

Poetry.

THE PORTRAIT OF A GOOD PREACHER.

None be the man whose doctrine pure and sound, No tropes distract, no metaphors confound; No plain, the simplest understand and love, So just, the wisest cannot but approve; Who with a keen, but nicely judging art, Steals to the bosom and unlocks the heart; And holds a mirror up where each may see Both what he is, and what he ought to be. Not his the text which language overpowers, Like some old sampler border'd round with flowers; Where holy truths in measur'd periods shine, And Scripture stares to see itself so fine. Not his the saintly leer, the well smooth'd hand, And the coy tightness of a half-shown hand; The lengthen'd tone, the modulated clause, The dull, unmeaning energy of praise. Who never puts his Bible out of joint, To try his skill on some disputed point; Nor starts a doubt, to prove he can unravel, While some his answer catch, but all his caril. Christ is his stem, and would he win the skies, He shows what branches upon him must rise; No barren faith, uncultur'd into fruit; No splendor, void of strength and root; No art that either by itself can do, The Christian moralist must join the two. He, when he chides, affectionate and mild, Like some fond parent o'er a truant child, With mercy tempers every sound of fear, And wins to patience the slowest ear. Yet far less prompt to chasten than console, Like Hermon's dew, his words refresh the soul; Quench the parch'd lips of him who burns within, And slake the fever of remember'd sin. How must we joy in such a man to find His life a comment with his faith combin'd!

Rev. E. Smedley.

EPISCOPACY AND CONGREGATIONALISM.

(From the Boston Witness and Advocate.)

Experience has now given to these two systems of polity a very fair trial; and it seems proper that the Christian public should make up and render a verdict upon their respective merits. Two or three hundred years, would, on the whole, make it easy for all to decide which is the better adapted to advance and secure the great ends of Christ's kingdom. Gospel truth, brought home by the Spirit to the hearts of men, would doubtless be effectual for their conversion, if no visible church existed. For what end, then, was the church established? Doubtless for the preservation, mainly, of that truth. Give to the faith of the gospel no other defenses than are found in the hearts of sinful men, and its ultimate loss may be accounted certain. Man is a fallen, sinful creature,—far gone from original righteousness,—his whole moral nature defiled by sin. In his natural heart, he has no sympathy with the truth. He loves it not; he is unable to break away from its restraints; and, even in his renewed state, he continually inclines to deceive himself, and to change the truth of God into a lie, or else to let it slip from his embrace, and perish from among men. Hence, to preserve the truth, and keep it in contact with the wicked heart of man, for the purpose of converting and sanctifying it, may be regarded as the great end of all outward ceremonies and organizations. To secure this end, we believe the Episcopal Church much better fitted than the Congregational.

In the art of dyeing, when colouring matter is to be united to a fabric for which it has no chemical affinity, a third substance is employed which has an affinity for both; and thus things chemically dissimilar are held fast in a perpetual embrace. So when divine truth and the wicked hearts of men are to be joined together, being dissimilar and repellent, an established and scriptural mode of worship and a divinely appointed ministry are necessary, we believe, to bind these ungenial things in an indestructible fellowship.

The ministry as existing in the Episcopal Church,—how does this tend to secure and perpetuate gospel truth? Chiefly by claiming and securing for itself freedom from undue control by the popular will. This exemption results naturally from the view which the whole church takes of the nature and origin of the ministry. On the other hand, the sentiment which lies at the basis of the relation between pastor and people in Congregational churches, necessarily, as it seems to us, begets servility to the will of the laity. Let us contrast these corresponding sentiments, as they are held in the two denominations. The Episcopal clergyman is regarded by the people as God's servant, selected and sent by him to deliver his message, and as responsible only to him who commissions and sends him forth. The Congregational minister, on the other hand, is held to be the servant of the people, selected and commissioned by them to speak before them such sentiments as they may chance to hold. The former views his clergyman as the ambassador of God; the latter regards him as the representative of the people. The one looks to his minister for a declaration only of the revealed will of God; the other for an echo of the sentiments held by himself and brethren. The one is a listener, deciding merely whether he will receive the message brought; the other a criticising judge, determining whether his own authoritative views are fairly represented.

