

POETRY.

"THY KINGDOM COME."

A MISSIONARY HYMN, BY JAMES MONTGOMERY.

Send out thy light and truth, O God!
With sound of trumpet from above:
Break not the nations with thy rod,
But draw them as with cords of love:
Justice and mercy meet,
The work is well begun;
Through every clime their feet,
Who bring glad tidings run;
In earth, as heaven, thy will be done.

Before thee every idol fall,
Rend the false prophet's veil of lies;
The fulness of the Gentiles call,
Be Israel saved, let Jacob rise.
Thy kingdom come indeed,
Thy Church with union bless,
All Scripture be her creed,
And every tongue confess
One Lord,—the Lord our Righteousness.

Now for the travail of his soul,
Messiah's peaceful reign advance;
From sun to sun, from pole to pole,
He claims his pledged inheritance;
O thou most Mighty, gird
Thy sword upon thy thigh,
That two-edged sword, thy word,
By which thy foes shall die.
Then spring, new-born, beneath thine eye.

So perish all thine enemies,—
Their enmity alone be slain;
Then in the arms of mercy seize,
Breathe, and their souls shall come again:
So may thy friends, at length,
Of smitten, off laid low,
Forth, like the sun in strength,
Conquering, to conquer go,
Till to thy throne all nations flow.

INTERESTING EXTRACTS.

DANGERS OF YOUNG MEN.

BY JOEL HAWES, D. D.

"Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded."—TITUS ii. 6.

1. Every period of life has its peculiar temptations and dangers. But were I to specify the period which, of all others, is attended with the greatest peril, and most needs to be watched and guarded, I would fix upon that which elapses from fourteen to twenty-one years of age. This, pre-eminently, is the forming, fixing period; the spring season of disposition and habit; and it is during this season, more than any other, that the character assumes its permanent shape and colour, and the young man is wont to take his course for life and for eternity.

But not to confine my remarks to this particular age, it will not be doubted, that the time, during which, we usually denominate one a *young man*, is the most important and perilous period of his whole existence. Then the passions, budding and hastening to ripeness, acquire new vigour, become impatient of restraint, and eager for gratification. Then the imagination, unchecked by experience, and unrestrained by judgment, paints the world in false and fascinating colours, and teaches the young bosom to sigh after its vain and forbidden pleasures. Then springs up in the mind, the restless desire of independence and self control;—a disposition to throw off the restraints of parental counsel and authority, and to think and act for itself. "Then the social impulse is felt, and the young man looks around for companions and friends;" then the calling for life is chosen, the principles of action adopted, habits acquired, and those connections in business and society formed, which usually decide the character, and fix the condition, both for this and the future world.

The present, then, young men, is, to you, a season of deep and everlasting interest. Consequences of infinite moment hang on the span of time that is now passing over you.

The path to respectability, to usefulness, and happiness, is open before you: so also is the path to infamy and wretchedness and woe. And now the election is to be made. You are now to lay your course for eternity; to enter upon that path which, in all probability, you will pursue through life, and will terminate in heaven or hell. And the chances that you will choose wrong, are greatly against you. Such are the dangers that encompass you, and so little are persons, at your age, aware of them, that there is great reason to fear you will mistake the road to happiness and heaven, and wander into some one of the ten thousand ways that lead to ruin.

But this is a general view of the subject; let us descend to a few particulars.

1. In the first place then, young men, for the most part, are but little aware of the danger which attends the *beginnings of evil*. They readily perceive the degrading and destructive tendency of the grosser vices; but they are slow of heart to believe, that there are certain dispositions and habits, which inevitably lead to those vices and their consequent degradation and ruin. Hence, while they are careful to shun the more open and flagrant offences, they are not afraid to venture upon what are deemed little sins,—upon slight deviations from duty,—occasional indulgence of the appetites and passions.

No mistake is more common, or more fatal than this. It is the way in which vice maintains its dominion in our world,—the standing cause of ruin to the character and the souls of men. All vicious habits commence in what are considered little sins.

No young man becomes suddenly abandoned and profligate. There is always a gradual progress. He begins in *slight occasional departures* from rectitude, and goes on from one degree of guilt to another, till conscience becomes seared, the vicious propensity strong, the habit of indulgence fixed, and the character ruined.

Nothing is more obvious than this connexion between the beginning and the consummation of evil; and yet, hardly any thing is more difficult, than to convince the young of its reality. In entering upon wrong courses, they have not the least expectation or fear of the dreadful issue. They mean not to proceed beyond the point of safety; and they have no doubt, they can easily effect an escape, whenever danger appears; but ere they are aware, they are arrested by the iron grasp of habit, and ruined for ever.

Take for example, a young man who occasionally drinks to excess in the social circle; he does not dream that he is entering upon a course which will probably end in confirmed intemperance. He means no harm; he says of the sin, is it not a little one; there can be no danger in this. But soon his bands are made strong, and he becomes the slave of a sottish vice.

Thus it is with all vicious practices. However slight at first, they tend, by a strong necessary impulse, to the point of utter depravation of principle, and ruin of character. There is no safety but in guarding against the first approaches of evil. To step upon forbidden ground is to throw one's self into the power of the destroyer; and if God interposes not to deliver, ruin is inevitable. It was a wise saying, among the ancients, that the way of vice lies down hill. If you take but a few steps, the motion soon becomes so impetuous and violent, that it is impossible for you to resist it.

