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Miscellaneous Articles.

THE BEST BIRTHRIGHT.

(Concluded from page 71.)

Men are usually very jealous of their rights. If a despot trample on a nation's liberties, or impose on them unjust burdens, the spirit of the people is aroused to resist the aggression. If a private individual remove a neighbour's landmark, or refuse payment of a debt, a resolution is awakened in the injured to defend his rights. It is thus that freedom's battle has been "bequeathed from bleeding sire to son." The fruits of victory earned in one age have been gathered in another. It is thus that many a righteous cause has been pled at the bar of justice. The oppressed has triumphed over the oppressor. It would be well if men were as zealous of their spiritual rights, as they are of their civil privileges. But alas, it is not so. Human nature, it has been well said, loves better to hear of *rights* than of *duties*. Spiritual rights are underrated, just because they refer to things unseen, but they are slighted especially because they involve unwelcome arduous duties. We have spoken in previous papers of the best birthright—the offer of Gospel mercy to every human being. Few, perhaps, will be found in a Christian country, ready to give up all title to this high privilege. Most Gospel hearers would probably express indignation at your invading their rights, if you were to deny them all share in this inheritance, and to affirm that the offer of salvation through Christ does not belong to them. But with vast multitudes, this is a barren claim of right. They will not allow it to be said, that their name is not in the title deed, but neither do they take any practical steps to enter on the possession of the God-given inheritance. Some years ago, the words of a statesman became famous, "That if property has its rights, it has also its duties." This truth applies to men's property in the offer of Gospel mercy. Since this is their birthright, it is their duty to receive it, to guard it, to improve it, each for his own salvation. This is the last topic to which we solicit attention in these remarks on the best birthright. *The Apostolic warning to take heed not to barter it away.*—The warning against this may be enforced, on various grounds, on every Gospel hearer amongst us.

(1) Be warned not to sell your best birthright—*many have done it*. The sin of Esau is here cited, for an admonition to all. Brought up in a pious house we cannot doubt he was the subject of early impressions and hopes. We may even suppose these had some influence in winning for him at first, a chief place in his father's love, and that at one period he was thought in a fair way for the better country. But by the time he had reached middle life, all this early goodness had passed away, and he showed himself a profane person in disposing of his birthright. In this same epistle, the inspired writer points to