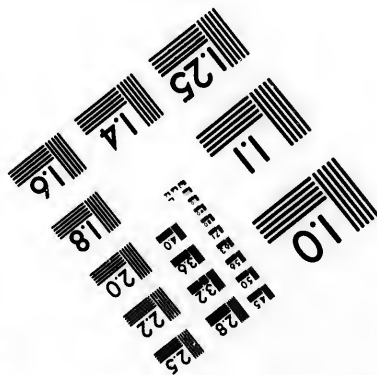
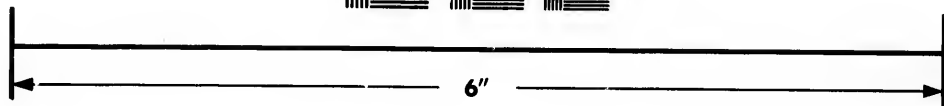
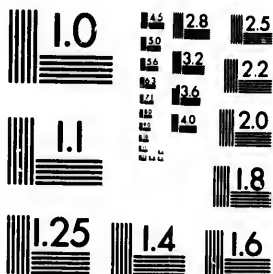


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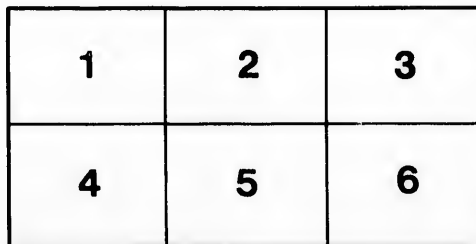
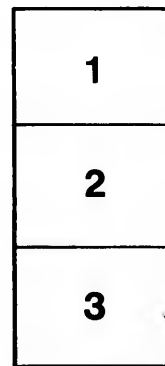
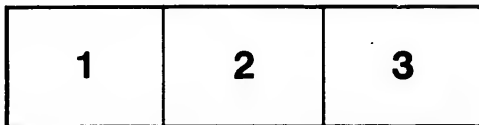
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W. Gilbert

SERMON,

DELIVERED AT PLANTAGENET, UPPER-CANADA,

AUGUST, 1828.

AT THE INTERMENT OF

JOHN CHESSER, ESQUIRE.

~~~~~  
BY THE REV. ALEXANDER FLETCHER.

~~~~~  
MONTREAL.

PRINTED BY N. MOWER.

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MONTREAL.

PRINTED BY N. MOWER,

1828.

TO
AMBROSE BLACKLOCK, Esqr. M. D. M. P.
AS A SMALL, BUT
PUBLIC TESTIMONY OF RESPECT,
TO HIS MEDICAL AND LITERARY ACQUIREMENTS,
AND TO THE
MANLY INDEPENDENCE OF HIS PUBLIC,
AND
THE STRICT INTEGRITY OF HIS PRIVATE LIFE.
THE FOLLOWING DISCOURSE IS
HUMBLY INSCRIBED
BY HIS GRATEFUL FRIEND,
THE AUTHOR.

SERMON.

“ PREPARE TO MEET THY GOD.”

Amos c. 4th v. 12.

P. **THE** solemn occasion on which we are now assembled, to perform the last offices of duty, gratitude, and friendship to one of the most respected and distinguished characters of this community,—this occasion, with all its attendant circumstances, addresses every ear of reason amongst us, and in language, audible and appalling as the last peal of the thunderstorm ; implores us also, to prepare to meet God, in Death, Judgment, and Eternity. Oh ! it is at such a season as this, when the heart is softened by the recollection of our own, and the spectacle of others' bereavement, and with such a scene before us, the deep, cold, damp grave—the sable coffin about to be deposited in its bosom—around, the relatives vainly endeavouring to suppress the throbbing sighs that convulse the bosom, and to restrain the tears which bedew the countenance.—On every face of the numerous auditors, the impress of solemn thought, and captivated attention. It is under the influence of such a season and scene, that the soul most convincingly feels the remonstrances of conscience, the convictions of moral duty, the loveliness of religion in Life ; and its indispensable necessity in death. Permit me, then, in endeavouring to improve this dispensation of providence to the advancement of our best interests—to direct your attention to the following inquiries, namely : How—Why—and When, should we prepare to meet God. In adverting successively to these all-important topics, our sole aim is to illustrate them in a brief and simple, a practical and scriptural manner ; and in conclusion to detail some of the more prominent and charac-

teristic features of our lamented friend. *Firstly*, How are we to prepare? Repentance is the great, the fundamental method appointed in the Sacred Volume for this purpose. When the Patriarch Noah, the Preacher of Righteousness, admonished the antedeluvian world, this was the scope and end of all his exhortations. But they remained obstinate in their iniquity amid all the denunciations of the Almighty, and perished. When Moses the Jewish legislator, became the leader of the Children of Israel; his whole ministry presents almost one continued scene of entreaty on this subject. Amidst all their murmurings, backslidings, and idolatry, how eloquently, how perseveringly does he beseech them, to return to that God from whom they had wandered; and his last, his dying exclamation, concerning them was, Oh! that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end. The whole strain of the other Prophets of the Mosaic dispensation, was also, of a similar tenor, all proclaiming, "Let the wicked man forsake his ways, and the unrighteous man his deeds; let him return to the Lord and he will have mercy, and to our God and he will abundantly pardon." John the Baptist, in opening the New Testament dispensation, as the harbinger of our Saviour, resumed the Theme thus, unfolding his mission, "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." Our Redeemer also enforced the same topic in all its varied forms. Such was also the apostolic mode of preaching, and wherever the Gospel is published in purity or with success, it must be the primary subject, to which the minds of all are directed. Who is there amongst us that has not wept for his sins? that has not, when under the influence of a heart-searching sermon, bodily indisposition, or any other particular dispensation of providence, lamented those vices that degrade the body, corrupt the soul, tarnish the reputation, and make God our enemy? Yet, when the exciting cause is removed, how soon are these serious impressions effaced; as the morning dew and early cloud which soon passeth away. The most ignorant of us, if he has at all applied his mind to the subject, is as conscious of the necessity of repentance as the most enlightened. We may all be convinced,

