

other words, their progressive sanctification and their preparation for glory. During Dr. Payson's last illness, a friend said to him, "I am sorry to see you lying upon your back." "Do you know why God puts us on our backs?" asked the smiling sufferer. "No," was the answer. "In order that we may look upward." There are many things during sickness that are well calculated to soften the feelings and elevate the soul: the separation from the busy world and its hardening influences, the stillness of the room, the mild light through the window-curtains, the low voices, and then, more than all, the kind words of those who surround us, their attention, their solicitude, perhaps the tears in their eyes—all this should cause us to "look upward."

The mode in which men prepare diamonds will, I think, illustrate the way in which God prepares His people, who are His jewels. Diamonds, you know, are dug out of the earth in a rough state, with no apparent beauty, covered with a hard, ugly crust; and they are cut, sawn, split and put upon the wheel, and ground, and ground, and ground, until they have the right form, until all the blemishes are ground out, and they shine in beauty fit for a king's crown. Now, Christians are God's diamonds, but in the state of nature they are very rough diamonds, and therefore they have to be kept long upon the wheel till every speck and blemish is worn off, and they are fit to shine as jewels in Immanuel's crown. Or to change the figure to one suggested by verse 11, and more familiar to Canadians, there are characters that are like summer fruits which ripen early in the season, under the warmth of the sun; but there are few such, except those whom God plucks and gathers, like early summer fruit, in the days of infancy, childhood and youth. There are other fruits that ripen not till the sharp autumn frosts come. All through the summer they are sour, bitter and unfit for food. The keen frosts make them luscious and mellow. There are many of Christ's disciples who resemble this