

fore is it given us by a gracious God, merely for the asking; 'Ho every one that thirsteth come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money, come ye buy and eat.' Yes, Blanchard, religion can alone procure you these inestimable blessings—have you ever for one moment experienced the truth of my words?' 'I have never viewed religion in the light of an enthusiast or a fanatic; I detest all species of cant, and the phraseology approaching to methodism, and yet I conceive myself to be a Christian in its orthodox sense, though I certainly may not be termed a saint,' and his lip slightly curled. 'Ah, my friend,' said Lindsay; 'you are nominally a Christian, that is you mentally assent to the truths of religion, without having attained a spiritual reception of its power in your heart; is this sufficient, think you? I will propose to you a metaphor, which you will comprehend. Suppose you with an army had besieged a city, would it satisfy you to gain only the outworks, while you left the citadel in the power of the enemy; until this also had surrendered, would you conceive yourself victorious?' 'Assuredly not.' 'Then in like manner, my friend, will the great God, who formed you for himself, to be an inheritor of those glories which he has even sacrificed his own son that you might attain, will He be satisfied with any thing short of your whole undivided heart—will He deem it sufficient that you offer him the outward forms of homage, the lip service—the occasional attendance in his temple—at his altar—when your best energies, your affections, your thoughts are exclusively devoted to the world, which is his enemy. Alas, is not this profanation, and the blackest ingratitude—can you defend it?' 'Perhaps viewing it as you do I cannot, yet in what differ I from thousands; I am not aware that I commit any flagrant crimes, why am I then condemned?' 'Is it because the temptation to commit them may not have been yours, that you are exempt from their taint. No, Blanchard, the moralist plumes himself upon being superior to the vices by which a poor man falls, when it is his refinement, his education, which render them distasteful to him; but will he be preserved from the commission of those which are equally baleful to society, ruinous to his own best interests, and sinful in the sight of God? Undoubtedly not, unless His restraining grace checks the propensity to evil, which is alike spread throughout all the fallen race of Adam. Worldly morality is satisfied with the outward semblance of good conduct, religion demands the purity of the heart—can you say that this is yours, or that your present mode of life in all things is such that if you were suddenly called to appear in the presence of your maker, you are prepared?' Blanchard shrank from the earnest gaze of the young minister, as he uttered this in a tone of solemnity. 'Lindsay,' he said after a few minutes silence, and with a gesture of impatience; 'you have beguiled

me I know not how into this conversation; it is one which I always endeavour to avoid.' 'And yet remember that the day *must* come, when such thoughts and reflections will pass in fearful array before you; would it not be well to stand prepared. De you not punish the soldier who is found sleeping on his post in an enemy's country, will you admit of any excuse he may have to offer? No, he is tried and he is condemned to the punishment he merits; and will not this be your case, if, like Felix, you postpone to a convenient season, the duties you owe to your maker, who has given you life for no other end. Why is religion the only science which requires no study; if man aims at distinction, as a statesman or a soldier will he think any time mispent which he devotes to its attainment?' 'But I can assure you, Lindsay,' said Blanchard; 'I have remarked that those young men who have arrogated to themselves more religion than their neighbours, make very bad soldiers; it has repeatedly been observed, they become abstracted and unfit for their military duties, frequently so morose as to withdraw themselves unseasonably from their companions.' 'The religion of such is without doubt defective and mistaken,' returned Lindsay; 'where it is genuine and consistent it quickens us in the performance of our duties, since all is then done upon principle, and with a view to God's glory. Yet can I make many excuses for the youthful convert; the scales are but just fallen from his eyes, he beholds every thing around him in a new light, he is dazzled while his mind, confused, unsettled and in a state of probation as it were, becomes abstracted and filled with the one grand and most sublime subject—but this will gradually compose itself, like the troubled waves after a storm, then how great will be his peace, and if he has sense and judgment, his usefulness, his religion, he will adorn by a more strict attention to every earthly duty, for he unites it inseparably with each action of his life—he will view with charity the faults and failings of his companions—he will separate himself undoubtedly from their vices, but he will never disgust them by fanaticism or gloom, or exclude himself from their innocent recreations. Is it reasonable to dispraise that which we do not understand; you consider theology as the morbid reasoning of the ascetic, debarring you from every thing joyous in life; but take the Bible as your guide, and you will soon learn that the self denial it inculcates is for your truest happiness—since the indulgence of those passions and appetites which its pure tenets condemn, would destroy your peace, your health, and your soul.' As the conversation continued, the manner of Lindsay became more animated; Blanchard gazed on his flushed and eager countenance for a moment, and then said, smiling: 'I thought you tired, but even now where is the weariness you exhibited on your entrance?' 'It is absorbed in the interest I feel for