but how many of us are converted? Oh! how indescribably wretched is the state of that being, (and it is not a solitary case) who loathes yet cleaves to his lusts, whom his base habits have bound in such adamant chains, that all the persuasions of his better reason, all the strugglings of his polluted prayers—all the terrors of the violated law—all the consciousness of his misery in time and eternity, is incapable of liberating from the sins that most easily beset him. He beholds himself abandoned by health, fortune, fame, friends; by all, but his companions in iniquity. He beholds the sword of divine vengeance suspended by a solitary thread over him. He beholds the grave yawning to usher him into the presence of his offended judge, yet he will not, cannot reform. Our great dramatic poet, in delineating the Usurper of the Throne of Denmark, has drawn with the most appalling truth; the soul-agonies of such an unfortunate wretch.—Such is his soliloquy.

Then I'll look up;

My fault is past. But, Oh! what form of prayer

Can serve my turn—What then? what rests?

Try what repentance can: What can it not?

Yet what can it, *when one cannot repent.*

O! wretched state, O! bosom black as death.

If we retrace the history of the past, are there not some—many, amongst us; who felt remorse for our impiety and resolved as we did wickedly, to do so no more. Yet soon, in the emphatic language of St. Peter, returned like the dog to his vomit, or the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire. But dismal as is the condition of the man, whose religious convictions and practice are at continual variance, still more hopeless is his state, who though equally inconsistent; is sunk in carnal security, and unconscious or indifferent, as to his danger makes no effort to avert his impending fate; like the intoxicated mariner, asleep on the high and giddy mast, whom the winds and waves but lull in deeper slumber, till comes the rushing blast, that precipitates him in the deep. Repentance is the gift of God, but freely bestowed on all who ask it with patience and sincerity in the appointed way. As

well may the agriculturist expect an abundant harvest, without the introductory labours of the spring, as the sinner expect repentance and salvation, without attendance on the means of grace. It was when the disciples met together on the day of Pentecost, that by the preaching of St. Peter, three thousand were added to the Church; and on a similar occasion *that* Cornelius and his friends were converted. It is wherever two or three are assembled in his name, that the divine blessing is promised. But why enumerate examples. The Gospel Ministry has in every age been the chief means of convincing and converting and building up sinners in their most holy faith. Though then, notwithstanding our strongest resolutions, we have again repeatedly returned to folly, God still promises to heal our backslidings and love us freely. We *My Fellow Sinners* asked the gift of repentance, but received it not, because we asked amiss; and this day he still addresses us, as he did the Jews of old. "Why will ye die? Oh! House of Israel? There is balm in Gilead, there is a Physician there, why then, is the health of the daughter of my people, not recovered." Let us implore the light of his countenances with greater ardor and purity and he will strengthen us for the performance of every good word and work, in this preparation, self-examination is our incumbent duty. Self knowledge must be, from its very nature, the most important branch of information. Destitute of this, the warrior is feeble, the philosopher ignorant, the politician superficial, and the professor of religion; the dupe of his own imagination. Socrates who first delivered the celebrated adage, "Know thyself," was supposed by the ancient Greeks, to have obtained it by inspiration from Heaven. Such was their conviction of its excellence. Our great moral poet, speaks of self-information, as of the master science which includes all others, and which should be our chief exercise,

Know, then, thyself, presume not God to scan,

The proper study, of mankind, is man.

Virtue alone, is happiness below,

And all our knowledge, is, ourselves to know.

What an unlimited field for meditation does this self-inquiry open

to the mental view? To institute as it were a tribunal within our own hearts; at the bar of which, we will, as in the presence of Almighty God, inquire what improvement we have reaped, from the temporal, moral and religious advantages we enjoy.—Inquire, what is our state by nature and practice?—what our readiness for the eternal world? In prosecuting this inquiry, we are neither to estimate or judge ourselves, according to the fallacious standard of human reason, nor self-flattery, nor by the general opinion and example of the world, but by the unerring dictates of Scripture. If then we are anxious to ascertain the truth on the most important of all questions—whether we are saints, or sinners, heirs of heaven or of hell, let us search and try our ways, and conscious of our incapacity to accomplish this impartially, deliberately, and frequently, let us adopt the prayer of the Psalmist, “Search me O God, and know my heart; try me and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way that is everlasting.” This suggests that Prayer is another of the means to be employed in preparing to meet God. Can there be a more interesting scene on earth, than to behold the humble, upright Christian holding communion with his God; pouring forth his complaints, imploring his mercy, pleading his promises, and relying on his grace. To him, prayer is as the breath of the soul—the element in which he lives—the bond of love, that connects earth with heaven. How many are as neglectful of this duty, as if they had never received a heavenly favor, that claimed their acknowledgement or gratitude, as if there was no omniscient judge, to witness and to punish—as if death was an eternal sleep. And of those who profess to pray, how many mistake for prayer, the breathings of their own distempered imagination. How many repeat periodically, a cold, lifeless form, in which they have no interest, and which has no suitableness for them, but which they impose on themselves as a task, and which performed, they presume all is well, that their vows are paid—that they are favourites in Heaven. How many address God with a levity, for which an earthly superior would spurn them with contempt. But that prayer, which com-

