

plain that in so abstaining he inflicts an injury upon himself by disobeying an intimation of Divine Providence, and also upon Society, by doing what in him lies to consign the administration of its affairs, and the guiding of its intellect, to hands that are, above all others, least fitted for such onerous service: those, namely, of men who have no regard for God in the government of His own world and creatures.

I cannot do better than close this part of the subject with the following extract from the discourses of of a deceased clergyman "The ascetic life of abstinence, of fasting, austerity, singularity, is the lower and earthlier form of religion. The life of godliness is the glory of Christ. It is a thing far more striking to the vulgar imagination to be religious after the type and pattern of John the Baptist—to fast—to mortify every inclination—to be found at no feast—to wrap ourselves in solitariness, and abstain from all social joys; yes, and far *easier* so to live, and far easier so to win a character of religiousness. A silent man is easily reputed wise. A man who suffers none to see him in the common jostle and undress of life, easily gathers around him a mysterious veil of unknown sanctity, and men honour him for a saint. The unknown is always wonderful."

"But the life of him whom men called a gluttonous man and a wine bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners, was a far harder and a far heavenlier religion. To shroud ourselves is no fair test of holiness,—to dare to show ourselves as we are, making no solemn affectation of reserve or difference from others: to be found at the marriage feast; to accept the invitation of the rich Pharisee Simon, and the scorned publican Zacheus; to mix with the crowd of men, using no affected singularity, content to be creatures, not too bright or good for human nature's daily food; and yet for a man amidst it all to remain a consecrated spirit, his trials and his solitariness known only to his Father—a being set apart, not of this world, alone in the heart's depths with God; to put the cup of this world's gladness to his lips, and yet be un-intoxicated; to gaze steadily on all its grandeur, and yet be undazzled, plain and simple in personal desire; to feel its brightness yet defy its thrall; this is the difficult, and rare, and glorious