The Protestant

AND EVANGELICAL WITNESS.

"PROVE ALL THINGS: HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD."—1 Thess, v. 21.

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The Protestant,

AND EVANGELICAL WITNESS,

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[Original.]

JOHNNY'S GRAVE.

BY HIS SISTER—A. L. G.

Winter winds, O! blow ye softly
O'er the place where sleeps the dead;
Silver moon-beams, shine ye brightly
Round about the narrow bed;—
For where yonder poplar weeps,
Darling brother Johnny sleeps.

When the hand of death came o'er him,
And his eyes began to close,
Happy dreams went on before him,
Calling him to sweet repose;—
Now he's left us, and we weep
O'er the grave where Johnny sleeps.

Angels' wings have borne his spirit
To a brighter land above,
Where the blest fore'er inherit
All the Saviour's holy love;
And there love its vigil keeps
At the grave where Johnny sleeps.

Winter winds, then blow ye softly
O'er that peaceful, hallowed spot:
Silver moon-beams, shine ye brightly,—
For it cannot be forgot,
That where yonder poplar weeps,
Is the place where Johnny sleeps.

Huntley, April 6, 1860.

Dr. Guthrie on American Slavery.

Dr. Thomas Guthrie, of Edinburgh, has addressed a letter to the editor of the *Presbyterian*, Philadelphia, U. S., in reply to certain strictures cast upon him in an article in that journal, in reference to the part he took at a meeting held in Edinburgh on the question of slavery. In the course of the letter Dr. Guthrie says:—

You say that I "was bloodthirsty." A horrid charge to bring against any minister of the gospel! If you mean, by applying this abusive language to me, that I delight in the shedding of human blood, or would have recourse to arms rather than suffer any wrong, I deny your charge; and appeal for my veracity to those who know me, and know how I abhor the cruelties inseparable from war. Perhaps you mean something else. Perhaps you mean that I would regard the slaves, if they had a fair prospect of success, as justified in rising to recover their freedom, and, as a last resource, meeting arms with arms in the battle for liberty. If so, I plead guilty to the charge; guilty I must add, as were our Wallace and your Washington. Washington and his compatriots thought not liberty only, but independence, even worth fighting for. In the days of the struggle which you yearly commemorate, ministers preached up resistance; pulpits as well as drums sounded to arms. You land the men who did fight, and were ready 'to fight to the knees in the blood of the white man,' merely for the right to tax themselves; and have you the assurance to hold up your hands in horror at the bare idea of poor Africans, ground to the dust, doing the same to save themselves, their wives, their children, from bleeding under the bloody lash, and being sold like cattle to the highest bidder? What were the wrongs your fathers suffered from Britain, compared with the untold wrongs your slaves suffer on the same soil? Let the great Jonathan Edwards answer that question. He says:—'We all dread political slavery, or subjection to the arbitrary power of a king, or of any man or men not deriving their authority from the people. Yet such a state is inconceivably preferable to the slavery of the negroes.—Suppose that in the late war we had been subdued by Great Britain, we should have been taxed without our consents. But these taxes would have amounted to but a small part of property. Whereas the negroes are deprived of all their property; no part of their earnings is their own; the whole is their masters'. In a conquered state we should have been at liberty to dispose of ourselves and of our property, in most cases, as we should choose. We should have been free to live in this or that town or place; in any part of the country, or to remove out of the country; to apply to this or that business; to labor or not; and excepting a sufficiency for taxes, to dispose of the fruit of our labour to our benefit. But the unhappy negroes in slavery can do none of these things. They must do what they are commanded, and as much as they are commanded, on pain of the lash. They must live wherever they are placed, and must continue themselves to that spot on pain of death. So that Great Britain, in her late attempt to enslave America, committed a very small crime indeed in comparison with the crime of those who enslave the Africans." Your great Jefferson also speaks out his mind as strongly and as truly. "One hour," said he, "of American slavery outweighs whole ages of the oppression we rose against England to shake off!" You cannot deny that; and though a violent termination to slavery is not one that any reflecting and right-thinking man would wish, the system, as one of cruelty, of immorality, of robbery, and of murder, is accursed both of God and man. It is the plague spot of your state; the plague spot of your churches; and should its end, which God forbid, be one of violence, on the heads of those who are not straining every nerve to bring it to a speedy and bloodless determination will lie the guilt of all the fearful crimes that shall accompany its dying struggles. Looking across Europe, we see a mighty despot, the head of a church where the light of the Gospel shines dimly through many an error, bending his giant strength to break the serfdom; while in free Protestant America states are driving—shame to say it—innocent and free men of colour from their territories; a man is sentenced to the gallows for no other crime than aiding, in obedience to the dictates of religion and humanity, a poor enslaved brother in his flight; and many, calling themselves free men and Christians, are seeking to restore the accursed slave trade, and rivet the chains of bondage. Let me say, in conclusion, that no lasting peace nor true prosperity can be yours till the evil thing is put away. I believe that God will not continue to bless a nation which continues to maintain a system that is opposed to the religion of Christ, and tramples in the dust its golden precept, "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you."

