

this grand problem of human wretchedness by those who ignore a living Christianity. The most that they have done is to borrow some faint outlines of the faith they scorn, and thus construct a system which, in contrast with God's truth, is as moonlight is to sunlight, or rather as the faint flicker of a taper is to the effulgence of noon.

Christ looked the problem direct in its face, and then he uttered words of benediction and of healing, which have carried joy into millions of hearts in the hour of deepest agony.—“Come unto me all ye that labour and heavy laden, and I will give you rest!” He tells us of immortal life begun here and perfected in Heaven: he tells us what to do in order to escape the worst of evils and to gain a hope in the strength of which we can live well and die happily.

Is it any wonder then if the Christian, conversant with majestic hopes, and with the terrors of a future as well as a present world of woe, should differ in thought, taste, feeling, from him whose mind is set on things that are exclusively earthly?

“The invisible world with thee hath sympathised;

Be thy affections raised and solemnized.”

He is justified in believing that a personal God takes an interest in him individually—watches with loving care his footsteps—helps him in hours of trial—delivers him in the hour of death and takes him home into everlasting bliss. One whose soul throbs with thoughts and hopes such as these should scorn the frivolities of life—should do his duty well and boldly—should live always as conscious of the eye of a holy God. This would put it out of his power to be a jolly Sabbath breaker: his highest pleasure is to spend that day in the service of God. He cannot swear or get drunk like some good fellows; for he reveres God's name, and remembers that his own body is a temple of the Holy Spirit. He cannot, in short, indulge in the pleasures of the sensualist; to him they are all a loathing and an abhorrence. He can find no happiness in the gay carouse, in the “illicit rove,” in the low pursuits that some call pleasure and in which they waste health,

wealth, and all the blessings with which God has favoured them.

See how these miserable “pleasures” which Christians denounce recoil in tenfold woes on those who joy in them; that brilliant debauchee perished in his prime and all his family have sunk in ruin. His vices have ruined *them* as well as himself. He might have been living happily and usefully to-day, a blessing and an ornament to the community; but he indulged in the “pleasures” which God forbids and he has reaped his reward and his family are reaping it now. Many instances will occur to the thoughtful reader, in illustration of our remark.

But Christianity forbids no man to enjoy the highest pleasures of which human nature is capable; rather does it invite him to their enjoyment under conditions that secure greater permanence and perfection than is otherwise attainable on earth. A Christian family is emphatically a happy family, honest, pure, faithful, loving,—adorning every relationship. An intelligent Christian ever enjoys with the keenest zest the glorious banquet of beauty spread before the eye in the natural universe. He admires the loveliness of lawn and leaf—of flower and bird, and insect; anything lovely, grand, wonderful, comes to him with a message from God whom he recognizes as his Father; and the things that are frowning and severe he accepts as indicative of God's displeasure against whatever is unholy and disobedient. Thus is light cast upon all the dark places in our life. Through Christ we get rid of sin; we despise sin's pleasures; we are purified and our taste renovated, and our appetites and passions placed in thorough subjection to reason and conscience. And thus, though death and misery are in the world in all their might we triumph over them, and have in sure possession both life and happiness! As Christians we are authorized to enjoy and to do all that is pure, lovely, of good report, virtuous, praiseworthy. What wider license should a good man seek?

None of the “pleasures of sin” come under the category of things pure, lovely, virtuous and praiseworthy; and therefore