That in this Congregational sentiment may have originated, in part, the transcendent heresy which regards the bosom of all put on the depositories of inspiration, seems not very improbable; for if God's messengers are required to speak the sentiments of the people, what more natural than finally to conclude that the people are inspired? But, be this as it may, it is easy to see that these opposite sentiments, long cherished and acted upon, would beget, on the one hand, servility to the popular will, and, on the other, an independent regard to the sole will of God.

The results of responsibility to human authority, on the part of any body of clergy, might easily have been foreseen, even if the experience of Congregational churches had not already placed them in a strong light before us. It is a well-known fact, that in many, perhaps most, parishes, those minds which, in consequence of talent or wealth, exercise a controlling influence, are unsanctified by the grace of God; and that clergyman who regards himself not as the sole ambassador of God, bringing a message to the people, but rather as one of themselves, commissioned by and speaking for them, and yet escapes contamination by these leading minds, must be blessed with some perfect exemption from human infirmities than falls to the lot of most mortals. God has put a rich treasure into earthly vessels for our benefit; and if we would not break the vessels and lose the treasure, we must expose them as little as possible to the rude assaults of worldly power.

A scriptural literacy we believe to be even a stronger defence of the truth than a divinely-commissioned ministry. The amount of conservative influence exerted by it, when the church has fallen low in spiritual life, can hardly be over-rated. Nothing can tend more to the integrity of the truth among a people in a state of religious decay, or, indeed, in any other state, than continued familiarity with it in acts of worship. The following fact and conversation will furnish an illustration:

One of the Episcopal churches in Massachusetts had been for several years paralyzed, and the decay of active piety among the communicants had become general and alarming. Some conscientious persons, guided by false views of duty, had withdrawn from the church, and mingled with surrounding sects. But God, in his providence, some time since, sent to that church one of those discriminating and faithful preachers who are, happily, multiplying in our ministry. From Sabbath to Sabbath in the pulpit, and from house to house during the week, this faithful servant of Jesus urged home upon that people the prominent doctrines of grace, the immediate duties of men, and the inconceivable retractions awaiting the impatient, with a clearness and force that would have honoured a martyr or a Payson. The result is, that the church is aroused from its slumbers, the disaffected have returned to its bosom, conversions are beginning to take place,

many are beginning to inquire what they shall do to be saved, and the indications of a general revival of religion are such as should fill with joy the heart of every Christian observer. A gentleman of that town, formerly a member of the Orthodox Congregational communion, but now a constant worshipper at the Episcopal church, told us, a short time since, that he had been in the habit, formerly, of remarking, that "if a faithful preacher were to enter the pulpit of that church, and thunder the truth in the ears of his hearers, one half of them would flee from his presence. But," said he, "I find that though I never heard the truth declared with greater freedom and boldness, yet none of the church people seem at all offended, and the congregation fast increases. I do not understand it." We replied, in substance, that his perplexity was natural, though we thought that his perplexity was not. "We think you always admitted," said we, "that the Episcopal liturgy contains the true doctrines of the Gospel." "O yes," he replied; "I never doubted that." "Then," we continued, "you are to reflect, that however feebly the light of truth may have shone from the pulpit, yet this people have never been unacquainted with the pure doctrines of the Gospel; for from their childhood they have been in the habit of repeating them in their weekly services. Why, then, should they be frightened when familiar subjects are urged upon them? If this were a Congregational society, having been for years in a cold and lifeless state, and having heard little of the Gospel in the preaching, and of course quite as little in the prayers, of the pastor, we grant that a sudden exhibition of the offensive doctrines of grace in the pulpit addresses would very naturally excite enmity and resistance. It is vastly more difficult to revive a church which has lost God's truth, and substituted its own inventions, than one in which the truth is well known and admitted, but not appreciated."

So far we have endeavoured to show that a divinely appointed ministry is an important guard of a gospel faith. We have argued that the views entertained in the Episcopal and Congregational churches, respecting the nature and origin of ministerial authority, would contribute much towards the perpetuity or loss of the true gospel. We have also urged that a scriptural literacy would tend to the integrity of the faith, by the constancy with which it brings truth into contact with the mind during the consecrated hours of public devotion.