Religious Intelligence.

The Bishop of London presided at a conference of clergymen last week to promote plans for keeping Sunday school children in the paths of rectitude after they had left their schools. A code of rules for the guidance of teachers was agreed upon.

An Evangelical Alliance in Persia.—In a letter (in *Evangelical Christendom*) dated Oroomiah (Persia), Dec. 10, 1859, we read—You will be happy to be informed that a Persian branch of the Evangelical Alliance, auxiliary to the British Organization, has been formed by the American missionaries of Oroomiah, agreeably to the regulations of the parent society. After the adoption of the usual constitution and byelaws, it was resolved to hold a general meeting in the city of Oroomiah, and that the Rev. G. W. Coan be requested to make the address on that occasion. The contemplated meeting was convened on the 6th ult. It was attended by some hundreds of Evangelical Nestorians, and was an occasion of much interest. The names of Mar Yohanan, Mar Elia Dea Yshak, brother of the patriarch Mar Shimoon, and about fifty other principal Nestorians of Oroomiah, were regularly proposed and received as members of the Branch."

The Missionary Conference at Liverpool.—A circular has been issued, signed by Mr. A. Kinnaird, M. P., and other gentlemen, in reference to this proposal. The circular states:—"Special invitations, guaranteeing their expenses, have been given to a limited number of secretaries, missionaries, and others, many of whom have already intimated their concurrence in the Conference, and intention to attend it, to meet at Hope Hall, 3, Hope Street, Liverpool, on Monday, March 19, and confer together until the evening of Friday the 23d, when a public meeting will be held. Each day's conference will commence with one hour of united prayer. The discussion will be conversational, each introduced by a paper, or an address, not exceeding ten minutes in length." A programme is appended, "in order that experienced friends of the cause in different parts of the country may transmit any useful hints and suggestions to the address of Mr. Perkins, 30, Moorfield, Liverpool. These will be brought before the Conference, and their substance embodied in the report, which it is hoped may be published before the May meetings."

Christian Indians.—The Earl of Southesk, during his recent hunting expedition in the Rocky Mountains, fell in with some Indians who worshipped like Christians. The *North Wester*, of January 14, says:—"At the religious meeting held this week, in St. John's school-house, his Lordship, who was requested to address the audience, stated that while on this trip in the neighborhood of the Rocky Mountains, he fell in with about twelve families of Assiniboins, or Stone Indians (a very wild and savage tribe), who professed Christianity, and, so far as he could judge, were acting up to their profession. These families were far from any missionary station, and had not even seen a missionary for many years. Still they showed a considerable acquaintance with Scripture, and were regular in their morning and evening devotions. A little bell was always rung as their signal for assembling to worship, and the singing of hymns formed part of their religious exercises. At their earnest request, his Lordship wrote out for them several passages of Scripture. Their knowledge of religion is supposed to have been imparted to them by the Rev. Mr. Randall, a Wesleyan missionary, who went to Fort Edmonton in 1839, and left the country in 1847 on account of ill health. They have, however, a regular teacher in one of themselves, who has been set apart by them for that purpose.—*Scottish Guardian.*

The Protestants of Hungary.

Many of our readers feel a deep interest in the history of the down-trodden Protestants of Hungary, who owe all their persecutions and disabilities to the Jesuits. Their history is profoundly interesting.

