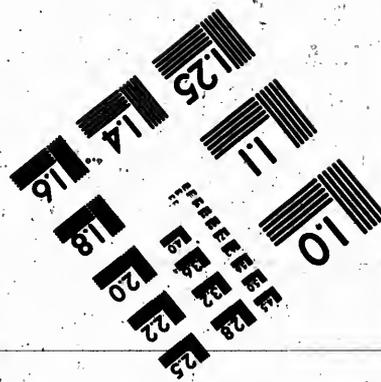
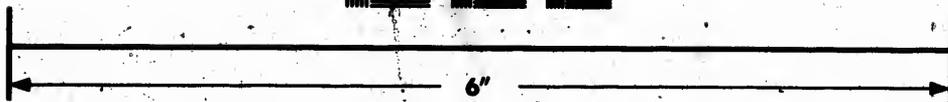
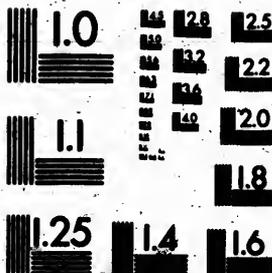


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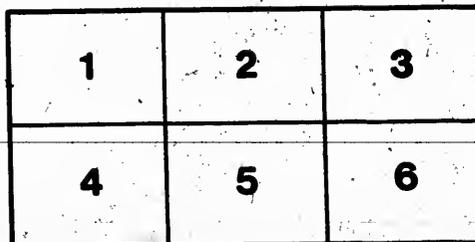
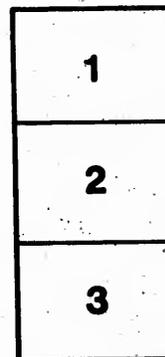
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THE JUDGMENTS OF GOD A CALL TO
REPENTANCE.

A SERMON,

PREACHED AT LA CHUTE, LOWER CANADA,

On TUESDAY, the 26th of JUNE, 1832,

WHICH DAY WAS DEVOTED TO THE EXERCISE OF FASTING AND PRAYER, IN THAT
SETTLEMENT, ON ACCOUNT OF THE ALARMING PROGRESS OF

THE CHOLERA MORBUS

In various parts of the Province.

BY

THE REV. WILLIAM BRUNTON.

TO WHICH IS SUBJOINED

AN APPENDIX,

CONTAINING

PART OF AN ADDRESS DELIVERED BEFORE THE LA CHUTE
TEMPERANCE SOCIETY,

On MONDAY, the 2nd of JULY, 1832.

MONTREAL:

PUBLISHED BY THOMAS A. STARKE.

1832.

LA CHUTE, 2nd July, 1832.

At a Quarterly Meeting of the La Chute Temperance Society held here this day, the REV. GEORGE POOLE in the Chair,—

*It was resolved unanimously,—*That the REV. WILLIAM BRUNTON be requested to furnish to a Committee of the Society a Copy of his Sermon, preached here on the 26th Ultimo, in order that it may be printed for the benefit of the Society.

It is now, accordingly, published by their authority.