2. Another danger, to which young men are exposed, arises from the want of *firmness and independence* of character. They have not a due sense of their individual responsibility; and are too apt to yield to the practices and opinions of others, in opposition to their own convictions of duty. They imagine, that their respectability and success in life, depend on being on good terms with those of the same age and standing with themselves. This leads them to accommodate themselves to their habits, to their modes of thinking and acting, and to their errors and vices. They dread the thought of being singular. They cannot bear the ridicule of companions, nor gather courage enough to say *no*, to those associates who would draw them into a fellowship with themselves, in dissipation and vice. Many a young man has, in this way, fallen to rise no more. He yielded to the solicitations of a sinful companion, not because he approved of them, but because he did not dare to resist them. He went with him into the ways of evil, not because he was pleased with them, but because he had not courage to turn his back on his seducer, or incur the sneers of an unprincipled associate.

This is an evil, the extent of which cannot be well estimated. Every season, great numbers of youth come from the country, to our larger towns and cities, to engage in the various departments of business and trade. Many of them are from Christian families, and bring with them the loveliness of a fair unsullied character. But they know little of the world, little of the temptations and vices to which they are exposed in their new place of residence. Drawn, as they soon are, into fellowship with those who have gone there before them, and accustomed, as they are, to look up to them as their superiors, they naturally conform to their habits and practices,—and fall an easy prey to the corrupt and corrupting examples by which they are surrounded. They have not firmness to resist the enticements of depraved companions. The consequence is, they fall in with the mass of corruption around them, and go to swell the monstrous tide of depravity and dissipation, which is rolling, as a mighty desolation, over the cities of our land.

3. Another danger to which young men are eminently exposed, is an *excessive worldliness*. This is especially true of the young men of this country, and

of the present day. Here are no hereditary titles, no honours, and no entailed estates, descending from father to son. All are born equal, and are alike left to make their way in the world by their own exertions. Wealth confers the principal distinction. Men are deemed happy and honourable according to their wealth. And, as the field of enterprise is unbounded, all set out with a determination that they will get wealth. This is the great object that fills the eye, and fires the heart, and engrosses the thoughts, and employs the hands, and occupies the time, to the almost entire exclusion of other subjects. The consequence is, the formation of a thoroughly worldly character; than which, so far as religion, and eternity, and God, are concerned, a more hopeless character cannot be conceived. Concerning persons of this description, our Lord Jesus Christ declared, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for them to enter the kingdom of heaven. Their habits are all of the earth, earthy; and it is well, if, in the process of rising in the world, as it is called, they have not made shipwreck of a good conscience, and fallen into those foolish and hurtful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition.

Take an example. Here is a young man just commencing business. His object is a very laudable one, to obtain a competency for himself and family; and he purposes to pursue it, by fair and laudable means. By degrees, his business grows on his hands, and demands a larger share of his time and attention.—He is successful in his plans; and wealth pours in upon him in unexpected abundance. But this, so far from satisfying, only wakes up new desires, and prompts to new efforts. He begins to plan and act on a larger scale, and looks, with eager expectation, for larger profits. As he extends his connexions, and enters into new arrangements, his cares multiply, and his business exerts over him a more and more absorbing influence. At every step, his thirst after wealth increases. The world fixes a stronger and stronger grasp on his affections, and plunges him, deeper and deeper, in its bewildering concerns. At length he finds no time, or inclination, to attend to any thing else. He has become a thoroughly worldly-minded man. He feels, and thinks, and talks, about nothing but the world. This is the idol of his heart,—the god of his daily worship. And now just trace the evils of this process, which has formed him an idolater, and cut him off from heaven. Conscience is hid asleep; moral principle is prostrated; the intellect and the heart shrivelled up to the little dimensions of dollars and cents; the Sabbath, and the Bible, and the soul neglected; and God and eternity hardly more thought of than if they did not exist.

This is no ideal character. It is realized in the case of great multitudes of young men. In their study and strife to get rich, they are ruined for ever. The result, in thousand of instances, is the destruction of morals and happiness; the formation of a low worthless character; and utter abandonment of God, to the curse of confirmed impenitence, and the misery of unpardoned guilt.

4. Another danger to which young men are exposed, arises from their proneness to *scepticism and unbelief*. It is an unquestionable fact, that "the natural bias of youth is almost always towards scepticism or infidelity. And such is the case, not merely because, as Bacon says, a little philosophy inclines us to atheism, and a great deal of philosophy carries us back to religion; but youth has an *intellectual bias* against religion, because it would humble the arrogance of the understanding; and a *moral bias* against it, because it would check the self-indulgence of the passions." This is especially true of young men, in the incipient stages of education. They have a strong bias in favour of infidelity, because it seems to emancipate the mind from superstition and prejudice; and because it lays few restraints upon the gratification of the desires.

I might mention many facts in proof of this. I don't believe the Bible, said a little boy not ten years old, and brought up in a Christian family in this city; I don't believe the Bible, said he to his little associates, looking very wise and big. What principle was at work here? The same, precisely, that made Voltaire, and Hume, and Paine, infidels. It was the workings of a depraved heart,—the natural aversion of the mind to the duties and restraints of religion.

My friends, let me exhort you to be on your guard against this evil bias of the heart. Form your views of religion, not from indolence, not from prejudice, not from the failings of its professors; but from the decisions of an enlightened conscience, and an intelligent study of the Bible. This sacred book comes to you as a revelation from God; and its divine origin is sustained by the most ample evidence, and you can never have a doubt of the correctness of its claims, nor of the truth of its essential doctrines. The Gospel may be neglected, but it cannot be understandingly disbelieved. It may be despised, but it cannot be overturned. It is an edifice built upon a rock. Its foundation is the truth of God: and it will stand for