

THE

# GOOD NEWS.

A SEMI-MONTHLY PERIODICAL:

DEVOTED to the RELIGIOUS EDUCATION of the OLD AND YOUNG

## PERSONAL PURITY.

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Distinguished from other jewels that have but one colour, such as the fiery ruby, the milk-white pearl, the sapphire that borrows its tint from the sky, and the emerald from the sea, diamonds owe their beauty, brilliancy, and costly value to this, that they burn with many hues. Turned round, they sparkle with shifting colours, as the light flashes from their different faces.—Still though it appears in this variety of aspects, the diamond is one gem—"pure and undefiled," as a dew-drop distilled from the skies. And why should not Christians believe that the Church of the living God is also one, though in forms of worship, ecclesiastical constitutions, and somewhat even in doctrines, it presents various aspects—as Paul says, "There are differences of administration, but the same Lord."

Like the costliest and most brilliant of gems, pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father presents itself under various aspects. Every one is beautiful, heavenly in its source—like the rays of the diamond caught from the sun; yet each differs from another, as much as do the properties which James assigns to divine wisdom. In this passage, "the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated of, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy," we have something like a full description; but in saying that "pure and undefiled religion is to visit the

widow and fatherless in their affliction, and keep himself unspotted from the world," the apostle does not attempt to give a full-length portrait. Out of many he mentions but two features; but these, though highly characteristic, neither embrace all the duties of a Christian's life, nor exhaust the graces of his character. On the contrary, as the sun in his annual course passes through all the signs of the zodiac, pure and undefiled religion, overlooking no commandment, but endeavoring to keep the entire law of God, walks the whole circle of Christian duties. Then, though some may be more prominent and more fully developed than others, the believer, "complete in Christ," is bedecked with every Christian grace. None are wanting; all are there, like the precious stones of the high priest's breast-plate, when, with a blood-filled bowl of purest gold, wearing his crown, and robed in white, he drew aside the veil; and, vanishing, entered into the Holy of Holies to commune alone with God. With this explanation, let us now study the second phase of true and undefiled religion.

*It requires us to keep ourselves unspotted from the world.*

An obstruction to our prayers, efforts, and progress, meets us here *in limine*,—on the very threshold, which it is necessary to take out of the way. It lies in a feeling, or fancy, that it is impossible to keep ourselves unspotted from the world, or even