

“serving the Lord.” I shall now attempt to prove and illustrate the idea thus suggested to us—the compatibility of Religion with the business of Common Life.

We have, then, Scripture authority for asserting that it is not impossible to live a life of fervent piety amidst the most engrossing pursuits and engagements of the world. We are to make good this conception of life,—that the hardest wrought man of trade, or commerce, or handicraft, who spends his days “midst dusky lane or wrangling mart,” may yet be the most holy and spiritually-minded. We need not quit the world and abandon its busy pursuits in order to live near to God :

“ We need not bid, for cloister'd cell,
Our neighbor and our work farewell ;
The trivial round, the common task,
May furnish all we ought to ask,—
Room to deny ourselves, a road
To bring us, daily, nearer God.”

It is true, indeed, that if in no other way could we prepare for an eternal world than by retiring from the business and cares of this world, so momentous are the interests involved in religion, that no wise man should hesitate to submit to the sacrifice. Life here is but a span. Life hereafter is *for ever*. A lifetime of solitude, hardship, penury, were all too slight a price to pay, if need be, for an eternity of bliss ; and the result of our most incessant toil and application to the world's business, could they secure for us the highest prizes of earthly ambition, would be purchased at a tremendous cost, if they stole away from us the only time in which we could prepare to meet our God ; if they left us at last, rich, gay, honored, possessed of everything the world holds dear, but to face an Eternity undone. If, therefore, in no way could you combine business and religion, it would indeed be, not fanaticism, but most sober wisdom and prudence, to let the world's business come to a stand. It would be the duty of the mechanic, the man of business, the statesman, the scholar—men of every secular calling—without a moment's delay to leave vacant and silent the familiar scenes of their toils ; to turn life into a perpetual Sabbath, and betake themselves, one and all, to an existence of ceaseless prayer, and unbroken contemplation, and devout soul.

But the very possibility of such a sacrifice proves that no such sacrifice is demanded. He who rules the world is no arbitrary tyrant prescribing impracticable labours. In the material world there are no