

Now, you again ask, can they be pleasant? We have always looked upon religion, as something gloomy, and one reason, why we have not become religious, is because we thought that it would stop all our youthful enjoyments. But it is not, my young readers, what you think, for the thoughts of the young are often sinful and foolish. Who is it then that tells us here that the ways of religion are pleasant? It is Solomon. And who was Solomon? Any of you can at once answer. He was the son of David, the King of Israel, and the wisest of men. The wisest man, that ever lived, has then said, that it is a delightful thing to be religious. Ought you not to believe him? But you say in reply—"We never knew Solomon. He lived and died a great many hundred years ago. And it might have been all very true in Solomon's days, but yet not now. Many persons, older than we, have told us, that religion is a gloomy thing, and have discouraged us from seeking it." But, my young friends, when they give you such advice, you should ask them, if they have found religion; for, if they have not, how can they tell you, whether it be pleasant or painful. Once when Dr. Halley, a wicked infidel, was talking infidelity before Sir Isaac Newton the latter thus addressed him "Dr. Halley, "I am always glad to hear you, when you speak about astronomy, because that is a subject you have studied and well understood; but you should not talk of Christianity, for you have not studied it. I have, and am certain that you know nothing of the matter." So those, my youthful readers, who say that piety makes people sad, say so because they "know nothing of the matter."

Many people in Britain think that this country is a vast forest, full of wolves, bears, and other wild beasts; and that, as they travel through it they will light on a little log shanty, here and there, containing a family of settlers, while all around lies an unbroken forest. Now why have they this poor opinion of the country? Simply because they have never seen, or read, and thought much about it. So many persons because they have never travelled God's road, believe that it is a very sad and dismal path. You know, that I would not willingly tell you what is untrue, and I therefore expect that you will give heed to what I now say, that I have travelled this road, and found it much more pleasant than that of sin. And many others state that they have done the same. They have first tried the broad way of sin felt it to be very unpleasant; and having been led by God into the narrow way, have found it most delightful. And not only do thousands of good people tell you, that the paths of religion are happy paths, but God says the same thing. It was He, who inspired Solomon to write "Her ways are ways of pleasantness." The book of Proverbs is God's book. The words are God's words, though Solomon was the instrument, or pen, by whom God wrote them. He then, who cannot lie, has said that "Her ways are ways of pleasantness." By thinking, or believing otherwise, you make Him a liar. Oh! my young friends, be not deceived. God is not to be mocked. The true way to be unhappy, both here and hereafter, is to choose the ways of sin. The true way to be happy, is to choose the ways of God. But some of the more thoughtful among you say to me again. The Bible is full of the sorrows of Christians. Look at David, Moses, Paul, and many others. Was not Moses often in great straits? Does not David say "I am troubled; I am bowed down greatly. I go mourning all the day long." Psalms 137. Does not Paul speak thus? "In weaknesses and in pains, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness; and does he not give a moving catalogue of his grievous sufferings in 2. Corinthians xi. 24?

You think perhaps that I cannot answer you now and that religion after all only brings people into trouble. But, my youthful readers can you tell me this? What was it that caused their sufferings? Was it their piety? No. It was their own sins, and the wickedness of their fellowmen. It is not religion, but the want of it, that makes men miserable. Does Moses, or David, or Paul wish to forsake God, because they have so much sorrow? Hear what they say. "If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence" (Exodus 33. 15.) "Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth, that I desire beside thee" (Psalms 73. 25.) Who shall separate us from the love of God? (Romans 8. 35.) Through sin and ungodly men, they suffered, but their piety took the sting out of their sufferings. A better reply will, however, be found in the two questions, which I am now going to ask you. Who was the greatest sufferer, that ever lived upon the earth? Was it Moses, or David, or Paul, or who? *Jesus Christ*. And who was the most happy person? *Jesus Christ*. You thus see the greatest happiness united with the greatest sufferings. There lived nearly 200 years ago, a godly minister, named Samuel Rutherford. He was at one time put into prison in the city of Aberdeen, for serving Christ, rather than man. Now hear, what he says about his sufferings, for gales in those days were much more uncomfortable than they are with us. Christ, says he, "hath made my prison my palace," a garden of pleasures, a field and orchard of delights. God forgive them that "raise ill report upon the sweet cross of Christ. Those who take it on them, find it "such a burden, as wings are unto a bird, or sails to a ship." And yet this man so happy and so hopeful, was a prisoner, in daily danger of being put to death. Say not, believe not then, my dear readers, that religion is, or can be a gloomy thing. It is only the want of it, that makes people sad. When travelling along our roads in mid-winter, you know that sometimes we have to leave the well beaten track, and go into the deep snow. The travelling thus becomes heavy and difficult. The horse plunges with difficulty through the deep wreaths, and cuts his legs in the effort. The harness is strained, and frequently damaged. The cutter is often broken or upset, and the progress made is slow; and fatiguing to the pony. How much more easily and quickly do we glide along the regular track? And such is God's way. He has beaten for his people a plain path through the snows and sorrows of this world. Sometimes it runs up and down hill; and then the traveller has to be careful, sometimes it glides through forests, and at other times through fertile fields. But everywhere God has smoothed and beaten it down, and the sound of heaven's sweet music floats along it, a sound far more joyful than the jingling of our sleigh bells, and cheers many a weary pilgrim on his heavenward journey. But the broad way has no smooth track. It is full of cradle-holes and side-lings. Those, who travel it, go plunging here and there in the snow, meet with many upsets, are dreadfully shaken and bruised, and soon grow weary, and disheartened. Benumbed by the cold, they at last fall asleep, until they are awakened by the voice of death; or they plunge through wreaths on wreaths, until, bewildered by the falling snow, and benumbed by the piercing cold, they lose themselves amidst the swamps and wastes of hell. Which will you choose, my young friends? the paths of piety and pleasure, or the ways of sin and sorrow. Oh! this very day, choose Christ, and give Him your hearts.

