

Even such is man who lives by breath,
Whose hour's soon gone—see life and death.
The grass withers, the tale is ended,
The bird is flown, the dew ascended,
The hour is short, the spanne not long,
The swanne now dies—man's life is done.

Like to the bubble in the brooke,
Or in a glasse much like a looke,
Or like a shuttle in weaver's hands,
Or like a writing on the sands,
Or like a thought, or like a dreame,
Or like the gliding of a stream;
Even such is man who lives by breath,
Whose hour's soon gone—see life and death.
The bubble's burst, the look's forgotten,
The shuttle flung, the writing blotted,
The thought is past, the dreame is gone,
The water glides—man's life is done.

Like to an acorne in a bower,
Or like swift surge of water's roar,
Or like the time 'twixt flow and ebbe,
Or like the spider's tender webbe,
Or like the race, or like the goale,
Or like the wailings of a dole:
Even such is man, whose brittle state
Is always subject unto fate,
The acorne's not, the flood's soon spent,
The time's noe time, the webbe soon rent,
The race soon runne, the goale soon wonne,
The grief soon ends—man's life is done.

Like to the lightning from the skie,
Or like the post that quick doth lie,
Or like a quaver in short song,
Or like a journey three days long,
Or like the snow in summer's summe,
Or like the wood, or like the plume;
Even such is man, who lives in sorrow,
He's here to day, away to-morrow.
The lightning's past, the poste soon goe,
The song is short, the journey soe,
The wood doth rott, the plume doth fall,
The snow dissolves—and soe must all.

* A funeral, or some grievous event.

† Three days, viz., youth, manhood, and old age.

LEARN HYMNS.

A good hymn is a blessed treasure. Every such hymn in your mind, at command when it is needed, will be worth vastly more to you than so many dollars in your pocket. It is capital that bears repeated and continued investment, always repaying at compound rates. A good hymn, like a good plough, becomes all the brighter from using, but, unlike the instrument, use does not wear it out or weaken its power. Like the "Fama" of Virgil, "*crescit equestri cuncta*," the hymn gathers strength from repetition, and with something of mercy's quality, "it blesses him that gives and him that takes."

A hymn committed to memory becomes a little perennial fountain, for good, in the soul of the young Christian. It affords a substantial refreshment. It does not interfere with his duties, for it is a sweetener of toil. It helps to make heavy burdens light, and dull hours cheerful. It either drives away care, or lessens its anxieties. It brings a gleam of sunshine into the cloudiest and darkest day, and aids in the development of right feeling under the most unfavourable circumstances.

If any one doubts this, let him fill his heart and mind with such a hymn as

"Jesus, I love of our soul,
To live to thy loved one."

or Cowper's—

"To my happiness to live,
Not to live without the cross."

or Watts's—

"Am I a soldier of the cross,
A follower of the Lamb?"

and see how much such trains of thought, thus expressed, can be made to do for him in the appropriate circumstances.

He will sing it over to himself in the store, or shop, or office, and even in the street, though his lips may be silent, the hymn will be found springing up, a little fountain of "melody in his heart unto the Lord." *Ex. paper.*

THE HUMAN AND THE DIVINE PLAN OF SALVATION CONTRASTED.

To desire the end without the use of means, is a characteristic of our nature.

The Astrologer and the Alchemist professed, the one to change the baser metals into gold, the other to disclose the events of futurity. The success of these professors depended very much upon the credulity of those, who favored them with their patronage. And if we may judge from the testimony of history, the Astrologer and the Alchemist had nothing to complain of. Men were rather simple in the dark ages; they are so still. But then, they could be persuaded to believe almost anything. The pretensions of the Alchemist, for example, to change metals into gold, was a capital expedient for men getting rich without labor. The profession of the Astrologer to disclose the events of futurity, was certainly a privilege, for then, men required foresight without the trouble of reflection.

This characteristic of our nature, however, is not simply confined to objects, we are credulous enough to believe will tend to our secular advantage. In matters of more lasting importance it exercises unlimited power. If the mind be awakened to concern of religion, there is also a desire to attain the end with out a steady and consistent use of the appointed means. Who does not entertain the desire to possess eternal life? and yet, how often is it the case that there exists a hesitancy, and a doubt as to efficiency of the means appointed for the obtaining of this? How often does there exist a reluctance to comply with the conditions upon which eternal life is secured?