THOMAS BARTON, *Vice President,*
JEDIDIAH LANE, *Secretary.*

TO THE
LA CHUTE TEMPERANCE SOCIETY,

THE FOLLOWING

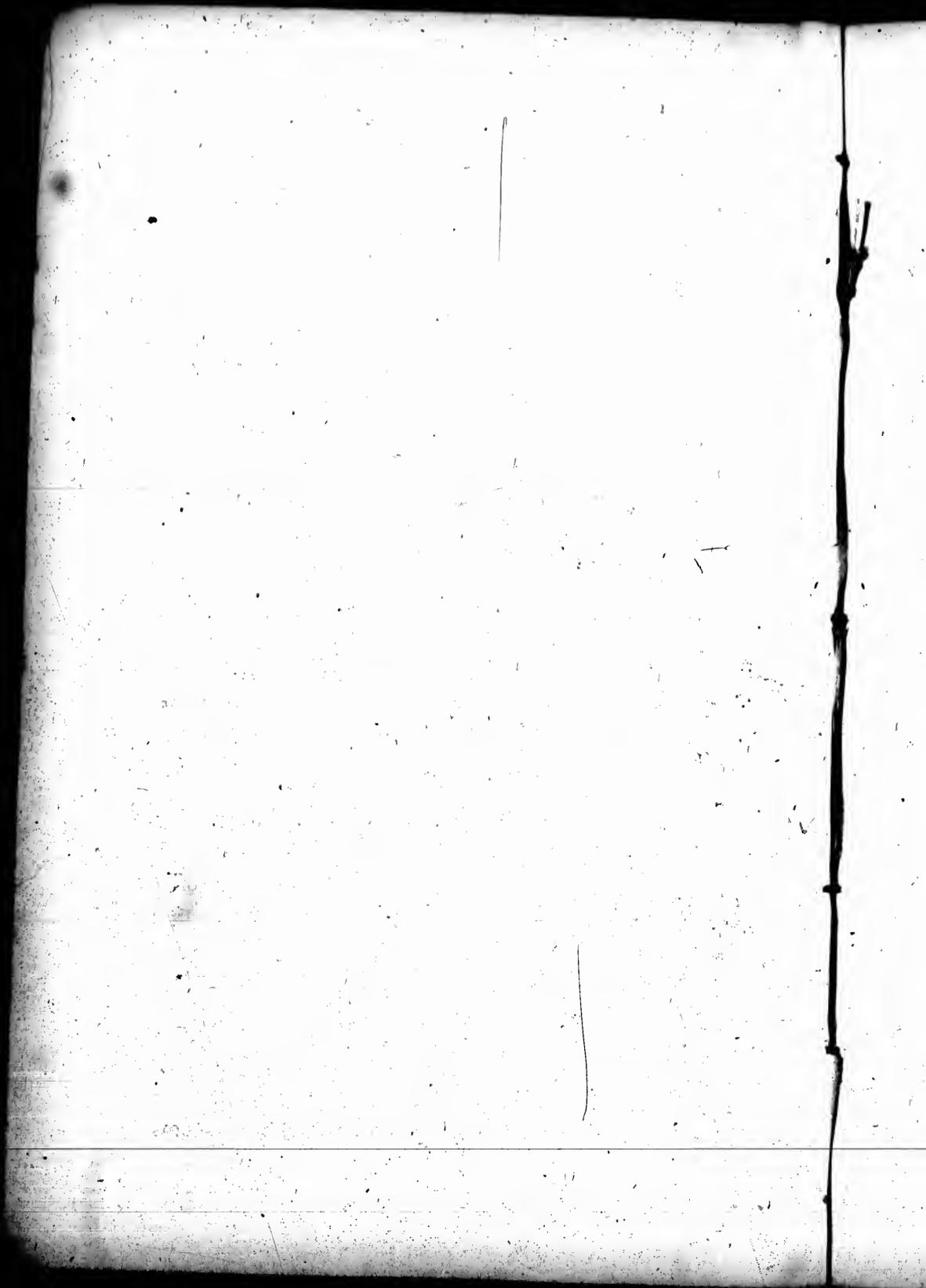
SERMON,

WHICH WAS HURRIEDLY PREPARED FOR THE OCCASION ON WHICH IT WAS
DELIVERED, AND PREACHED WITHOUT ANY IDEA WHATSOEVER OF ITS BEING
PRINTED, BEING NOW PUBLISHED, IN COMPLIANCE WITH THEIR UNEXPECTED
AND UNANIMOUS REQUEST,

Is respectfully Inscribed,

BY THEIR OBEDIENT SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.



S E R M O N .

JOEL ii. 12, 13.

“ Therefore also now, saith the LORD, Turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning ; and rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God ; for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.”

By these words of the inspired Prophet, the LORD of hosts graciously called upon the people of Judah to turn unto himself, after they had long been guilty of grievously provoking him, by their sinful ways, to write bitter things against them. It appears to be impossible to ascertain the precise period during which this prophet delivered the divine messages which his Book contains ; but as he makes no mention of the ten tribes, it seems probable that he prophesied after their captivity. He exhibits a striking representation of a most terrible famine in the land of Judea, occasioned by an extraordinary drought, and by prodigious swarms of various kinds of noxious vermin and destructive insects, which are particularly specified in the fourth verse of the first chapter. Although it may perhaps be impracticable to determine, with certainty, the period or event to which the description contained in the first chapter is particularly applicable, the prophet seems

evidently to combine two different calamities or judgments in one general delineation. Under that fearful devastation of the fruits of the earth, which was to be produced by the palmer worm and the locust, and by the canker worm and the caterpillar, he prophetically portrays a more distant and far more dreadful calamity, which was to be inflicted on the whole land of Judea, through the instrumentality of the Chaldean armies.—In the second chapter, the judgments of God are more generally denounced; and the denunciation is expressed in such forcible terms, and accompanied with such a combination of terrific circumstances, as to be apparently descriptive, in some degree, of that great day of final retribution, when “our God shall come, and shall not keep silence;” when “a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. He shall” then “call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people. And the heavens shall declare his righteousness; for God is Judge himself.” *

