

THE COLONIAL CHURCHMAN.

"BUILT UPON THE FOUNDATION OF THE APOSTLES AND PROPHETS, JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF BEING THE CHIEF CORNER STONE. Eph. 2 c. 20 v.

VOLUME II.

LUNENBURG, N. S. THURSDAY, DECEMBER 1, 1836.

NUMBER I.

From Recollections of Jotham Anderson

A CHAPTER FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS.

My college life, on which I now entered, was like that of many other young men. I applied myself zealously to the duties required of me, and became ambitious of distinction. My thirst for knowledge increased, and with it my desire of eminence. I allowed myself little time for sleep or recreation. I denied myself even food, that I might sit at my books without the necessity of exercise to help digestion. I know not how it was, but gradually insidiously literary distinction became my ruling passion. My Bible was consulted less frequently, my seasons of devotion were hurried over, and even the worship of the Sabbath came at last to be attended by me with little interest or feeling.

I was sometimes uneasy at perceiving the change which had taken place in my affections, and felt alarmed for the result. But I satisfied myself with saying, that as soon as I should be relieved from my present hurry, or have finished the study I had now on hand, I should have leisure to resume my religious vigilance. But this leisure did not come, and I suffered myself still to go on. I quieted the remonstrances of my mind with the persuasion that a man cannot feel equally engaged at all times on any subject; and that at any rate I was preparing myself for the duties of life, and why was not this as acceptable service as the performance of my religious duties? Then, if conscience answered that the preparation for future duty is no excuse for neglecting present duty, I stifled the suggestion by burying my thoughts in study.

I tremble to this day, to think of the hazard I was running, and in how dreadful a ruin it might have ended, if it had not pleased God to send me a rebuke.

I had already entered my senior year, and with a heart full of ambition, was pressing on to realize, in the honours before me, the darling object of my hope. I had overplied my powers, and they gave out. My body refused to sustain the labours of my mind, and after four weeks' severe illness, it was thought I must sink to the tomb.

Of the early part of my sickness I have no recollection, except of a confused feeling of disappointment and vexation at being stopped and frustrated in my career. It seems to me like some long dream, in which I was struggling with envious and malicious foes, who were conspiring against my improvement and reputation. I seemed at length to awake from the dream, and found myself a feeble and helpless man, stretched upon my bed, and attended by friends whose anxious countenances revealed to me their fears.

'What is that bell for?' was the first question I asked.

'It is tolling for the exhibition,' said my friend.
'The exhibition?' said I, starting with surprise; 'how long have I been sick?'

'Nearly four weeks.'
'Exhibition?' I repeated, 'and I am not ready; I cannot be there;—when I had so depended on it—so longed for it—and here am I shut out from—When shall I be able to go out, Thompson?'

'You must lie still,' said Thompson, 'you are too weak to talk; keep yourself quiet.' And he withdrew from the bed.

Thompson's voice and manner struck me, and I at once suspected the truth. Never shall I forget the feeling that came over me, as the conviction flashed across my mind that I was dangerously ill. A cold thrill ran through my frame, and the sweat issued upon my forehead. 'And is this,' thought I, 'the end of all my toils, the completion of my hopes? Is it all to end in an early grave and a forgotten memory? Spare me, O God, that I may recover strength before I go hence to be seen no more.'

As soon as my first surprise was over, I set myself to collect my thoughts as well as I was able, and to

prepare my mind for the event. And now the wide extent of my folly became visible at once. I saw the full measure of my negligence, and the whole unworthiness of my delusion. I felt the emptiness of that ambition, for which I had sacrificed my religious affections, and would have given the world to return to that spiritual frame which I had possessed two years before. Then I thought of my privileges, my opportunities, the discipline I had passed through, the early instructions of my mother, the faithful counsels of my father; and as I thought of him, I involuntarily spoke out, 'Has my father been sent for, Thompson?'

Thompson looked at me with surprise, and after a few moments' hesitation answered, yes, and that he was expected to arrive to-morrow.

To-morrow came, and at the expected hour my father entered the chamber. He had evidently come from a hurried journey, and wore a countenance of anxiety and grief. I held out my hand, and he took it without speaking. We both were thinking of a separation, and for some moments could not trust ourselves with our voices. At length I broke silence, for I had been fortifying myself for the interview, and had my powers under my control.

'My father,' said I, 'I rejoice to see you. I know why you are come, and shall feel the easier for your presence. You led me in the beginning of life, and if my life must close, it is a consolation to lean on you at the last.'

'The will of God be done,' said he. 'I had hoped it would be otherwise ordered; but the will of God be done. I am glad to find you look upon it so calmly. Your religion supports you, as I thought it would.'

