

"A noble lady told me herself," says Whitfield in one of his sermons, "that when she was crying on account of one of her children's death, her little daughter came innocently to her one day, and said, 'Mamma, is God Almighty dead, you cry so?' The lady, blushing, said 'No.' She replied, 'Mamma, will you lend me your glove?' She let her take it, and, after that, asked her for it again: upon which the child said, 'Now you have taken the glove from me, shall I cry because you have taken away your own glove? And shall you cry because God has taken away my sister?' Out of the mouths of babes God has perfected praise."—(Sermon lxx.)

A Birthday—What should it be made?

—A day of thanksgiving to the Author and Giver of life—For our being—for the rank we occupy in the scale of creation—for the country and family in which we were brought forth—for our civil and religious advantages—and for our preservation through so many perils—and when so many have been cut off.

—A day of humiliation—That we were shapen in iniquity, and in sin did our mother conceive us—that we went astray from the womb—that our transgressions are innumerable, and our trespass is gone up into the very heavens—and that we have not improved as we ought to have done any of our privileges—"I do remember my faults this day."

—A day of reflection—That as there is a time to be born, so there is a time to die—that so much of life is already passed away as a shadow—that when a few years are come, we shall go the way whence we shall not return—that our continuance here is as uncertain as it is short—that we may never see this day again—and if we do not, where shall we be when it returns?

—A day of prayer—That we may so number our days as to apply our hearts unto wisdom—that we may obtain pardoning mercy and renewing grace—that we may be prepared for all the duties and trials that lie before us—that whether we live we may live unto the Lord, or whether we die we may die unto the Lord, so that living and dying we may be the Lord's

Happy they who without complaining of their lot, or being impatient to be gone, yet know the day of their death is better than the day of their birth. Though for them to live is Christ, to die is gain. Every returning birthday tells them, "So much nearer your heavenly home."

But how dreadful the state of those who know—and if they consider they must, know—that every year advances them so much away from all they love, and brings them so much nearer a world in which, as they have no hope, so after which, they can have no desire. If conscience be not stupified, and all thought banished by company and gaiety—a birthday to them is far from enviable. Verses may be written; addresses may be received; smiles may be put on; but even in laughter the heart is sorrowful, and the end of that mirth is heaviness.

What a difference in the two following references to the birth of the individuals:—

"Who," says Voltaire, "can without horror, consider the whole world as the empire of destruction? It abounds with wonders; it also abounds with victims. It is a vast field of carnage and contagion. Every species is without pity pursued and torn to pieces through the earth, and air, and water. In man there is more wretchedness than in all the other animals put together. He loves life, and yet he knows that he must die. If he enjoys a transient good, he suffers various evils, and is at last devoured by worms. This knowledge is his fatal prerogative; other animals have it not. He spends the transient moments of his existence in diffusing the miseries which he suffers; in cutting the throats of his fellow-creatures for pay; in cheating and being cheated; in robbing and being robbed; in serving, that he might command; and in repenting of all he does. The bulk of mankind are nothing more than a crowd of wretches equally criminal and unfortunate; and the globe contains rather carcases than men. I tremble at the review of this dreadful picture to find that it contains a complaint against Providence itself; and wish I HAD NEVER BEEN BORN."

Now let us hear the language of the excellent Hallyburton, who died as he lived, full of confidence in God:—"I shall shortly get a very different sight of God from what I have ever had, and shall be made meet to praise Him for ever and ever. Oh! the thoughts of an incarnate Deity are sweet and ravishing. Oh! how I wonder at myself, that I do not love Him more, and that I do not admire Him more! What a wonder that I enjoy such composure under all my bodily pains, and in the view of death itself! What a mercy that, having the use of my reason, I can declare His goodness to my soul. I long for His salvation, I bless His name I have found Him, and die rejoicing in Him. Oh! blessed be God that I WAS BORN! Oh! that I was where He is. I have a father and mother, and ten brothers and sisters in heaven, and I shall be the eleventh. Oh! there is a telling in this Providence, and I shall be telling it for ever! If there be such a glory in His conduct towards me now, what will it be to see the Lamb in the midst of the throne! Blessed be God that—EVER I WAS BORN."—Jay.

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Importance of Religious Education.

There cannot be a doubt that much of our prosperity and happiness, both individually and nationally, depends on the extent and depth of our piety. If we had the opportunity of witnessing the effects upon a people's temporal condition of two different modes of treatment, education apart from religion, and religion separate from education, we would gain a most impressive lesson of the incalculable value of religion even in promoting their temporal welfare. For, whatever the dissuasive influence from crime and

grosser vice of those refined ideas which in general accompany augmented knowledge, yet undoubtedly it may occur that, under the opposing influence of social misery, increased intelligence may only furnish to the vicious and the criminal increased facilities for evil. But the wider and more penetrating influence exerted by religious principle, controlling conscience rather than refining taste, is seldom felt without conferring, in addition to its higher blessings, those fixed views and habits which can scarcely fail to render individuals prosperous and states secure.

Applying to the regulation of their daily conduct towards themselves and towards society the same high sanctions which control them in their loftier relations, christian men become, almost invariably temperate, industrious and provident, as part of their religious duty; and christian citizens acquire respect for human laws from having learnt to reverence those which are divine. The history of men and states shows nothing more conspicuously than this—that, in proportion as a pure and practical religion is acknowledged and pursued, are individuals materially prosperous, and nations orderly and free. It is thus that religion has the promise of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come.

If then, the question was asked, "What is the great end of education?" we reply, "the formation of character." This affects not simply the individual and the family, but all classes and relations in society. A child is committed to the hands of its teacher, that he may train it so as best to subserve the design of its existence. His duty is to train it in the manner best calculated to prepare it for the duties of this life and the enjoyments of the next. It is a mortal being, made to live a season in this world, and therefore to be cultivated for its business; but it is also an immortal being, made to live beyond the grave, and therefore to be prepared for another and a higher state of existence. The education best adapted for the one is so also for the other. There are no jarring interests between time and eternity. He who trains best for the one does so for both. This, and this only is education. And, were its design thus kept continually before the minds of those engaged in it, how would it both direct and stimulate them. It would teach them how to educate, and urge them to task all their powers to the work. It would dissipate the wild and wicked theories that have usurped the name of education, and cause the teacher to train his pupils for the sober realities of time and eternity. In the language of an eloquent writer "The world is wrong side up in this matter of education, when it administers its own medicines only, its own beggarly ele-