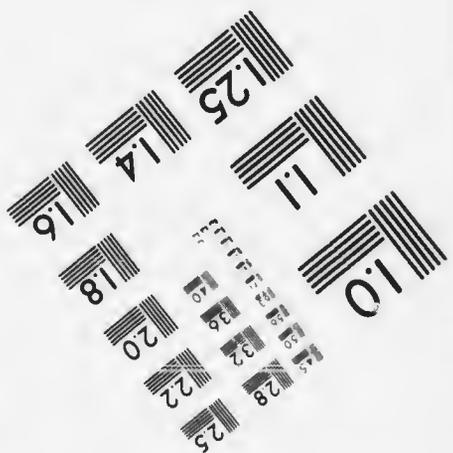
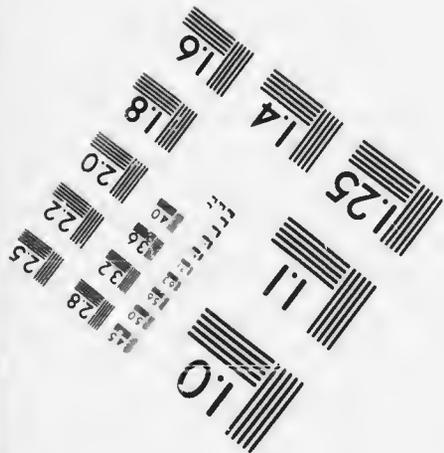
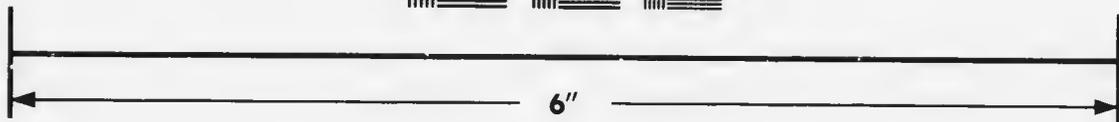
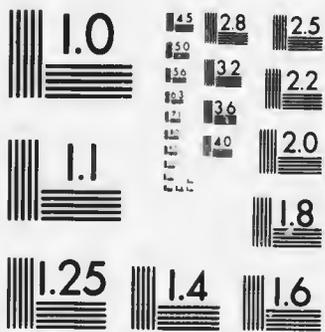


**IMAGE EVALUATION
TEST TARGET (MT-3)**



**Photographic
Sciences
Corporation**

23 WEST MAIN STREET
WEBSTER, N.Y. 14580
(716) 872-4503

8
2.5
2.2

**CIHM/ICMH
Microfiche
Series.**

**CIHM/ICMH
Collection de
microfiches.**



Canadian Institute for Historical Microreproductions / Institut canadien de microreproductions historiques

© 1987

Technical and Bibliographic Notes/Notes techniques et bibliographiques

The Institute has attempted to obtain the best original copy available for filming. Features of this copy which may be bibliographically unique, which may alter any of the images in the reproduction, or which may significantly change the usual method of filming, are checked below.

L'Institut a microfilmé le meilleur exemplaire qu'il lui a été possible de se procurer. Les détails de cet exemplaire qui sont peut-être uniques du point de vue bibliographique, qui peuvent modifier une image reproduite, ou qui peuvent exiger une modification dans la méthode normale de filmage sont indiqués ci-dessous.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coloured covers/
Couverture de couleur | <input type="checkbox"/> Coloured pages/
Pages de couleur |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Covers damaged/
Couverture endommagée | <input type="checkbox"/> Pages damaged/
Pages endommagées |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Covers restored and/or laminated/
Couverture restaurée et/ou pelliculée | <input type="checkbox"/> Pages restored and/or laminated/
Pages restaurées et/ou pelliculées |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cover title missing/
Le titre de couverture manque | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pages discoloured, stained or foxed/
Pages décolorées, tachetées ou piquées |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coloured maps/
Cartes géographiques en couleur | <input type="checkbox"/> Pages detached/
Pages détachées |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coloured ink (i.e. other than blue or black)/
Encre de couleur (i.e. autre que bleue ou noire) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Showthrough/
Transparence |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coloured plates and/or illustrations/
Planches et/ou illustrations en couleur | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Quality of print varies/
Qualité inégale de l'impression |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bound with other material/
Relié avec d'autres documents | <input type="checkbox"/> Includes supplementary material/
Comprend du matériel supplémentaire |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tight binding may cause shadows or distortion along interior margin/
La reliure serrée peut causer de l'ombre ou de la distorsion le long de la marge intérieure | <input type="checkbox"/> Only edition available/
Seule édition disponible |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blank leaves added during restoration may appear within the text. Whenever possible, these have been omitted from filming/
Il se peut que certaines pages blanches ajoutées lors d'une restauration apparaissent dans le texte, mais, lorsque cela était possible, ces pages n'ont pas été filmées. | <input type="checkbox"/> Pages wholly or partially obscured by errata slips, tissues, etc., have been refilmed to ensure the best possible image/
Les pages totalement ou partiellement obscurcies par un feuillet d'errata, une pelure, etc., ont été filmées à nouveau de façon à obtenir la meilleure image possible. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Additional comments:
Commentaires supplémentaires: | |

This item is filmed at the reduction ratio checked below/
Ce document est filmé au taux de réduction indiqué ci-dessous.