It now remains for us to inquire whether the history of the two denominations of which we are speaking, sanctions the conclusion to which our argument brings us. A position, which seems quite logically sustained, is often destroyed by a few simple facts. We have no wish that our reasoning should escape the exacting comparison with the results of experience. On the contrary, we are ourselves about to subject it to this rigid test. In an early period in the history of this country, [U.S.] a considerable number of Episcopal churches were planted in several of the colonies, by a society in England connected with the Established Church. When the war of the Revolution came and sundered the tie which bound these colonies to the mother country, the pastors of these churches, being Englishmen by birth and education, and bound to the parent land by their whole worldly interest, and, more than all, by the ties of affection, and the ties of duty, were, for the most part, in the habit of remaining in the country, and of continuing to exercise their pastoral functions. The consequence was, that when peace came and stretched her olive-branch over the land, these churches were found in a state of the lowest possible depression, lying under the ban of a strong national prejudice, if not resentment.

Take your stand now at this inauspicious period, draw a veil over the future, and, in the exercise of all the sagacity you can command, tell us what will be the fate of these churches, if they are not speedily rescued. How many, within a few years, will disband, and be swallowed up by surrounding sects? How many, unchecked by the restraints of pastoral supervision, will imbibed sceptical opinions, and convert their sacred temples into halls for profane infidel discussions? How many? We need not pause for a reply. It would be discouraging enough, without doubt, to lift the veil now, and contemplate the fact. Of all these depressed and apparently ruined churches, one only, in the whole United States, has been lost. "King's Chapel," Boston, is the solitary instance of defection from the faith; and the loss of that we trace to the craft of those who had been spoiled through vain philosophy in another denomination.

How do you account for this apparently singular fact? We attribute it, in a great measure, to our confessedly excellent liturgy. Many of these churches were for years in a deserted state; but the Prayer-Book lay upon their altars, and whenever the people were called together, that excellent book became vocal of God's truth over the congregation. Indeed, we see not how the truth can be lost in any church, until the liturgy is silenced.

But how is it with Congregational churches? Have they been equally steady in their adherence to the true gospel? Let us step into Plymouth county, the most favoured spot in which any number of them were ever planted. We direct our steps first to the town of Plymouth, and to the rock on which the Pilgrims landed—to the church which they first planted. The church still exists; but its light is extinguished. It can in no sense be said that "the Lamb is the light thereof." It may emphatically be called the Pilgrim Church; but the doctrines taught by the Pilgrims have long been disowned and rejected. The church is lost—lost to God, lost to truth. And why was it lost? Why, but because it placed no defence around the truth?

At Kingston, the First Congregational Church has followed close in the footsteps of that at Plymouth. The direction of the old heresy, "put off the man with his deeds," and "put on Christ," this church has long since practically reversed, by putting on the former, and putting off the latter.

In Duxbury, the Orthodox church has literally joined the congregation of the dead. The old society is Unitarian, and the Pilgrim faith is extinct.

The old society in Marshfield has long been Unitarian. In Pembroke, the church has gone the way of those already named, and is now silently verging towards Universalism.

Of the two original churches in Scituate, we are obliged to record, that they are deep in the darkness of error, and are so much engaged in extolling man, that they find it not in their hearts to exalt Christ.

In Bridgewater, East Bridgewater, and West Bridgewater, the Pilgrim churches have all apostatized from the truth, and account "the blood of bulls and of goats" as effectual for taking away sin as the precious blood of Christ.

The same may be said of the two ancient churches in Hingham, to which a third has been added, since their apostacy, of the same stamp. In this town, as in Duxbury, the faith of the Fathers is extinguished. The catalogue we have properly added another in the town of Cohasset, formerly a part of Plymouth county, but now attached to Norfolk.

There may be other cases of defection in the county which have not come to our knowledge; but we have named thirteen churches, in a comparatively small community, that have broken away from the ranks of Orthodox, and are even "denying the Lord that bought them." Of a great proportion of the remaining Orthodox churches in the county, we believe it may truly be said, that, in regard to the faith, they are in a very unsettled condition.

