

paratively. So that my crown is not taken away, I lose but little—"such a man is better fitted for business than any other, who can not say this. And no man has so little ground of excuse for not becoming a Christian, as the man who pleads that he is burdened and plied with business engagements. He, more than any body else, needs religion.

A word about excuses founded upon hope, such as promises and procrastinations, for there are many of them. They seem very amiable sins, for they consist, not in men's *refusing* to perform duty, but simply in adjourning its performance. Many persons excuse themselves for not being Christians now, by the promise that they will be by and by. At the bottom, however, their promises are all deceptive. They are artifices simply to rid one's self of importunity. They are like many debtors' promises, who promise to pay what they owe, the next month—not because they expect to pay it then, but because they wish to get rid of your importunity till that time. It is a device, not by which you are to get your money, but by which they are not to pay it. So men say, they can not attend to religion now, but they will at such and such a time. These excuses are at bottom untrue and deceptive, and are *meant* to be so. Oh! how many of them there are! The mere statement does not begin to cover the facts. I call upon those that are present to-night to remember how many of those prayers, which they have made, have been forgotten after they were made. If you had made as many notes—written them, signed them, and, in the presence of witnesses, given them out—as you have made solemn promises to God, covering the whole sphere of your being, and if all these notes were to be brought to your notice now—you would be bankrupt. Think of all that you made when you were sick! Beginning at childhood; and coming down through five, ten, fifteen, twenty, forty, fifty years—most solemn promises that if God would, in your trouble, remove that trouble; that if, in the sickness of your child, God would spare that child, and let it be restored to life; all the promises that you made to God, that if he would fulfill certain conditions, or forget certain threatenings, you would fulfill certain duties; all that you made for the future, which you made only to forget; all that you made upon the sea, and in the storm; all that you made in distant lands, and in great exigencies and emergencies; all that you made under vehement pressure of business! Oh! what promises have you made to God! How many times have you adjourned present performance with the avowed solemn promise that you would perform your duty at some other day? A young man, some five years before he comes to his estate, is waiting anxiously for it. He can not take possession, and he wants to use it before he can get it. Whenever he wants money he goes to a usurer, and gets it by giving a note of hand for the amount. He borrows it to pay it out of the estate when it shall fall to him. He is drawing it all from this usurer, who knows that the estate is ample. He don't want to disturb the young man's fear. So one note after another is put down, and one after another again—the young man forgetting every one, the usurer remembering every one—till there are enough to make a package, and it is inclosed