

ral evil, and for the growth and establishment of all true excellence, its tendency is so strong and so well fitted to elevate this fallen world to the purity of heaven, and to renew man after the image of God, as shows beyond all controversy the Scriptures to be a book purely spiritual, while gold is a substance as purely material.

The superiority of the Scriptures to gold, will be seen still more, if we consider the benefits they respectively confer upon man. Gold is a substance of no small value and importance to man. It multiplies the sources of human enjoyment; it is the origin and main-spring—the means no well as the grand end of all business, traffic, and commercial enterprise—it raises its possessor from the bare necessities of life to seek for refinements and elegancies—it begets a feeling of independence, and its profuse appearance in every form, disclosing extensive resources, never fails to secure its possessor a station of power and influence in the world. It were the merest affectation, then, and contrary to all observation and experience, to deny that gold does confer a variety of substantial benefits on man in the world; but then they are benefits on man in the world; but then they are benefits of such a kind, that they cannot impart to him the enjoyment of perfect, nor secure the pledge of lasting happiness. Let his coffers be ever so full of the envied treasure, and his apartments exhibit ever so profusely the splendour of golden trappings, his gold cannot elevate him to a happy eminence where the troubles and misfortunes of life will not assail him; and not until gold can purchase an indemnity from the thousand ills that flesh is heir to—not until power can command all the angry agents of pain to vanish and retire—not until authority and influence can charm or exorcise the demon passions that are hostile to peace of mind,—which embitter life and fill the world with violence and crime—then, but not till then, can gold be said to confer the blessings most needful and most suitable to man.

Turn now to the Word of God; and when you consider the precious benefits it confers on man, you will perceive how much more it is to be desired than gold, the finest gold. Striking its axe at sin, the root of all the evils that afflict both the personal and social condition of man, it lays, in the disappearance of that evil and bitter thing, a foundation for the full enjoyment of all the blessings it offers; and how many and various are these blessings! It reveals doctrines calculated to fill the mind with sublime and holy principles; it prescribes laws which in their nature are wise, and equitable, and good, and which by their direct and certain influence are calculated to promote the happiness of all who obey them; it inspires sentiments of piety to God, which, when imbibed in their true spirit, mould man into the highest form of humanity ever seen on earth; and it prompts a

benevolence to man so active as to have led to the erection of those humane and philanthropic institutions which are designed to mitigate the evils, and promote the comforts of the poor and the suffering; it has extirpated so many barbarous customs that once prevailed, and introduced such refinement into the general tone of society, that by its influence, even in a temporal point of view, it has conferred unspeakable benefits on man; and then, when we consider its higher and happier influence over those who, by a living faith in its truth, bring themselves under willing subjection to its authority; when we consider how that, though it does not exempt them from the trials of life, it furnishes them with the true philosopher's stone, that can turn them all into gold, leading them to bring their wills into entire acquiescence with the Divine—filling them with the love of God the joys of the Holy Ghost, and the blessed hope of eternal life; when, in short, we consider that it instils into all who imbibe its spirit and comply with its dictates a principle that makes them faithful in the discharge of every duty, active in the improvement of every means of grace, serene in the most troublous hour of affliction, and happy in the prospect of death—say, has it not conferred benefits on man greater and more precious than all the gold in the world could ever purchase?

Once more, the superiority of the Scriptures to gold, even the finest gold, will be seen, when we consider their comparative durability. Gold, though the most valuable useful, and durable of all the metals, is of a mutable nature. Though not liable, like others, to corroding rust, it is subject to the tear and wear of time; and, like all things else that belong to this changing world, is doomed to grow dim of its splendour, and to perish at last.

Turn now to the Word of God; and when you consider the durability of its nature, you will perceive it is a possession more to be desired than gold, even much fine gold. It has already continued to exist for ages, and it will continue to exist so long as the world lasts. But I am not speaking of its continued and miraculous preservation in the world, but of its personal and happy effects on those who read and prize it, as the Psalmist did.—on those who, reading and receiving by faith its precious truths into their heart, will have reason, both in time and throughout eternity, to bless God for the inestimable boon. The man whose treasures of gold are as great as those Cyrus, and who has placed all his happiness and his hope in his coffers, may be stripped, like that opulent monarch, of all his riches, and left to beg a pittance from the cold hand of charity. But when the word enters the heart of any one, with demonstration of the Spirit, and with power, it leads him to a Saviour who can save him to the uttermost, and will never abandon the soul that