Dark as this record is, truth does not permit us to make it a shade brighter. Time, we fear, will compel the future journalist to give it even a sadder aspect. Indeed, we see no way in which the Old Colony can be saved from hopeless infidelity, but by the intervention of a more conservative and compact ecclesiastical system. Congregationalism cannot save it; Episcopacy must, if saved at all. In reply to the facts now presented, it is sometimes urged that "notwithstanding the alleged conservative influence of the liturgy," &c. &c. a few of the Episcopal clergy of England [have been carried] into the Romish heresy. We admit and lament the fact; but the argument drawn from it is far too feeble to meet the case presented. These clergymen did not, and could not, carry their congregations with them. Their churches are still fast anchored on Protestant ground. Individual cases of defection from the faith, moreover, are to be expected under the best possible external arrangements of the

* At an early day, two Episcopal churches were planted in the Old Colony: one at Scituate, since removed a short distance to Hanover, and the other at Bridgewater. Both, we are happy to say, though they have suffered much adversity, yet live, and retain the truth unimpaired; and each, we may add, with thankfulness to God, is now blessed with a truly evangelical and primitive pastor.

church. It is not such isolated instances that we are charging upon the defects of Congregationalism. We allege that, under the shield of its feeble polity, not individual ministers only, but churches, associations, whole communities, have been swept away by a false philosophy, and have made total shipwreck of faith. We aver that, aided by all the lights of experience, with the sad results of the past full in view, this feeble system fails, and in all human probability will fail, to prevent still further deterioration. In comparison with the general and widespread apostacy already witnessed, the individual instances of defection in the Episcopal Church are like sporadic cases of disease compared with the spread of a fatally malignant epidemic.

Brethren of the Orthodox Congregational Church,—in view of the subject thus presented, we affectionately appeal to you, as lovers of Zion's security, for your considerate judgment in the premises. If the ecclesiastical polity under which you fight the battles of the cross has proved so unstable a defence of the truth, what security have you that the tide of false doctrine, which has swept away the venerable churches of your fathers, will not also sweep away yours, and leave your sons and daughters, as it has left their prostrate before the shrine of a conceited and mazy philosophy? If these churches, even under the shield of *literary* religion, were gradually bowed before unsanctified reason, how can you hope that your churches will continue to stand upright, now that the spirit of the age calls for such laxity in morals and faith? When you trace the history of your churches from the landing of the Pilgrims to the present hour, and then look into the future and contemplate the possible and probable spiritual condition of your posterity in the next and succeeding generations, is the prospect bright and encouraging, or is it overcast with forebodings which you scarcely dare confess? Are you not fairly admonished by the existing state of things, as considerate and prudent men, to begin to consider the expediency of revising & abandoning a system which has so poorly served the cause of Gospel truth? The results of your system are held by Unitarians and Universalists as the highest recommendation that could be bestowed upon it; by you, the must be viewed in a far different light. You, as sincerely as we, mourn the advance of error; and, when fully convinced of its source, you will, we doubt not, gladly submit to the proper remedy.

To the clergy of our own church permit us to say, you occupy, as appears from the above reasonings and facts, a solemnly important post. You minister at the altars of a church which, through all the changes human affairs, has never lost the truth. Let us beg of you to cherish and reverse that church—to love and uphold its institutions, laws, and liturgy. Above all, it is our urge you to preach the truth as it is in Jesus—preach in love, and in the power of the Holy Ghost. You have committed to you a high commission, a solemn trust; so live and so preach, that, when called to lay it down, you may do it with clean hands—that, when summoned to your final account, you may go with the peaceful conviction that the truth has suffered no detriment at your hands, that it has not been dimmed or soiled through your neglect. Leave it burning bright upon all your altars, that posterity may see its light and feel its power. Determine, through God's grace, that though a pall of error be spread over the world, a few rays of light shall at least continue to reach its inhabitants through the Prestant Episcopal Church.

PROTESTANT INGRATITUDE.

(From Bishop Bull.)

