

## REVIEW.

## LESSONS FROM THE HISTORY OF DANIEL:

An Introductory Lecture delivered before the Gloucester Young Men's Christian Association, Bathurst, New Brunswick, by the Rev. James Murray, Nov. 7th, 1857.

We are delighted with our perusal of this excellent lecture, and hesitate not to characterize it as most appropriate, practical, earnest and eloquent. We lay before our readers the following extracts:—

"Look at two scenes in the history of Daniel—the one recorded in the 5th, the other in the 6th Chapter of his Prophecy.

Here then we have an instance of remarkable decision, appearing most conspicuously in his whole life. While this is frequently the result of natural constitution, it may be fostered by moral training, and is always strengthened by high moral principle. When this is the case, it appears as a clear strong conviction leading to prompt energetic action—it is an unflinching adherence to what the judgment pronounces to be right, at all hazards and at whatever cost—it is the inflexible perseverance which no difficulty, no defeat, no disaster can ever cause to relinquish for a moment the purpose it has intelligently formed. Generally considered, it is essential to character of every kind. Your hearts are set on success. Whatever may be the course you have chosen or are about to choose, however varied your pursuits, success is the goal which you wish to reach. And let me tell you that, without decision, success in any undertaking cannot be achieved. The wavering man, however favorable his circumstances, invariably fails; the man of unbending decision, however formidable the opposition with which he has to contend, generally succeeds. Obstacles disappear at his bidding, mountains become plains before him, hostile influences are pressed into his service, and reverses are made the stepping-stones to victory.

Now see the decision which characterized Daniel, and all who like him have been placed in positions of danger, exposed to ridicule and reproach, and exciting the suspicion and jealousy of their neighbors. Christianity, if true, is everything, and warrants and commands every sacrifice of self to promote its influence. Such is the principle on which the most noble Christians on earth have acted—such was the principle on which Tyndale, Hale, Baxter, Wilberforce, Howard, and Whitfield framed their lives. They showed themselves in every important step of their history to be men whom nothing could induce to sacrifice principle to policy, who would not forsake the straight line of duty for the bye-paths of expediency, who would not be turned aside from the purpose they had so prayerfully formed by the opposition of foes or the alienation of friends. Others might temporize from a regard to consequences, and shape their course to escape the frowns or receive the smiles of men—but with these men right was right, irrespective of man's opinion, and by the right they would abide whether others smiled or frowned.

Such a character as this cannot be too highly commended. The young man for this, or any age, must know how to take his stand on the rock of right and remain there, breasting the storm if need be, looking with calm and unflinching eye over the raging billows, heedless of the thunder's distant muttering, or the lightning's nearer flash. We must scorn the false prudence which dares not act until it asks

—What will others say or think? If the action be right, what does it matter? You are no man if the fear of ridicule or rejection can turn you from the course you believe to be right. You must learn to resist them as the rock the dashing wave. Not that we would have you scorn others or treat their opinions with contempt, but, only looking at the work to be done, you should lose sight of personal consequences. You may honor man while you prove faithful to truth; you may look lovingly on others while you cleave to the right. Can it be done safely, did you say—Safely! There is a God who controls the affairs of men, right is stronger than wrong, truth than falsehood. Safely! To be sure you can. Temporary inconvenience, present loss you may have to sustain; but in the end you are safe, right will triumph over wrong, good over evil. Safely! what though you could not. Better to die doing right than live by doing wrong. Safely! they are only the craven and faint-hearted that suggest danger and inexpediency—the truly brave man only asks—Is it right? Stand by the right. Though the world should assail, though friends should misunderstand, though your firmness should be mistaken for obstinacy and your faithfulness for conceit, though difficulties should thicken around you—still remain faithful to duty, immovable as the rock, defiant and brave. Be true to the right as the eagle to his aim; pass through clouds of detraction unharmed by the shafts of malice, until, standing with the storm beneath your feet, you enjoy the calm which flows from the voice of an approving conscience, and bask in the blissful smile of the God whom you adore. In the words of Tupper—

Never give up! it is wiser and better

Always to hope than once to despair;

Fling off the load of Doubt's cankering fetter,

And break the dark spell of tyrannical care!

Never give up! or the burthen may sink you,—

Providence kindly has mingled the cup,

And in all trials and troubles bethink you

The watchword of life, must be, Never

give up!

Never give up! though the grapeshot may

rattle,

Or the full thunder-cloud over you burst,—

Stand like a rock,—and the storm or the

battle

Little shall harm you, though doing their

worst!

Never give up! if adversity presses,

Providence wisely has mingled the cup,

And the best counsel in all your distress

Is the stout watchword of, Never give up!

To render this decision on your part praiseworthy, it must be accompanied by and based on sobermindedness. He only can pursue a straight-forward course, and aim steadfastly at a given object, who is confident that he has judged rightly, and this judgment is only becoming when the arguments for and against any given course have been carefully and deliberately weighed. It is a mistake to suppose that this sobriety of thought is incompatible with energy of action, and to expect determination only when men rashly resolve. Suppose, at a Missionary Meeting, a young man, moved by descriptions of the state of the World, has, in the excitement of the moment, resolved that he would go and preach the Gospel to the Heathen—of whom the heathen have never heard and to whom they are not in any degree indebted, his resolution having been overcome by the first difficulty he encountered—and then contrast him with that youth who, with no visible excitement, ponders over their condition as he sits in his cobbler's stall till he calmly and deliberately resolves that he will go, and in spite of dissuasions from friends, opposition from foes, difficulties in the way of

leaving home and trials when he has left, holds on the even tenor of his way, until William Carey has obtained for himself a first place as an Oriental Scholar, laid the foundation and reared a good part of the structure of a Missionary Society, and placed the Word of God within the reach of millions of the human race; and you will see that the sober-minded, self-controlled, calm and deliberate thinkers are the men of whom alone are to be expected the most unbending decision and the greatest success.

And surely it needs not that I remind you that in the highest style of character godliness is an essential requisite. However excellent a man may be otherwise, if destitute of this, his character is defective. This, combined with the qualities mentioned already, will invest you with the highest style of character, and raise you in the scale of moral elevation on this side the grave; it will secure for you in another state the realisation of all for which your nature fits you, and of which the Bible in its glorious revelations gives you a glimpse—the continual improvement of your intellect, the expansion of your affections, the attainment of higher knowledge and larger joys, while the ages of eternity roll their ceaseless round.

Be decided then—have a purpose, let it rest on the broad and sure foundation of sobermindedness, crowned with godliness, and the minuter ornaments will not be wanting in your character."

P.S.—A Review of "A Memoir of Captain Hammond, Rifle Brigade," though in type, has been crowded out.

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## The Presbyterian

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