

title clear to mansions in the skies. He looked upon the whole realm of nature as the possession of his Father, and the whole infinite blessedness of an everlasting life as the portion given him in his Father's will. He could alleviate the weary toils and the dark hours of earthly bondage by sweet anticipations of eternal rest. He did not complain of wrong—he did not mourn over his hard lot. He knew it would soon be over; and, last as long as it might, he knew that the toil and affliction of earth could only increase the preciousness of the final rest.

Which of these two men, think you, had found out the great secret of happy living, the philosopher or the slave? Which had formed the truest estimate of the value of life? Which had most reason to be satisfied with the fruit of all his labor under the sun—the one whom kings delighted to honor and whom philosophers acknowledged as their master, or the one whom nobody honored, and who was not permitted to be even his own master? Which of the two could best direct the weary and the thirsty to the river of God's pleasures?

I have stood beside a mountain stream when it was swollen by the melting snows and the abundant rains of spring. The turbid flood rushed by with maddening and impetuous speed. Trees were uprooted and whirled down the foaming torrent. Vast rocks were loosened from their ancient bed and moved out of their place. High banks were undermined and new channels formed, through which the wild waters rushed in devastating fury over farms

and fields and domestic gardens. Flocks were carried away, bridges and highways destroyed, the dwellings of men endangered by the ruthless flood. Again I stood on the same bank in mid-summer, when the parched fields had most need to be refreshed by living streams from the mountains. A shallow and long-extended channel of gray rocks and drifted gravel and white sand lay before me, but there was no water. The hot sun shot his fiercest beams through the glimmering air, and my feet were burned by the heated stones, as I walked in the dry bed of the stream, as if I had been climbing the crater of a volcano.

And I said, This inconstant and wasteful river is a fit emblem of the brief and blasting pleasures of appetite and passion. In the mad hours of excitement and self-indulgence they sweep through the soul like a mountain torrent, carrying away all the barriers of reason and conscience, overturning all the beacon-lights of experience and undermining all the foundations of good habits and virtuous resolutions. The whole man is swept along by the torrent of passion, pleasure, self-indulgence, temptation. For a time he is wild with joy, with pride, with hope with success. But when the flood of worldly triumph has run its course and subsided, as it soon must, and the season of trial comes, the secret springs of the soul are all dried up. It can show nothing but blight and ruin where the wild and wasteful torrent of passion, pride and worldliness swept through. It can only writhe and groan under the burning heat of adversity, and long for the flood of