

There endless crowds of liars lie,
And darkness makes their chains;
Tortured with keen despair they cry,
Yet wait for fiercer pains.

Not all their anguish and their blood
For their old guilt atones,
Nor the compassion of a God
Shall hearken to their groans."

D. G. K.

Original Communications.

ON CHRISTIAN PROFESSION.*

The profession of the insincere and inconsistent, whatever they themselves may think of it, is, in the sight of God, utterly vain. This much is implied in the interrogatory of our Lord, previously quoted, "*why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say*:"—as if he had said, mere *profession in itself, without obedience*, is lighter than vanity, as empty and as unsubstantial, "as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal"—is nothing worth, absolutely vain. Herein does St. James agree with our Lord. "If any man among you," says he, "seem to be religious," makes a profession of piety, "and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is *vain*;" nothing better than the "chaff which the wind driveth away." This is the unerring decision of that Being whose prerogative it is to "search the heart" and "weigh the actions" of men. He cannot be deceived: all his judgments are according to truth: and in the great day of "dread decision," the vanity of all religious profession, without a correspondent religious experience and practice, will be made to appear. Such a profession, we also regard, as being decidedly injurious. The characters in question may flatter themselves with the idea that they are a benefit to the cause of Christianity, and to the religious body, to which they have been permitted to connect themselves. But, in this particular, they "think of themselves more highly than they ought to think," and being "vainly puffed up by their fleshly mind," attach to themselves a greater importance than they by any means deserve. They are an *injury* rather than a *benefit* to a society of real Christians. To the *seekers* of religion they are certainly injurious. These look for proper examples from those who profess to be members of a Christian church; and when they witness the inconsistent conduct of such, their minds are too often harassed with doubts as to the reality of religion itself, and are hereby either retarded in their progress, or "turned out of the way." Not less injurious to the *young Christian Convert* is the conduct of inconsistent professors. It is natural for the newly converted to imitate the conduct of their seniors in religious profession. Laxity of conduct in the latter has a great tendency to lead the former to adopt the dangerous belief, that they may live, with impunity, as loosely as others who have long borne the "name of Christ," but have not been careful to "depart from all iniquity."

The injurious influence of these pretenders extends likewise to the *interests of religion* generally. Were all its professors to "walk worthy" of their high and holy vocation, and "adorn the doctrine of Christ their Saviour in all things," many, through their instrumentality, would doubtless be won from the paths of vice to those of piety. But in consequence of the inconsistent, unjustifiable deportment of many who call themselves Christians, and are connected with the visible churches of Christ, sinners are hardened in their sins and prejudiced against religion. Nay, it is well, if they are not thereby led to deny its existence, as an inward and spiritual principle of righteousness to man and holiness to God. Thus often is religion "wounded" deeply "in the house of its"

*Concluded from page 103.

professed "friends;" and on its sacred head are dealt the censures, which, in all justice, should fall upon the heads of its unworthy professors.

The profession of such, if confided in, will, in its results prove ruinous to the parties concerned: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven"—and, as if this were not a sufficient warning, it is added, "many will say to me in *that day*, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? and then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: *depart from me ye that work iniquity*." To convince persons of the ruinous tendency of a mere profession of religion without obedience, the Saviour elsewhere compares the conduct of such, who are trusting in this "cobweb of lies," to the folly and ruin of the man, who "without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell, and the *ruin of that house was great*." With such views how forcible is the exhortation of St. James—"be ye *doers of the word*, and not *hearers only*, *deceiving your own selves*;" and how just is the inference of St. Paul, "for not the *hearers of the law* are just before God, but the *doers of the law* shall be justified." Distress and destruction shall certainly come upon all mere professionalists; and though, at last, like those who had lamps but no oil, they may cry, "Lord, Lord, open unto us," he will answer and say, "verily I say unto you I know ye not." Like the man without the wedding garment, "the righteousness of the saints," they shall be "bound hand and foot and taken away and cast into outer darkness,—there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." *He that has ears to hear let him hear!*

Christian Professors! permit the writer to inquire—have you profession only—the mere name of religion—the shade without the reality—the form without the power of godliness? Or do you really enjoy inward grace—the love of God and man—the abiding witness of the divine Spirit in your hearts? You talk about religion—perhaps, are zealous for its forms and external circumstantialities:—but do you obey God? Are the keeping of his commandments more to you than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices? You profess the religion of the Saviour—but are you solicitous to do the things which he says? Are you sincerely serving him—following his footsteps and imitating his example? These are vitally important questions, and in answering them, you should be strict, faithful, and impartial. It is not the belonging to this Church or to that Church, that will constitute you Christians in reality, but "the loving and serving God with all your hearts, and the loving your neighbours as yourselves." If, alas! any of you should discover that you have been satisfying yourselves too much with profession only, without religion itself, awake from the dream, realize its folly, and repent of your sin. Let this be your sincere, your fervent, your constant prayer—"Cleanse thou me from secret faults; keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins;"—"Search me, O God, and know my heart, try me and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked-way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." Geology.

May 17, 1939.

LONGEVITY.—Died yesterday (Friday) morning, at the advanced age of 115, Henry Brough, of Walmgate, in this city, match-vender, better known by the name of "the old Jew." We understand Brough was born at New York, and was, in his youth, in the army—he being present at, besides others, the battle of Bunker's Hill, in America, fought on June 17, 1775, when he stood six feet two inches high.—*Yorkshire Gazette*.

PULI

The department unrivalled, wheth object, the multitu of the subjects wh

Yet while this is often to deplore t its real capabilities are not wanting. ment truly admi conception which third, a tendernes penetrate us with speaker. But th should surround zone, it is scarce ten realize.

Yet, instances cited—of men, w were, by turns, a all reason, all ten none other, was t

If the heathen inexpressibly va *infinitumque*,) s preacher should. In this view, the sketch, though h the literary beau press every min the portraiture every feeling he therefore, that w so masterly a co

One of the de pulpit eloquence appears in his o his subject. He vated, or wrapt of the defect is One man has third has patho contract an int their energies h Suppose that, i infinite mind t that which, mi gination of Go all things fair. liness of the fl and the glory o attribute but would have be countenance w nothing less th suppose that i tellect, had not ty work: whe pose and resul vinity? The of his Maker the force of an office of comr utterly dazzle to him the cal would consum warinrh. He the entire ma He must have mortals.

But, though be the first i