mands an audience with God, which procures his blessing, and which qualifies for his presence, is the supplication, which flows from a deep conviction of sin, and of human infirmity ; and which leads the truly penitent suppliant, to that atoning blood, through which he can be justified from all those things, from which he could not be justified by the Law of Moses. But, suffice it to say further on this branch of our subject, that not only repentance, self-examination and prayer are requisite to fit us for the appearance of our Creator, but also, every other ordinance ; public and private, of divine institution. Yet where the former are in habitual exercise, the latter will accompany them ; a desire will be excited to search his word—to frequent his sanctuary—to exemplify the moral virtues, and to walk through life as strangers, and pilgrims ; conscious that they have another and better inheritance, eternal in the heavens.

Secondly.—Why should we prepare to meet God ? Strange and seemingly absurd question ; Strange, that a rational and accountable creature, should require any motive for the performance of what is in itself so natural, so honourable, so beneficial, so indispensably necessary to our happiness. But Divine Authority and our own experience equally testifies that this paramount duty is generally neglected.

The exclamation of the world is, what shall we eat ; or what shall we drink ; or wherewithal shall we be cloathed ; while the redemption of the soul is treated as a point of inferior consideration, that merits attention only on the couch of sickness, in declining life, or in the hour of death.

But let us be urged to spiritual watchfulness from the conviction that this is the *Command of God*.—The end of our creation, a rational duty and the circumstance with which our eternal happiness is connected. We say it is the command of God, all whose injunctions are absolute. “ Seek ye first,” says our Saviour, “ the Kingdom of God and his righteousness and all other things will be added unto you.” He that gave his Son, his greatest gift, shall he not with him impart every other necessary blessing. But why

particularise what is the whole scope of Revelation? but an enforcement of that knowledge, and faith and righteousness sufficient to qualify us for his appearance in the great day of his coming. This is the end of our creation. In the eighth Psalm we find a magnificent description of the dignity of man, he is represented as the Lord of the lower world, swaying the whole animal creation, himself, only a little lower than the angels. Man is exhibited in two very different aspects, what he is by nature, and what he may be by conversion; for this contrast he is well styled by the Poet.

An heir of glory—a frail child of dust.

A worm, a god, a mortal, an immortal.

But however man has degraded himself, honour and glory was the great end of his creation, and he only realises the purposes of his high destination, in as far as he devotes himself to pure and undefiled religion.

This spacious earth, and boundless sea with all they contain were formed for his comfort, and as a glorious theatre on which he might display his power. And as the vicegerent of God on earth his mind was directed to infinitely noble distinctions beyond the grave; does our life and conversation manifest this heavenly propensity? this noble ambition, that the desire of God in this respect should be accomplished.

Should the inhabitant of some other planetary orb visit our world, and having no other source of information, through which to form a judgment of us, save solely from his observance of our conduct, what would his conclusions respecting us be? would he not suppose we were formed merely like the common warblers of the wood, to carrol and trifle away life's uncertain day, and then to lie down in eternal sleep, or that we were made merely to pursue the phantoms of honour, the enchantments of pleasure, or the distractions of ambition. But what would his amazement be when knowing, that our existence here was merely a state of probation, for an eternity of happiness or misery—that we could not presume on the enjoyment of an other hour, and yet that the flowers and thorns that sprung up in our path, had equally the power to en-

gross our attention, arrest our progress, and throw a cloud over the object of our journey. Wretched, fatal indolence, thus to linger while God addresses us, as the Angels did Lot and his family; linger not, look not back, escape for thy life, another moment's delay may involve the most fatal consequences. It is also a rational duty. Self-preservation is justly styled the first law of nature. Instinct teaches the inferior animals to guard against danger, and to be solicitous in promoting their own happiness. Reason is slower in its progress but more extensive in its range, and persuades man to consult his own welfare; and what can be more rational than to trust in that God, whose power is almighty, whose goodness is unbounded, and all whose laws are holy, just and wise. What can be more reasonable than to love that Saviour that humbled himself that we might be exalted, and that became poor, that we through his poverty might become rich; and who died that we might live forever. What can be more politic than to prepare seasonably and earnestly for our everlasting destination before the night of death cometh, when the hour of grace is expired.

Preparation for death promoteth our temporal comfort. The ways of religion, says the wise man, are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. Let us picture to our own imagination, first, the character of a sinner, and then that of the christian; this will convince us more effectually than the profoundest reasoning that religion is profitable for both worlds.