Men do not like to work out their own salvation in the spirit of the Gospel. They would rather do it their own way. Naaman, the Leper, for example, II. King v. xi would have given all he possessed, if the prophet had but cured him agreeably to his own desire—if he had but permitted him to wash in the rivers of Damascus. So the sinner will do anything rather than meet the conditions of the Gospel. He will observe holy-days, practice fastings, exercise penances, and undertake pilgrimages, rather than obey the requirements of that scheme, which is alone fitted to meet the necessities of his case, and without a general surrender to which there can be no salvation. He will rather resort to human unauthorised expedients—will rather trust to human instrumentality, and be guided by human wisdom, than prostrate himself in the dust before God, and in the utterances of a broken heart, ask for mercy and forgiveness through the merits and atoning sacrifice of Christ.

To assume this position, however, thus to become a supplicant before God, is too much for human pride, and too much opposed to human wisdom. The philosophy of Alana and Phalar rivers of Damascus is more congenial to human nature than the philosophy of the Cross. There is too much *exaltation* in the Gospel plan to suit men's tastes, too little room for exercising the passions, and for indulging in a general way the propensities of this nature.

And just upon this principle can we account for the existence of Atheism, and Socinianism and Universalism, and Popery. If it is necessary that men adopt some religion, that decidedly is preferred which ministers to the carnal appetites, and at the same time serves as an opiate to conscience.

"I thought," says Naaman the leper, "he would surely come out, stand and call upon the Lord his God, and recover the leper." And so you may deal with the sinner by telling him of the mercy of God, and of his willingness to accept of good works as a compensation for sin, you may lull him into unyielding security by teaching that the water of baptism regenerates and purifies the soul—you may stifle every conviction, and dissipate the horror of approaching death by sprinkling him with holy water, and anointing him with holy oil,—you may tell him that his salvation must be secure, if it is left in the power of the Church, or in the hands of any of her ghostly advisers; all this you may tell the sinner, and it will be most palatable religion. But tell him that "without holiness no man shall see the Lord," that without faith in the atoning sacrifice of Christ there is no salvation,—that without an entire surrender of himself to God, he shall never find him as *God reconciled*,—never find him ready and willing to pardon, and to bestow with all the complacency and tenderness of a father, the choicest blessings,—to accompany his lot in life with the peaceful tokens of a father's love, and the ever-abiding, and ever increasing assurance that this love is unalterable, and everlasting,—tell the sinner we say, that without all this his salvation is impossible, and his condemnation inevitable, and you will arouse all the pride in his heart; he will laugh you to scorn—trample upon the very remedy provided for his cure, and thus practically demonstrate the apothegm of Scripture, "the carnal heart is enmity against God."

So long as there exists a feeling of self complacency, and so long as the convictions of the sinner are met and quieted by human expedients, so long will there be an antipathy and opposition to the Gospel. And it is desirable that men should reflect upon this.—It is desirable they should be brought to see and feel the entire insufficiency of human remedies in a matter so vitally important as the salvation of the soul. It is expedient that men become alive to the fact, that the general mercy of God, apart from the work of Christ, presents *no ground* upon which to rest for salvation. Because if we rightly interpret the mind of the Spirit, we must inevitably arrive at the conclusion that "It is not he that *worketh*, but he that believeth on Jesus who is saved."

Notwithstanding the urgency of scripture however upon this point, men will not divest themselves of the idea, that to obtain favour with God, they must resort to *human expedients*. They will not sanction the spirituality of the Gospel plan. They will not have faith as a means to salvation. They will have morality, and charity, and honour, and duty. They will do anything but believe.

All this must appear startling, and to many it may be repulsive; but an honest appeal to conscience, will decide whether it is the case, that these things have in the estimation of sinful men a pre-eminent advantage over the things which the Gospel lays down as necessary to the reception and the enjoyment of the blessings of salvation. An appeal to the experience of any individual who has become a subject of the Grace of God, will decide whether it is true, that in the carnal heart there is a disposition to trust in natural rather than in divine instrumentality for acceptance with the Almighty. What is more common indeed, than for a man to secure himself in the belief, that an outward and decent behavior in the proprieties of life, an observance of the enjoined ordinances of religion—a consistent practice of morality, abounding in deeds of charity and benevolence,—reciprocation of neighbourly love,—doing unto others what he would others do unto him—what is more common, I say, than for a man to secure himself in the belief that