

by what, for many years, has not affected me in the least degree.

"I once thought a good deal about making a profession of religion; but that is now thirty years ago. The subject came and went for some time, but at last was banished altogether; and *neither the purpose nor desire ever returned.* Before this, I was tempted to spend a Sunday 'out' with a pleasure party. That act seems to have been the pivot on which my destiny turned. I was a ruined man. Conscience was not dead. Convictions goaded me severely for a time. I repeated the transgression. Again conscience smote me, but I now argued with it. You know how far a man has gone toward ruin when he can turn round and say to conscience, 'You are too hard; it is not so bad as you make it.' By and by I habitually absented myself from the house of God once a day. But this single Sabbath attendance did not long continue. For some years, except when a celebrated preacher came, I gave up attending a place of worship altogether.

"My life now became one of pleasure. I never descended to be one of the gross and vulgar herd. I cannot better describe to you my relation to ungodly men than by saying, they looked up to me as their superior, a kind of arbiter or umpire among avowed servants of sin. You are ready to say, 'You are now sorry for your sin.' I answer, No; I have not a single feeling of regret, though my reason tells me I took the unwise course.

"In the course of time, something—I do not exactly know what, unless it was through being induced to attend a singing meeting on what was called 'practice night'—led me again to attend a place of worship. It certainly was not any interest I felt in my personal salvation; for let me tell you, sir, *for more than twenty years I have been PAST FEELING.* I have read a good many books upon religious subjects, and debated about the doctrines of religion; but I do not remember that over that space of time I have *ONCE FELT.* I know that before this week is over I shall be gone. There is a God, and there is a day of retribution; and I shall perish. All this I believe; but I should not speak the truth if I said I either felt, or that I had a wish to feel. I repeat it, I *AM PAST FEELING.*"

Reader, do you wonder at my trembling as he spoke? Again I brought before him those truths of the gospel which seemed most suitable to his case. Every thought likely to break through that awful indifference to his condition and prospects was, according to the best of my ability, pressed upon him. I knelt at his bedside, and, as I could command utterance, prayed for him. All was unavailing. When I looked again at his face, there was the tranquility of infancy. He interrupted my thoughts, and quietly remarked, "It is past: I remember when I

could weep under the truth, but *HERE* I shall feel no more."

The next morning I called early. The last enemy had laid his victim low sooner than was expected. Before me lay a breathless form, with scarcely a change in the features. There were no hands in his death. I could not help recalling his words, "HERE I shall feel no more," and then exclaiming, "But NOW?"

Reader, let me entreat you to attend to a few solemn thoughts, suggested by this narrative. Possibly you may have been treating convictions of sin and occasional thoughts about living a religious life lightly; not exactly with indifference, but with much less seriousness than you should treat matters so unspeakably weighty. In reviewing your life, you remember times when your heart was much more tender than it is now; when it cost you much more thinking and struggling with convictions before you committed sin than it does at present; and when doing wrong made you, upon reflection, miserable for a longer time and to a greater extent than after-thought does now. "Still," you say, "I am not *past feeling*; nor can I believe that I shall ever arrive at that awful condition of heart." You may be right; for the mercy and forbearance of God are very great. But it must not be forgotten that many have said the same things, who have died in hardness and impenitence. Your plain duty, and your interest too, is decision for God. Trifle no longer with time and opportunities. Hesitate no more between the world and Christ. Stifle no longer your convictions. Debate no more with conscience. At once go to Christ, and close with his offers of mercy. Repent and believe in him. Do not talk of "to-morrow;" for you may not count on it: you know not what a day may bring forth.

But perhaps the discovery of the state in which you have been living is alarming you. You tremble lest your trifling with mercy should be an unpardonable sin. Listen then to the blessed declaration, "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth from all sin."—(1 John i. 7.) The way to safety is simply and clearly stated: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."—(Acts xvi. 31.) Full and free mercy is before you: "Whoever will, let him take the water of life freely."—(Rev. xxii. 17.) "The gift of God is eternal life."—(Rom. vi. 23.) "True," you say; "but my sin—my sin! I am a sinner to expect pardon; I want the heart to trust in God." Then listen once more. "A new heart," says God, "will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh."—(Ezek. xxxvi. 26.) Does not this promise meet your case? Then take the words of penitent David, and say, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right