Behold the sinner, he fears God, but it is the terror of the slave that dreads merited punishment, he admires religion, but it is, because it produces that morality which makes the virtue of others subservient to his own interest, he may be successful in life, but he wants that divine blessing which unparadises prosperity—he may be constitutionally moral, but it is not that morality which springs from pure motives. But if he gives scope to his sensual appetites what a revolting spectacle does he exhibit. The wretched father of worse than orphan children—the cruel husband of a still affectionate but broken-hearted wife. The unprincipled brother, that would filch from his family their all.—The assassin

of virgin fame.—The introducer of pollution and ruin to the domestic circle, formerly spotless and happy.—The unnatural son, that receives on his father's death-bed, not his benediction but his heart-felt curse. Can such a wretch have peace? Oh! ask the tempestuous ocean that is never at rest, but incessantly heaves from her bosom mire and filth.—Ask the volcanic mountains, that ever pour their burning, and overwhelming lava—ask them, if they have peace, but ask not the man that gives his unbridled passions unlimited indulgence. He may indeed have a momentary artificial tranquility, but it is that fatal calm of the sky, that precedes the storm, before the tornado sweeps along impetuously—before the earth-quake heaves the foundations of the earth. On a death-bed he may try, but try too late, to pray. He may look above, but behold only a God of mercy become vindictive. He may look behind, but the memory of the past haunts him as the vision of his victim, does the awakened murderer. He looks forward but all is terror and despair. View on the other hand the virtuous; the friendship of the world may not be his, but he has the approbation of his own mind. Afflictions visit him, but they come accompanied by the rainbow of hope, that points to brighter worlds. He looks around on the magnificent wardrobe of the external Heavens.—He surveys the beauties of nature.—The lofty mountain—the majestic river—the spacious valley, and gazing with rapture on the scene, exclaims, My Father made them all. His pillow may be hard, his raiment coarse, his cottage lowly, his food meagre, but at peace with himself, at peace with his family, at peace with Heaven. He runs with patience the race set before him, and when he finishes his earthly course, he sets like the sun to rise still more glorious. My peace, says Jesus to his disciple, I give unto you, not as the world giveth, give I. In this world, ye shall have tribulation, but be of good comfort, I have overcome the world. But there are many other motives, which should equally urge us.—God has promised strength for this preparation, My grace shall be sufficient for you, and my strength shall be perfected in your weakness. If we have to wage warfare

against our spiritual enemies, armor is given, the sword of the spirit—the shield of faith—the helmet of salvation. If indolence in the practice of Christianity, could prolong the day of our probation, then there might be some pretext. But the sun will not delay his course, because the sluggard loiters on his journey. The counsels of heaven will not be regulated by our caprice.

Great God on what a slender thread,
Hangs everlasting things ;
The eternal state of all below
Upon life's feeble strings.

But finally on this head, the consideration of the resurrection, and judgment, also shew the necessity of this preparation.—Resurrection! transporting sound! how delicious the recollection, when pensively reclining over the turf, of what was once our joy, and our pride, and when apt to exclaim with the ancient Bard of Caledonia,

Deep is the sleep of death, cold the silence of the tomb,
When shall it be morning in the grave,
To bid the slumberer awake.

Resurrection! what a train of hopes and fears is associated with the reflection. Then the righteous will realize the anticipations of Job, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day on the earth, and though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." Then man shaking off the slumber of many thousand years, will rise to sleep no more, and will behold the Son of Man coming in the clouds of Heaven, with pomp and great glory.

Oh! how unlike the babe of Bethlehem?
How unlike the man that groaned on Calvary,
Yet he it is, that man of sorrows. Ah, how changed?

The Manger and the Cross are transformed into a resplendent Throne, and he is surrounded, not as at his crucifixion by a scoffing populace, but by Myriads of adoring Angels. Let us pause for a moment and contemplate the decisive events of that day, for which all other days were made.—The conflagration of all things, the shock of conflicting elements, the wreck of ruined worlds—

these are but the signals, the fore-runners of more solemn transactions. Then the eternal, the irrevocable destiny of every human being, that breathed the breath of life, will be impartially fixed. Then each of us, must be either exulting in the regions of felicity, or groaning in the depths of despair. Our ears shall hear the sound of the Arch-angels' Trumpet, and the sentence of "depart from me ye cursed," or "come unto me ye blessed." Our eyes must behold the stars falling from their orbs, the sun turned into darkness, the moon into blood. Can you now presume that your Christian hope will, then "light her torch at nature's funeral pile." And is not the intimate, the solemn connexion we have with these events, is it not, an urgent reason, that should rouse us up from our spiritual stupor, to perform the part that becomes us, as men of common prudence, to walk in that path which leads to eternal life.

Thirdly.—When should we prepare. If we consult, the experience and conduct of mankind, as an answer to our inquiry, the time is indefinite indeed. In youth, ardent and confident, the love of pleasure chiefly predominates, and the concerns of eternity are postponed to a season, which too often never comes. But a few lines from a great poet, will illustrate this better than a long and tedious description.

At thirty man suspects himself a fool,
 Knows it at forty, and reforms his plan,
 At fifty chides his infamous delay,
 Pushes his prudent purpose to resolve,
 With all the magnanimity of thought.
 Resolves, and re-resolves, but dies the same.