10X	14X	18X	22X	26X	30X
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12X	16X	20X	24X	28X	32X

The copy filmed here has been reproduced thanks to the generosity of:

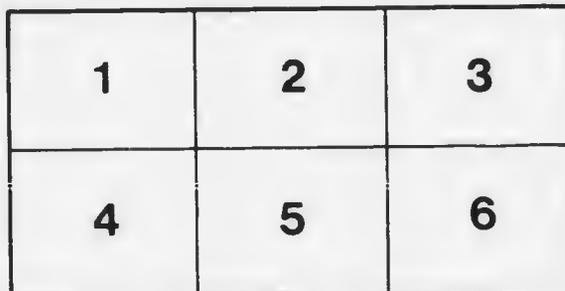
Harold Campbell Vaughan Memorial Library
Acadia University

The images appearing here are the best quality possible considering the condition and legibility of the original copy and in keeping with the filming contract specifications.

Original copies in printed paper covers are filmed beginning with the front cover and ending on the last page with a printed or illustrated impression, or the back cover when appropriate. All other original copies are filmed beginning on the first page with a printed or illustrated impression, and ending on the last page with a printed or illustrated impression.

The last recorded frame on each microfiche shall contain the symbol \rightarrow (meaning "CONTINUED"), or the symbol ∇ (meaning "END"), whichever applies.

Maps, plates, charts, etc., may be filmed at different reduction ratios. Those too large to be entirely included in one exposure are filmed beginning in the upper left hand corner, left to right and top to bottom, as many frames as required. The following diagrams illustrate the method:



L'exemplaire filmé fut reproduit grâce à la générosité de:

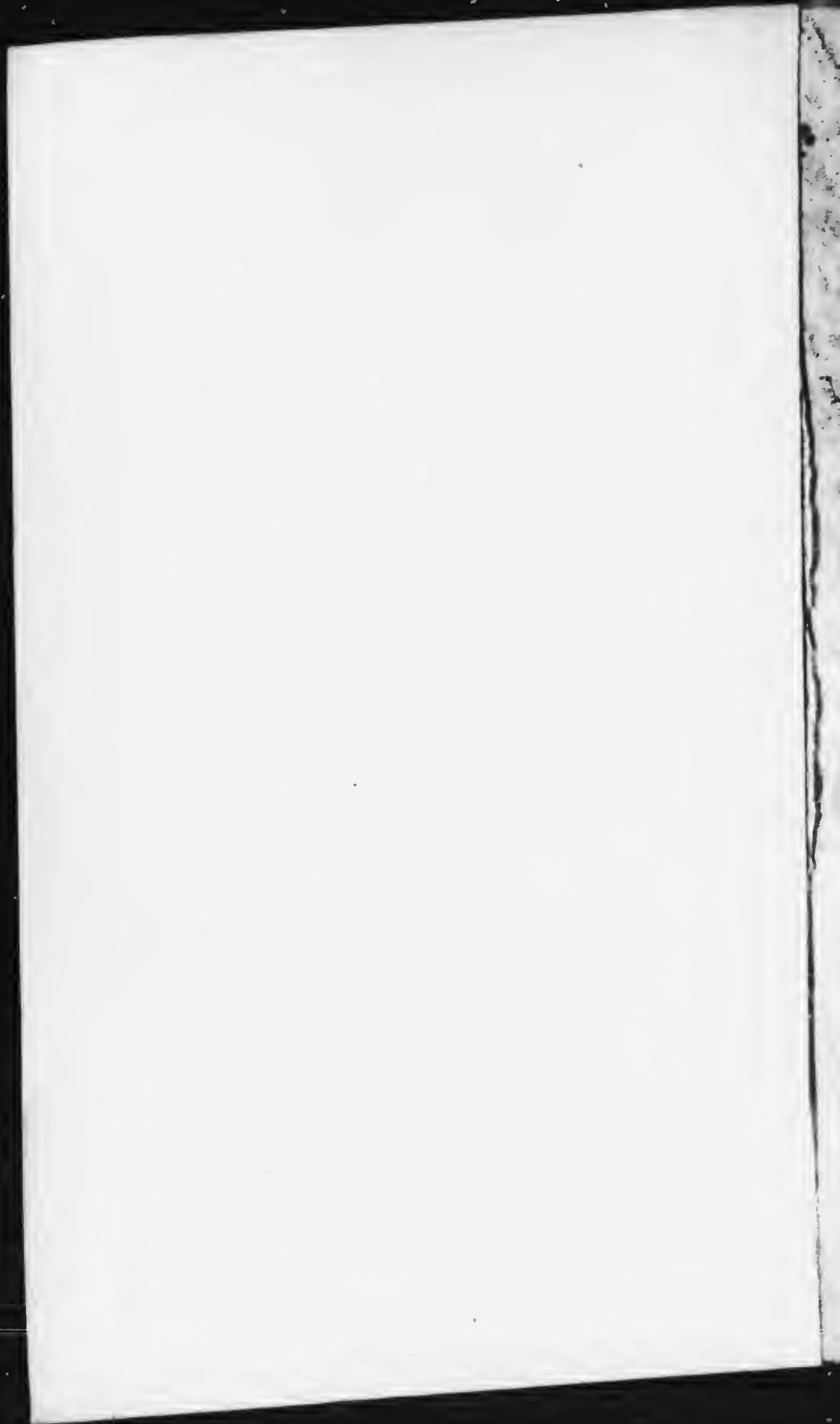
Harold Campbell Vaughan Memorial Library
Acadia University

