

will be sorry for what you have uttered to-day? rung in my ears.

"It was near morning, when the party broke up, and I returned home, jaded in spirit, and worn down with excitement. I went to bed, and fell into a troubled sleep which lasted until noon. When I awoke, a dizziness and pain in the head incapacitated me from mental exertion; still I half-resolved ere I left home in the afternoon to confess my fault to my father. I met him at the dinner-table, but no allusion was made by either of us to the incident of the previous day; and when we arose from the table it was near the hour at which it was necessary for me to take the coach. I followed my father into our little parlor, whither he had gone, as if desirous of affording me an opportunity to speak with him alone, but I was ashamed to confess that I was wrong, and I merely said I must bid him good bye, as the coach was coming.

"Have you nothing more to say, Charles?" he inquired.

"No," I answered, and we parted. I took the coach for the scene of my labors, displeased and angry with myself but not penitent; and for a week succeeding was industriously employed in my vocation, having allowed the unpleasant circumstance to pass out of my mind, when an express came requiring my immediate presence at home, for it was stated that my father in a state of perfect and florid health, had been stricken down by an apoplectic fit.

"Although still alive when the messenger left he was insensible. Then, indeed, I felt the full force of the ominous prediction, 'the time may come when you will be sorry for what you have uttered to-day.' I hastened home full of anxiety and grief, only to find my father at the point of death. He never gave a token of recognition of my presence, and resigned his spirit into the hands of God amid the grief of a sorrowing household, of whom mine was infinitely the most bitter. Once, indeed, before my arrival, he rallied sufficiently to inquire if I had come, and on being answered in the negative, relapsed into a state of insensibility, and never spoke again. As I stood beside his bed, and gazed upon the lifeless features of one of the best of fathers, whose every command it was my duty to have obeyed, the thought of that last act of disobedience and unkindness tortured me like an avenging fiend; and I felt as if a word of forgiveness from those cold lips would have been received more joyfully than a welcome admission to the bliss of heaven."—*W. & R.*

SINS OF OMISSION.

A sin of omission is a slight matter in the eyes of men who would not for any price stain their name with a sin of commission.—Look at the position which men take upon the reforms of the day. Some earnest and philanthropic movement charged with the redemption of the degraded or oppressed, presents itself to a man, asking his sympathy and support, and he quietly gives it the go-by, soothing his conscience with the plea that if he is no help to the good work, he is at least no hindrance. To be no help is a thing for which he feels little compunction. Merely to let the movement alone is so far from being a very grievous offence, that it is a stand entitled to considerable praise, because it is not rancorous opposition. To have no part in the self-denying labors which win victories for the cause—to throw no contribution of name, or toil, or money, for its success—to deserve nothing of gratitude from its beneficiaries, is a trifling shortcoming so that he do not set himself vehemently against it.

There comes to the door of a man of fortune an appeal to his humanity. The case is a clear one—a destitute widow asks relief on behalf of her fatherless children. This man of fortune is a man of honor. He would not for all the gold in California cheat his fellow out of a farthing. He never exacts from any man more than his due. No

price would tempt him to engage in a fraudulent transaction. He doesn't owe her anything. And it is a light thing in his estimation that he turns empty-handed and sorrowing from his door. Has he not a right to do what he will with his own? He passes on his way calm and erect, with no burden on his conscience, no tinge of shame of his cheek. What has he done? Nothing.—He has defrauded no one; he has not oppressed the poor suppliant whose prayer he rejected; he did not reduce her to poverty; he has not taken the bread from her babes; he has only let her alone. Is theft then the only crime in God's sight? Compared with his cold-blooded, hard-hearted, inhumanity, would it not have been innocent in him to have stolen a purse of gold? Will it not be more tolerable in the day of judgment for the swindler and the highway-man, than for this just and honorable man of marble? I believe it.

The grand principle is, that God holds us responsible for the good we might do, as well as for the deeds we actually put forth. And a member of a Christian church who is just pursuing the even tenor of his way, practising fair dealing in all his business relations with the world, and staining the ermine of his possession with no positive misdemeanors, may, just by his want of spirituality—his neglect of spiritual duties—by what he does not do, be all the while making out a terrible accusation against himself in the sight of God, and heaping up a terrible retribution.—Was it enough for the fig tree in the parable, that all the demonstrations which met the eye were fair and full of promise—an upright trunk, with branching boughs and wreath of green leaves—but only no fruit?

And it is quite conceivable and perfectly capable of illustration, that this negative action, that is the not acting at all, might be of all crimes the most heinous and horrible.