The young man in the Gospel retired from our Saviour sorrowfully, at what he deemed the severe requisitions of the Gospel, but never returned. Felix, the Roman Governor trembled at the language addressed him, in a private interview, on temperance, righteousness and judgment to come, by St. Paul, but he postponed the further consideration, till a more convenient season, but that season never came, and he died in his infidelity. There is no such phrase to be found in the vocabulary of religion, as dependence

on to-morrow, or deferring our repentance to a future day. The language of scripture is, now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation. There is then no specific time fixed to prepare to meet our God. The Divine injunction is, always to be ready as we know not, what day or what hour death cometh.—From the information gleaned from statistical accounts, and the general bills of mortality, it is evident that of the universal number of human births, only a small proportion arrive at advanced age. But not to enter into abstract reasoning on the subject, let us only advert to the little cemetery atlwert yonder stream, and muse on the history of the lowly tenants of that sequestered solitude, of how few of them can it be said, came to their grave, as a shock of corn cometh in its season? all the others, were either nipt in the bud of infancy—cropt in the bloom of youth, or cut down in the vigor of manhood. One of them was an interesting young female, who revelled in the delightful visions of a long course of earthly happiness. The nuptial day was fixed, she received the congratulations of her parents, relatives and friends. The bridal dress was prepared—That day, in anticipation the most interesting one of her life—the fated day that was to consecrate the ardent attachments of her heart, was fast approaching—But sad reverse, ere that day arrived, she sickened and died. Her Bridal garments, became her funeral shroud—The festival preparations were changed to the solemnities of death. And the youthful Bride had to receive, instead of the plighted hand of faith, the cold embraces of the tomb.

The event that has now assembled us, sounds also an alarming admonition, to redeem our time. It is true, he was declining in the vale of years, the chilling hand of time, had began to sprinkle his head with snow, to deepen the furrows of his brow, plant wrinkles on his countenance, and stiffen his sinews.

Yet such was the almost gigantic strength of his majestic form, and constitution, that to human appearance he might still have hoped to enjoy many years, in the bosom of his family, and retired from the more bustling and distracting cares of life.

But it was otherwise determined in the Counsels of Heaven, and

he was as suddenly as unexpectedly, called to the immediate presence of his God.

To Apoplexy, the disease of which he died, he had (to use a medical phrase) from the conformation of his body, a predisposition; and which was probably accelerated, by the change from a life of frequently robust exercise, to one of comparative repose.

His, was not however, the luxurious indulgence, of the pampered and bloated sensualist, but that relaxation which his years rendered desirable, and which family circumstances permitted him to enjoy.

Death, in its most natural and pleasing form, is revolting to the human mind. There is something in the word, the very recital of which under particular circumstances, has a tendency to chill the blood.

Hence, in many of the more ancient languages, they avoided the corresponding word, and expressed it by some circumlocutory phrase.

The ancient Romans in their funeral orations and monumental inscriptions, speaking of the deceased, expressing it, *he departed* or *past his last day*.

The same observation applies to the Celtic or Gaelic language (which is *one* of the *four* ancient languages, from which all others have been formed) in which the term death as applicable to the decease of any person, is rarely employed, but almost universally, *he has changed*, or *he has departed*.

But if death in its more common or natural form, is thus repulsive to nature, there is in a sudden death something indescribably appalling. To be instantaneously snatched away from all we knew—from all we loved,—Not the respite of a moment given to bestow in death the parting grasp on the hand of affection, to give our last fond blessing to the friend of our bosom, to our children—our kindred—to bid farewell to the world we are abandoning, or breathe a prayer preparatory to the world to which we are to be ushered.

Yet many a great and good man, has been thus called to his last

Audit; and many a sinner in the midst of his iniquitous career.

From such a death proceeding from physical, and secondary causes, no omen favourable or unfavourable can be drawn.

In this world, to use the language of the inspired writer, the same event happens to the righteous and to the wicked, to him that sacrificeth and to him that sacrificeth not. This uncertainty of human life, evinces the folly—the danger of delay, but though it is our duty to be ever in a state of preparation, yet, there are some seasons, in which the influence of religion is commonly felt with greater ardor and efficacy. The hour of sickness—the bereavement of a friend, or the pressure of any of the greater afflictions of life, have all a tendency to rouse the most inconsiderate to reflection. And assuredly if this has not that tendency, they increase our responsibility, and will make us more inexcusable in the great day of account.

Having thus briefly illustrated the manner in *which* the reasons why, and the period *when* we should prepare to meet God—permit me now according to our arrangement, to direct your attention to some of the more prominent and characteristic features of the lamented individual whose obsequies we are now attending.

There is something particularly difficult, and perhaps still more delicate in the delineation of human character. Every thing on earth, however valuable, has some contrasting defect. The purest water has its sediment—the finest gold has its alloy, and the spotless virgin snow no sooner touches our earth, than it is contaminated. And what is man in his best estate but a *wretched compound* in whom vice and virtue are continually striving for the mastery. But though viewed according to the standard of moral perfection, the most virtuous are woefully defective; there are comparative degrees of human excellence, which must command our respect, and invite our imitation. It is only through such a medium, and in such a light that it becomes us to estimate any person or detail *his characteristics*.

In his religious principles he was a Presbyterian according to the forms of the National Church of Scotland. But, from the la-

mentable situation of most interior places in this colony, as to the Public Ordinances of the Gospel, he had not the happiness for any stated period to enjoy the regular privileges of his own church ; nor indeed, that of any denomination.

