

those principles and offices of religion, without which virtue has no encouragement, sorrow has no consolation, society can have no order, man has no certain hope? The youth who contemns religion, indicates thereby a deplorable want of wisdom; his judgment is at variance with his best interests; it is at variance with the opinions of the wisest and best of men; it is at variance with God! "Cease, my son," says the wisest and best of men, "to hear the instruction which causeth to err from the words of knowledge."—"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and a good understanding have all they that do thereafter; the praise of it endureth for ever."

Another thing which makes the unwise youth is, his yielding himself up to the allurements of vice and folly. The young are surrounded with temptations. Vice spreads for them snares as enticing as they are destructive. In the city, in the place of concourse, they are exposed to courses which are ever fascinating and ruinous. I speak not of the ordinary vices, into which they may be hurried by the contagion of a corrupt atmosphere. I have more particularly in view the extravagant, maddening riot at the wine, the impure haunts of illicit pleasures; and those graves of youthful excellence and promise, public gaming tables. Dreadful is the demoralization, incalculable are the evils which are born and fostered in their vicious resorts. Hence the ingenious blush of innocence is for ever dissipated, and the barriers against iniquity are thoughtlessly thrown down! There are sacrificed and abandoned the holy instructions which fell from the parental lip upon the youthful heart, soft and wholesome as the dew of heaven! Here the name of the Being whom angels fear is rudely profaned; his laws, which carry the most awful sanctions, are defiled; and conscience, the kind monitor which he has placed in the bosom, is trampled under foot! Here we may see the wreck of genius, the destruction of fortune, the immolation of character, the dissipation of health, commencement of disquietude, progress of discontent, weariness and despondency of soul, unrestrained profligacy, and the consummation of wretchedness! Here—but I will proceed no farther. Even those, the frequency of the scenes has hardened to their turpitude, even they would blush at the exposure to the innocent and wise of the criminality and debasement to which they descend in their vicious resorts. And is not the youth "void of understanding," who, in the earliest and most important period of his life, suffers himself to be driven into these vortices of ruin? Reason, when she is heard, proclaims the danger. Conscience, could she be listened to, would remonstrate and intertreat. The shades of pious ancestors descend: the spectres of victims who have been led on to destruction in those paths, appear to check the youth in his career, and turn him into the path of safety. Yea, a voice is heard from the throne of the Almighty, calling to him in the language of inspiration, "Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men; avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, pass away." But passion, not reason; blind inclination, not manly sense, govern his conduct. There is nothing of the grace or circumspection of wisdom in his steps. He goeth to his sinful indulgences, "as an ox goeth to the slaughter," or "as a bird hasteneth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life." And what will be the result of his foolishness?—"For all these things, God will bring him into judgment." "The evil days will come, and the years draw nigh, in which he shall say, I have no pleasure in them." He will then look back with shame upon the profligacy of youth; and happy for him, if the Almighty do not leave him in awful judgment upon his abuse of the advantages of a Christian education, to reap to the last "the fruit of his own way, and to be filled with his own devices."

Another thing which indicates a want of wisdom and understanding in the young, is forming connection of friendship with unprincipled and profligate persons. Sweet to the youthful bosom are the pleasures of friendship. Noble and unguarded is the freedom with which our minds and hearts are then thrown open to those we love. And on this account it is of unspeakable importance, that the companions of our early days be such as may be worthy of our confidence, and capable of promoting in us the qualities and virtues which exalt the human character. But by falling into intimacies with the vicious, the source of generous joy, the spring of youth's most exquisite

pleasure, may be converted into a source of disappointments and debasements. For he who can wrong his God, who can renounce the obligations of religion and virtue, who can disregard the feelings of his parents and virtuous connections, what reasonable ground can there be for confidence in him, that he would not wrong his friend? Besides, the influence and example of such an one are fatal to the fairest and best prospects of youth. What does the voice of wisdom so often lament? over what is Experience so often seen shuddering the tear of regret, as the ruins which are occasioned by evil company? I see an amiable youth, upon whom kindred affection has fostered the fondest hopes: his talents are good, the best principles were early instilled into his bosom by parental assiduity; and in a course of manly and virtuous pursuits, he might be distinguished in society, and an ornament amongst the works of God. He steps into the world. The unprincipled and the profligate meet him, and with all the eagerness of fallen spirits bent on mischief, resolve to make him a partaker of their shame. His simplicity renders him their easy prey. With fair speech they gain access to his heart, and with guilty artifices they kindle his passions.

They take him to the orgies of Folly; with blind infatuation he follows them to the haunts of Vice, and to the abodes of Pollution. His former principles they now laugh to scorn: his boldness in iniquity they now extol and encourage: they draw him at length into all the dreadful excesses of their own guilt, and he who was once like the young cedar in Lebanon, fair and strong, and promising much growth and beauty, is now like the scathed tree, shorn of his glory, marked with the vengeance of heaven, and exhibiting a melancholy spectacle of worthlessness and untimely decay. Who sees not in this youth a "young man void of understanding?" He has chosen those for his friends, who were destitute of principle and virtue, and therefore were only capable of promoting his debasement and destruction. And what is his recompense for the sacrifices they have led him to make? Even to be reduced to the same level with them, to be deserted by them, in all probability, when they have stripped him of his virtue, his fortune, and respectability, and to be one day ashamed of them at the bar of the Almighty, as the panders of his vices, and promoters of his misery. "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not." "He that walketh with wise men, shall be wise; but a companion of fools shall be destroyed."

