

It has been my fortune to pass through every variety of scene, which ever falls to the lot of man, in this earthly pilgrimage; and the experience of my whole life has convinced me that religion is the one only thing needful; the one only object worthy the pursuit of a rational and immortal soul. My character and situation have often led me, not only to the abodes of wretchedness and want—to the houses of mourning and affliction—but to the habitations also of the rich and powerful; to the halls of mirth, and joy, and gladness. I have witnessed scenes of the dearest distress, and of as unalloyed felicity as any thing terrestrial can be. I have been with the smiling infant, when its first days were consecrated to the Lord by baptism; and I have been by the death-bed of the aged pilgrim, bowed down with the infirmities, and cares, and sufferings of four-score years. I have been with the blooming bride, where all was festivity and joy; and I have been with the broken-hearted widow, when she and her fatherless children were weeping over the grave of him, who was their only earthly support and comfort. I have seen the young man in the summer of life, the joy of his parent's heart, gradually wasting away under the slow and sure decay of a lingering consumption; and I have seen the strong man suddenly hurried out of the world, in the midst of life and health. I have been with the poor, despised beggar, when about to exchange his sorrows and sufferings for a place of rest in Abraham's bosom; and I have seen the rich, and the great, and the powerful, reluctantly bid adieu to their wealth, their greatness, and their power, with fearful apprehensions of that undying wretchedness which awaits those who "have received their consolation in this world."