Les images suivantes ont été reproduites avec le plus grand soin, compte tenu de la condition et de la netteté de l'exemplaire filmé, et en conformité avec les conditions du contrat de filmage.

Les exemplaires originaux dont la couverture en papier est imprimée sont filmés en commençant par le premier plat et en terminant soit par la dernière page qui comporte une empreinte d'impression ou d'illustration, soit par le second plat, selon le cas. Tous les autres exemplaires originaux sont filmés en commençant par la première page qui comporte une empreinte d'impression ou d'illustration et en terminant par la dernière page qui comporte une telle empreinte.

Un des symboles suivants apparaîtra sur la dernière image de chaque microfiche, selon le cas: le symbole \rightarrow signifie "A SUIVRE", le symbole ∇ signifie "FIN".

Les cartes, planches, tableaux, etc., peuvent être filmés à des taux de réduction différents. Lorsque le document est trop grand pour être reproduit en un seul cliché, il est filmé à partir de l'angle supérieur gauche, de gauche à droite, et de haut en bas, en prenant le nombre d'images nécessaire. Les diagrammes suivants illustrent la méthode.



2526
179

A

S E R M O N,

PREACHED ON 10TH AUGUST, 1804

THE DAY APPOINTED, BY GOVERNMENT,

FOR

A GENERAL FAST,

BY

ARCHIBALD GRAY,

MINISTER OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND, AND PASTOR OF
THE PROTESTANT DISSENTING CONGREGATION,
HALIFAX, NOVA-SCOTIA.

HALIFAX:

Printed by JOHN HOWE, and SON,

PRINTERS TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY

1804.

The following discourse is not, precisely, of the kind which the Author should deem most worthy of publication: but, in matters of little moment, every man will, sometimes, rather comply with his friends, than adhere, obstinately, to his own opinion.

A RB
BX9178
.G754

A

S E R M O N.

+++++

PSALM CXLVII--12.

*" PRAISE THY GOD, O ZION, FOR HE HATH STRENGTHENED
THE BARS OF THY GATES."*

AMONG the Nations of the East, a disposition has always prevailed to express the sentiments of piety and devotion by some correspondent external act. Thus a sacrifice was offered by the sinner, not as an atonement for his offences, but, as an acknowledgement of his unworthiness and guilt: a tacit confession that he deserved, himself, to suffer that death, which was inflicted on the victim thus substituted in his room. From the Altar, reared by the hand of the grateful worshipper, the smoke of incense ascended to Heaven, along with the praise of his creator, for some recent, and signal,
instance

instance of divine goodness. And, on occasion of great calamities, or where such appeared to threaten them, Nations, as well as Individuals, have set apart, in token of their humiliation before GOD, certain seasons for solemn fasting.

It may not be improper, considering the purpose for which we are assembled, this day, to premise a few words on the nature of a Fast.—The greatest, and warmest, disputes have ever arisen from the merest trifles. Mankind have often been divided about external ceremonies: yet external ceremonies are of very little consequence. Whether a man should sit, or stand, or bend the knee, in the presence of his Maker, when he addresses him in the language of praise and adoration; whether, or not, he should appoint, for periodical and solemn approaches to the throne of Grace, some particular day, the twelfth or fourteenth of the moon; whether he should repeat certain prayers, in white garments or black, with his
head

head covered or bare, appear, at first view, and while the passions are yet unenflamed by the heat of controversy, and the strife of words, matters of the greatest indifference. That the heart should be sincere, and the affections truly devout, seem, to a man of plain sense, the only circumstances which, in such cases, demand our serious attention, as what the ALMIGHTY will, undoubtedly, require.