It would be superfluous to expend time in proving (what is so evident to common observation) how much the religious character of man is modified according to the religious privileges he enjoys. If then, in the most highly favoured places, so much indifference and languor as to practical christianity prevails, it can be no matter of surprise, however to be deplored that in such an unprivileged section of the country as this, even the very forms of religion should be neglected and its most direct precepts violated. A section of the country, where no sacred temple with its towering spire points to heaven, where no joyful sound of the Sabbath-bell inspires blissful recollections—where the regular services of the sanctuary are unknown. This state of religious destitution had its natural influence on his mind. He admired religion generally, and more particularly the unpretending and simple forms of worship of his own Church.

He was temperate and moral in his habits, punctual in his attendance on public worship when an opportunity offered, and exemplary in all the varied relations of life, yet it must be admitted, that for too long a period, he did not devote that attention to the peculiar doctrines, or evangelical duties of religion, which their infinite importance demand. From this spiritual apathy, however, I am happy to say he appeared for sometime past to be roused. He took an active interest in the Branch Bible Society recently established in this place, and expressed his ardent hope that it might be the precursor of other kindred means to elevate the moral, and religious character of the Settler. And a few days previous to his decease, in a long and interesting conversation, that I had with him on the subject, he was extremely urgent that a Sunday School Union should be formed in this place ; stating at the same time forcibly, and minutely, the inestimable advantages derivable from such institutions, more especially in such unprivi-

privileged situations as this. And he felt sanguine that from the serious impressions which might thus be excited among the people, a general desire might be created for the acquisition of other and more public and spiritual privileges. It was under the influence of these renovated and better feelings that he terminated his earthly course, and we trust, not as Sterne so gracefully paints; that the tear of the Recording Angel has effaced his imperfections from the Register of Heaven, but *we trust* that the blood of the atonement has blotted out all his human frailties.

He was endowed with strong natural powers of mind, a retentive memory, vivid imagination, and sound judgment, and although his education was rather mercantile, than classical, or scientific, yet such was the natural force of his genius, the extent of his reading and the variety of his research, that he discovered an intimate acquaintance with all subjects of general interest or general literature, and was in his conversation, as pleasing as he was an instructive companion.

He was unaffected in his manners—easy and inartificial in his intercourse with society, he beheld with supreme contempt, or rather with the mingled emotions of scorn, and pity, all those who endeavoured to bolster their dignity, by a haughty deportment, absurd affectation, cold reserve or a manifest contempt of others.

How often have we seen him in his garden, in his parlour, or in the field, familiarly surrounded by a number of the villagers, or settlers cheerfully conversing with them on the common topics of the day, listening patiently to their tedious descriptions of their petty grievances—suggesting how they might be redressed, and urging the necessity of peaceful and industrious habits.

He felt an honest pride and pleasure in witnessing the increasing population and the progressive improvement of this settlement.

But while thus humble and familiar among his inferiors; when among his equals he displayed that dignified deportment and that versatility and ease of manner, which equally evinced his intelligence and good sense, and that he had been accustomed to move in the more enlightened circles of society.

He was benevolent in his disposition,—indiscriminate charity, even where there is the power, may rather be termed culpable prodigality, than laudable humanity, and as to the exercise of his private beneficence, suffice it to say, that very few meritorious objects appealed to his humanity in vain.

In his mercantile transactions which were generally extensive, and in which he met with his full proportion of that unpunctuality, and ingratitude often felt in that department of life, he was lenient and accommodating, and rare indeed are the instances in which he resorted to the ultimate step, which justice to himself rendered necessary.

But there was another point of view in which his benevolence was manifested in such a manner, as to merit, and to excite the general and sincere gratitude of this settlement. As there was no Physician in the place, he kept an amply supplied *Medicine Chest* and which, although in the first instance, procured for the benefit of his own family, was indiscriminately open to the necessitous. No one could appreciate, more than he did, the advantages of a Regular Medical Practitioner, in all the more critical diseases. But in the absence of such aid, he justly conceived it to be his duty, to the best of his knowledge, and means, to supply the deficiency, and from his careful perusal of Medical authors, his extensive observation and knowledge of the more common diseases of the country, he was *comparatively speaking*, well qualified to supply that deficiency.

Who of you ever applied to him for medical advice; either for yourself or friend, but it was judiciously and guardedly given, at the same time, furnishing the requisite medicines gratuitously.

He displayed his benevolence in his natural kind-heartedness— in his general desire to oblige, and equally so, in the mental pain he felt, when necessity, or a sense of propriety forbade the exercise of his beneficence.

He was liberal in his sentiments. The liberality of his sentiments, was equally exercised in religion—in politics, and in his general view of men and manners, while, then, he had a natural predilec-

tion for the Church in which he was educated ; he was too enlightened to think or speak harshly of any Church or Creed whatever. He conceived it to be the unquestionable right, and the incumbent duty of all to worship God according to the dictates of their own conscience, and that any attempt to impede the exercise of the natural rights of conscience, whether by *Penal Code*, legal restriction or any Civil Disability of whatever name, or nature, was spiritual tyranny, odious, and unprincipled persecution.