It was the eccentric result of the Protestant struggle of the Sixteenth Century, so far as it affected the Austrian dominions, that that cause was lost in Bohemia, where it originated in its fullest power, and finally found refuge in Hungary and Transylvania, where it had at first played a secondary part in the contest with the Papacy. Protestantism, thus established in these two latter countries, divided itself into Lutheranism and Calvinism—the latter becoming the most popular branch of the faith, and soon claiming to itself the exclusive title of the Reformed Church. Hence, by that phrase, at this day, we understand only the Calvinistic Church in Hungary and Transylvania. The rights of both Churches were solemnly guaranteed in the Treaty of Vienna, of 1806, and in the Treaty of Lintz, of 1647. With the unvarying perfidy of the House of Hapsburg, both these compacts were broken, and the Churches were subjected to similar infractions of their rights with those that they now bear, until the reign of Maria Theresa and Joseph. Then, for the first time, they obtained, both in fact and in law, nearly equal privileges with the Roman Catholic church, and fully equal rights with the Greek Church. From this period hardly any question arose to disturb the harmony and loyalty of Protestant Churches until the Revolution in 1848—these Churches having been in full possession of their rights for the best part of a century. Prince Metternich accepted these rights throughout his long Ministry with a fidelity which contrasted with his encroachments on the civil independence of the Hungarians. But in 1848-49 the Protestant Churches were suspended in the exercise of their functions by the intervention of Haynau, and from that period their governing powers were in abeyance. In 1856 the Concordat followed, and assigned to Roman Catholics powers irreconcilable with a restoration of those of the Hungarian Protestants. It was felt, however, that without some effort to re-establish old privileges, revolution must break out anew. Accordingly, in 1856, a new constitution was assigned them. Thereupon, the eight superintendencies of the Protestant Churches were convened, and they unanimously rejected the proffered constitution. In this situation the Church question in Hungary remained until the 1st of September last. Then the decree bearing that date was issued, and the Protestant body, divided into new and numerous superintendencies, by the Constitution of 1856, was required to assemble. But the Protestants refused to recognize the subdivision of their body. The old superintendencies then proposed to meet in their place. Their assembling was immediately prohibited, and the seniorats protested as vainly as individuals petitioned. We now find that the Protestants have rejected the Ministerial ordinance of the 2d September, as completely as the Imperial decree of the first of that month.

It would be wise policy on the part of the Emperor to concede their demands, for:—

The Reformed Church forms the most enlightened of all branches of her subjects, and consequently in great degree the most influential of them. The education of its clergy is very superior to that of Catholics, Greeks or Lutherans, throughout the Austrian dominions; and it is hardly inferior to that of the Prussian Lutherans and the French Calvinists. In Hungary the College of Debreczin, founded in 1792, is of wealth and learning; it has a library of some twenty thousand volumes, and both in government and theology it formes the capital of the Reformed Church. Nearly the same may be said of the advancement of the Calvinists of Transylvania. The two Protestant Churches number together between four and five millions, according to the most reliable authorities; but some difficulty is experienced in the accurate computation of numbers in so remote a district. This amounts to more than a fourth part of the whole population of Hungary and Transylvania; and in point of instruction, reasoning and activity the Protestants are so far ahead of the rest of the people that, in political calculations, they may rank as equal to one-half of the community.

"Wiser than my Maker."

A young man of sceptical tendencies, walking out one Sabbath morning, proposed to a comrade in sin to spend the day in a fishing excursion down the harbor. A Christian friend, passing them on his way to church, had overheard the remark, and politely invited him to accompany him to public worship. The young man reluctantly consented, saying, that "if preaching was effectual to convince him of error, he should believe in it; but if not, he would never again be caught listening to it."

They entered the house of God. After the usual devotional services the pastor arose, and casting his eye over his audience, in the deepest tenderness and solemnity said, "I do not rise to preach to you, it is God addressing you: 'Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child'—Do *you* so receive it?" "If not," he added, with deep commiseration, "the closing words of this text are God's message to you: '*He shall not enter therein.*'"

These words were uttered with deep emotion, and all felt that they came from the heart of the preacher. At the close of the services the young man said, "I have never seen such simplicity and tenderness in a preacher, and his words sunk into my heart. I felt I had not received the word of God as a little child, but as one *wiser than my Maker*. That to me was preaching effectually."