In the course of his prophecy, this faithful servant of God repeatedly directs the people of Judah to the exercise of fasting and prayer, as the means of obtaining deliverance from the calamities which he describes. He predicts their deliverance from the famine, and foretells the astonishing and most plentiful effusion of the Holy Spirit, upon great multitudes in the apostolic age; the accomplishment of which the Evangelist Luke has particularly recorded, in the second chapter of the Acts. He farther foretells the overthrow of

* Psalm l. 3, 4, 6.

- various heathen states and nations, and concludes his prophecy with comfortable promises of deliverance to the Jews in the latter days.

The words of our text are an inference from the foregoing part of the prophecy. They contain a most earnest and gracious exhortation to the ancient professing people of God, to turn unto himself as their own God in Christ, in the exercise of faith and repentance, and genuine reformation of conduct. And it must be remembered, that the words of our text are as certainly addressed to us this-day, as ever they were to the people of Judah. On account of our manifold heinous transgressions against God, he has already visited us with various judgments, both of a temporal and of a spiritual kind. And on account of our continued provocations and highly aggravated sins, he is yet continuing to threaten us with the infliction of severer judgments. Yet, notwithstanding this, in the exercise of his patience, and forbearance, and long-suffering, he is still most mercifully calling us to listen to his voice, in these gracious words, "Therefore also now, saith the LORD, Turn ye *even* to me with all your heart," &c.

In directing your meditations on this interesting passage of scripture, with a view to the object of our present exercise, I wish, with humble reliance on the aid of promised grace, briefly to illustrate a few doctrinal and practical observations, which appear to be natively deducible from it.

- I.—That the judgments with which God threatens and visits his professing people, are mercifully designed to excite them to repentance.

II.—That we ought never to consider the exercise of repentance as too late or unseasonable, while God is graciously pleased to call us to it.

III.—That it is our indispensable duty to turn unto the Lord immediately, without any delay.

IV.—That* genuine penitents will not rest satisfied with outward signs of repentance, nor with any external performances.

V.—That, without real conversion to God in Christ, no repentance can be acceptable in his sight.

VI.—That the new covenant characters in which God graciously reveals himself in his word, and his perfections as glorified in the mediation of Christ, ought powerfully to excite and encourage us to turn unto him, and to repent of all our sins.

I proceed to the illustration of these remarks, in the same order in which they have now been arranged. And may the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ savingly illuminate our naturally darkened minds, and lead us into the knowledge and belief, and love and practice of the truth as it is in Jesus.

L. That the judgments with which God threatens and visits his professing people are mercifully designed to excite them to repentance.

The truth of this observation is obvious from the connection between the passage before us and the foregoing part of the prophecy. The text itself consists of a most earnest and affecting exhortation, addressed to God's professing people, to turn unto him in the exercise of faith and genuine humiliation. And the greater part of the foregoing prophecy is a descrip-

tion of the judgments which, on account of their transgressions, were either threatened or inflicted upon them. And the Lord introduces the exhortation in the text in such a manner as clearly to manifest that, in subordination to his own glory, his great design in threatening and visiting his professing people with his judgments, is to stir them up to turn to himself, and unfeignedly to repent of all their iniquities. "The Lord shall utter his voice before his army: for his camp is very great: for he is strong that executeth his word: for the day of the Lord is great, and very terrible, and who can abide it. Therefore, also now, saith the Lord, Turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning, &c." It is our duty carefully to observe, and gratefully to consider, and rightly to improve the goodness and the mercy of God, as manifested even in his threatenings, and in the judgments which he inflicts. When he *threatens*, it is his gracious design that the execution of his threatenings may be prevented, by our turning from the ways of sin. And when he *executes* judgments, it is his merciful intention that the infliction of greater may be prevented, by our turning to himself, in obedience to his gracious invitations.

