

execrated; what had so often caused us agitation, and pain, and shame; and what thus exposed us to ourselves in our miserable weakness, our secret corruption, our foul deformity, our shameful irresoluteness. Not sorrow, alas! simply because the deed was against the holy and immutable Will of God.—In godly sorrow this is the rod which smites the stony rock into the gushing streams of penitence—the guilt of opposition to the Will of the all gracious, all holy God. “Against Thee, Thee only have I sinned,” is the feeling; and not—“Against *myself* have I madly done this thing.” Nay, the very hope of pardon is an active cause of godly sorrow, while it would calm and even wholly remove the sorrow of the false penitent. The true penitent has indignation at himself for his sins against that merciful Father who refuses not His forgiveness to such ungracious, undeserving wretches. He says, with the Psalmist, “There is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared.” The sense of which works indignation and revenge against himself in the penitent; the hope of which in the impenitent allays all fear, and calms every perturbation. *Have we, then, this Repentance?*

Let me remind you again, my brethren, that if your godly sorrow, however pungent, or active, or sincere, stop short of that Repentance, which is AMENDMENT, it can profit you nothing. Rivers of tears would be barren of result, save that they would leave the heart more dry and desolate than before. The highest tides of emotion would have no other effect, than to make us less impressible than ever. This is not only the natural effect of feelings excited, yet not carried out into act; but it is also the supernatural and just judgment of God upon those who neglect to improve the visitations of His Blessed Spirit; who, when He breaks the iron bars, and sets before them the open door of repentance, refuse to go forth—voluntary prisoners, and no less wretched! Would it not be well for us to inquire seriously (as we advance in this holy season, and ere it close upon us) what progress we have made in this repentance, or whether our eyes have not rested on a vain image of it? What a mistake to suppose that Lent is a time merely to afflict our bodies with fasting, to go mournfully, to renounce the more obstrusive gaieties of the world, to tread a beaten round of dull and pious formalities, to work ourselves