"From that hour," he afterwards said, "scepticism vanished from my mind, and the truth uttered in the simplicity of a little child brought me to the feet of Jesus." He is now an earnest laborer in the cause of his Master, preaching that gospel he once derided, in its simplicity and power, to the souls of men. If we would save souls, let us be "filled with the Spirit," and our utterances shall be clothed with power to their salvation.—*Am. Messenger.*

Pray with your Child.

How often are the hearts of Christian parents torn with anguish by the persistent disobedience of a beloved child. How many sleepless midnight hours are spent in trying to devise some plan for reclaiming him.

Such a son had Mr. K——. Paternal admonition was unheeded, kindness was abused, punishment only seemed to make him more sullen and obstinate in his evil way. At length, quite despairing of his own success, his father resolved to place him in the care of an aged clergyman, a celebrated instructor of youth. When alone with the minister, the father told him what a desperate lad his son had grown to be; that praise or blame had no effect upon him. The good man asked if he had tried no remedies. The gentleman enumerated various measures he had adopted to reclaim him. Still the other inquired if he had done nothing else. "Yes, after a very flagrant act of disobedience, I once kept him two days confined to his chamber, on bread and water."

"Ah," said the old clergyman, "these remedies were not sufficient; I know a better remedy for such desperate cases. It is prayer. Did you ever go alone with your son, and earnestly pray with and for him?" The gentleman was forced to confess he had never done so. "Then," said the clergyman, "it need not seem strange that all your pains have been in vain."

Deeply impressed with the suggestion, the humbled father betook himself to the new remedy, and with the happiest results. The wild, reckless lad became sobered and thoughtful. Soon a change in his daily conduct was apparent. He dare not go out of that chamber, where he could not but feel that God was, and plunge into his customary sinful courses. He lived to become an excellent, efficient man, an honor and blessing to society.

Father, mother, do you pray daily with your child? One has well said, "A child should not be able to remember when his parent first prays with him." The practice should be commenced in infancy, and never discontinued while he is under your watch and care.

The mother of ten children lived to see them all within the fold of Christ. When asked the secret of her successful training, she answered, she had been accustomed to take each of the children with her to her closet, and pray with them alone.—*American Messenger.*

Treasury.

The Royal Penitent.

THOUGHTS ON THE FIFTY-FIRST PSALM.

The inspired healing of this psalm teaches us that it was the utterance of David at a deeply trying and humiliating point in his history—at a moment in which he was called to prove, in a very striking manner, what sin is, and, therefore, what grace is. His conscience was stained with two aggravated sins—sins committed against light and knowledge, privilege and blessing, of no ordinary character. Yet, amazing thought; at such a moment, and in such a condition, he found his way to that One who cannot look upon sin, and who is of pure eyes than to behold iniquity. "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to *thy* loving-kindness; according unto the *multitude of thy* tender mercies blot out *my* transgressions." Here he lays his heavy burden down before the Lord. He places his "transgression," side by side, with God's "tender mercies." He lays the magnitude of the former beside "the multitude" of the latter. God alone can deal with a sin-burdened conscience, and to him it must come ere it can find relief.

To what man could David have betaken himself when the arrow of divine conviction pierced his conscience? Was there one upon earth who could have understood him? Was there a human heart that would have borne with him? Not one. He would have been misunderstood by all at least whose reputation rested only upon a basis of self-righteousness.

David knew this well. He would say, on another occasion, when conscience condemned him, "Let us fall now into the hand of the Lord; for his mercies are great; and let me not fall into the hand of man." He knew what he had to expect from the hand of man, and he knew, also, what he had to expect from the hand of the Lord. No marvel, therefore, if he infinitely preferred the latter.

