was surprised at observing that the women in the Holy Land used instruments of music in their lamentations, and that before the melancholy event happened to which their wailing referred. He says, "While I was at Saphetta, many Turks departed from thence towards Mecca, in Arabia. The same morning they went, we saw many women playing with timbrels as they went along the streets, who made a shrieking as if they cried. This was mourning the departure of their husbands, who were gone on pilgrimage to Mecca, and whom they feared that they should never see again."

Irwin, speaking of a merchant that was murdered in the desert between Ghinnah and Cosaire, tells us, "The tragedy which was lately acted near Cosaire, gave birth to a mournful procession of females, which passed through the different streets of Ghinnah this morning, and uttered dismal cries for the death of Mahommed. In the centre was a female of his family, who carried a naked sword in her hand, to intimate the weapon by which the deceased fell. At sundry places the procession stopped, and danced around the sword, to the music of timbrels and tabors. It would be dangerous to face the frantic company; whose constant clamour and extravagant gestures give them all the appearance of the female Bacchantes of Thrace, recorded of old. The female relations of the deceased make a tour through the town, morning and night, for a week, beating their breasts, throwing ashes on their heads, and displaying every artificial token of sorrow.—Harmcr.

PUNISHMENT OF SAWING ASUNDER.

Matt. xxiv. 51.

"And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites."

If this expression be understood in its literal sense, it must be an allusion to the terrible punishment of inflicting death with the saw; which, according to tradition, the Prophet Isaiah suffered. Dr. Shaw says, this method of executing criminals is practised by the western Moors in Barbary. Calmet says, that this punishment was not unknown among the Hebrews. It came originally from the Persians or the Chaldeans. It is still in use among the Switzers, and they practised it not many years ago on one of their countrymen, guilty of a great crime, in the plain of Grenelles, near Paris. They put him into a kind of coffin, and sawed him at length, beginning at the head, as a piece of wood is sawn. Parisates, King of Persia, caused Roxana to be sawn in two alive. Valerius Maximus says, that the Thracians sometimes made living men undergo this torture. The laws of the twelve tables, which the Romans had borrowed from the Greeks, condemned certain crimes to the punishment of the saw.—Burder.