

nion, our not being as vicious and as wicked as we suppose them to be. But how greatly do those err from the very letter of scripture, who justify themselves before God by condemning others! Surely such self-deluded formalists cannot have benefited by St. Paul's warning against a course so much to be reprobated. And here is his reproof—"who art thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth, yea, he shall be holden up; for God is able to make him stand." But still, in the face of this very plain statement, the language of contempt and scorn against others, is heard from many who are not certainly better prepared for heaven than those whom they so unblushingly condemn. Even when no bad opinion of others is openly expressed, there is the dark, undertone insinuation—there is the significant and sinister cast of the eye—there is the ominous shake of the head—there is the derisive laugh—there is the artificial cough—there is the hollow whisper, bearing on its pinions the marshalled legions of gloomy hints, with a thousand cautions against revealing the name of their author, but with the most sincere wish that they may be received as very truth—and there is the contemptuous power that imposes on itself sullen silence when other men's virtues are extolled. But there is often more than all this. There is the unsubdued sneer. "This publican." And let it be very carefully observed, that this sort of thing is not confined to what in a theological sense, is called the world, but is even the habitual doing of those who are regular and punctilious enough in the performance of religious services. One must have seen very little, indeed, of society, who does not know this. He cannot have travelled through the highways and hedges of human life, or seen any thing of the world as it speaks, acts, and lives, or if he have, he must be sadly deficient in the faculty of observation. His eyes must have been shut, and his ears closed, not to have seen and heard the many unworthy expedients which are constantly resorted to by unprincipled men, for the purpose of gaining favour for themselves, and of injuring the reputation and usefulness of others. Not unfrequently are good and honourable men grieved at what they see and hear in this way, under circumstances over which they have no control. It is an inhuman a most

wicked employment; and especially unworthy of the Christian name, to be always disparaging, underrating, and decrying our fellowmen, pointing to them with the finger of scorn, and crying with a malicious air, "This publican." And hateful as the practice is, and with this most unchristian spirit in the ascendant, men repair to the sanctuary with the feeling that they are all right and others all wrong. Nothing is surer than that such is indeed the feeling of those over whose dark and hardened hearts the beams of the Divine light have never fallen. The devotion of such men has no life, no principle—no subjective energy—no objective good to accomplish. It is no more real worship than the statue of a man is the man himself. They feel no weight on their conscience. They have no sense of having, times without number, insulted the majesty of heaven. They forget that they are fallen creatures, who have wandered far from God, and therefore they make no confession of sin. They feel no need of Divine grace to quicken their dead hearts to newness of life; and they have no fear of death and judgment, for they cannot see any danger. Is it any wonder therefore, that God should say to them as He said to Israel of old, "when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers I will not hear?" God is holy, and is "of purer eyes than to behold evil." He cannot "look on iniquity;" therefore He will not accept of a hypocritical service, but demands that which comes from the heart. "God is a Spirit; and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." "It is very obvious then, that "the prayer that goeth out of feigned lips," is not an offering suitable for the altar of Jehovah. "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit." But "the sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord;" "how much more when he bringeth it with a wicked mind?" "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be an abomination." It would be well for the cause of religion and for the prosperity of the church at large if christian worshippers would bear all this in mind, and approach God with greater humility and reverence, pleading, not their own good works, but the merits of Christ's death.

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