In like manner, in fasting, the external observance can be of little consequence, if considered separately from the affections of the mind. An abstinence from our usual indulgences may be a proper expression of humiliation: but it can be nothing more. In itself it has no claim to merit: it can prove of no avail; it can only be acceptable to Heaven as it is connected with the sentiments of sorrow for sin, and sincere resolutions of penitence. “ To break the bands of wickedness, not to bow down the head like

like a bulrush," saith the spirit of GOD, by the voice of the Prophet, "is the fast that the LORD hath chosen."

We are called upon as individuals, and as members of society who hold the welfare of their country dear, to confess, with deep and unfeigned contrition, our private and our national sins, which might, long ere now, have justly drawn upon us the judgments of Heaven. We should be sensible, indeed we cannot but be sensible, that, in many respects, we have frequently and heinously offended. While we form, therefore, the virtuous resolutions of penitence and amendment for the time to come, let us humbly implore, through the merits of our powerful Mediator, the pardon and remission of the past. Let us pray that the Father of Mercies would deal with us rather "according to the multitude of his tender mercies," than after our own demerits; that he would "still pity us as a father pitieth his children," but forbear

bear to "chasten us in his wrath," or
 "visit us in his hot displeasure." What
 created being, alas! is able to stand be-
 fore Omnipotence incensed? When
 the measure of the sinner's iniquities is
 full, and he endeavours not, by penitence
 and reformation, to cancel his transgres-
 sions, or to appease the Judge of the
 world, if that GOD, whom he appears
 to brave, but raise his voice, in indigna-
 tion, for a moment, certain destruction
 overtakes him: sudden and fearful as
 falls the thunderbolt from heaven. Not
 on us, O Lord, not on us, sinners, we
 confess, but repentant sinners, let the
 weight of thine indignation fall. We
 confess, with sorrow, our sins, and hum-
 bly deprecate thy wrath. O thou first
 and last, thou greatest and best of beings,
 what are we? blind, feeble, and erring
 mortals, creatures of yesterday: who, to-
 morrow, shall mingle with the dust from
 which we sprung; what are we that
 thou shouldst chasten us in thine anger?

Is

Is not man but as an atom in thy universe; and the son of man but as a worm before thee? Or if our own insignificance be insufficient to shield us from thy wrath, hear, we beseech thee, the voice of intercession from Him whom thou hearest always; and look on the blood that flowed from the cross to wash away the sins of men and of nations.

ABSTINENCE from food is nothing; nor are any outward marks of humiliation of the least importance, but so far as they are undissembled and faithful tokens of the affections which prevail within. We have, this day, assembled to make confession of our sins, and to implore, for ourselves and for our country, the pardon of heaven, and the continuance of that protection and favour, by which, above every other land, ours has been long and eminently distinguished. To the prayer of unfeigned piety the God, whom we serve, refuseth not to listen. But let us beware of deceiving ourselves;

ourselves; of "approaching Him with our lips, while our hearts are far from Him." No secrets can be hid from His all-searching eye. And though he rejecteth not the sighing of a contrite heart; neither desireth the death of a sinner, though He is ready to aid, by His good spirit, the strugglies of returning virtue, and to receive, like a tender father, with favour and indulgence, His repentant, though prodigal son: He cannot view, without indignation, the presumptuous boldness of those weak mortals, who substitute a shew of devotion in the room of sincere virtue, of good and holy resolutions, who bow down before Him as it were in mockery, and approach Him "with a lie in their right hand."

THE folly of such an attempt can be surpassed only by its danger. Sensible of guilt, and of frailty, we should seek, in all humbleness of mind, some means of expiating our past offences, some prop
to

to sustain our weakness, in time to come, against the temptations which surround, and will, infallibly, assail us. For the faithful disciple of the Saviour, this atonement and support are abundantly provided. Let us come unto GOD, through him, and every stain shall be wiped away, with which sin hath polluted our souls. To all, who earnestly solicit it, divine assistance shall be given. To the weak, who are conscious of their weakness yet desirous of persevering in virtue, wisdom and strength shall be imparted from on high. By hypocrisy all our former offences shall be dyed in indelible crimson. Instead of securing an interest in the merits of our Lord, or winning the spirit of truth to take up his abode in our hearts; by a semblance of piety, while we are strangers to its power, and benign influence, on our temper and conduct, we shall quench the spirit of GOD, crucify our Redeemer afresh, and put Him to open shame.

shame. Encumbered with a load of guilt, voluntarily incurred, we may "strive to enter," according to the expression of our LORD, "the strait gate of life : but shall find, to our confusion, that we are finally, and for ever, excluded.

The nature of a solemn fast, then, appears to be the humbling of ourselves in the presence of our Creator, attended with the confession of our sins, an earnest solicitation of pardon, and a faithful and steady determination to amend our lives. As an individual learns, in the hard school of affliction, to reflect on those blemishes in his character, which the dazzling sunshine of prosperity had wholly prevented him from discerning : so societies and nations, who, blessed with a long train of fortunate events, are almost ready to forget GOD, when calamity overtakes, or appears to menace them, call to mind, with profound regret, their national iniquities ; and the nation,

nation, like the individual, conscious of guilt, and humbled by chastisement, sinks, in the dust, before her Judge, and seeks, by humble supplications, to avert, or to mitigate, the sentence of avenging justice.

