

principles causing the whole to advance and to flourish.' Yes, Great Britain has flourished, and Ireland has flourished, but the foundation stone of all this progress, was laid, little as he thought of it, by that great and intrepid warrior, Julius Cæsar. He, from a various design,—that of gratifying his own pride and ambition, penetrated this island with his victorious army, but God, who can take good out of evil, meant it for good. A way was thus laid open for the introduction of that glorious gospel which was now gaining access into different parts of the Roman empire. The mist of superstition and ignorance was now to give way, druidical worship was to be relinquished, and the beams of the sun of righteousness was then the first time to arise over Britain "with healing under his wings." It is this grand event in British History, I say, that was the starting point towards that intellectual and moral greatness which has ever since so signally distinguished the British nation. And this is the case indeed with *all* nations who are visited with the glad tidings of salvation. It is a fact that must never be overlooked, that the *affections* of a people, *must be in a healthy state*, if their intellect is ever to work powerfully for good. But whence do the affections receive their proper nourishment, but from those heaven-born truths which are scattered over the pages of Revelation? Here alone do we find motives of any value presented for moral progress, and these motives, under the quickening and directive influences of the Holy Spirit, sink into the innermost recesses of the soul, and grow into heavenly principles, and these *principles*, like irresistible impelling forces, drive those in whom they are implanted ever onwards and upwards, and cause them to devote all their physical and intellectual energies to the diffusion of happiness. If firm moral principles do not take possession of the heart, intellect will only work disastrously.

If a fated comet, in the course of its eccentricity in space were to dash against our hoisted planet, and hurl it to atoms, the loss would surely bear no comparison to the loss of a single soul with its wonderful powers and high destiny. This is not the mere dictation of fancy, it is in substance, the language of Scripture; for says he who "spake as never man spake." "What is man profited if he were to gain the whole world, and lose his own soul; or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul." Now the minister of the gospel cannot of himself be said to save this inconceivably precious gem eternal ruin; he is at best but an instrument; but even as such, who can sufficiently value his grand office? Ah! none but the converted and renovated sinner can do so. Look at yonder sensualist! He daily marches forward in the prime of his strength, and has no higher aim than to gratify his appetites. His conscience, being frequently tampered with, is

long ago hushed to silence. He forgets that there is a God above him who has respect to the affairs of men. Full of spirit and healthful vigor, he puts the day of adversity far from him. But hark! in the midst of all his luxurious ease and enjoyment, a deadly disease seats upon his vitals. His pulse now becomes irregular, his breathing difficult. The dainty viands which lately gratified his pallet are brought before him, but they are now distasteful. The physician is called, but his medicines bring no relief. His system shows symptoms of daily prostration and decay. His days are evidently numbered. And now what shall he do! He suddenly wakes in the first time, as from a fearful dream. He looks back upon his past life with horror, and finds it but one continuous scene of sensual indulgence. He looks before him, and finds himself on the very confines of time, with a dark mysterious and awfully uninviting eternity ready to burst upon his view. His sensual companions throng around his dying couch, but they have no comforting words to communicate to him, and after gazing for a little while on his pallid form, they stupidly turn away and leave him. He cries out in the very anguish of his soul, and none in the wide universe seems capable of soothing his departing spirit. But yes! do not despair, there is one, the minister of the Gospel. He hears of his deplorable condition, and with a heart glowing with philanthropy which the spirit of God alone can kindle, he runs to his rescue. He examines his case, tells him not to despair, and reminds of the consoling fact that there is still a balm in Gilead for him, and a mighty physician there, who is both able and willing to fill up his aching void, and that by an application to this physician, even at this late hour, "though his sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." After this admonitory address, he kneels and earnestly intercedes on his behalf at the throne of Grace, and then departs. And now soon, witness the amazing change! The desponding, dying man does apply to the physician of sinners. His efforts are weak; but he who has promised to make his strength perfect in human weakness, strengthens him and administers to him consolation, and thus he is translated from the verge of the bottomless pit to eternal glory. Oh! this is but a faint picture illustrative of the usefulness of the minister of the gospel: still, I trust that the consideration of it may give you some idea of this grand truth. And now I have done. I fear I have already exhausted your patience too much; but if I have, I trust that the importance of my subject, however poorly it may have been handled, may serve as an apology.

And now one word in conclusion; and it is this:—Let us, oh! let us not think lightly or disparagingly of that sacred profession which we have chosen. Let those of us who