

the deeper reading of the whole law required to its right fulfilment a real love to God and man, over and above its outward observance. Thus they fell into an utter distortion of the proportionate heinousness of outward and inward sins. Sins of a flagrant fleshly kind they sternly denounced, but sins of the spirit little troubled them. Murder, adultery, theft, lying, neglect of ceremonial observances of religion, were sins visited with the heaviest penalties of their condemnation; but ambition, malice, envy, scorn, evil thinking, pride, avarice, covetousness, worldliness, selfishness, scarcely gave their consciences a moment's uneasiness, unless indeed they burst to the surface in some outbreak of a scandalous character. Are we free from this danger? We very properly cry shame on open breaches of the moral code, and grosser forms of sin; but do we minimize, and almost overlook sins of the spirit that burrow in our souls like cancers, and blacken them in God's sight sometimes more than sins which are visited with the sharpest condemnation of public opinion, and the severest censures of Church discipline? God forbid that we should extenuate the evil of the grosser forms of sin; but God forbid, not less, that we should conceal from ourselves the odiousness and danger of sins of heart, spirit, thought, temper and feeling. There are those who never transgress the rules of decorum, and who often severely denounce such as do, who are yet nursing in their hearts the very spirit that cast the wicked angels out of heaven. We may scorn the poor drunkard who soaks himself in liquor till the reason is dethroned; but may be soaking our own whole being in sordid worldliness, till God himself is dethroned, and our heart grows hard as adamant. Sometimes a clique of sanctimonious religionists may groan in pious phrase over the wickedness of those who practice dancing, card playing, theatre-going, horse racing, Sabbath-breaking and other forms of worldliness, who may themselves be, in the very act of deploring, expending as much spite, and nursing as much self-righteousness in their religiously phrased lamentations as would outweigh in the scales of Divine judgment, the whole catalogue of sins denounced. It is one of the tricks of a perverted conscience to fix our eye upon some outward form of transgression, and concentrate our attention, and expend our indignation on it, till we have no eye or condemnation for corroding inner vices. Severity against outward evils is the readiest way of diverting our attention from our own heart-sins, while it gives us the luxury of posing as abhorrent of vice, and at the same time of gratifying our malevolent passion for denunciation, and flattering our own sense of superior virtue. We can

"Compound for sins we are inclined to  
By damning those we have no mind to."