For a long time past, the judgments of God have been singularly abroad in the earth. In various kingdoms of Europe, and in other parts of the world, within these few years, war, which may justly be considered as the greatest of all the judgments with which sinful nations are visited, has prevailed to a very dreadful degree, and has swept many thousands of

sinful thoughtless men, in the very prime and vigour of life, out of the land of the living. By destructive fires, in many different parts of the world, many hundreds of families have been suddenly rendered destitute of habitations, and reduced to extreme indigence by the entire loss of their property. By the unexpected and unusually high inundation of many rivers,—by the stagnation of trade,—by obstructions thrown in the way of commerce,—by extensive commercial failures,—by the loss of vessels at sea,—by the death of cattle,—and by a great many other calamities, numbers of precious lives have been lost, and property to the amount of several millions. Judgments likewise of a spiritual nature have long been inflicted. The powerful operations and effectual influences of the Holy Spirit have, in very many parts of the visible church, been withholden in a very great degree from the ordinances of divine institution; and the preaching of the Gospel, and other means of spiritual instruction, have consequently been accompanied with comparatively little success. And because iniquity of almost every possible kind has long abounded, the love of many has waxed cold. Our iniquities have separated between us and our God; and our sins have hid his face from us; so that he may justly refuse to hear our prayers.

And that pestilential disease, called Cholera Morbus, which has often proved fatal in a most extreme degree, in Asia and in some parts of the European continent; and which, within these few months, has been the cause of sudden death to many thousands of the human family in England and Scotland, and Ireland and

France, has very recently been introduced into this province. Anticipating the probability of the introduction of this dreadful malady into his American territories, it was doubtless a very judicious and laudable measure, for the King of Britain to appoint a day of solemn fasting and humiliation to be observed throughout Lower Canada, for supplicating the Father of mercies to prevent the entrance of that awful calamity. And it was certainly proper for the civil authorities of the province to use means for the same purpose. Accordingly, Friday, the 4th of last month, was observed, through this province, as a day of solemn prayer and humiliation, for the prevention of Cholera. I recollect that on that day I observed—"If it be the determination of God to visit us with that calamity, as we may justly apprehend on account of our sins, all the means which can be used for preventing it, though highly proper to employ them, must inevitably prove ineffectual." And the event has since shewn, that God having determined to permit the entrance of that terrible disease into the province, on account of the idolatry, superstition, pride, profanation of the sabbath, ambition, covetousness, dishonesty, drunkenness, swearing, and numerous other immoralities, which had long prevailed, to a most lamentable and alarming degree, amongst almost every rank and order of the population, it was impossible that it could be prevented. It made its first appearance in Lower Canada, about the eighth or ninth day of this present month. In the two cities of this province, in which it began almost simultaneously, it has been rapidly and extensively destructive of human life. In Quebec

and Montreal, it has, within these fifteen or sixteen days, carried off many hundreds of our brethren, a large proportion of them in a few hours after being seized, into the eternal world. On some of these days, it has been calculated that, in these two towns, it has been ten or eleven times more fatal, in proportion to their population, than in London, or Edinburgh, or Paris, or any other city or town in Europe. In Montreal alone, it has been stated that, in one of these days, more than two hundred have died. And although its virulence is said to have greatly abated, for which we ought to be very thankful to God, it is certain that it still continues, and operates, and proves fatal in many instances. And there is great reason to apprehend its communication into the interior. From the contagious nature of this appalling disease, and especially from the low state of religion, and the general prevalence of iniquity, there seems to be too much reason to fear, that it may be permitted to extend its ravages into every village and seignior, and into every parish, and township, and settlement in the province. In that case, it may naturally be expected to carry along with it multitudes of the inhabitants into the world of spirits. Now certainly, we ought to learn righteousness, by means of every judgment which God inflicts. By means of this awful visitation, we ought unquestionably to be excited to repentance. If we do not thus improve it, we have reason to apprehend that, dreadful as it has been, it is only the forerunner of some more terrible judgment. If we do not improve this alarming calamity as a most powerful stimulus to genuine reformation; it will, in all pro-

bability, be the occasion of hardening us still more and more in our sinful courses, by which we shall render ourselves still more and more obnoxious to God's fiercest wrath.

II.—That we ought never to consider the exercise of repentance as too late or unseasonable, while God is graciously pleased to call us to it.

