

arguments for or against any given course may have been carefully and deliberately weighed. It is a mistake to suppose that this sobriety of thought is incompatible with energy of notion, and to expect determination only when men rashly resolve. Suppose, at a missionary meeting, a young man, moved by descriptions of the state of the world, has, in the excitement of the moment, resolved that he would go and preach the Gospel to the heathen—of whom the heathen have never heard, and to whom they are not in any degree indebted—his resolution having been overcome by the first difficulty he encountered; and then contrast him with that youth who, with no visible excitement, ponders over their condition as he sits in his cobbler's stall, till he calmly and deliberately resolves that he will go; and in spite of dissuasions from friends, opposition from foes, difficulties in the way of leaving home, and trials when he has left, holds on the even tenor of his way, until William Carey has obtained for himself a first place as an oriental scholar, laid the foundation and raised a good part of the structure of a missionary society, and placed the Word of God within reach of millions of the human race; and you will see that the sober-minded, self-controlled, calm and deliberate thinkers are the men of whom alone is to be expected the most unbending decision and the greatest success.

And surely it needs not that I remind you that in the highest style of character godliness is an essential requisite. However excellent a man may be otherwise, if destitute of this, his character is defective. This, combined with the qualities mentioned already, will invest you with the highest style of character, and raise you in the scale of moral elevation on this side the grave; it will secure for you in another state the realisation of all for which your nature fits you, and of which the Bible in its glorious revelations gives you a glimpse—the continual improvement of your intellect, the expansion of your affections, the attainment of higher knowledge and larger joys, while the ages of eternity roll their ceaseless round.

Be decided, then; have a purpose; let it rest on the broad and sure foundation of sober-mindedness, crowned with godliness, and the minuter ornaments will not be wanting in your character.

The prophet's consistency of purpose, his calmness in danger, are to be explained farther in the fact that he was a man of prayer. Emulation unchastened by any higher principle is to our perverted nature often a danger and an evil. The love of distinction, not truth and right, becomes the master-passion of the soul. Self-reliance in a heart un sanctified, often gives place to self-confidence. The habit of prayer will afford to these principles the salutary check which they need. It will sanctify emulation, and make it a virtue to aspire; it will curb the excesses of ambi-

tion, and keep down the vauntings of unholiness, pride. It will chasten and consecrate the spirit of self-reliance. It will preserve unadulterated all its enterprise and bravery, and will show, existing in the same nature and in complete harmony, indomitable courage in the arena of the world, and loyal submission to the authority of heaven.

Do you pray? Is the fire burning on the secret altar? Do you go to the closet as a duty, and linger in it as a privilege? Most of you spend your time in secular employments, which in these days of engrossing mercantile and industrial activity leave but little space for actual application; yet who, by help of diligence and self-denial, may not snatch more time than they do for express devotion? Prayer and action are not antagonist forces. "To pray well is to work well." But what is that you say?—There is a scoffer in the same place of business or work with you, and he tells you it is cowardly to bend the knee, and jeers you about being kept in leading strings, and urges you to avow your manliness; and you have been ashamed to pray before him. To your knees, that the cowardice may be forgotten and forgiven. There is no bravery in blasphemy, no dastardliness in godly fear. It is prayer which strengthens the weak and makes the strong man stronger. Happy are you if it is your habit and privilege. You can offer it anywhere. In the place of business or by the way, on the wide waters or solid land, in the morning, mid-day or evening, let the need be felt, let the soul be in danger, let the enemy threaten, happy are you, for you can pray.

Another feature in the character of Daniel was his industry. While thus serving the Lord, he also served the king of Babylon, ruling over the provinces, and attending to the various duties which necessarily arose from such a position. Now, there are some who clamorously assert that religion is unfavorable to industry and industrial pursuits. It is surely a sufficient reply to this that we can challenge men to point to any age or country which has attained to such a degree of industrial prosperity as that, where the religion of the Gospel has risen to the most commanding position, and its influence is most extensively and powerfully felt. It is a spurious Christianity that is inimical to industry. It is not that system which contains in it such industrial maxims as are contained in the book of Proverbs—a system which tells its friends that "if a man will not work, neither shall he eat;" that "he who provides not for his own, and specially those of his own house, has denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." In accordance with these maxims, Christianity enjoins men to be "diligent in business," while "serving the Lord." It cannot tolerate idleness; it is not the religion of the sighing sentimentalist or the lazy idler, but of the manly worker. Of all men, it commends itself most to the brave-hearted and manly men who habitually

gird themselves for the fight and bravely march into the arena of conflict. He who would attain to eminence must carve his way to it by patient industry, and honest, self-denying toil. You must work if you would rise. There is no royal road to success, no such thing as being borne to eminence by taking hold of another's skirt. It is reached by an upward path which each must traverse for himself, and the bravest climber will make the most rapid progress and attain to the greatest height. And though you may not snatch the golden prize which many seek, your labor will not be in vain. Exercise will tend to develop your manhood, invigorating and strengthening its various faculties, and the braving influence of that higher region will give buoyancy to your spirits.

Labor is the great law of the universe. That it is the punishment of sin is an error as contrary to reason as it is unsanctioned by revelation. Adam, in his state of innocence, was put into the garden of Eden, we are told, "to keep and dress it." If laborious industry was manifested to be honorable by being the law of Adam's life before he fell, it is abundantly confirmed by Scripture. "In all labor there is profit." "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might." This is echoed back by the New Testament, where we are exhorted to be "diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord;" diligently pursuing those secular occupations to which Providence has called us, and at the same time cultivating the earnest spirit of Christian devotion. These are the two broad planes of duty, which, when braced together, make up the whole of human service—and thus there is a practicability of embodying a Christian life in a life of business, of discharging the functions of a citizen of earth, and at the same time breathing the temper, sustaining the relation, and tasting the joys of a citizen of heaven.

Are you a laborer, tradesman or mechanic? Be industrious in your calling. The injunction, "Be diligent in business," speaks to all, and plainly intimates that you should serve the Lord, and strive to excel in your worldly employments. Whatever occupation a Christian has, faith in our religion should impel him to aim at perfection, to remember that he is working up God's materials with hands which are his gift. The man at the plough or forge, the worker in wood or clay, will thus, under the influence of desire to glorify him in the use of his gifts, serve and honor him as really and acceptably as the Christian pastor or Jewish priest.

"Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called." Be sure that yourselves honor labor. Honor wealth, dignity, leisure, learning, not for their own sakes, but for the profitable purposes to which they are applied, and the great advantages you derive from them. If employers are to respect employed, so also are these en-