Here is a man walking at the dead of night through our streets, belated, to his home, and he sees a dwelling house on fire. The flames are leaping from room to room, and mounting the stairway and roting in their mastery—no sound is heard from the sleepers—the whole household are wrapt in the slumbers of midnight. No watchman, pacing his distant round, discerns the light. No other soul of the whole population seems awake or conscious of this peril but himself. There is not a moment to be lost. Even now he is well nigh to late. But he passes coolly by, and goes silent on his way. What has he done? Done! Nothing. If manhood, and matron, and babe be consumed there together, and the dawn behold the ruin complete—none living to tell how or in what agony of suffering and despair the dead met their fate, it is not his work. He is not incendiary—he did not kindle the fire. He did not burn the house and its inmates. He—did nothing. Would your hearts accept such a defence from his lips? Would an indignant community pronounce him acquitted of blame on such a plea? He did burn those fellow-creatures—in the sight of Heaven, in the judgment of your own unperverted consciences he did commit the awful murder, for he might have saved them. His excuse is just his crime—that he did nothing, when he ought to have aroused every sleeper far and near with his alarming shout, and steeled his heart and sinews to deeds of desperate courage and strength.

A company of reapers are seated quietly at noon of day beneath the shade, taking their accoutrements. Their attention is attracted by the sight of a solitary figure, crossing the field with slow and irregular steps. He carries a staff before him, and now and then trips and stumbles on the unseen surface. They perceive that he is blind. He is out of the path, too, and has no guide. A little way off in the direction he is following a precipice, looking sheer down a hundred feet. The blind man moves on toward the brow, piloted with his staff,—nearer and nearer he draws, all unconscious of what is before him. They who watch him are silent and unmoved—no voice is lifted up, no

hand is stretched out. They see him pacing steadily to the awful verge. His staff meeting no obstacle, slips from his hand into the abyss. He takes a step forward and stoops to recover it, still no warning no interposition from the reapers. His foot overhangs vacancy—his bending form leans from the brink—a wild cry, and he is gone. What have they done? Nothing. They did not put out his eyes, they did not lead him to the precipice; they did not push him down; they have done nothing; they only neglected to do; and yet his blood is on their skirts; it cries like Abel's to heaven against them. They knew he was blind, they could have saved him and did nothing.

Let us not think these illustrations are extravagant, or wide of the mark. Let us give them application to a single point. The impatient around us are as if we were asleep in burning dwellings—going bloodfold down to ruin. Their peril deepens with every hour of delay. They push on unconscious of danger. Soon it will be too late to interpose.—The summer of hope and mercy is waning. Death, judgment and eternity are on the wing; are near; their awful shadows fall upon the path so securely trodden. The hapless travellers stand gaily on the verge of perdition. Do we see, do we know, have we faith in eternal realities? While we sit idle and voiceless, they reel over the tremendous brink and are lost, lost forever, and up from the abyss comes their despairing cry,—lost, lost forever." Who has done this? Not we; then sins were their own; we wrought no violence upon them, we put no constraint upon their liberty, we did not drag them down to woe. Ah! but we knew they were out of the way, we knew of the precipice, we knew they were nearing it, we knew they were blind, blinded by the delusions of sin, and we left them to their fate. Stand still now, and hear the word of God written for our offence, and behold the divine judgment against us. "When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die, and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life, the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thine hand." Behold the fearful guilt of being at ease in Zion! Behold the responsibility that attaches to the NEGLECT OF DUTY!—*Congregationalist.*

EXPOSITORY PREACHING.

We do not disparage topical preaching. That has its place. But we propose to give some reasons why pastors frequently, if not regularly, should engage in expository preaching. By exposition we do not understand mere dry exegesis, but a full and familiar development of the sense of Scripture, in the form of a popular discourse.

The propriety and importance of this mode of preaching, we think, is shown by the following considerations.

1. Expository was evidently the primitive mode of preaching.

He who taught as never man taught, expounded to his disciples, in all the scriptures, the things concerning himself. The apostles, in their defence of the Messiahship of Christ, expounded the prophecies which related to him. The memorable sermon on the day pentecost, was but an exposition of portion of Joel and the Psalms, practically enforced. Apollon mightily convinced the Jews by the exposition of their own scriptures. An able article in the *Christian Review* of December, 1842, on "The systematic Theology of the Early Church," to which we refer the reader, fully sustains our position.

2. Another argument is drawn from the effects produced upon the preacher's mind. These are various and important.

1. Exposition disciplines the mind.

The preparation of an exposition requires close, hard thinking, not the thinking of mathematical