

gregation? even though it be repulsive to their taste. This may be so vitiated that he who would invariably seek its gratification might be sure to lead them to hell.

But this fidelity should take its most unyielding position in giving lessons on experimental and practical religion. However harmless any doctrinal error may be, an error in experience is fatal. A man whose heart receives a moral fitness for heaven will reach that blissful state though his mind be considerably shaded with erroneous sentiments during the days of his pilgrimage. But he who retains an unrenewed heart till he has passed the bounds of his probationary state, must be a certain outcast from heaven's untainted society, though the correctness of his opinions might have challenged the severest scrutiny of orthodoxy itself. With what jealous care, then, should every branch of inward religion be set before people of all ranks and conditions! How carefully should the messengers of God point out the difference between the spurious ebullitions of sympathy, excited by affecting anecdotes or moving circumstances, and that godly sorrow which arises from a clear and painful apprehension of the exceeding sinfulness of sin! With what earnestness should they insist also that it must not only embrace a mental change of purpose, but assume such a poignancy as will urge the soul to cry out, "God be merciful to me a sinner!"

We know the world would be pleased with a smoother way—a repentance without tears—a crucifixion without pain: and it is an alarming truth that some have made a fearful approximation to their views. But let him that would stand in the terrible day of the Lord beware how he pampers such desires or gives countenance to such doctrine.

Another important branch of Christian experience is the witness of the Spirit. God never designed that the dubiousness of night should envelope the minds of his people. He is not only ready to effect a deep and powerful work, but also to add his own unequivocal testimony that it is done. But alas, how few now press this great truth on the people of God with that energy which characterized the venerable Wesley! Salvation from all sin is another branch, and an indispensable pre-requisite for heaven. The great object of preaching with Paul was, "that he might present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." No minister should consider himself at liberty to leave a single individual till he has brought him to that state. That unwelcome story of deadness, doubts, and fears, repeated almost every Sabbath by the generality of Christians, should meet a faithful rebuke, and every soul be given to understand that "it is the will of God, even our sanctification," and that "without holiness no man shall see the Lord." There is, perhaps, no point less palatable to the common mass of mankind than this; and on that very account the temptation becomes stronger to pass it over in silence, or to preach it in so vague a manner as to render it perfectly nugatory. Why is it that so many Methodist preachers never present it definitely before the people? And have we not reason to fear that in some instances a meagre thing is substituted for it which falls altogether below the Bible standard? The great

mainspring of the astonishing revivals in Mr. Wesley's day was the faithful preaching of repentance, present salvation by faith, the witness of the Spirit, and heart holiness. These formed the burden of all those sermons which shook Great Britain from its slumbers, and roused the nation to piety and prayer. And whenever, as a body of ecclesiastics, we shall presume to lay these aside, or suffer them to deteriorate in our hands, we may look for a correspondent wane in the spirit and extent of revivals.

**MINISTERIAL VISITS TO JESUS.**—The disciples returned to Jesus and told him all that they had done. This is a good rule for every minister and every Christian. Every night go to Christ and tell him what you have been doing during the day, and the motives which influenced your conduct.—*Payson.*

#### HISTORICAL.

##### SKETCHES OF WESTERN AFRICA.

By REV. MELVILLE B. COX.

*American Meth. Missionary.*

##### PORT PRAYA.

PORT PRAYA is situated at the south-east part of St. Jago, in latitude 15° north, on a table-eminence of land, about seventy or a hundred feet above the level of the sea. The town—or city, as it is called—is surrounded at a distance by mountains without number, thrown in every variety of form which a burning volcano could give to an uplifting mass of earth.

To me, the appearance of the place is perfectly unique. There is nothing analogous, to it in the United States; and to an American who has never been out of them, all descriptions must be more or less deceptive. Search for the poorest little village on our rivers, or in some of our farthest wildernesses, nay, I might say by the side of a good mill-stream, and in appearance it would have by far the pre-eminence. When you enter the village, there is something a little redeeming about it; the sight of what is called the public square, and a garden or two, make it quite tolerable; but at best, to use the homely phrase of our supercargo, "it is a beggarly place." In the harbour it strikes one as nothing but ancient ruins crumbling under the weight of years. In its midst, you see it animated with human beings, too ignorant to make it better if they would, and too indolent to do it if they could.

Still, as a port for water, and refreshment for ships, it is one of great importance, and seems to have been thrown from the bottom of the great deep, as a common resting place for vessels from every quarter of the globe, by that Hand which so constantly and so abundantly provides for the wants of his creatures.

The buildings are generally remarkably low, built of a dark coloured kind of free-stone, stuccoed with plaster, and covered with tile, or thatched with grass. The number of inhabitants are estimated at from two to three thousand. It has a church, a custom-house, a jail, and a "palace," as it is called, though less like one than almost any ordinary house in America.

Religion here, as in countries exclusively Catholic, consists in mere ceremony. I saw nothing that looked like the Gospel, in church or out of it, except in a few gentlemen from America. The Sabbath has but little respect paid to it, though on that day they profess to worship God; but morning, noon, and evening, the market was open; and hides, horses, and clothes, as well as provisions, were exposed for sale. Form obliges them not to forget that there is such a day, but when it comes, instead of the evangelical worship of a holy and intelligent Spirit, you see