The people of Judah had long and obstinately persevered in the ways of sin. They had shockingly misimproved and perverted the patience of God, before he proceeded to visit them with those awful judgments which are spoken of in the foregoing part of this book. And when these signal judgments began to be actually inflicted upon them, they might perhaps through the native depravity of their hearts, be apt to imagine that it was then too late, and out of season, for them to turn from the ways of sin unto the Lord. But the Lord clearly shewed them, that it was not yet too late, by graciously calling them to turn unto himself. In imitation of the people of Judah, our provocations, against the Lord have been very many in numbers, and attended with high aggravations. We have long continued in the ways of sin. His patience and forbearance have been long exercised towards us. We have been visited with his judgments, and we have been hardened under them. We have been guilty of despising "the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering."* His goodness has not brought us to repentance, for we have refused to be reformed.

* Romans ii. 5.

But, notwithstanding these things, we ought by no means to imagine that it is now too late to repent of our sins, while God is still sparing us in the land of the living, and allowing us space for repentance, and mercifully calling us to turn unto himself. Be assured, my fellow sinners, that the LORD is yet waiting that he may be gracious. He is yet exalted, that he may have mercy upon you. He is not yet willing that you should perish. While he still mercifully permits you to remain on his foot-stool, and while you are yet favoured with the gracious calls and invitations of the Gospel; your turning unto the LORD, by accepting of Jesus Christ as your own Saviour, and by repenting of your sins, can never be unseasonable. But be assured that your repentance is absolutely necessary, that you may not perish in your iniquities. For Jesus Christ himself most expressly and repeatedly assures you that, "except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Now, it is impossible that you can repent, without turning unto the LORD. For faith in Jesus Christ, which the Scriptures identify with turning unto the LORD, is the only source of genuine repentance. This faith is the gift of God. And "God hath with his right hand exalted Christ a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to sinners, and the forgiveness of sins."* Let it therefore be your most earnest prayer, that it may be given unto you, in the behalf of Christ, to believe in his name.† And turn unto the LORD, with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning,—and turn unto the LORD your God.

* Acts v. 31.

† Phillipians i. 29

III.—That it is our indispensable duty to turn unto the Lord immediately, without any delay.

“Therefore also, *now* saith the Lord, Turn ye even to me, &c.” That “delays are dangerous,” is a proverbial saying, which has been very frequently verified. But in no other case whatever are delays half so dangerous, as in the essential exercise of turning unto the Lord, to which he is now graciously calling us. Seriously consider, Gospel hearer, this most gracious call and commandment of God in Christ, *now* to turn unto him. Consider that you are bound, indispensably bound, by the infinite authority of the Three-One-God, by your own profession and engagements, and by your own best interests, to turn unto him, with all your heart, without delay. Consider the unspeakable importance of this exercise, to which God is graciously pleased to call you. By turning unto God in Christ, with all your heart, and with all your soul, and without delay, you will glorify him most acceptably; and your own best interests in time, and your complete happiness through eternity, will be infallibly secured. It must surely be good for you to draw near unto God in Christ; for they that are far from him shall perish.*—Consider the shortness and the absolute uncertainty of your time: “For what is your life? it is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.”† A moment’s reflection may shew you that you have no time to lose. There is no time which you can warrantably consider as your own but the present moment.

* Psalm lxxiii. 27, 28.

† James iv. 14.

Promise not therefore on the time to come. But improve the precious time which you now enjoy, by turning immediately unto the LORD, as your own God in Christ, without one single moment's delay, in obedience to his most gracious invitation. *Now*, saith the LORD, Turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, &c. "Boast not thyself of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."* Defer not, O Gospel-hearer, to obey the most kind and gracious invitation contained in the text, expecting to have a more proper opportunity for complying with it, at some future period. Every expectation of this kind is vain and groundless. Consequently every delay, which is founded on such an expectation, must be perfectly unreasonable and full of danger. Another opportunity for glorifying God, by cordially complying with his gracious will, as expressed in the passage under consideration, you may *perhaps* never have. And a more proper opportunity for attending to this most important duty, it is absolutely certain you never can enjoy. For "behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation."†

IV.—That genuine penitents will not rest satisfied with outward signs of repentance, nor with any external performances.

In ancient times, the professing people of God were accustomed to rend their clothes, in seasons of deep sorrow and mourning. But the real believer in Christ, who is the only true penitent, will be far from

* Proverbs, xxvii. 1.