Let us bless God that we yet breathe a pure air, free from the noisome and pestilent fogs of those superstitious vanities, where none of those foolerand impieties (of the Church of Rome) are obtruded upon our faith or practice; that we live in a Church, where no other name is invoked but the Name of our Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; nor divine worship give to any but to the true God, through Jesus Christ, our only Mediator. O happy we, if we knew and valued our own happiness! But alas! many of us do not. We despise and trample upon that reformation of religion, which, by a miracle of God's mercy, was wrought in this nation in the days of our forefathers, and in schismatical assemblies, under pretence of seeing after a better reformation. We abandon that Church, and can hardly forbear to call it Antichristian and Popish heresy; the foundation-stones whereof were laid and cemented in the blood of God's holy Martyrs, that did in defence of the errors and superstitions of the Romish synagogue. And yet these men call themselves Protestants; yes, the only true Protestants; and will scarce allow us of the Church of England a share in the title. Go grant, that by that his horrid ingratitude, we do not provoke Him to rebel, which ourselves indeed throw back into His face, as if it were not worth our acceptance, and to cause a dark night of Popery to return to us; whereas a superstitious and idolatrous worship shall be thrust upon us, and we shall be compelled to forbidden and idolatrous worship, or to death; wherein our lives, that we now enjoy only with liberty but encouragement, carry about us, shall be snatched from our hands, and our faithful living legends put in the oom of them; wherein our excellent Liturgy, in a tongue we all understand which many of us now loathe, and call pitiful postage, y^e and Popish Mass, shall be abolished, and the abominable Roman Mass indeed placed in its stead; wherein t^e cup of blessing in the Holy Eucharist shall be sacrilegiously taken from us, which is now openly and freely held forth to us all, and that in so excellent a way of administration, that the whole Christian world beside is not ble at this day to shew the like; but we scorn to take it, and reject the effects of Popery, which I cannot now mention, happen to us (which God avert!) and I trust will never come to pass; but, I say, if ever these things should befall us, we should then, when it is too late, early distinguish between light and darkness, and discern the vast difference between the established religion, which many now call Popery, and Popery itself. We should then cast back a kind and mournful eye upon our dear uther, the Church of England; whose very bowels we ne tear and rip up, by our wicked schisms. We should wish our ourselves in the safe arms of her Communion again, and resolve never more to depart from her. Thus do that now, whilst it is reasonable, which we shall wish we had done, but cannot do.

THE SIN OF DRUNKENNESS.

(From Bishop Beveridge.)

Look upon a man in drink, what an hideous creature is he now become? More like a brute than man. His colour is changed, his eyes stare, his tongue fatters, his head and his hand shake, his breath is short, his knees weak, so that he staggers to and fro, and at length perhaps falls down into a kennel, the fittest place for such brutes to lie in. Inasmuch that the very sight of a drunken man is enough to make men abhor and loath the very thoughts of being drunken. And yet this is nothing in comparison of what they must needs feel inwardly. For if they look into their inward parts, you might there see, their stomachs are sick, their lungs pant, their hearts beat, their heads ache, their blood ferments and boils, and at length breaks forth into a fever, or some other mortal distemper, which usually shortens their days, and puts an end to their miserable life by a more miserable death, which follows so naturally upon excessive drinking, that it is almost a miracle that any common drunkards live out half their days. And if any of them do happen to hold out to the usual age of men, it must be imputed unto God, either to his mercy waiting for repentance, which is very rare, or else to his justice, continuing longer in this world, to punish them the more severely in the next, which he hath given them sufficient warning of, by making this sin itself in some measure its own punishment; and so beginning to punish them for it so soon as ever they have committed it, as they always experience, and sometimes have confessed, being forced to do so by the pains and diseases their bodies are afterwards tormented with. And it would be well for them if it went no farther; but drunkenness disorders the soul as much as it doth the body, or rather disordering the body, it disorders the soul too. For the soul whilst it is united to the body making use of the animal spirits that are in it as its instruments whereby it performs its several operations; when they are out of tune, the soul can do nothing as it ought, no more than an artificer can work without tools, or such as are not fit for his purpose. But excessive drinking causeth such fumes and vapours in the stomach, which flying up into the brain where the animal spirits chiefly reside, put them all out of order, either scattering them out of their places, or overpowering them so as to make them stupid and inactive, no way fit for the soul to make use of. Hence, some by drinking to excess are deprived of all sense and reason, as if they had no souls at all, but were mere stocks, fit for nothing but to be cast into the fire and burnt, as they will be ere long. And though it doth not go so far, but they have still something like reason left them, yet it serves them to very little purpose. They cannot think a wise thought, understand nothing clearly, nor judge of any thing aright. Their imaginations are disturbed, their consciences stupefied, and their passions all in a hurry, all irregular and extravagant, so that at present they are in a kind of delirium or phrensy, not knowing what they say, or what they do, or what is done to them; as the wise man excellently describes it, where forewarning men of drunkenness, he saith by that, *Thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast. They have stricken me, shall thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not; when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again, Prov. xxiii. 34, 35.* And although this delirium continues in its height only while the liquor is working in their brains, yet their brains are thereby so clouded, their understanding so darkened, and all their faculties discomposed, that they are never wise when sober, as the wise man observes, saying, *Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging, and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise; or, as the word in the original signifies, shall not be wise, Prov. xx. 1.* So that as no wise man will be ever drunk, so no drunkard is ever a wise man.

