

1. The scene in which we are to appear, viz. before the judgment-seat of Christ.

God has wisely determined, that the judgment of this world shall be executed in the person of his only Son, Jesus Christ, and for this we have the authority of the Scriptures, wherein it is written, "For he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that Man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." Christ will then descend to the earth in the execution of omniscient justice, unerring truth, and universal authority: "the Father hath committed all judgment to the Son;" he will prove himself to be the God Almighty—in him we shall behold the Judge of heaven and earth. Ever since the apostles saw him ascend to heaven, he has been occupied in his human nature at the throne of God; and as it is written, he shall come again in like manner, as they saw him go up. The judgment of the world is an honour decreed to him, and it is an honour due to him; for that great work of redemption which he accomplished whilst on earth, it shall be his to come to judgment, in order that he may then gather up his saints from all quarters of the globe, and pass a sentence of acquittal, and present them faultless before the Father: and it is equally due to him, that he should have the honour of publicly condemning those who have trampled his authority and laws under their feet, and to whom he shall say, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire." The time of his coming is not revealed, nor is it necessary that we should be acquainted with it; we are, indeed, told that he will come "as a thief in the night," and we may fairly presume that he will descend to some place above our earth, yet within sight of it; for we are assured, "Every eye shall see him, and nations shall wail because of him." There shall be the judgment-bar, and the judgment shall be set before the throne of his glory; the books shall be opened, out of which, and according to the evidence contained therein, every one shall be tried; there shall be also the agents of God, as flames of fire descending; there shall be the sound of the trumpet, and it shall be to his angels by the sound of his instrument to sound his approach—to collect together the dead from all parts and quarters of the earth: "and the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised in the twinkling of an eye, and shall stand before God;" there will be a great division of the righteous from the wicked.—"He will place the sheep on his right hand, and the goats on his left." It will be the day of the general resurrection, both of the just and the unjust.—"They that have done good, to the resurrection of the just; and they that have done evil, to the resurrection of damnation." That will be the day when the earth shall be destroyed—the final dissolution of all things. "The stars shall be darkened," to make the scene more solemn; "the moon shall be turned into blood," to strike terror and dismay into the ungodly; "the stars shall fall from heaven," indicating the general wreck of nature; "and the elements shall melt with fervent heat." Thus the apostle describes the scene, and this is the scene in which we shall all appear, and in which we shall be all deeply interested.

II. The appearance itself. 1. It will be personal—we must all appear—you and I must be there personally at this awful crisis; we shall appear there both body and soul: the identity of the body is clearly revealed in the gospel—"Bone to its kindred bone shall cleave." The spirit will continue in a disembodied state till the day of judgment, when it shall descend to reunite to the body; the soul of a Christian will not join the body in the same state as when it separated, but it will be raised up in a state of glory and perfection, destined to live forever in a state of blessed immortality; "though sown in weakness, it will be raised in power." The wicked also shall there appear; but, oh! with what different feelings! The moment a wicked man dies, he enters into hell, and is kept here till the judgment. We cannot, indeed, follow the spirit beyond the verge of time; but in the scriptures we read, that the soul of Lazarus was immediately borne to the scene of glory, while the spirit of Dives was carried to hell. They will also be awakened by the sound of the trumpet, and rejoined to their bodies again, not as the righteous, but in a state of weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. Thus both classes will appear before the judgment-seat

of Christ. God will know us, and we shall know ourselves to be the same identical persons as on earth, and our former characters and conduct will rush into our imaginations. In that day we shall hear some saying, "Come Lord Jesus," whilst others are calling to the rocks and to the mountains to fall on them, and hide them from the presence of the Lord.

2d. This appearance will be judicial, that is, it will be for the purpose of judgment—"to be judged according to our works, whether good or bad." The proceedings of that day may be illustrated by a reference to our own judicial proceedings in the courts of law, which are founded on evidence; and Christ will proceed in the same way, and the evidence against us will be our actions in this world, which are recorded by the Judge himself; but our works are not recorded as the procuring cause of our judgment; for the righteous will disclaim good works, as Christ represents them as saying, "When saw we thee hungry, and fed thee," &c. This will also apply to the wicked; their character is just the reverse of what we have described—a life of sinfully, and dissipation; and whilst the works of the righteous will be brought forward to show their interest in the redemption, the works of the wicked will be produced to prove the justice of their sentence. All the good which God gives in this world, he gives in mercy, and not as deserved; and all the evil he bestows, is as justice due to us for our crimes.

3d. It will be universal. We must all appear; before him shall be gathered all nations; there will be no exception; every person that has lived from Adam to the last infant that shall be born, must all be there. This is fully and beautifully described by John, in the apocalyptic vision. Ministers must there appear to give an account of their stewardships—a thought which is enough to strike a person with awe; they will then have to answer, not whether they have tried to please their hearers, but whether they have, with undeviating truth, "given to every man his portion of meat in due season." And no one, but he who feels the situation of a minister as he ought, can tell the weight which hangs on such a character. On the other hand, you are equally responsible, that you make a due improvement of what you hear; you will have to answer why, when your convictions have been erased, you returned to your evil companions, and endeavoured not to shake them off.

