

have no connexion with any church, and seek none. Thousands besides are to be found within the Church who are dead—dead as the bodies that rot and moulder outside its walls! They have the form of godliness, but are strangers to its power.—It requires neither an intimate nor an extensive acquaintance with society, to discover that thousands are living in open profligacy. The vices of town and country indeed thrust themselves on our notice. Though not exactly defended, they are allowed and winked at—now excused on the plea that the young must sow their wild oats, as if it was no solemn truth that “what a man soweth that he shall also reap”—and now varnished over by giving respectable names to bad things. For example, seduction is called an affair of gallantry; murder by duel, an affair of honour; drunkenness, intemperance, the debauchee who ruins his health, is a fast liver; and he who cheats another, is a sharp man of business.—Licentiousness, with brazen front and painted face, openly waiks our streets—pushing virtue aside, and putting modesty to the blush; while immoral and impure habits, though discreetly veiled, like an internal cancer, are destroying the health, the fortunes, the happiness, the bodies and souls of thousands. With idiot look, drunkenness reels abroad in the face of day; and events ever and anon are coming to light that show how many of both sexes, and of all ranks, are the secret slaves of this debasing vice. What falsehoods are told, and frauds largely practised in commerce; and in almost every kind of business! and are not the poor often defrauded of their wages, helpless widows and orphans of their substance, to maintain a splendid extravagance—a false position in society, to blow and keep up a bubble that sooner or later bursts? By how many is God's holy name profaned; and how many more—like the drunken king, who, in carousal with his wives and concubines, made wine-cups of vessels of the sanctuary—profane the Sabbath by idle recreation, or feasting, or business, wasting its sacred hours on the most common purposes!

To warn people against such vices may seem unnecessary. I know that they will not promise. Fall? alas! how have the mighty fallen? and were all our secrets revealed, how would it be seen that many

who never fell, had been on the point of falling—tottering, when God's arm pulled them back, on the very edge of the precipice. What sore battles have been fought of which the world knows nothing!—Examples of this, that “the righteous are scarcely saved,” wounded, and bleeding, and all but overcome, their shield and helmet battered, their crown in danger and all but taken, they have come off conquerors only by help of Him who finds his opportunity in man's extremity, and saves at the very uttermost.

It is not the practice of fathers to publish faults of their children; they are slow to believe them; they are much more ready to conceal than to reveal their failings. And for what end were the sins of Noah, and Jacob, and Peter, and David, written in the Bible, and proclaimed in the ears of the world but to warn us? Their moral is this, Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall. Do any, astonished and indignant at the insinuation, resent it, saying, There is no fear of me? Ah! the day was when these good men would have said the same, asking, with horror as great as yours, Is thy servant a dog, that he should do such a thing? Yet they did it; and, though with Noah's sons we would throw a mantle over their shame, the sound of their fall will have its echo in our Saviour's words, Watch! watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.

*We are to abstain from all worldly pursuits and pleasures that are of a doubtful character.*

The atmosphere is sometimes in such a peculiar state that the spectator, on coast or shore, looking abroad over the sea, cannot tell where the water ends and the sky begins; and as if some magician had raised them out of their proper element, and turned their sails into wings, the ships seem floating in mid-air. But occasionally no line of separation is more difficult to draw than that which lies between what is right and what is wrong. Whether such and such a business, or amusement, pursuit or pleasure, is wrong, and one, therefore, in which no Christian should engage, is a question that, so far as the thing itself is concerned, may be difficult to answer.—But it is not difficult to answer, so far as you are concerned, if you doubt whether,