

ends? But all that they could do in this way before, consistently with their real good, and with the duty which they owed to their own families, and the obligations which chained them to their own hearths and domestic altars, they ought to have done; and more than this, let me add, they ought never to do; for it then swells into an excess, and is converted into dissipation, and may, not uncharitably, be called a sin. So it is with regard to conversation, demeanor and dress. In each of these particulars there is a general standard of propriety, which ought never to be transgressed by a wide departure from it on either side. Frivolity and flippancy, levity and extravagance, are errors in any one; and an unnatural gloominess and stiffness, a dark and funereal habit of feature and gesture, required by no circumstances, and tending to no good, are also errors, and can be proper in no one. I am wholly at a loss to conceive what course a communicant should pursue, which should not also be pursued by every individual who is acquainted with the revealed word and will of his Maker.

On a subject of this nature it is highly important that I should not be misapprehended. I would guard as carefully as I am able against the supposition, that I would treat the Holy Communion as a light matter, and represent Christian obligation as a loose and easy tie. On the contrary, it is precisely because I hold religion to be of deep and universal concern, because I know it to be as momentous as life and as serious as death, that I have endeavored to combat the notion that it requires of one what it does not require of all, or that it releases one from what it enjoins on another. It is precisely on account of its unchangeable character, its unlimited appli-