

When I see the blood, I will pass over you.  
Exodus xii. 13.

## A SEARCH FOR HONEY.

A WORD TO YOUNG MEN.

"Hast thou found honey? eat so much as is sufficient for thee."—Prov. xxv. 16.



HERE is a very mistaken notion abroad among young folks that religion is a melancholy business, that it is the enemy of pleasure, the stern opponent of all that is delightful, and that it puts a strict embargo upon all that goes to make life enjoyable. Its demands are so hard, its restraints so many and so binding, and its general influence so depressing, that nature, especially in the young, rebels against it, and regards its demands as a burden too grievous to be borne.

It is a lie, as false as the devil, the father of lies, who coined it. But perhaps you have been deceived by him, and have been seeking pleasure (or honey) in the world.

My friend—my young friend—you who refuse to seek pleasure and to search for sweet treasure in the same fields as I—what success have you had? Hast thou found honey? Have you found it in your recreations, your amusements, your freer methods of hunting pleasure? Ha! there, you say, we have him on the hip. Religion frowns on recreations, puts a ban on amusements, has a puritanical antipathy to good fellowship. Stop thy impeachment, friend; for, lo! I deny it altogether. Let me tell you what my religion allows, I was going to say *enjoins*, in the way of pleasant recreations. First, *they must do me no harm*. Second, *they must recreate my body*,

brace it up, and leave me readier for after-service. The pleasure that results in weariness, faggedness, lassitude, is not pleasure—you will find precious little honey in that. Thirdly, *they must refresh my mind*: not make it sluggish, heavy, depressed, and ill at ease. The so-called pleasures that stupefy, irritate, make languid, and superinduce "the blues," as you call them, on the morrow, these are ghastly parodies on pleasure, and produce as much honey as you can gather from a whinbush in November. Fourthly, *they must cheer my heart*. In their present influence, in their results, and in their memory; they shall neither vex me with regrets, sadden me with reproach, nor sting me with remorse.

Do I speak to any person whose search for pleasure goes beyond that—who never seeks anything else but pleasure!—who seeks pleasure in immoral enjoyments and sheer sensual delights? I say, hast thou found honey? Nay, verily. Young men! the pleasures of sin are not honey. They may be sweet to the taste. Half the deadliest drugs on the apothecaries' shelves are sweet. Brothers, it is sin! sin! not religion that maketh melancholy. It is sin! sin! not Christianity that saddens the life, blasts the future, breaks the heart and makes the soul weep tears of blood. The world, the foolish, the purblind, call sin pleasure; and the word elicits the loudest laugh of hell! Men and women saunter down into the gay garden of sensual delights and pluck what they call the flowers of pleasure; and unknowingly gather hemlock and henbane, and nightshade and hellebore, and all the herbs that make up the pharmacopœia of the damned! "Be not deceived, God is not mocked." There is no honey in sin; though it is sweet to the tongue, its nature is wormwood, and in the belly it is bitter as gall!

Young men! I know where honey, true honey, the sweets of real delight, lie hidden in rich profusion. In the

The Lord will bless his people with peace.  
Psalm xxix. 11.