It hath seemed good to the infinite wisdom of the Supreme Disposer of Events, that an appearance, without example in the history of the world, should draw the notice and astonishment of the present generation. In the heart of the civilised countries of the earth a terrible republic hath arisen, that wielding, in bloody hands, the sword of desolation, seemed, for a time, to have banished mercy and humanity from her territories; and has been, in the commencement and progress of her career, hostile, both in principle and conduct, to the peace; and established order, of every neighbouring society. Many nations have, indeed, been unjust and oppressive in their public measures; but

it

It was reserved for our times to witness a great people governed by rulers professedly void of the fear of GOD, and glorying in having shaken off every religious and moral restraint.

Her emissaries have been but too successful in disseminating the principles of licentiousness and sedition; and the success of her intrigues, and of her arms, has diffused, to a fearful extent, the reign of republican oppression. In every country, into which her citizens have found their way, their rapacity and rage seemed then only to be satiated when there was nothing left to plunder or destroy. Other oppressors have contented themselves with stripping the nations they had conquered of the goods of this world; those patrons of freedom, equality and rights, with an atrocity unknown before, have, in addition to every other species of pillage, sought to rob men of the consolations of religion.

gion, and leave them to perish without hope.

Do I mean then to call upon you, this day, to join in those vehement exclamations, which have become so fashionable, against our perfidious and unprincipled enemies? I have no such intention. The truths of the gospel, dissuaves from sin, and exhortations to the practice of the christian virtues, are topics suitable to this place; but I cannot think so of those essays at declamatory eloquence, on the irreligion and wickedness of a nation at war with ours, which have, of late, so frequently disgraced the pulpit. "Bless, but curse not," was, of old, the rule of a christian's conduct. Since the commencement of the present troubles, it seems, by the abuse and invectives which have fallen from christian Ministers, as if their tongues had itched for liberty to curse their enemies. The crimes which have disgraced the national character of our turbulent neighbours

neighbours, and the misfortunes which have darkened the face of their unhappy country, are more proper objects of pity than of malediction; rather than imprecations of vengeance they call for humble petitions to the throne of grace, that it would please the Almighty to turn the hearts of the Rulers, or to rescue the people from their ferocious dominion, and establish, in their land, some rational and permanent government. It is not to the sins, nor to the unhappiness of our neighbours, but to our own felicity, and the gratitude it demands, I would, this day, direct your attention.

In discoursing from the words of the Psalmist, I have chosen for the subject of our meditation at this time "Praise GOD, O Zion, for He hath strengthened the bars of thy gates". I shall consider,

1st. The reasons we have to praise GOD that He hath strengthened the bars of our gates.

2d. The best methods of testifying our gratitude to heaven for its mercies, private and national.

First : I am to consider the reasons we have to bless GOD for having "strengthened the bars of our gates."

The appearances which, for many years, the world has exhibited, tend to impress, on the minds of our countrymen, above every other sentiment, gratitude to GOD for the unequalled privileges which, through his goodness, it has been given them to enjoy. While one State has been subdued, and another degraded : while resistance, or the shew of it, has drawn on some countries rapine and massacre, in every hideous form, and ill-timed alliance and fraternity have reduced others to the basest servitude, we have continued to hurl proud defiance at the enemy of all nations. We have never dreaded their boasted power, nor their more formidable craft : nor have we, for one moment,

ment, submitted to their insolence. It is, surely, subject of thankfulness to GOD, that, amid the political wrecks of the world, our country continues to enjoy her lofty pre-eminence, in freedom and independence, above every surrounding nation.

LET us appeal to the understanding of any reasonable man, who is competent to judge of the subject, to what are the nations of Europe indebted for the portion of liberty they have still preserved? To what is it owing that some have successfully resisted that all-grasping power, before which the weakness of many States has been forced to bow? By what means has our country, in particular, the favored asylum of freedom and of order, been enabled to defy the attempts of her enemies, and to deride every hostile preparation? The great instrument of general preservation, in the hand of Divine Providence, has been the British fleet. The ALMIGHTY
 "hath

“ hath strengthened the bars of our gates.” He hath poured the tide of waters around our coasts. In the ordinations of His wise and good Providence He hath given, to our country, the dominion of that turbulent element. Her ships, her own bulwark, in every evil day, have, since the commencement of the present troubles, fought the battles of the world. They have wafted protection from shore to shore. Their sails, seen afar off, have been, in distant lands, the signal of safety. Wherever they came they have struck the enemies of our country with awe, and inspired her friends with confidence and hope. Every quarter of the earth hath shaken and resounded with their victorious thunders.

