

of a small sum of money that had been due to his father; and to procure which for his mother, he requested to beg his way to the residence of the creditor. When he returned, he presented to her the whole sum; and when asked upon what he had supported himself on the journey, he replied that the cause in which he was engaged procured him the means of subsistence, for he was not refused alms by a single individual whom he had solicited.

It was in consequence of his kindness to his father and mother that he was assisted by a rich friend to procure education fitted for his becoming a clergyman. For this patron he ever afterwards felt the strongest esteem; and his gratitude kept pace with his affection. He attended his friend on his death-bed, and administered to him that knowledge and consolation which the clerical education he had received enabled him to bestow on his dying benefactor. Nor did he consider that the gratuitous assistance, which had thus been extended to him, could be repaid alone by affection towards the victorious giver, but declared that, as it came from heaven, so ought the gratitude of his heart to be directed to the origin of all gifts that are bestowed on the deserving.

Gratitude is not only its own reward, but the cause often of the means of its own increase; for Smithson's benefactor was so pleased with his attention to him when dying, that he left him a large legacy in his will, which relieved him from that state of dependence which he found had limited his means of doing good. He soon afterwards married a very beautiful woman, and put himself placed in the church of Berwick.

His ministerial duties were performed with the greatest devotion and zeal for the welfare of the people intrusted to his charge. His attention to his parishioners was unremitting—his prayers for the dying, or the sorrow-stricken, were fervent—and the poor and aged not only tested of the consolations afforded by his pious sympathy, but often had their wants relieved by his charitable hand. No mortal eye could discover in this any insincerity, for let any cloak put on to cover evil already done, or any false assumption of a good and devout character to avert the eye of suspicion from deeds intended to be perpetrated.

His character had, indeed, in other respects, been tried and found not wanting. A relation of his had died, and left a large sum of money to be divided among his nephews and nieces. The money was recovered by Smithson, and upon the young heirs arriving at majority, was divided among them with as much honesty, that they all combined in addressing to him a letter, wherein they extolled his character for justice, honour, and piety, and attributed to him all the qualities of a saint.

In addition to all this, his conjugal character was unspotted. His attentions to his wife were what might have been expected from a good husband and a minister of the gospel; the breath of scandal never dimmed the purity of his fidelity, nor could the most querulous character of conjugal obligations have found any fault with the manner in which he fulfilled not only the duties of a husband, but the more generous and less easily counterfeited affections of the lover. His wife seemed to be grateful for his kindness, and respected

his official character as much as she loved those private virtues from which she was so much benefited in her moral, as she was aided in her personal and conjugal capacity.

On a Sunday previous to that on which the sacrament was to be dispensed, he preached in the Church of Berwick. His text was the sixth commandment—'Thou shalt not kill.' His sermons, always animated and vigorous, and proceeding even a list of devout enthusiasm, were much relished by his congregation; but, on that day, he outshone all his former efforts of pulpit eloquence. He painted the character of the murderer with colours drawn from the palette of inspired truth; the cruel, remorseless, blood-thirsty heart of the son of Calvary was laid open to the eyes of his enraptured audience; the feelings of the victim were described with such power of sympathy that the tears of the congregation fell in ready and heartfelt tribute to the power of his delineation; his own emotion, swelling that of his people, filled his eyes with tears, and lent to his voice that peculiar thrilling sound, which eddies forth while it expresses the strongest pity. The men of God seemed inspired, and he communicated the inspiration to those who heard him. His hand was observed to tremble; his eye was bloodshot—his manner nervous, tremulous, excited, and enthusiastic; his voice 'broken with pity'; and, at times, dissonant with the overpowering excess of his emotion. His whole soul seemed under the influence of divine power; and his body, quivering under the energies of its noble partner, shook like a thing touched by the hand of the Almighty.

On that morning the preacher had murdered his wife. By the time the congregation came out, the news had begun to spread. Nobody would credit what they heard, while they exclaimed that his sermon was strange, and his manner remarkable. A determination not to believe was mixed with strange insinuations, and the town of Berwick was suspended between extravagant incredulity and unaccountable suspicions. But the report was true, and the fact remains as one of those occurrences in life, which no knowledge of the heart of man, though dignified with the proud name of philosophy, has been, or perhaps ever will be, able to explain.