

bo served by them. They replenished the common stock-purse of the olden time, whose knowledge was dealt out in proverbial expressions. These current coins of antiquity were laconic, expressive, brief, quaint, easily comprehended, remembered, and applied. This one of these ancient coins, these proverbs, whose homeliness interdicts criticism, that furnishes the text for this hour, during the remainder of which I shall call your attention.

I. To the terms of my text, and the truth couched under it.

II. To some plain illustrations of this truth, bearing on our specific doctrine.

1st. As to the terms. Against any minute or detailed explanation of the terms in my text, the proverbial designation of our common country reveals: Is it not "the Land of Cakes?" I may, however, remind you of the very characteristic simplicity of ancient oriental domestic economy, as witnessed by Gen. xviii. 6. "Abraham lusted into the tent unto Sarah, and said, make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth." Look, too, into Kings xix. 6, "Elijah looked and behold a cake baked on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head." Simple was the appetite, simple the food, and simple the cookery! Intoxicating drinks came not into the bill of fare, though in the strength of that meal, the prophet was to travel for forty days and forty nights, and it was furnished by Him who hath said, "As thy day, so shall thy strength be." You may thus see the meaning of this proverb. A cake must be turned again and again, that so it may be properly fired and fitted for the eater. If it be unturned, one side may be ready for the month, while the other is soft, raw, doughy, and disagreeable. How opposite the judgment furnished by inspection of the two sides! how very inconsistent with each other! palatable the one, but how contrary to the other! Now, who knows not that things seen are the symbols of things not seen, and that the sensations of the body are, by a simple and natural transfer, adopted as the signs of the mind, with its judgments, and feelings, and verdicts?

Plain and easily read, therefore, is the doctrine of my text, and it is this.—"Ephraim is self-inconsistent. Of his character and conduct, part is secure, good, and profitable; part is unbecoming, bad, and injurious; let the firm, the suitable treatment, training, and influence, which has been applied to the one, the good portion of his character, be extended to the other portion of it; or such will be the character, as a whole, that I cannot find a more simple, expressive, intelligible, easily applied and brought home characteristic of Ephraim, than that of the text, "Ephraim is a cake not turned."

Now, to whom does the Holy Spirit append this characteristic? Is it to the aboriginal heathens? No; but to a tribe of Israel—God's own Israel—to Ephraim—a mighty tribe—a tribe (Gen. xlviii. 19) preferred to Manassah.

It is true my text is in the Old Testament. The peculiarities of Old and New Testament cases may differ, but the spirit, the great law is under both dispensations the same, and it is this—Even in God's own people; the distinguished among them, in many respects, for excellence, there may be such inconsistencies, as in "a cake not turned;" and these inconsistencies are observed by God, condemned by God, and condemned especially in his own people, that they may hear the condemnation, renounce the character and practices condemned, and so escape from the sin, disgrace, and perdition.

Of this characteristic and its application there are many departments. Omitting, at present, other instances, I am to select some specimens of the "cake not turned" bearing on our present meeting, that it may be turned; and let all to whom these apply, see that it be forthwith turned. And, mind the instances are all to be drawn from among the Ephraimites, Israelites, or, if you prefer a more modern term, Christians. Note, I pray you, this element and its importance. Observe, then, I am not called to discuss the material of the cake; it may be, like Sarah's referred to, kneaded out of three measures of fine meal; in other words, I am not called to enter on the question,—is he who uses intoxicating drinks, Christian or no? elect or no? can lie, though he do so, get to heaven or no? But I am to consider and expose the present inconsistency of those that are allowed by others, and by themselves, to be Christians. I grant the cakes are good, very good, I only say that they need to be turned. Is it asked who are they that stand in need? I answer,

1st, The Christian who is indolent or apathetic as to any good thing or cause, "is a cake not turned."

Is not the Christian one who has avowed Christ as his master and lord; and has He not said, "No man can serve two masters." "He that is not with me is against me." Has he not

sworn his subjection to this law of Christ? and it is perfect, and pronounces him that has offended in one point to be guilty of all. Does he not own that Christ has left him an example, and he knows that He went about doing good, and counted it his meat to do his Father's will? Does he not say that the epistle to the Laodiceans was written for his learning, "I would thou wert cold or hot, so then, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth?" Does he not confess at the throne of grace that he has not attained, nor is already perfect? does he not subscribe to the exhortation, "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with perseverance the race set before us." Well, in all this he proceeds as becomes Ephraim. This is only the one side, let us look at the other. Though diligent in the business of this world, and labouring for the meat that perisheth, does he discern as light food that which endureth to everlasting life? Does he place last the kingdom of God and his righteousness, giving to the "other things" a prior claim? While others around him are making a deep in-crest in the matters of God, and the benefit of their fellow-men, does he care little for these things? While societies for good purposes are happily rising around him, does his caution keep him aloof from them? does he content himself with giving credit to the efforts of others in what is good and profitable to men—the abolition of slavery, the spread of liberty, the extension of education, the purification of the church, the progress of sobriety, and with paying an occasional barren assent to their importance? Is his utmost flight a hollow panegyric on their ardour, and a gladness at their success, who have elevated themselves to such labours of love, while he takes no part in their activities, pleads ignorance of their constitution or details or fruits, and at times augurs their dissolution? Yea, after years have elapsed, and by their fruits they have been tested, do you find him equally inactive, uninformed, and undecided? Does not the one portion of his character argue woeful inconsistency with the other? "is not this a cake not turned?" how much does he need to be turned!

We can only give the heads of the rest of this able discourse with a few extracts.

2d, The Christian who is not among the first to adopt and encourage every good work and scheme, is the Ephraim in the text—"a cake not turned."

3d, The Christian who scruples to make, or does not delight in making sacrifices in order to benefit himself or others, is another example of my text—"a cake not turned."

4th, The Christian who pleads any custom or usage of earth or of any country on it, though it be his own country, as a legal antagonism of the Law of heaven, is the Ephraim of my text,— "a cake not turned."

5th, The Christian who owns the social law of love, and enslaves, or contributes to the enslaving of his fellow-men, is the Ephraim of my text,— "a cake not turned."

Does not every Christian rejoice in the first great commandment, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind;" and in the second, which is like unto it, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself?" He receives His word who says, "Walk in love as Christ also walked." He rejoices in the golden rule of his Lord, "Whatsoever ye would that men do to you, do ye even so to them." He reverences the apostolic injunction, "Be dutiful, be courteous;" "forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you." How cordially does he join in the petition, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us." With what delight doth he swell the spiritual song, "Behold how good and how pleasant for brethren to dwell together in unity, there God commandeth the blessing, life for evermore." In all this is he right, does he manifest the spirit of Ephraim? Well, look at the other side of the cake—of the character. Does he traffic in those of woman born?—does he by statute proclaim them brutes, that he may treat them as such?—does he interdict marriage, and convert into one wholesale brothel the district which is cursed with his rule?—does he torture at his caprice them whom God has made of one blood with himself?—does he sever spouses, parents, and children, uncaring what hearts may bleed, all of them more tender than his own?—does he, at his unhalloved bidding, constitute them widows, fatherless, orphans; forgetting Him who is their pledged avenger?—does he forbid them to enter the house of God in his company, or to sit there in his sight?—does he pronounce them worthy of death if they learn to read