

both hunger and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place; and labour, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted we suffer it; being defamed, we entreat; we are made as the filth of the earth, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day." (1 Cor. iv. 11-13.) The fierce and dreadful persecutions, under the Roman Emperors, by which the first Christians were assailed and tormented, and by which they were frequently called upon to meet death in its most terrific forms are well known: those were days of trial, in which a person's religious principles were, indeed, put to the test:—he was not likely, under such circumstances, to profess what he did not enjoy, and in proportion as this was the case, the conclusion is generally in favour of an inward principle of grace in the heart:—though it must be acknowledged that even then some had the "form of godliness" whilst they "denied the power thereof."

But in our times the tables are changed: the days of persecution are gone, it is to be hoped, no more to return. A profession of religion, such as it is generally regarded, subjects a person now to no particular inconvenience: it is esteemed necessary to the perfection of character: a greater insult to any one cannot be offered than to withhold from him the title of *Christian*. The greater, therefore, is the liability that a mere profession of piety will be rested in as constituting the nature of religion; that forms and ceremonies, and an outward observance of certain duties will be substituted for heart-felt religion—a principle of saving operative grace, exercising its hallowing and purifying influence over the heart and extending its salutary and restraining power over the conduct—and hereby a perpetual occasion be given to the Ministers of the Sanctuary to enforce the Apostle's doctrine,—*"In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature."* (Gal. vi. 15.)

This then is the evil especially to be guarded against in these days of religious profession; and that there is reason for caution is evident from the fact, that a great proportion of the Christian world, so called, has actually and contentedly settled down into a mere dead, lifeless form, denying the existence of an inward principle of saving grace in the soul, and branding, without ceremony, all as fanatics or enthusiasts, who profess to enjoy a spiritual, heart-felt religion. With reason, it might be asked, what is religion without the inward power?—It is only a name, a shadow, a cold lifeless corpse; and as such is worth comparatively little, nay, nothing at all, as to its beneficial bearing on man's future destiny. Forms and ceremonies, the external decencies of religion, should meet with attention,—its outward duties be practised: but all these avail nothing if the kingdom of God be not set up in the heart: separate and apart from vital, experimental godliness, they are "as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal." The ancient Pharisees, beyond doubt, carried their charities and observance of ceremonies and external duties farther than their modern progeny; but with peculiar emphasis, the assertion fell from the sacred lips of our Lord, "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of God;" (Matt. v. 20) And to what does our Lord here refer but to an inward principle of piety? As an universal rule, without a solitary exception in favour of the most externally moral, the inspired Volume has decided that "the kingdom of God," only another phrase for true religion, "is not meat and drink," does not primarily consist in any outward thing; "but righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." (Rom. xiv. 17.) Were it otherwise, why did our Saviour so solemnly declare, "the kingdom of God is within you?" (Luke xvii. 21) and the Apostle so emphatically pronounce, "If any man be in Christ," that is, a Christian, "he is a new creature: old things are passed

away; behold all things are become new?" (2 Cor. v. 17.) If religion be not an inward principle, the Bible is a fable;—an *ignis fatuus*, more calculated to lead astray than to guide into the way of peace and truth. The heart is naturally depraved, "alienated from the life of God;" with an unchanged or unsanctified nature, man cannot be happy in the presence of a holy God; hence the necessity of inward holiness as a qualification for heaven. (Heb. xii. 14.) To meet the necessity of the case, provision, ample and free, is made in the atonement of Christ, and in the renewing influence of the Holy Spirit:—"Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." (Eph. v. 25-27.) "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." (Titus, iii. 5.) Reader! lay this to heart! If thou art resting in an outward form of religion only, be undeceived: seek now, seek earnestly, seek repentingly, seek through faith in Christ, the soul-renewing religion of the Bible, "the kingdom of God" which "is not in word but in power." (1 Cor. iv. 20.) For "except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." (John iii. 5.)

February, 1838.

[FOR THE WESLEYAN.]
THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH.

How sweet the day of rest;
The Sabbath—consecrated to the Lord;
Part of heaven's rest to fallen man restored,
Hallowed and sanctioned by God's holy word;
Oh! 'tis supremely blest.

How sweet the house of Prayer!
How pure the bliss we feel—how free the grace,
While in the warmth of rapturous joy we trace,
The presence of our master fills the place,
The Master, Jesus, there.

How sweet the holy joy!
Which lights the features of the aged saint,
While at the throne of grace, he pours his plaint—
This joy—not glowing equivoque can paint,
Nor depth of woe destroy.

I love thy blest abode,—
The earthly temple of heaven's glorious King,
Where saints the tribute of their praises bring;
Even heaven seems nearer while thy love we sing,
My Saviour, and my God.

What! though life's path be strewn
With earth's original briars—grief and pain;
What! though in passing woes the flesh complain,
There still doth an eternal rest remain,
Where sorrow is not known.

Then in full glory crowned,
A never-ending Sabbath we shall know;
Where streams of bliss uninterupted flow,
Fading flowers of peace perennial grow,
And endless joys abound.

Ah! when the time shall come,
From earth that sets our longing spirits free—
Yes—we shall live, and love, and reign with thee
Destined through out a long eternity—
In Paradise to bloom;

There shall our praises blend,
With the hosannas of the ransomed throng;
Who—while heaven's bliss lends rapture to their tongue,
Senseless conspire to swell th' immortal song;
A SABBATH WITHOUT END!

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