'I trust in God's mercy,' said I; 'I need it. O my father, you do not know how foolish I have been, and how nearly I have lost myself in the love of worldly honours.' And I told him the state of my mind for some time previous. But, I continued, 'I have humbled myself before God, and cast myself on his compassion. I have thrown away my false ambition, and renewed my vows and prayers, and I hope I have found pardon and peace. I have given up everything to my Maker, and trust I may depart in hope. Father, give me your blessing.'

He knelt down by my bed and prayed. My soul was thrilled by the sound of that voice—so familiar, and so loved, and a thousand tender recollections crowded upon my mind. I was refreshed and strengthened as I listened, and lifted nearer to heaven.

A long silence continued after he had ended, while we both pursued our own reflections. At length I untied from my neck the locket containing my mother's hair, and handed it to my father. 'I wish to leave this,' said I, 'to my sister Jane, with the same injunction with which my dear mother gave it to me. Tell her that it has been a talisman to me in many a difficulty and temptation, and that if I had never suffered myself to be unfaithful to it, I should have been spared the only pain I feel at this time. Bid her, therefore, wear it in memory of her deceased brother and mother, and as a pledge that she will never pass a day without prayer, remembering that if we cannot see how she fulfils the pledge, God does; and the day is coming when we shall know also.'

I was too feeble to pursue the conversation, and soon became faint. I thought myself dying. After I had revived, I could catch from the occasional whispers in the room, that it was thought I could not live through another night. I had nothing further which I wished to say, and I lay quietly, in the perfect possession of my powers, waiting the signal to depart. O, the indescribable sublimity of that hour! Words cannot picture the solemnity of feeling which pervaded my mind, as my thoughts flew, in the pressure and excitement of the season, with the rapidity of lightning, to the past and to the future, to my own life—to the truths of Christianity—to the perfections of God—to the promises of Christ—to the prospects of heaven; and the whole was framed, with an intense

energy of which I can now hardly conceive, into a perpetual mental prayer. Thus was I occupied until sleep overcame me, and I was lost in forgetfulness.

It was ordained that we should be deceived. He who had brought me low, intended but to chasten and heal me; and when I had learned all that a death-bed could teach, he again breathed health into my frame, and bade me live to praise him.

'Seek first the kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof, and all these things shall be added unto you.'

These words were perpetually present to my mind, during my recovery from the illness I have mentioned, and gave rise to much salutary reflection, which helped to establish my resolution for the future. I felt how easily the one thing needful slips away from those who cease to seek it, and how liable even a religious man is to lose the substance of happiness in pursuing the shadow. I persuaded myself that if the prime object of duty were secured, a man could never feel any thing actually wanting to his well being; for it is very evident that the pursuit of the highest duty and most permanent good, is consistent with the pursuit and enjoyment of every other object really desirable.

I experienced the truth of this at once, in returning to the studies of my class. My great struggle had been to subdue my inordinate ambition. It had interfered with my religion and must be sacrificed. It was a dear sacrifice, but I took my resolution, and it was performed. The consequence, I supposed, would be, that I should fall from my standing as a scholar, and graduate with less reputation than I had coveted. This was a mortifying anticipation; but better risk my scholarship than my religion, thought I, and I summoned firmness to brave the result. This result was quite other than I expected. In proportion as I became indifferent to my reputation, for mere reputation's sake, I found myself able to study and recite with greater ease and self-possession. Formerly my extreme anxiety to do well, and my morbid dread of doing ill, had occasioned an irritability and hurry of spirit, which had driven me off my self command, and produced the very evils I sought to avoid. But now, having little desire except to do my duty, I was cool, collected, and preserved the full command of my powers. So that, to my surprise, I acquitted myself better than formerly, and rose in my class, rather than fell. A certain portion of every day was sacredly devoted to religious exercises and studies; and the time thus abstracted from classical pursuits, was more than compensated by the steadiness of mind and equanimity of feeling which it produced.

There is no state of the mind so happy in itself, and at the same time so fitted for success in the duties of the world, and for contentment amid its difficulties, as the tranquil and composed frame of habitual devotion.

THE KORAN.

Professor Bush, in his remarks at the anniversaries last week, stated one fact in regard to the Koran, which we were not before aware of. It was this, that the Koran maintains the Ptolemaic system of Astronomy, viz. that the earth is the centre of the universe, and that the sun and the planets revolve round the earth, and the follower of Mahomet was compelled to believe this, or suffer the penalty of eternal damnation. This fact, said the professors, renders it evident that the Mahomedan religion contains within itself the seeds of its own dissolution. The light of science will eventually dispel this illusion, and teach the follower of the false prophet, that the Koran has made him believe a lie. If it will lie in one thing, he will reason, it will lie in another, and the whole book must be false.

Boston Daily Adver.

God, "according to his great mercy, saved us, by the fountain of the new birth, and by the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he poured upon us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour."—*Hom. on the Nat.*