

On entering the cell of the criminal, I found him walking from side to side with hurried step, as if anxious to escape from his own unwelcome thoughts, or to shake off the heavy weight that pressed upon his guilty conscience. His appearance was such as, of itself, to indicate that he was not an ordinary man. This fact was soon confirmed by his conversation. Of the information he furnished at different times respecting his own history, the following statement includes the substance:—

"I am the child of pious parents, who were connected with the Wesleyan body. At the age of sixteen, through their instrumentality, and under the preaching I was then accustomed to hear, I became the subject of religious impressions. These in the course of time were effaced. It was nevertheless my daily practice to read the Bible, and my invariable custom to respect the Sabbath. Having on a particular occasion been informed that the Rev. William T—, a celebrated preacher in the city of B—, near which I then resided, had announced his intention of preaching on the next Lord's day evening, a sermon on Prophecy, and feeling some curiosity on this subject, I went to hear him. In returning from the chapel, I expressed to an acquaintance whom I met in the street, my high admiration of the discourse which had been delivered. He replied, Mr. T—, is no doubt a superior orator, and it would afford me great pleasure to discuss any subject having a true claim upon the attention of a rational being; but as this is not the case with religion, he will not have me amongst his audience until he shall have changed his theme." Presuming from the answer of this man that he disbelieved the Bible, I asked him his reason for adopting such a course. He expressed his willingness to do so, and invited me to his house, to receive the explanation he had to offer. Having already yielded much to temptation, I was very desirous to escape from the dread of that punishment which the bible taught me to expect as the consequence of sin, and saw nothing so likely to afford me refuge as the conviction, if it could be produced in my mind, that the contents of this book are nothing but a cunningly-devised fable. The invitation of the person who now professed to be my disinterested friend, but subsequently proved my most destructive enemy, was therefore readily accepted. On my arrival at his residence, I found him surrounded with several others of a kindred spirit. From that moment they were my principal, because my favourite associates. I soon adopted all their opinions as my own, and became avowedly pledged to make every effort in my power to diffuse more widely our common views. And this pledge (alas for my present peace!) I laboured but too faithfully to redeem. I could at this moment almost say, the bitterness of death is passed, if I were sure no one had become an infidel through me. But there is too much reason to fear that many have; and this thought is like a barbed and poisoned arrow, ever rankling in my soul. Before the time now adverted to, I had married a very estimable young woman of very respectable connexions, and entered into business. But though we commenced with a capital exceeding £1000., it was soon all spent: and

compelled by the force of my own folly and extravagance, I left England for America. There, my principles not fully satisfying me, were reconsidered, and, after reading "Watson's Apology for the Bible," with some other works of the same class, I again avowed myself a believer in the word of God. It was my bitter lot, however, soon to see that it was much more easy to renounce the principles of error than to cease from those evil practices of which they are generally the productive source. As I had questioned the moral government of God, and thrown off all the restraints of moral obligation, it will not be wondered at that, even after I disavowed the creed of the infidel, I was confirmed in my habits of infidelity, and was still on returning to my native land, ready to perpetrate any deed, however dark, which the fury of passion might prompt, or the straits of poverty suggest. The act for which I am now immured in a dungeon, and may soon be suspended on the gallows, is indeed the ultimate effect, the final consummation, of a wilful and wicked disbelief of the inspired record; leading, at first, to a profanation of the Sabbath, and afterwards to every other evil work."

The crime for which R. H. was convicted, and which to me he never denied, was a most desperate attempt at murder, with a view to robbery, on the highway. I was with him at frequent intervals from the time when his first message reached me up to the last moment of his existence, and found him to possess a very extensive acquaintance with the Scriptures, and a considerable knowledge of our religious poets. As the person at whom he fired, though severely wounded, was not killed he seemed to the last to expect a reprieve. The governor of the gaol entered his cell, half an hour before the time which had been fixed for the execution, saying, "I have a communication from the Secretary of State;" a smile of hope played for a moment around his pallid countenance, but it seemed only as if to give the gloom of despair the opportunity of coming in deeper and more terrific shadows over his features, for the governor in the very next instant added, "but in that communication there is nothing said respecting you; you must therefore die." How true is it that the wages of sin is death! We were again left to ourselves; and pacing his cell with accelerated step, he said, with deep emotion and thrilling emphasis, "It is then a fact that I must suffer the extreme penalty of the law. In a few minutes I shall be in eternity, my wife will be a widow, and my children will be fatherless, bearing part of my reproach, notwithstanding they had no share in my guilt. Oh, tell my wife to let my miserable end be productive of at least one good effect, by increasing her anxiety and multiplying her efforts to train up our children in the fear of the Lord."—On our way to the place of execution, whether he insisted on my accompanying him, we passed through the apartment appropriated to the Turnkey. Seeing a lad in a distant part of the room, he went to him, and said, "Look at me, and learn never to stand in the way of the ungodly, nor sit in the seat of him that scorneth at the truth." At his own request, and by permission of the sheriff, after all the preparations for the work of death had been completed, I stood by his side, and addressed the multi-

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