Now, it is a marvellously blessed thing to know that there is no one to whom a convicted sinner can so confidingly come as to the Lord himself. The heart does not easily admit this, at times, when bowed down under the painful sense of sin. There is a great tendency to keep away from God—to mitigate, to palliate, to manage, to slur, to extenuate, in some way or another—to wait until, by the action of time, the intense feeling of shame and self-reproach has worn itself out. All this is the result of ignorance of grace. We forget, or are ignorant, that God's grace has travelled down to the very bottom of every supposable case of failure and sin, —that it has met "the *chief* of sinners," and in so doing has, of necessity, met every gradation short of that amazing point. If it has met "the chief," it can meet any subordinate sinner. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom (says the apostle), I am chief." And he it remarked that this is not merely the expression of Paul's humility, though, no doubt, he was humble under the sense of what he was. But the Holy Ghost here declares that Paul was the chief of sinners: and, not only so, but that he obtained mercy in order that Christ Jesus might, in him, "show forth all long-suffering, as a *pattern* to them who should hereafter believe on him, to life everlasting." —*British Messenger.*

Something to live for.

A young man has just left me, with whom I have had a pleasant hour's talk concerning the great matter of personal religion. He is full of youthful energy; hopeful, energetic, industrious, and skillful in the business to which he has given his life. If no disaster should befall him, he may become, in the course of years, one of the greatest merchants of the land. Better than all this, he has just given his heart to God, and is rejoicing in the freshness of his first love as a disciple of Jesus. It was good to be with him, and listen as he poured forth his new purposes concerning himself and the future.

One of his sentences lingers in my ear, now that he is gone. "I feel," said he, and his eye kindled, and his form dilated as he spoke, "that I have something to live for, now." He had lived before as I knew, for business, for advancement, for money. These things seem to be nothing now, compared with the new and higher aims which had entered into his soul. He had found Jesus, and with him he had found "something to live for." He had become a Christian, and his whole life had been exalted by the change.

The young man was right. Every Christian has "something to live for." He has a chief end, a great end, wherewith to give concentration and vigor to all his labors. The aims of the worldling are often low, sometimes degrading to man, always far beneath the aims of the man who has been renewed and purified. Soon he will find that his life has been a scene of laborious trifling, in which he has wrought hard and gained nothing. But the Christian lives worthily because he lives to some purpose.—*Extract.*

A Glorious Reproach.

The way to be reproached, sometimes, is simply to do one's duty. For there are persons about us, who think they have a right to judge for us, lord it over us, reproach us, vilify us. The rights of man, like the rights of God, are very much misunderstood. Every man has a right to do what he believes God requires of him, and to be protected in doing so, if he does not injure his neighbor or society at large. The Lord Jesus commanded his first disciples to promulgate his doctrine, and to begin at Jerusalem; the priests and rulers of the people determined that they should not, though they had no right to interfere. They therefore apprehended them, examined them, flogged them, charged them, and threatened them, and so let them go. Being let go, as good servants they went directly to their work, and were then apprehended again, and in the way of reproach were told "*Behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine*" (Acts, v. 28). A finer compliment could not have been paid them. They had just done what their Master bade them. They had done what we ought to do, spread the doctrine of Christ everywhere.

Apostolic doctrine was pure and holy, and is clearly stated in the New Testament. It respected man, what he is—a poor, lost, helpless, ruined sinner; and what he needs—a personal, powerful, present Saviour. It respected God, what He is—a spiritual holy, just, and benevolent being; what He has said, in his law and in his gospel; and what He has done —provided and presented just the Saviour which guilty man requires. It especially respected *Jesus*, that He was the promised Messiah, the seed of David, the omnipotent, gentle, and kind-hearted Saviour. It respected earth as cursed, doomed to fire and destined to be delivered from the bondage of corruption. It respected heaven too, as the home of God, the dwelling-place of Christ and his saints, the inheritance of all that believe on his name. Precious doctrines these, just like their Author, they are holy, harmless, and undefiled. They must do good, they could do no evil.

In reference to these doctrines we may observe, that the apostles adopted them, and they became their own. They experienced the power of them, and could therefore testify, "We speak what we know." They highly valued them, and would sacrifice ease, health, wealth, liberty, and life, for them. They industriously spread them; for daily in the temple, and from house to house, they ceased not to teach and to preach Jesus Christ. Beloved, here is our example; the doctrines of Christ are clearly revealed to us in the gospel, and we should cordially embrace them, highly value them, seek to experience the power of them, and then, to the very outside of our power, we should spread them abroad and make them known in every direction.