† 2 Corinthians vi. 2.

satisfying himself with such external signs of sorrow. He is deeply convinced that, by his sins, he has done inexpressible dishonour to God, who is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and who cannot look on iniquity, but with infinite abhorrence. He knows that "the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit."* He therefore wishes, as God requires him, to rend his heart and not his garments. If you, professing Christian, be a real penitent, you will be deeply affected with grief of heart, on account of your sins, not only because they expose you to the judgments of God in time, and to his indignation for ever; but chiefly because they are offensive to God, wounding to Jesus Christ, and vexing to the Holy Spirit. You will hate sin, because it affords to the great adversary of your soul, the only gratification of which he is susceptible; and because it defiles your own heart and conscience, and consequently disqualifies you for the service and enjoyment of God. If you, O Gospel hearer! be indeed a genuine penitent, and be deeply affected with a proper sense of the great dishonour which is done to the God of infinite holiness, by your own sins and by the sins of the generation in general, you will not be satisfied with outward appearances of sorrow for sin, on days of public fasting and humiliation. You will penitentially confess your sins in secret before the Lord. It will be your habitual desire and endeavour to search your own heart, that you may know, still more and more, the deceits and spiritual abominations which lodge in it. You will earnestly supplicate the throne

* Psalm li. 17.

of grace, that God may discover you to yourself, that you may clearly and penitentially discern the powerful principles of sin which exist in your soul, and that consequently you may be excited to have the more earnest recourse, for deliverance from them, unto Jesus Christ, whose precious blood cleanseth from all sin. And you will make conscience of improving these discoveries of yourself, as so many motives to excite you to the exercise of true holiness. Viewing yourself as the chief of sinners, and confiding in Christ as your all-sufficient Saviour, you will be humble, vigilant, and grateful. And relying on the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit, you will be desirous of being excited to the exercise of deeper humility, under the conviction of sin; of greater watchfulness against iniquity; and of purer heart-felt gratitude for the inexpressibly precious blessing of divine forgiveness. While you bring forth fruits meet for repentance, while you carefully study to walk in the way of the divine commandments, and to do every thing which God enjoins on you, you will conscientiously disclaim all reliance on your own performances. And you will place your whole dependance, for pardon of sin, for acceptance with God, and for all the blessings of eternal life, on the finished work of Jesus Christ your glorious surety.

IV. That without real conversion to God in Christ, no repentance can be acceptable in his sight.

Fasting, and weeping, and mourning, are external indications of repentance. But unless those who fast, and weep, and mourn, have truly turned unto the

Lord, their repentance itself, and all the indications and evidences of it, will be perfectly unacceptable in his sight. When persons are under the judgments of God, or apprehensive that they are near at hand, they often apparently repent of their sinful courses. Their repentance, however, is frequently superficial. It too generally consists in appearance, or it is confined to particular sins, which are notorious and obvious to the view of the world. But repentance can never be genuine, or truly acceptable to God, so long as the person's state is not changed by regenerating grace, or so long as he has not actually turned unto the Lord, by believing in Jesus Christ, for the pardon of all his sins, and for complete salvation. The fruit cannot be good, unless the tree be good which produces it. So, in like manner, unless a person be himself truly good, through union to Jesus Christ, it is impossible that his repentance can meet with the approbation of God. So long as he has not truly turned unto the Lord with his whole heart, and remains ununited to Christ as his living and life-giving head, his very best performances are, in the sight of the heart-searching God, only dead works. His repentance still need to be repented of. Accordingly, in the exhortation to repentance in the passage before us, God begins with exhorting his professing people to turn unto himself. In exhorting his people to turn unto himself, he not only deals with them as with rational creatures; but with the exhortations, and calls, and invitations of his word, he also imparts power or inclination to obey them. He works in his people both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

He fulfils in them all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power. Examine yourself, therefore, professing Christian, whether your repentance be sincere and genuine. Have you truly turned unto the LORD? Have you turned unto him with all your heart? Have you, in good earnest, given your heart unto him, in obedience to his gracious command? Are you unfeignedly grieved in your mind, on account of the very great dishonour which you have done to each of the persons in the adorable Trinity, by all your sins, and especially by your unbelief and impenitence? Do you now believe on the Son of God? Do you truly believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, equal with the Father in every divine perfection? And do you humbly repose your hope and your confidence in him, as your Almighty Saviour? In fine, is it your real desire and fixed determination, with dependence on promised mercy, cleaving unto the Lord, with full purpose of heart, to walk in all his commandments and ordinances blameless? and to serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness unto him all the days of your life? If you be able, with sincerity and truth of heart, to give an affirmative answer to these few inquiries, you may warrantably infer, that your repentance is genuine and acceptable in the sight of God. You may be certain that it is a fruit of faith in Christ, and a consequence of divine forgiveness through his most precious blood. In short, you may be fully assured, that it is that very repentance which God requires in our text, and which could never have been produced in your heart, without the saving operation of his Holy Spirit. But if you

