

stars as glorious and splendid bodies ; but we read, " Behold even to the moon, and it shineth not ; yea the stars are not pure in His sight." (Job xxv. 5.) We talk of the heavens as the noblest and purest part of creation ; but even of them it is written, " the heavens are not clean in His sight." (Job xv. 14.) Reader, what is any one of us but a miserable sinner in the sight of such a God as this ?

Surely we ought all to cease from proud thoughts about ourselves. We ought to lay our hands upon our mouths, and say with Abraham, " I am dust and ashes," and with Job, " I am vile," and with Isaiah, " We are all as an unclean thing," and with John, " If we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us," (Gen. xviii. 27 ; Job xl. 4 ; Isaiah lxiv. 6 ; 1 John i. 9.) Where is the man or woman in the whole catalogue of the Book of life, that will ever be able to say more than this, " I obtained mercy ?" What is the glorious company of the apostles, the goodly fellowship of the prophets, the noble army of martyrs, what are they all but pardoned sinners ? Surely there is but one conclusion to be arrived at, we are all great sinners, and we all need a great forgiveness.

See now what just cause I have to tell you that to know your need of forgiveness, is the first thing in true religion. Sin is a burden, and must be taken off. Sin is a defilement, and must be cleansed away. Sin is a mighty debt, and must be paid. Sin is a mountain standing between us and heaven, and must be removed. Happy is that mother's child amongst us that feels all this ! The first step towards heaven is to see clearly that we *deserve hell*. There are but two alternatives before us, we must either be forgiven, or be miserable for ever.

See too how little many persons know of the design of Christianity, though they live in a Christian land. They fancy they are to go to church to learn their duty, and hear morality enforced, and for no other purpose. They forget that the heathen philosophers could have told them as much as this. They forget that such men as Plato and Seneca