The ignorant and consequently illiberal Protestant, dooms his Catholic fellow christian to endless woe ; and the ignorant and fanatical Catholic is assuredly not less reluctant to consign his Protestant fellow-christian to irremediable misery,—Merciless bigots—well for us that they cannot command at pleasure, the thunderbolts of heaven, or control the counsels of the Almighty. Wherever they learned this nefarious part of their Creed, it was not in the School of Christ. Witness (among many others) the reply which our Saviour gave his disciples on two particular occasions. In the first of these, the disciples stated to their Divine Master, that they had met a man who wrought miracles in his name, and they forbade him ; as he did not follow them. Our Saviour disapproved their conduct, adding, that any person who thus openly professed him, could not be an enemy, and if not against him must be of his party, altho' for some particular reason, he did not publicly attach himself to their society. The other instance is when they were travelling through a particular village and had met with a harsh reception from the inhabitants.—The disciples wished Jesus to invoke fire from Heaven (as Elijah did of old) to consume the inhabitants, for their inhospitality. Let the answer of the Messiah be engraved on the heart of every bigot ; “Ye know not,” says Jesus, “what manner of spirit ye are of ; the Son of Man came to save, not to destroy.” Every christian then who takes the sacred volume as the standard of his religious sentiments will be liberal.

As the Almighty alone has the power, so it is his province alone, to acquit or condemn—let not us interfere with the exercise of his attributes, but rather adopt the well-known Prayer of the Poet.

Let not this weak unknowing hand,
 Presume thy bolts to throw,
 Or deal damnation round the land,
 On each I judge my foe.
 If I am right, thy grace impart,
 Still in the right to stay,
 If I am wrong, Lord teach my heart
 To find the better way.

He was liberal in his political sentiments. Though an ardent admirer of the principles of the British constitution, he did not conceive that this pledged him servilely, and indiscriminately, to approve of every administration Provincial or Imperial, that might for the day hold the reins of power, as this was a subject on which the most judicious might entertain opposing sentiments ; he regretted that a variance of opinion on this, should affect private friendship, excite suspicion of each other's loyalty, or lead them to brand each other with political heresy.

He was public spirited in his principles. While he took a warm interest in whatever related to public affairs in general, he was an active promoter of every public measure that lay more immediately within the sphere of his control or influence. I repeat then, and with confidence to an assembly among whom he was equally known, respected, and beloved, that his natural and acquired talents were of a superior order, that he was moral in his habits, benevolent in his dispositions, unaffected in his manners, liberal in his sentiments, public spirited in his principles, faithful in his various offices of public trust, and exemplary in his discharge of the relative duties of life.

The death of such an individual, would be a subject of general regret in any community—in this, it has made a void which cannot soon or easily be repaired. But the remembrance of man soon passeth away. We will soon forget him.

The memory of a Nelson who bore the British Thunders round the world, and whose name was synonymous with victory,—of a Sir John Moore, glorious in retreat as in conquest, and of a Can-

ning, whose principles of liberal policy were the admiration of all, save the Despot and the Bigot, even their names must soon fade from public recollection.

How transient then, must those of inferior note be. We will soon forget him; but all will not forget, there is one that never will, till she joins him in the silence of the grave.

Oh! often will his widowed consort, his wedded spouse for thirty-seven years, often will she turn her gaze towards the garden so much the scene of his recreation.

Others must now tend the shrubs, and flowers, and varied roots, must now prune and transplant and arrange the enclosures in the culture and judicious arrangement of which he passed many a pleasant hour.

In vain will she hope to see him walking among the parterres or seated in the bower. In the language of the Patriarch Job; "The eye that saw him shall see him no more, he shall return no more to his house, and the place which knew him shall know him no more."

Oh! often will she visit his sepulchre, and during the first distraction of her grief may haply exemplify the beautiful picture drawn by Blair, of similar distress.

The-new made widow, too, I've sometimes spy'd,
 Sad sight: slow moving o'er the prostrate dead,
 Listless she crawls along in doleful black,
 Whilst bursts of sorrow gush from either eye,
 Prone on the lowly grave of the dear man,
 She drops; whilst busy meddling memory
 In barbarous succession musters up
 The past endearments of their softer hours,
 Tenacious of its theme. Still, still she thinks
 She sees him, and indulging the fond thought,
 Clings yet more closely to the senseless turf;
 Nor heeds the passenger who looks that way.

The anniversary of his death will be during the remainder of her pilgrimage, a day which will revive all her love and all her woe. Oh! often in her evening walk, as she visits the hallowed

spot, she will watch the sunbeams as they gleam upon his grave, and pensively returning homeward, will deeply muse on his conjugal kindness and manly worth. At such a season the past will rush on her mind, mournful yet pleasant to her soul, and retiring to her lonely couch under the impression of such feelings—The faculties of the soul still active amidst the death-like sleep of night, she may haply see him in her midnight dreams, not shrouded with the ghastly paleness of the grave, not with the fading form of age, but majestic, blooming and enraptured as when their loves first began, and awaking with a sigh, will regret to find that the visions of night are more friendly to her peace, than the realities of day. We will soon forget him, but can his children! No, every dictate of humanity—every bond of natural affection—every feeling of gratitude—every sentiment of morality—every precept of religion equally forbid it. His presence will no longer cheer their domestic circle, preside at the hospitalities of the table, or superintend their affairs, but many a circumstance will ever present itself, tending to renew their remembrance and their conviction of their loss. The voice of instruction addresses them solemnly from his grave, exhorting them to cherish fondly the declining years of their surviving parent, to revere his memory, to imitate his virtues, and avoid his errors—to live in harmony with each other—to be diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. Is there a dutiful and affectionate wife in this assembly; you see before you the dissolution of the conjugal bond, and how our deepest sorrows spring from our purest joys. The fate of the aged matron before you may soon be yours—learn timely then, to wean your affections from earth, and to fix them on Heaven—Oh! learn timely to secure that inheritance which the stroke of death cannot impair, nor the conflagration of the world destroy, so that (should you be the survivor) when comes the day, that wrenches from your side the husband of your youth, the father of your children, the protector and solace of your life, you may have that consolation which this world can neither give nor take away.