Look at the exclamation, "Behold, *ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine.*" There was full evidence of the fact; for the multitude was following them, the mouths of the common people were full of the subject, the very children were crowding to their services, and the entire face of society was changing. Here is an example for us all. Let us fill our villages, towns, cities, countries, and the world with the doctrine of Christ. Let us earn such a commendation for fidelity and zeal as primitive believers did, nor fear the consequences. O what a reproof such a passage must be to many. Look at their families and neighborhoods, look at their course and conduct, and say, how is the doctrine of Christ circulated by them! Let every one of us receive the exhortation suggested, and begin at once at our own doors, in our own neighborhoods; and let us begin with children, friends, and neighbors; and persevere until we hear the cry, "*Behold, ye have filled the world with your doctrine.*"

The Talent of Time.

Our time is a talent put into our hands by the great Lord of the whole family of heaven and earth, and one of which we are to give an account when our Master calls; and it will be a lamentable account, when it shall consist only of such items as these; items, so much of it spent in plays, taverns, and gaming. Items, so much of it spent in eating, and drinking. Items, so much spent in recreations and pastimes. Items, so much spent in getting wealth and honor, &c. And the remains so much which was spent in doing nothing.

Our time is a universal talent, which every man, that lives to discretion, hath. Every man hath not a talent of learning, or of wealth, or honor, or subtilty of wit, to account for; but every man, that lives to the age of discretion, hath time to account for.

As our time is short, so there be many things that corrode and waste that short time; so that there remains but little that is serviceable to our best employment. Let us but take out of our longest lives the weakness and folly of childhood and youth; the impotency and morosity of our old age; the times for eating, drinking, sleeping, though with moderation; the times of sickness and indispositedness of health; the times of cares, journeys, and travel; the times for necessary recreations, interview of friends and relations, and a thousand such expenses of time; the residue will be but a small pittance for our business I mean, of fitting souls for glory, and, if that be misspent, or idly spent, we have lost our treasure, and the flower and jewel of our time.—*Sir M. Hale.*

Reader, how are you employing your time? How much of it do you spend in preparation for eternity? Do you even employ an hour a day in seeking after the knowledge of God through Jesus Christ, and in calling on the name of the Lord at the throne of grace? How much do you use for reading your Bible, meditating on its truths, communicating them to others, serving the Lord, and getting ready for Heaven? If you are not saved, you will not be able to plead want of time, for you misspend more time every day than would suffice to obtain the salvation of your soul. You have the same twenty-four hours daily which others have. Every one has plenty of time to be saved; how dreadful to use it only in ensuring everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord!

What Sin Has.

"It cost Him blood our hearts to win
To buy us from the power of sin."

Sin has its God. After characterizing Satan as "the great dragon which deceiveth the nations," John bears emphatic witness, "All the world . . worshipped the dragon." And the Scriptures expressly declare that Satan is "the god of this world."

Sin has its law! Paul speaks of "a law that when we would do good, evil is present with us." The law "works in the members," and when Christ addressed those who were in subjection to it, he said, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." Inspired writers style that law "the law of sin and death."

Sin has its gospel. The old serpent spoke the language of promise in Eden. "Ye shall not surely die." He speaks that language still. He beguiles his dupes by setting before them, in fair show, "the pleasures of sin," and hiding from their eyes that these pleasures are but "for a season." Nay, he makes bold, with some, to give assurance that hell shall not be moved from beneath to meet them at their coming. And thousands who have no faith in Christ's gospel believe this!

Sin has its scriptures. The press groans with works which ignore, or defend, or beautify sin. "It has long been the policy of the Devil to keep the the masses of the world in ignorance," says one, "but finding at length that they will read, he is doing all in his power to poison their books." And how countless are the books which a strict justice traces to their origin, in that unholy men wrote as they were moved by this Spirit of Evil! Such are the systems of false and skeptical philosophy; and tomes of history that see no God ruling among the sons of men, and poems and novels that charm the imagination, but taint it—smiting the soul fatally, as with the sunstroke of genius.

Sin has its churches—assemblies of the wicked for purposes of wickedness—may not those be styled "synagogues of Satan?" Sits he not enthroned in their hearts there? And there is not his will wrought? O, it cannot be questioned. Here is one of sin's churches, convened in the theatre. Yonder is a second, gathered into the gambler's den.