

The Colonial Protestant;

AND

JOURNAL OF LITERATURE & SCIENCE.

VOL. I.

AUGUST, 1848.

No. 8.

THE SUPERIOR IMPORTANCE OF PRACTICAL GODLINESS.

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PRACTICE is the true test of profession. It was the criterion laid down by our Lord—"By their fruits ye shall know them." Zeal for sound doctrine is of little worth unconnected with a catholic spirit, and with the work of faith, and labour of love. It has been falsely charged against the adherents of the Reformation, that they are more anxious about right opinions than right actions:—very earnest for doctrine, but very careless of its practical adornment. Now, to this libel, it may be safely answered that, the Evangelical Protestant has no confidence whatever in any system of doctrines whose native fruit is not holiness of heart and life,—nor can he endorse the profession of religion which journies not along the path of righteousness. His abhorrence of Romanism, as a system, arises not only from the insult it flings upon the human understanding by certain of its dogmas and superstitions, but it also springs largely from a conviction that it is a foe to true godliness, and therefore to the well-being of man, and the glory of God. In his judgment supreme importance is attached to practical religion, against which, notwithstanding profession to the con-

trary, he conceives the distinguishing features of Romanism are opposed. Without pressing this point on the present occasion it will not be inappropriate to dilate somewhat on THE SUPREME IMPORTANCE OF PRACTICAL GODLINESS. It is a subject in perfect harmony with the design and spirit of this Journal, as it brings before us the native product of "the faith once delivered to the saints," to "contend earnestly" for which is its proper business.

Let it however be carefully premised, that *practical godliness is based upon evangelical sentiment.*

It is not meant that none are practically godly who lack clear and large views of scripture truth; the reverse of this is sometimes the fact. Owing to defect of education, and to imperfect instruction, and disadvantages, there may be darkness, or at most twilight of perception on important points, which to other minds are clear as a sunbeam; and yet so humble and tender may be the spirit, so dependent on God, and so afraid of sin, that practical godliness is really its distinguishing characteristic. But even in these cases the *foundation* is properly laid; essential truth is under-