

with their sins. They would be *saved*—that is, if they need salvation—they would enter by a gate into life, but they will not leave their sins behind them.—This were to cut off a right arm, or to pluck out a right eye. It matters not whether it be pride, or worldliness, or carnality. No sin can pass through this gate; and therefore the lovers of sin—those who prefer to cherish their sins—those who will not renounce their sins for all the crowns that sparkle in the distance—must remain without.—Heaven lies on one side—with its inviting and far extending vistas of light and glory:—there are the fields of never-fading verdure, and the rivers of life, and the blessed abodes, and the happy society, and the unmingled joys, and God himself, and Christ, and eternity crowning all:—but here are a few paltry pleasures, or a cherished indulgence, the world, ambition, sensual delight; and these are too powerful; or the sinner will not renounce these, for all that smiles, or is most inviting, in the prospect beyond. Let him possess the honours and the pleasures of heaven without renouncing the gratifications of earth, and he will have them, but he will not have them at the sacrifice of all that is most dear to him here. The gate is thus too strait for him. It would admit him, but it will not admit his sins—and so he cannot enter.

Among the sins which must be renounced in coming to Christ, an inordinate attachment to the world, to its riches, its pleasures, and its honours, is of course included. This is so prominent a cause of exclusion, or hindrance to admission within the gate, however, that it deserves to be especially noticed. For the thousands that are the slaves of sin in its more direct, or more flagrant, forms, and whom their attachment to their favourite sins prevents from entering this gate, there are tens of thousands whom the inordinate love of the world in some one of its forms, operates, in shutting out *That*, no more than any other sin, can pass through this gate. “Go, sell all that thou hast, and come and follow me”—effectually dissipates all desire to follow Christ, if ever that desire was cherished. And it is not the actual *parting with* our possessions that is implied in that command of Christ, but rather the being willing to part with them, at his call, or for his sake—the subordinating of them to himself: this is the lesson which Christ inculcates: it is

in fact the leaving these possessions (or let it be the honours or pleasures of the world) without, when we enter the gate to heaven: it is this which Christ requires if we would follow him, and enter into life. The gate is strait: it will admit nothing of this world's wealth, or pomp, or glory. All state must be laid aside: all greatness must become low. Rank, distinction, renown, are alike worthless, and must be forgotten. The wearer of a crown must become as the meanest beggar. “Whoever will be great among you let him become your minister.” How preposterous to attempt to pass through this gate in royal or lordly fashion! Ceremony and grandeur are out of place when those on whom they generally attend come to this gate. Every distinction is worthless here. It is the sinner alone, conscious of his sins, who can enter. It is not clothed in purple, and riding in a fine equipage, and followed by obsequious attendants, that we are to drive to heaven; neither is it without them. The poor are not always poor in spirit: the rich may be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which God hath promised to them that love him. It is to the poor in spirit that the promise attaches: “their's is the kingdom of heaven.”

It may be intellectual preeminence that is claimed. And that often seems to be put by its possessor in the place of every thing else, and if not made, as by some, the excuse and apology for a wilful and daring recklessness of conduct, it seems albeit to satisfy its possessor, as if he were sufficient to himself, and were a kind of demigod among his fellows. But this too must be laid aside. The possessor of the proudest faculties must become as a little child. The intellectually great must recognize themselves as nothing in the sight of God, and see they must enter by the same gate to heaven as others. They can claim nothing for all the faculties they possess. Genius must cast all its wreaths in the dust. Newton, the highest in philosophy and science: Milton, the loftiest in song: must sit at the feet of Jesus, and learn of him who was meek and lowly.

Hence the gate is strait; and hence it is that many shall seek to enter and shall not be able. It is because they will pass through with their peculiar qualifications and distinctions, or because they will not enter unless they can carry along with them their favourite dispositions and cherished indulgences. With these they can-