

not previously believed that there was a future punishment awaiting the disobedient, how could his fears have been excited? "But," adds he, "I was not only afraid of the wrath of Heaven on account of my neglect, but I would rather than all the world that I could have believed in the Saviour and shared in his salvation." Well, why did you desire to believe in the Saviour if you had not previously believed there was a Saviour? Why did you wish to share in his salvation, if you had not before believed that you were a sinner, and that there was salvation? Your doubts and fears, then, were all founded upon your former convictions. And had it not been for these, neither the reading of these words, nor the preacher's remarks, would have produced one emotion. Nay, his strongest appeals to your conscience were based upon the supposition that you were in possession of these convictions. If we have been instrumental in any respect, it was in causing you to hope that notwithstanding you had long sinned against the light you had since an infant, there was room in the divine mercy for your pardon and acceptance. in believing and obeying the truths you had once received and acknowledged, and had been taught, whether your father was Protestant or Papist, High Churchman or Dissenter. He may have revived those impressions, and been instrumental in leading you to repentance for having lived in opposition to your own acknowledgement; but the seeds were sown before.

In the same manner the influences of Heaven take hold of these truths, however first communicated to the mind; and persons are not unfrequently, without a preacher, influenced to act according to the light formerly received, and *then* illustrated and revived—'tis true, not without a preacher, in the scripture sense, but in the popular sense. For parents, guardians, or whosoever pronounces the words of the preachers specially called and sent by God, only gives extension or sound to words long since announced.

But the seeds are sown in "a land of bibles," always in infancy or childhood, which, under the divine blessing, in riper years, bring forth fruit to everlasting life. Conscience is then formed, and without this, a man might as rationally expect to be instrumental in converting fish as men. But it most commonly happens that *tares* are sown with the *wheat* in the mind, though not in the sense of the parable; or in other words, improper views are communicated with the truth of God, which, in after life, give rise to that mental perturbation and those varied feelings of which many are conscious. The catechisms and little manuals, put into the hands of children, together with the old wives' fables