

in the most heedless, and excites dread anticipations in the sinner's extremity. The foreboding of exposure, and requital for—this malicious design,—this base indulgence,—this wrong inflicted,—this complicity with wicked men,—this acquisition of unholy gains,—the Divine love repelled, and the Great Salvation neglected,—infuses dregs of bitterness in the cup of the "lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God." and becomes a lowering cloud, in the sky, betokening the coming storm to those whose prospects include no Father, nor rest with Him, "when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them who know not God, and that obey not the gospel."

That dread future! which pertinaciously will thrust itself upon our notice, with its account to be rendered to the Judge of all, and its reward to every man according to his works! It is a phantom of terror that will not be laid, though for long too seldom regarded. It comes mocking the jovial crew in their revelry, disturbing the day-dreams of complacent, well-to-do people, haunting with unwelcome presence the shady grove, in the sinner's garden of delights. It can be seen when the eye is closed in the dark midnight. It can be heard when no sound falls upon the ear. It tracks the footsteps of man through life—coming nearer as age creeps on—most terrible to those who seek most eagerly to avoid it. And at last, when the mortal's pathway contracts on either side, converging to one dark, dank stopping-place—an opened grave; it stands over that, and cries, *God and Judgment now!*

II. Wherever man is, there is a sinner, and a lost one, if not yet sought out and drawn into the fold of the Good Shepherd. All the readers of this paper are sinners. Christians are not entirely Christ-like—blameless, loving, holy, and good to all of those without an interest in Christ, the better-thinking, and well-meaning, and well-doing are not believing God's testimony concerning His Son; and the rest are without God and without hope, yet unconcerned and at ease, or if a spiritual emotion agitates them, it is like the movement of the weather-cock—now this way, then that

as the changeful breeze directs,—they know of no impulse onward and sustained towards God or any holy principle whatever.

We are sinners; and we are accustomed to think of that as a matter of course. Perhaps we are too ready to make the confession, even before God;—too frequent and too flippant in our acknowledgments, betraying thereby the want of any deep impression, or real conviction of the truth of what we say. Indeed, it is to be feared, that current opinions about sin are too indiscriminating and sweeping, and that, as a consequence, the wholesome terror which the conviction of sin would inspire is, to a large extent, neutralized. The exuberant buoyancy and playfulness of youth, and fancy's fitful flashing; the joy that will brighten the eye, and prompt the light and laughing word when gleams of sunshine break upon us here, when memory recalls the happier incidents of days that are past, and when the loves and friendships of our kind, awaken an answering geniality within us; also the infirmities of our nature, the fainting and failing of heart and flesh, and the inability to perceive the value of some speculative truth, or to appreciate the argument intended to sustain it, have all been heaped together in one common category with unquestionable violations of the Divine law, and branded as sins; and men afflicted with a morbid spirituality have persuaded themselves that the allegation was true. But no healthy religious principle can arise from such a source. It is a spring rather of pious-looking make-believes.

There is a sentence in one of Philip's books for the young, which is brimful of truth and wise suggestion:—"All trifles are not sins, and no sin is a trifle." He is a fool who makes a mock at sin, and he is not much better who reckons all natural feeling and its natural expression sinful. The elasticity of spirit with its hopefulness, the merry laugh and cheery word, may have God's blessing on them and in them, when the gloomy look and the self-torturing soul-dissection meet His pity, or lie under His frown. The failure of man to keep up with even his own sense of what is due to God, the weariness and fainting of the heart at some point, in any exercise, is