For more than ten years, with a short, and experimental pause of delusive peace, has our country had to contend against a power, formidable in numbers, and, since the subversion of her monarchy, distinguished

distinguished by the courage of enthusiasm, which naturally cleaves to a military republic. Twice, in that time, has a powerful army of the enemy, stationed over-against our coasts, countenanced the revival of their customary menace of invasion. Could their countless myriads have poured into the British territories, I am not willing to suppose that our national independence would either have been lost, or endangered: but almost every family in the land must have mourned the effects of the sanguinary contest, the loss of many thousands of brave men: a loss which a long series of years could have but imperfectly repaired. And whatever the pride of patriotism may suggest, the events of war are extremely uncertain; the period is past, GOD be praised, but there was a period, when the attempts of our enemies would have been seconded, there is reason to fear, by many of the factious, and seditious, among ourselves; foreign force,

force, had the projected invasion, in an evil hour, succeeded, must have drenched our country in the blood of its inhabitants, and, aided by domestic treason, might have accomplished the subversion of our invaluable constitution.

OUR country may still be attacked ; our foes may enter our land ; and much of the blood of our countrymen may be shed. But, thanks to the goodness of Providence, we enjoy one signal consolation. Our enemies, if they come at all, must *steal* into our territories ; for should the hostile fleets encounter on the ocean, they are sensible we can have but little reason to tremble for the fortune of the day.

Few, perhaps, consider, with the gratitude so justly due to the merciful providence of GOD, their own share in the general protection extended to the country. That we live, and enjoy life, that our rights, as men, and our privileges, as citizens, are continued to us, we owe to
the

the infinite goodness of Him who "hath strengthened the bars of our gates." I have reprobated the idea of groundless, or violent, declamation. But, in "the words of truth and soberness" it may be affirmed, that the system of oppressive anarchy, which the French have introduced at home, which they have laboured to diffuse among the nations of the earth, and which we are struggling to avert, has been productive of misfortunes wherever it has got established, and with misfortunes will, probably, be attended wherever it shall go. When the waters of bitterness are abroad, no man can tell whether he may not be fated to drink them. When the sword is once unsheathed, it is impossible to determine on whose head it is next to fall. Every man, therefore, in every station, has reason to bless, and to praise the most High, for life itself, and the various comforts of life, while he knows that so many thousands, in almost every other

other nation, have either been hurried out of the world, or left to drag on a wretched existence, stripped of every thing, that was dear or valuable, and involved in much confusion, and multiplied distresses.

THE mercy of GOD, in "strengthening the bars of our gates," hath not only preserved to us our property, and lives, but hath protected our national independence, and secured to us our freedom, and our rights, as subjects of this highly privileged, and highly distinguished empire. To those among you, who have been enabled to compare our situation, in this respect, with that of others, inhabitants of countries less favored, it is needless to observe how much the happy frame of our political constitution has been the theme of praise, and the subject of admiration; how often the most judicious of men have held it up to the envy, and ambition, of the neighbouring States. It

was,

was, in truth, in quest of such a constitution our neighbours embarked on the wide ocean of political experiment. The extremes, into which they have been hurried, the ceaseless variations in the form of their democracy, the recent establishment among them of a complete and haughty despotism, the death, the dispersion, and depressed situations, of so many thousands of valuable, and virtuous, men of that country, should endeavor to us a constitution, venerable by age, by glory, and tried usefulness, and should convince us that what they have exerted themselves, strenuously, but ineffectually, to obtain, deserves to be greatly prized, and vigorously defended.

THE preservation of our religious privileges, is another reason for thankfulness to GOD. No man, it is true, can be deprived of the hopes, or the consolations, which religion supplies, without his own consent. An expression has found it's way into the speeches, and
public

public writings, of some of our countrymen, of which I cannot approve. It has been said that the French, in their revolutionary fury, had abolished christianity. This is surely said without consideration. To abolish christianity is no work for man. The enemies of the christian religion may persecute it's friends: or its professed friends may bring disgrace on their profession, by their unworthy, or fanatical, conduct. But the truths of GOD are forever; and "the gates of hell shall not prevail against them." The civil supports, which man has lent christianity, man may, indeed, withdraw. The interests of real religion could suffer but little by the subversion of the political hierarchy recently established in France, by it's unbelieving ruler. But pure and undefiled religion, the sentiment which inspires active virtue, and animates it to exertion, by glorious hopes, is beyond the reach of man, and bids defiance to
the.

the grossness of his violence, the ferocity of his persecution. Was not christianity fiercely, and warmly, opposed in it's rise and progress? Were not the Apostles of the Lord persecuted from city to city? Was not the Saviour of the World, the blessed founder of our religion, nailed to a cross? But did such violence of opposition abolish christianity? Without the aid of the civil power, and in spite of its bitterest opposition, the christian religion made it's way in the world; let us hope, and trust, it may maintain its ground without the props of civil support. While there are men in a nation, be their number great or small, who cherish, in their hearts, the fear of GOD, the faith of CHRIST, and the love of every thing praise-worthy, just and true, christianity is not, totally, extinguished in that land; and, however respectable the national provision, for the support of religion, may be, vital christianity is gone, where corrup-
tion

tion and depravity have become universal.