Is there an undutiful son in this assembly; rest assured that by

your unfeeling conduct you are preparing thorns for your last pillow, you may now think lightly of your unnatural demeanor, but it is when you behold him an inanimate corpse before you, when you are stretching him on his last narrow bed—when you hear the echo of the shovelled dust as it falls upon his coffin and hides him for ever from your view.—It is when by a righteous judgment your own children may by their disobedience punish, even in this world, your unfilial carriage. It is then, that like Esau of old, you may be denied repentance though you seek it carefully with tears. Is there an undutiful father now hears me ; a parent that presumes by giving his children common protection he does his duty. The horrid monsters of the pathless deep—the most ferocious animal that ranges the deserts of Africa—the most savage and benighted native that roams the Isles of the Pacific does this, and can it suffice for thee ; Oh ! if you teach him not morality and religion as well as the common principles of education and industry, it had been infinitely better for thee that you had been the last of your race—that no child had ever called thee father—that you had never bowed assent to the baptismal engagement.

The hour is fast hastening, my friends, when each of us must also be borne to the house appointed for all living, some of us cut down suddenly, and some of us may linger long, till we implore death to terminate our sufferings, but we will alike lie down in the grave “ and the worms will cover us.” These eyes with which we now view the scene before us must soon be sealed in the darkness of the tomb, and those bosoms now throbbing with hope or love or sorrow, must soon be hushed, as the clod of the valley. But where will our undying souls be ? The sudden fate of the cold remains now extended on that bier proclaims the necessity of improving our time.

What is time’s worth ! ask death-beds ? they can tell.—If religion furnished a passport to the temple of fame, or to worldly aggrandizement, how ardently, how devotedly would we toil for its acquisition : and is the dignity of a citizen of heaven less to be desired than the admiration of mortals, or the splendor of rank. If

all our follies and vices were to be immediately punished by human statute, how circumspect would we be? and is the divine vengeance, not to be more dreaded than the erring and impotent arm of civil power; If all our culpable thoughts, words and actions were to be publicly registered; would it not operate as a restraint on the wanderings of our imagination and conversation. And has the Book of God's secret record, which will be published before assembled worlds, and decide our eternal destiny, less influence? Every thing is serious around us; the Sun, the Moon, the Stars, the seasons of the year, every animal but man answers the end of his creation. The Holy Spirit is serious in this day, exhorting us to prepare to meet God. God the Father was serious when he punished sin, in the fate of the Antedeluvian World—Sodom and Gomorah, and in the ancient Jews, Jesus was serious when he died on Calvary for sinners, and is it possible that we alone can remain triflers, for whose benefit, or for an example to whom all this transpired.

In conclusion, my brethren, let me ask! are there not some here, who make not even a profession of religion, and still more, who are satisfied with the cold form of Godliness? Remember, Oh! remember, that while under such circumstances God is your enemy. His smile is Heaven, but his frown is hell; His promises are enrapturing; but his threatenings who can bear? You are under sentence of eternal condemnation—how long, how short before the sentence can be inflicted, we know not.—And can you feel tranquil, or assume the appearance of gaiety under such circumstances? If so, it can originate only from hardened insensibility, from the delusions of imagination, from ignorance of your impending danger. So the wretched Maniac, thinks himself surrounded with the splendors of royalty, while stretched on straw, and clanking his fetters, even so, the condemned malefactor, the night previous to his execution, during the respite of sleep, may revel in his dreams, but how dreadful is his awakening! You are now exhorted to apply to the only fountain of mercy—Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved. Now he beseeches you to consider your

ways—He entreats you by the joys of Paradise and the misery of the lost—by his own shed blood, and your own immortal souls, by time and eternity, by all that is sacred in religion, in self-love, or in friendship—by all these motives, he pleads with you to think of the things that belong to your everlasting peace, before they are forever hid from your eyes.—But if you remain in your present situation, remember his thunder will not always sleep, nor his lightning be ever deferred. When the calamity—the desolation, the horrors of death will come, you may then shriek for help, but shriek in vain. But I trust that there are also many in this audience, who possess that Gospel hope which maketh not ashamed. Hold fast this confidence, for it is the pledge of your future inheritance. The heir of the amplest possessions is subject to restrictions, and may endure many privations, during his nonage. Yet his expectations inspire him with fortitude. Jesus had to pass through the furnace of affliction to the throne of glory. You are yet in your minority, but remember though you now sow in tears, you will reap in joy, continue stedfast in your Christian course, and in the hour when your Soul is returning to the God who gave it, your end will be peace. You will add another to the innumerable evidences which justify the Bard's description ;

“Sure the last end of the good man is peace.
Night-dews fall not more gently to the ground,
Nor weary worn-out winds expire so soft.”

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