THE WONDERFUL FORMATION OF AN INFANT.

(From the Rev. W. Sewall's "Christian Morals.")

Look at that infant sucking at its mother's breast; and then collect from the streets of London all your great artificers and mechanics, painters and sculptors, architects and engineers; and he will surpass them all. He is performing at this moment every one of their operations, with a dexterity, and accuracy, and perfection, which baffles even the conception of the highest intellects. He is building himself a house, in which his soul is to reside; a house, not fixed to one spot, but capable of moving about to any place, and adapting itself to every climate. He is not only fitting together the masonry of his bones, but he makes the masonry itself; a hard, solid, but light, concrete of artificial stone. He spins cordage, to thatch his head. He weaves a most delicate tissue for his skin, at once impervious to wet from without, and pervious to it from within; no manufacturer has yet been able to solve this necessary problem. He constructs a telescope to see with; an ear-trumpet to hear with; a carriage to ride on; a pantechonion of mechanical instruments in the hand; a self-repairing mill in his teeth; a most curious system of water-works, pipes, pumps, fountains, and drains, by which he distributes the blood to every part of his mansion, on the most correct principles of hydraulics. He will make an air-pump to ventilate it in his reservoir of the lungs; a vast kitchen filled with stoves, ovens, bake-houses, to concoct his food, besides larders and presses to receive it. He will defy any chemist to equal the menstruum which he invents and employs for the purpose of analyzing and recombining it. At the same time that helpless infant is creating a series of engines of all kinds for raising weights, pulling cords, propelling bodies;

By this therefore we may see into the reason which our Saviour here gives wherefore he would not have your hearts overcharged with drunkenness, even lest that day, the great Day of Judgment, come upon you unawares. (*Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares, Luke xxi. 34.*) Your eternal state depending upon the issue of the proceedings on that day, he often cautions you to prepare yourselves, and have your accounts ready against that time whenever it shall happen. And here, in a most particular manner, he adviseth you to have a care of drunkenness, as that which will make you put the evil day far from you, till at length it come unawares upon you, and surprise you when you do not so much as think of it, much less can be ready and prepared for it. For when your hearts are overcharged with drunkenness, it is impossible you should be fit to do that which is the greatest work you have to do; for indeed you can do nothing at all, not the least thing that is, as ye ought to do it. You cannot pray or meditate upon God; you cannot exercise any repentance or faith in Christ. But why do I speak of such things which a drunkard is no more able to do, than a brute beast is. He cannot so much as mind his particular calling, nor do any worldly business without spoiling it: all that he is able to do is to sin, and that, I confess, he is always fit for. Fit for it, did I say? Yes, he is desperately bent upon it, impetuously inclined to sin; to all sin, one as well as another; to lust, fury and revenge; to swearing, cursing, lying, brawling, fighting, murder, any thing that comes in his way. There is no sin but some have committed it in their drink; and if there be any that a drunken man doth not commit, it is not because he would not, but because he could not. He had not an opportunity, otherwise he would have committed that as well as any other. For a man in such a condition hath no sense of the difference between good and evil: for wine, as the prophet speaks, *hath taken away his heart, Hos. iv. 11.* His reason, his understanding, his conscience is gone; and therefore all sins are alike to him. Hence it is that this sin never goes alone, but hath a great train of other sins always following it: inasmuch that it cannot so properly be called one single sin, as all sins in one.