But some doubt may still exist in your minds. You cannot understand how there is so much pleasure in piety, and you seek some more information on the point. Now, if you were setting out on a journey, just think what

would be necessary to make the trip agreeable.

Do you not require a good conveyance? If it be an old rickety waggon, without springs, you are so shaken and jolted, that the journey must prove disagreeable. But what a splendid chariot God has provided for His pilgrims. It was made in heaven. Of what you inquire, is it made? Of silver? No, of something finer than silver. Of Gold? Something more precious than gold. What can it be? It is formed of three substances, each one of which is most precious. They are the infinite power, the unerring wisdom, and the surpassing love of God. These he welds together, and out of them forms a carriage for his people. Would you not like such a conveyance? Christ has countless numbers of these all ready made, and offers them to you. It can never be upset. No part of it can ever be broken. Its tongue never breaks. Its pole never splits. Its tires never come off. Its horses never grow weary, or hurt themselves. It never needs repairs, and hard usage only makes its paint brighter, and its whole appearance more lovely. Do you not also need a good map? I recollect, when first coming to reside among you, that I was sadly puzzled with the numerous concessions and other roads. And as there is no large map of this, and the adjoining townships, I often took the wrong road, and had frequently to seek direction regarding my way. What a valuable boon would a good map have proved, if it had correctly laid down every road, and the exact site of every dwelling. How much more easy it would then have been to travel. From how many hours of perplexity, and from how many miles of unnecessary travel, would I have been spared. And such a map is still more necessary to guide on the way that leads to glory. There are so many by-paths, and so many incorrect maps and false directions that will out such a guide, no person could find the right way. But where, you anxiously ask, is such a work to be obtained? We don't remember having ever seen it. Do you not? I see it just now. It must be the Bible. You are right. "Search the Scriptures." Have you ever seen the map of a Surveyor? How carefully every place is marked in it, and what proofs it shews of constant use. He finds it necessary to study it with peculiar care. And should you not still more diligently study your bibles? There are few sights more agreeable to a pastor than to see a young person possessed of a well-thumbed Bible. And there are few surer signs of its being seldom read than its being brought forth from some corner of a trunk, as fresh and new-looking as when it was bought. Study your map well. Not that you are to abuse it, but so study it, that you may discover the narrow way, that leads unto life. We have been told of a poor woman, who was unable to read, but whose heart God had touched with love for His word. So anxious was she to hear its precious truths, that out of her scanty earnings, she paid another woman a penny a week to read to her portions of the holy oracles. Oh! when will you value your Bibles as she did the Bible-readers. Be Bible students.

In addition to a good conveyance and a good map, do you not require a good guide? When strangers visit the Holy Land, one of the first things which they do, is to get a faithful guide, who knows the language of the country, and can guide them in travelling from place to place. So in the road to heaven, so many paths run alongside of it that is sometimes not easy, even with the map, to find the right way. Christ has, however provided for this want. "Nevertheless I tell you the truth, it is expedient for you that I go away; for, if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." (John 16. 7.) "Howbeit when he, the Spirit