

which I least looked for it, of the utter paltriness and insufficiency of fear as a motive when brought to bear upon decisions in spiritual things. There seem to be no words strong enough to stigmatise it in all other affairs, except spiritual. All ages, all races, hold cowardice chief among vices; noble barbarians punished it with death. Even civilization, the most cautiously legislated for, does the same thing when a soldier shows it in the face of an enemy. Is there any language, then, sufficiently strong to denounce that system, or those systems, whether employed by individuals or denominations, that habitually use the arguments of fear, in order to force from a sinner, trembling on the verge of an unknown eternity, a confession of repentance? I do not remember a single instance in which our blessed Lord held up the terrors of future punishment as a reason why men should embrace His doctrine and accept Him as their Saviour; but on the contrary, all His words, all His deeds were words and deeds of love. True He did often refer to the terrors of the future, but only as the consequence of rejecting His offers of love. If the servants of God would walk in the footsteps of their Divine Master they must use the means which He employed, else failure and bitter disappointment will inevitably follow. Point not your fellow men, whether living or dying, to an angry God, who is ready to banish and destroy forever, but rather to the cross of Jesus Christ, the highest and most glorious manifestation of Divine love, and then may we vain hope and believe that the weakest and the most guilty and most deeply dyed in sin, under the teaching of the Spirit of God, may look and live, for it is written, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." But let none presume, because to look is to live! Sin continued in has the power of destroying the faculty of sight, and that man who has refused in health and strength to yield to the persuasions of the love of Christ, invites, by his own act, that condition of spiritual ophthalmia. There are, doubtless, many instances of true repentance on a death-bed. Few among those who have sat in our churches, and all through life, been privileged to listen to a faithfully preached Gospel, but without having accepted the message of salvation; yet many whose privileges have been few, whose light has been dim, and whose ears the message of God's love in Christ reaches for the first time like a sweet strain of music that hushes the hoarse clashing of a hard and struggling life. "The first shall be last and the last first."

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Ferguson & Co.'s advt. is unavoidably crowded out.

TEMPORAL POWER OF THE POPE.

THE Church of Rome thrives nowhere more prodigiously than in those free countries in which she only enjoys the blessings of equal toleration and shares it with all other creeds and confessions. It is full time that those peaceful means of spontaneous persuasion which, if we may believe her own priests and bishops, win her such splendid victories in England or the United States, should be employed in Italy and in Rome itself, where, perhaps, they may lead to more satisfactory results than Antibes Legions or Dumont Missions. The Papacy has tried sovereign power for a thousand years, and the result is a paltry territory with a beggard population, a bankrupt treasury, and a nest of brigands. If it has not yet learnt that "its kingdom is not of this world," that salutary lesson should be no longer delayed.—*Times*.

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"GRAPES IN THE WILDERNESS."

IN Hosea ix. 10, the Lord says, "*I found Israel like grapes in the wilderness.*" He is telling of His gladness in finding these lost sheep, His delight in taking them up when they were wayward, sinful, wandering souls. It gave Him great joy to save them. It was as refreshing to Him as is a cluster of grapes to a traveller in the weary wilderness, whose lips are parched, and whose eyes have long rested on barrenness, and who hails with satisfaction and delight the sight of a vine and its juicy grapes. Dr. Livingstone gives an instance of this feeling:—"In latitude 18 deg. we were rewarded with a sight which we had not enjoyed for a year before, large patches of grape-bearing vines. They stood before my eyes." The traveller thus gives utterance to his delight: "The sight was so entirely unexpected that *I stood for some time gazing at the clusters of grapes* with which they were loaded, with no more thought of plucking than if I had been beholding them in a dream." Be sure, young reader, that the Lord Jesus will welcome your return to Him. No fear of His casting you out. No: your coming will be to Him as pleasant as are grapes in the wilderness to a traveller; the very sight of your first arising to go will be as when the eye of the traveller is gladdened by the green leaves and hanging branches of the vine. And surely you cannot do anything more really satisfying to the Lord than bringing others, as Philip brought Nathaniel to Jesus. You are bringing, as it were, grapes to the lips; you are giving joy to God, who waiteth to be gracious. He has infinite pleasure in souls that return to Him and live.