

ment, how many—ascending to the judgment-seat of God? These are most solemn subjects for our calm and frequent meditation, and they serve to impress on our minds the imperative necessity of being always ready, for “in such an hour as we think not, the Son of man cometh.”

And who will attempt to describe the situation of the spiritually dead when the period of natural death approaches? Bitter remorse and self-reproach for the opportunities which they neglected, for the seasons of grace which they abused, for the proposals of heavenly mercy which they despised, oppress their minds. They begin to shrink beneath the power of Him, whom in the days of their prosperity they regarded not, and to shudder at the terrific prospect of His wrath. They look up to Heaven, but as they did despite to the HOLY SPIRIT, He no longer strives with them, and as they “denied the HOLY ONE and the JUST,” He appears not to comfort them, and faith in CHRIST yields no hope beyond the grave. And, if they endeavour to form some faint hopes of mercy, how are their minds distracted with alarming terrors and keen reflections! Unaccustomed to pray, they cannot lift up their hands to God, and offer the fervent petitions of the soul. Unacquainted with the Word of Truth, which presents a fruitful source of consolation to the believer, under the last trial, as well as under any other affliction of life, they cannot derive that benefit which they ought to obtain. On the contrary, every verse testifies against them, and every page pronounces their condemnation. The work of repentance is too serious, too difficult a matter to postpone, until a death-bed urges its importance; and, therefore, little reliance can be placed on its efficacy then. To avoid this anguish of soul, and the direful forebodings of the last hour, the surrender of the heart to God, through faith in CHRIST JESUS, and with an unfeigned contrition for past offences, affords a certain means. To make such an offering, by