It is another indication of a "youth void of understanding," to be wholly occupied about the decoration of his person, and the display of his external pomp or accomplishments.

I add, in the last place, that *habitual idleness* is a characteristic of an unwise youth.

Idleness at any age is the parent of vice and unhappiness. In the morning of life it is peculiarly inexcusable and ruinous. The youth who has nothing to do, will learn to do evil. Neglecting to cultivate the noble powers of his nature, he will be drawn into habits of dissipation.

All the advantages of early industry in procuring knowledge, fortune, character, and esteem, he will forego; and he will, in all probability, be restless and dissatisfied, a burden to himself in the hours of reflection, and a useless lumberer of the ground. Nor can he find any palliation of his folly in the plea, that he finds nothing to do. There is ever enough to employ usefully the hours of every one's life. Go, cultivate and expand the noble faculties which thy Creator hath given thee. Go, call into exercise and useful application the powers that lie dormant in thy nature. Go, search the pages of wisdom, traverse the regions of truth, and by acquisition of knowledge lay the foundation of future usefulness to thy country and to the world. Go, seek the most high God, thy maker, redeemer, and sanctifier. Consider studiously what it is he requireth of thee, in order that thou mayest spend wisely the hours of this fleeting life. Go, bring to the habitation of thy parents the reviving fragrance of a name, and get to thyself the habit in which thou mayest emulate angels, the habit of industriously doing good. Go and do this, and much more that is equally obvious and worthy of thee, before thou complainest in apology for thy inactivity, that thou findest nothing to do. Unhappy the youth in whose mouth is this delusive plea!

For him, the best years of life will pass away, without furnishing the foundations of respectability

and comfort. On him neither peace nor prosperity, neither public esteem nor self-satisfaction will ever wait; but in their stead, that contempt which the common sense of society fastens upon those who have no object or employment; and that weariness, dissatisfaction, and self-reproach, to which the Almighty in his justice generally exposes the inactive. With great propriety, therefore, has experience always recommended to the young a definite pursuit and diligent occupation; and it is with striking and apposite acuteness that Solomon represents "the field of the slothful" as the same ground with the "vineyard of the man void of understanding."

Be induced, then, my young friends, to use industriously the morning of your lives. Let not your attention be absorbed, and your ambition satisfied with external decorations and distinctions.

As you would avoid taking fire-brands into your bosoms, guard against admitting to the near intimacies of friendship the unprincipled and vicious.

With a discretion worthy of your rational and immortal natures, "flee youthful lusts," and avoid the resorts of pollution and debasement. Above all things, "know you the God of your fathers, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind." Cherish for religion that respect which you would cherish for the guardian of your race; and the arrows which are aimed at her name or services, consider them as aimed at the shades of your forefathers, and the dearest interests of the world.

Then shall the hearts of your parents be gladdened with the knowledge of your wisdom and discretion; then shall the church rest upon you as her strong and affectionate supporters; then shall your bosoms be filled with self-approbation, and the peace of God; then, at whatever period death shall remove you to other duties and other worlds, you shall not depart prematurely; "for honourable age is not that which standeth in length of time, not that is measured by number of years, but wisdom is the grey hair unto men, and an unspotted life is old age."



Many attempts have been made to define the term God: as to the word itself, it is pure Anglo-saxon, and among our ancestors signified not only the Divine Being now commonly designated by the word, but also Good: as in their apprehension it appears, that God and Good were correlative terms; and when they thought or spoke of him, they were doubtless led from the word itself, to consider him as the good Being, or fountain of infinite benevolence and beneficence towards his creatures.

A general definition of this great first cause, as far as human words dare attempt one, may be thus given. The eternal, independent, and self-existent Being: The Being whose purposes and actions spring from himself, without foreign motive or influence: He who is absolute in dominion; the most pure, most simple, and most spiritual of all essences: infinitely benevolent, beneficent, true and holy: the cause of all being, the upholder of all things: infinitely happy because infinitely perfect; and eternally self-sufficient, needing nothing that he has made. Illimitable in his immensity, inconceivable in his mode of existence, and indescribable in his essence: known fully only to himself, because an infinite mind can be fully apprehended only by itself. In a word, a Being who, from his infinite wisdom, cannot err or be deceived; and who, from his infinite goodness, can do nothing but what is eternally just, right, and kind. Reader, such is the God of the Bible, but how widely different from the God of most human creeds and apprehensions.

CLARKE.

MISSIONARY INTELLIGENCE.

SURVEY OF THE PROTESTANT MISSIONARY STATIONS, THROUGHOUT THE WORLD, IN THEIR GEOGRAPHICAL ORDER.

INERODUCTORY REMARKS.

THOSE fearful evidences of HOSTILITY TO THE CAUSE OF GOD, which we noticed in the Introductory Remarks to the last Survey, have been multiplied during the year. Truth and Love are, indeed, manifestly advancing in their influence on mankind; but Evil pushes itself forth with more rage and malice and daring, as the Cause of God wins its way toward assured victory. The hostile armies have been long collecting, and are not only rapidly marshalling in the field, but that dreadful Conflict of