Wherefore as ever ye desire to avoid any sin at all, ye must be sure to avoid drunkenness, which will expose you to all manner of sin, that you can never be secure from falling into any whatsoever. And as you must avoid the sin itself, so likewise all that are addicted to it. It is not mine, but the wise man's counsel, *Be not amongst wine-bibbers, Prov. xxiii. 20.* And St. Paul commands, *if any one be a drunkard, with such an one eat not to eat, 1 Cor. v. 11.* It is not enough that you be not drunk with them, but that you must not so much as drink with them, nor eat with them, nor keep them company any more than ye needs must; and that both for their sakes and your own: for their sakes, that so they may be ashamed of themselves, and of their sin, when they see all sober men abhor and shun them as so many wild beasts; and for your own sakes, lest you by degrees learn it of them, and become like to them, the worst sort of cattle upon the face of the earth, that only cumber the ground, doing good to none, and worst of all to themselves who live like brutes; and it would be well for them if they could die so too, so as never to live again. But that cannot be; live again they must, and that for ever; but where? In heaven? No surely, they can never come thither. For God hath expressly decreed, that no drunkard shall ever inherit the kingdom of heaven, 1 Cor. vi. 10; Gal. v. 21. Indeed what should they do there? There is neither wine nor strong drink to be had; and therefore heaven would seem a sad place to them. But they need not fear being sent thither; they have God's word for it, that they shall not, and therefore they may believe it.

But where then must they live? In a place more fit and proper for them, even in hell, where they will meet with their old companions again, not to be merry, but to weep and wail, and gnash their teeth together; where they shall have drunk enough, but it shall be only fire and brimstone; where they shall be drunk continually, but it shall be with nothing else but the fury and vengeance of Almighty God: where, for the many headstuds of good liquor they consumed upon earth, they shall not have so much as one drop of water to cool their inflamed tongues; where all their drunken boils will return upon them, and afflict and torment them over again. In short, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. This shall be the portion of their cup to drink in the other world, who give themselves up to drunkenness in this.

Now put these things together, how that drunkenness consumes a great part of that little time which God hath allotted you upon earth: it wastes your estate, and reduceth both yourselves and families into extreme poverty, or at least into great danger of it. It abuseth those good creatures to your own damage, which God hath given for your benefit and advantage: it impairs the health of your bodies, and breeds all manner of diseases in them; it blots out the image of God that was stamped upon them, and makes you like to the beasts which perish: it deprives you of your reason, or at least of the right use and exercise of it; it exposeth you to all sorts of vice and wickedness that mankind is capable of committing; it maketh you unfit for all lawful and necessary employments, whether sacred or civil; and at last throws you down into the bottomless pit, to live with the Devil and his friends for ever. Put, I say, these things together, and then judge ye whether it be not the height of folly and madness for any man to allow himself to such a sin as this? whether they who have been hitherto addicted to it, had not best to leave it off, and all others to take heed of ever falling into it, as they tender their own good and welfare?

These are some of those various reasons that might be assigned in vindication of that time, which infinite wisdom appointed for the coming of our Saviour, which infinite wisdom considered the circumstances of mankind in former ages, or the evidence of Christianity in the present.

And after all, had Christianity been discovered much sooner, its whole evidence would, in all human appearance, have been sunk and forgotten in a few ages. For though the evidences of the Jewish religion were preserved entire to the coming of our Saviour, yet the preservation of them was wholly owing to the difference there is between the Jewish and the Christian institution. The Jews, by their law, were forbidden to mingle themselves among the heathen, lest they should learn their works; and thus, by being kept a distinct people, they became faithful guardians of the oracles committed to them. Whereas the Christian institution in its very nature is contrived for a more extensive influence, not confined to this or that nation, not the peculiar care of one people alone, but equally the concern of every creature. And therefore the Gospel, being left thus at large to a world unprepared for the simplicity of its worship, might justly be expected to undergo the fate of other notions which had received concerning the divine nature and perfections.

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