BUT, although religion made its way, and may keep its ground, independently of the aids of civil authority, it is, certainly, a subject of praise and thankfulness to GOD, that the christian church is left to enjoy peace, and freed from all fear of persecution. It is natural to admire that holy firmness which exulted in the cross of CHRIST, amid the flames : but how few are equal to this fiery trial ? how few can say, with certainty, that the weakness of nature would not have prevailed over the hope of a happiness unseen, and the internal conviction of the heart ? Not wishing to exaggerate the crimes of the most licentious of mankind, I must say I do not believe that many, in the present age, have been persecuted for religion's sake. In times of tumult men perpetrate atrocities they hardly know why. Men there were, undoubtedly, among

among the Clergy of France, of great talents, and exalted worth, inhumanly put to death ; as well as thousands of the unfortunate inhabitants of their convents, who, ignorant, in general, of the politics, and the wickedness, of the world, were, most of them, it is probable, sincerely religious. But the courtiers, and nobility, were also put to death, not surely for the sake of their religion. *Their* stock of religion was not so great that they should deserve, on that account, to die. Had our enemies succeeded, when they threatened us with invasion some years ago, there can be no doubt but they would have attempted the subversion of all our establishments : and this must have disturbed the quiet profession of religion, and the periodical returns of the public worship, of GOD ; we have reason to praise the ALMIGHTY, that our country has been shielded from such formidable evils.

SUCH

SUCH are the motives we have for cultivating gratitude towards our heavenly protector, and approaching him with the voice of praise, while we reflect that his power hath been employed to "strengthen the bars of our gates." In frustrating the designs of the foreign, and domestic, foes of our Zion, he hath, hitherto, ensured to us personal safety, our worldly possessions, our political privileges, the quiet and peaceable profession of our religion, and the undisturbed observance of every duty towards GOD, which conscience requires us to perform. I proceed,

Secondly : To say something of the best methods of testifying our gratitude to heaven, for it's mercies, private and national :

1. A wise and enlightened man, it is probable, to whom such a choice had been granted, would not have pitched upon the present age, as the most desirable period of existence. Days of quiet
have

have preceded, and may succeed, the existing troubles. Our fathers, for more than a century, have enjoyed comparative tranquility. We, or our children, may, yet, rejoice in the blest return of peace. At present every considerate mind is kept in painful suspense, about the issue of a contest of unequalled magnitude, which embraces the interest of every man, in every department of life : wherein each estimable possession, each delightful hope, all that the heart can love, or the understanding can value, is at hazard, and must, should we fail, be swept, indiscriminately, away, in the torrent of public ruin. The present times, are times of alarm, incessantly renewed, and of danger that must be vigorously resisted. Against that portion of evil with which eternal wisdom may see fit, for the passing hour, to afflict us, we must endeavour to steel our hearts : for they who cannot bear pain and labour, with fortitude,

clude, are unworthy, and, perhaps, incapable, of taking pleasure or repose. It is the will of GOD that we should be called upon to witness, perhaps to bear a part in such scenes; and who shall dare to arraign the wisdom of his decrees? One certain method of glorifying our Creator, is humble resignation to His will.

2. ANOTHER method of testifying our gratitude to GOD for His past mercies, is an unshaken trust in the continuance of His protecting favour. That the ALMIGHTY hath respect to the virtuous who dwell in the land, that He is inclined to spare even a guilty nation, in which many of His faithful servants are found, are principles undeniably laid down in the sacred books. "For the sake of ten righteous persons I will spare the city," was His declaration to His servant of old. With Him, who changeth not, we can have no reason to doubt but the same regard continues

tinues to uprightnefs of heart, and unaffected piety. In the nation to which we belong, although licentiousnefs and vice be, unhappily, too prevalent, thousands are still left who praftife, without ostentation, every sublime and every amiable virtue. Among us may be found whatever is great or venerable, in wisdom or in piety, in undaunted heroifm, or unshaken integrity. The good and virtuous, the accepted fervants of the most High, however humble their station upon the earth may be, are the patriots who “stand as a wall of fire around our Zion.” When the ruler of nations is ready to fend forth, in his wrath, an exterminating Angel among a guilty race, he remembers the just and pious who dwell among them, and His anger is converted into tender mercy.

SHALL we despond in the present state of our county? Shall we rashly distrust the care of an over-ruling Providence, which hath upheld her in many

a perilous, and sanguinary, contest? Can the sun, which but now shone, with more than meridian splendour, set so suddenly to rise no more? Shall the means of self-defence be wanting, tomorrow, to a nation which, yesterday, spread her covering wings over every region of the earth, where there was either spirit to desire her protection, or strength to co-operate with her friendly efforts: to whose exertions, alone, it is owing that those very States, who have kept coldly aloof from the hazards of the contest, have their rights, or their neutrality, respected?