Parents will have to give an account of this charge, whether they have trained up their children in the "nurture and admonition of the Lord;" parents, it is true, cannot give their children grace; but they may, unless they instruct them, and set them proper examples, be instrumental in procuring their eternal destruction.

Children will have to answer for the improvement they have made of their parental instruction, whether they have attended to the instruction they have received.

Masters must appear to account for their conduct and uprightness towards their servants, and the servants whether they have rendered to their master that which in their situation it is incumbent upon them to do.

The rich will have to account whether they have made a good use of the blessings bestowed upon them, and whether they have forwarded the cause of God as much as was in their power.

The poor will have to answer whether they have been contented in that situation in which it has pleased God to place them, not murmuring nor repining at their lot.

The use which we should make of this subject should be,

1st. The danger of living in sin; for sin will be the real and just occasion of your condemnation, and it will be this that will bring forth the sentence of the Judge against you: ask yourselves, whether your secret actions will bear inspection? will your secret thoughts bear the scrutinizing search of that God who knoweth all things, and from whom nothing can be hid?

2d. Learn the remedy and the refuge. Christ alone is our intercessor. Had not God pitied man, we should never have heard of hell or judgment in this life; but God has revealed it in mercy, else men would have rushed blindly into eternal perdition. Seek this blessing, if you would escape; pray

earnestly that God would bestow his Holy Spirit, and may he grant you your request, for Christ sake.—Amen.

LITERATURE.

ON EDUCATION.

Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.

Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right.

Of all the blessings it has pleased Providence to allow us to cultivate, there is not one which breathes a purer fragrance, or hears a more heavenly aspect, than Education. It is a companion which no misfortune can depress;—no climo destroy;—no enemy alienate;—no despotism enslave; at home, a friend—abroad, an introduction; in solitude, a solace—in society, an ornament; it chastens vice;—it guides virtue;—it gives at once a grace, an ornament to genius. Without it, what is man? A splendid slave! a reasoning savage; vacillating between the intelligence derived from God, and the degradation of passions participated with brutes; and in the accident of their alternate ascendancy, shuddering at the terrors of an hereafter, or hugging the horrid hope of annihilation. What is this wondrous world of his residence!

"A mighty maze, without a plan."

A dark and desolate, and dreary cavern, without wealth, or ornament, or order; but light up within it the torch of knowledge, and how wondrous the transition! The seasons change; the atmosphere breathes; the landscape lives—earth unrolls its fruits;—ocean rolls in its magnificence;—the heavens display their constellated canopy;—and the grand animated spectacle of nature rises revealed before him, its varieties regulated, and its mysteries resolved! The phenomena which bewilder;—the prejudices which debase;—the superstitions which enslave;—vanish before Education.

The neglect of early improvement, is that great inlet to misery and vices of all kinds—the not knowing how to pass our vacant hours.

The mind, naturally limited by its weakness, becomes endowed by literature, with the wisdom of preceding ages.

Poets, orators, historians, and philosophers, all the great masters of thinking and writing, become incorporated with the mental energies of him, who has obtained by education the keys of knowledge.

I consider a human soul without education, like marble in the quarry; which shews none of its inherent beauties, until the skill of the polisher fetches out the colors: makes the surface shine, and discovers every ornamental cloud, spot, and vein, that runs through the body of it. Education, after the same manner, when it works upon a noble mind, draws out to view every latent virtue and perfection, which, without such helps, are never able to make their appearance.

If my reader will give me leave to change the allusion so soon upon him, I shall make use of the same instance to illustrate the force of education, which Aristotle has brought to explain his doctrine of substantial forms, when he tells us, that a statue lies hid in a block of marble; and that the art of the statuary only clears away the superfluous matter, and removes the rubbish. The figure is in the stone, and the sculptor only finds it. What sculpture is to a block of marble, education is to a human soul. The philosopher, the saint, or the hero, the wise, the good, or the great man, very often lies hid concealed in a plebeian, which a proper education might have disinterred, and have brought to light. I am therefore much delighted with reading the accounts of the savage nations: and with contemplating those virtues which are wild and uncultivated: to see courage exerting itself in fierceness, resolution in obstinacy, wisdom in cunning, patience in sullenness and despair.

Men's passions operate variously, and appear in different kinds of actions, according as they are more or less rectified and swayed by reason. When one hears of negroes, who, upon the death of their masters, or upon changing their service, hang themselves upon the next tree, as it sometimes happens in the American plantations, who can forbear admiring their fidelity, though it expresses itself in so dreadful a manner? What might not that savage greatness of soul, which appears in these poor