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“ THAT THE SOUL BE WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE, IT IS NOT GOOD.”—PROV. XIX. 2.

“ WHAT AILETH THEE NOW ! ”

I. What aileth thee now, Disappointed Worldling! Has failure attended thine enterprises? Have the riches in which thou trustest taken to themselves wings? Dost thou say with Micah, “Ye have taken away my gods and what have I more, and what is this that ye say to me what aileth thee then?” Or has it chanced with thee, as it has chanced with others, that external success has crowned thine enterprises? The estate thou didst covet thou hast secured—the fame for which thou didst pant thou hast achieved—the gratification for which thou didst long thou hast enjoyed—and yet thy spirit is disquieted within thee. Thou seekest rest and thou findest none, “what then aileth thee now?” The secret of thine ailment lies *here*. Thou hast, oh worldling, although thou dreamest not of it, an immortal soul. The undying spirit within thee craves God for its portion, and cannot be satisfied with any inferior possession. And yet thou hast sought to feed it upon the husks of swine. Thou hast tied down to earth the spiritual nature that would soar upward to the skies. Thou mayest have heaped up wealth, and accumulated honours and multiplied earthly enjoyments, but thou hast lived all the while without God and without hope in the world. And in the hour of sober reflection thou art miserable still. Thou hast been seeking in the creature what can be found only in the Creator—thou hast been seeking upon earth what can be found only in heaven—thou hast been seeking in gross carnal pursuits what can be found only in a life of faith upon the Son of God—thou hast sought to gather grapes of thorns and figs of thistles, and in the disappointment inevitable in such vain endeavour we find an answer to the inquiry, “*What aileth thee now!*”

II. What aileth thee now, *Awakened Sinner!* But a little ago thine attention was occupied with others in the engagements of business or pleasure. In the world’s giddy race thou wast then among the foremost. In the rush after wealth—in the race of ambition—or in the round of dissipation—thy whole being seemed engrossed. Thou saidst, “Eat, drink and be merry, tomorrow shall be as this day and much more abundant.” But what aileth thee *now!* All is changed. Former pursuits are abandoned or yield no enjoyment. Neither the hum of business nor the voice of pleasure—neither