“ It is good to hope, and quietly wait, for the salvation of the LORD.” In his mercy the means of our safety will be found. There are heads and hands, spirit and virtue, vigour and concord, in our land, sufficient to cope with force, or fraud, to repel invasion, and to crush conspiracy.

3. Not with our lips, but in our
lives,

lives, does it behove us to praise the most High. By lives conformable to His holy commandments, to the precepts, and the spirit, of the Gospel of His Son, by the sincere renunciation of every sinful habit, by firm resolutions of future integrity, and undissembled piety, it becomes us to glorify GOD. How much are they mistaken who would make religion a matter of speculation merely! He who acts justly, because he fears GOD, who considers the case of the poor for CHRIST's sake, who respects, in man, the image of his Maker, and trembles at the thought of oppressing, or trampling upon, the likeness of GOD, who administers to the wants, and consoles the sorrows, of his needy, or afflicted brethren, "doing good, and communicating," because he knows that, with such sacrifices, GOD is well pleased, is a man under the influence of genuine religion: the religion of the new Testament, and of CHRIST. But
is

is he religious, who is ostentatiously so? Do a sour face, a noisy zeal, empty professions, and a pharisaical stiffness of demeanour, constitute a religious character? Of him, who makes an ostentation of piety, who fasts that he may be seen, and prays that he may be heard of men, hath not our Lord declared, “ verily he hath his reward. ?”

My brethren, from the bulk of you, I expect better things. You have not so learned CHRIS T. Trained in simplicity, and godly sincerity, you have been taught that “ GOD looketh to the heart, not to the outward appearance ;” and that he “ who nameth the name of JESUS. should depart from iniquity.” You have been taught to dread alike that arrogance of self-sufficiency, that disdains the proffered aid of the Redeemer of Mankind, and the fanaticism, and pharisaical pretensions, which disgrace his religion. If the delusions of pride shall seduce you, to the right hand,

or to the left, no description of christians can be less excusable. Few, or none of you, can plead ignorance, in palliation of your errors. For you can discern, with ease, the emptiness and vanity of every groundless, however lofty, pretension, by recurring to the pure, and practical, principles of the religion of your fathers, in which you were early instructed. I pray GOD I may always see you steady in the principles, and faithful in the practice, of rational religion. It is, in this way, that a christian, and a candidate for immortal life, should glorify Him who hath imparted reason, and caused the sun of righteousness to shine upon him. Ours is a reasonable service.

4. Of him who would, unfeignedly, return to GOD, it is, indispensibly, required that he respect His laws. He who worships the LORD of life, in sincerity, should endeavour, also, to practise the virtues with diligence. In a mo-
ral

ral manner, the ALMIGHTY governs the universe he hath created. The rewards of perseverance, and the chastisement of obstinate perverseness, shall be revealed hereafter ; but had we been left without the precious light of divine revelation, we must still have discovered that many virtues tended to produce permanent good, and many vices permanent evil. In this respect we have been, I am afraid, extremely deficient in proofs of gratitude for private or national mercies. Of the most favoured nation upon earth, there is not, perhaps, a more highly favoured province than that in which we dwell. While many other lands have been visited, with great and afflictive evils, we have enjoyed a distinguished exemption. The thunder of war hath shaken the nations, but we have heard only it's distant echo. Pestilence hath raged in our neighbourhood, while health abode with us. This fortunate province hath enjoyed an abundance

dance of the necessaries, and comforts, of life, while famine pressed fore on thousands in the mother country. In return, for so many blessings, are we the moral people we ought to be? If atrocious crimes are unknown, or unfrequent, among us, are we not more sensual, more worldly, more luxurious, than we ought to be? Are not drunkenness, profaneness and blasphemy, daily to be seen, and heard, in our streets? Is not an ostentatious, expensive, dangerous levity, the characteristic of our people? Are not misery, and indigence, too often the fruits of vice? Are we not, annually, taxed for the support of unprincipled wretches, whose poverty is of their own procuring? And is it not a fact, that some of them have been heard to boast, while expending, in riot, the earnings of temporary labour, that they had still a resource in the public charity? The means of rectifying such abuses I presume not to point out.

out. But if expedients can be discovered for that purpose, it is pity they should not be speedily corrected. To reform a community is an arduous, and almost a hopeless, undertaking. But if every one of us, according to a trite, but just, observation, would take pains to amend one, the nation would be soon, and completely, reformed.

Such, it seems to me, are, in few words, the best methods of testifying our gratitude to GOD, for His goodness: chearful resignation to His will, unshaken confidence in His divine protection, the relinquishment of every sinful habit, steady resistance of surrounding temptations, and the faithful discharge, towards our brethren of mankind, of every moral, and social, duty.

F I N I S.