can give only a negative answer to these inquiries, or if you are entirely careless and unconcerned about these things, you may be very certain that you are yet in your natural state. In this case, there can be no doubt that you have never truly turned unto the Lord, and that you are still most justly exposed to his everlasting vengeance.

VI.—That the new-covenant characters in which God graciously reveals himself in his word, and his perfections as glorified in the mediation of Christ, ought powerfully to excite and encourage us to turn unto him, and to repent of all our sins.

In the first verse of our text, the gracious commandment of God to us, is thus expressed—“Turn ye *even* to me, saith the Lord, with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning.” This most gracious commandment is repeated in the second verse of our text, in these words—“And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God.” And in the conclusion of the text, this two-fold commandment is enforced, by these most important and comfortable reasons—“For He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.” Whatever God is, and whatever he will be, to the finally unbelieving and impenitent, it is certain that, to every true convert and to every genuine penitent, he will manifest himself to be the God of grace, and the Father of mercies. Be exhorted, therefore, professing Christians, to be fully persuaded, that God is indeed gracious, and merciful, and of great kindness. Behold

him, as revealed and reconciled in Jesus Christ, the Son of his love; and firmly believe that in him, he will be gracious, and merciful, and of great kindness to you. When you are most deeply convinced of your sins as violations of the divine law, and most deeply humbled under the conviction of their incalculable number and high aggravations, remember that God has manifested that—"he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness," by making Jesus Christ, his infinitely beloved Son, who knew no sin, to be sin or a sin-offering for sinners, that they might be made the righteousness of God in him.* When you have the most penetrating conviction of the real desert of your sins—when you most clearly perceive that you justly deserve the everlasting indignation of God, as the proper reward of your iniquities, believingly remember that Jesus Christ has endured the wrath of God to the uttermost, in the stead of all those who confide in him as the LORD their righteousness. Believingly contemplate the precious new-covenant characters, in which God has been graciously pleased to reveal himself to sinners of our race. In ancient times, he revealed himself as—"The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin."† And although he "will by no means clear the guilty," and although he "is a consuming fire" to all those who finally persevere in unbelief and impenitence, or who continue to the end of their lives in

* 2 Corinthians v. 21.

† Exodus xxxiv. 6, 7.

the love and commission of sin; he hath no pleasure in the death or ruin of sinners, but most earnestly exhorts, and most compassionately entreats them, to turn unto himself and live.* He most graciously reveals himself as "in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them."† You may be fully assured, that all the perfections of God are most eminently glorified, in the mediation of Christ. It is in his substitution and satisfaction, that "Mercy and truth are met together; and that righteousness and peace have embraced each other."‡ And it is in consequence of his substitution in the place of the guilty, and in virtue of his satisfaction to divine justice, by his obedience, and sufferings, and death in their stead, that the God of infinite holiness and inflexible justice, is not only just and righteous, in justifying the ungodly who believe in Jesus, but is also most eminently glorified in bestowing upon the very chief of sinners all the inconceivably precious blessings of everlasting salvation.§

Let these considerations powerfully excite and encourage you, my professing Christian brethren, to turn unto God, from whom you have deeply revolted. Let them powerfully and irresistibly induce you to come unto God through Jesus Christ, who is the only way to the Father, to heaven, and to eternal life. Let them powerfully and delightfully constrain you to accept of Jesus Christ, the unspeakable gift of God, and to depend upon him alone for complete salvation.

* Ezek. xviii. 32. † 2 Cor. v. 19. ‡ Psalm lxxv. 10.
§ Rom. iii. 26, v. 29, 30; 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10, 11; 1 Tim. i. 15.

And in turning unto God, as your own God in Christ, it is indispensably requisite that you repent of all your iniquities. You must forsake them with contrition of heart. You must "rend your heart and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God." Without deep contrition of heart, or true sorrow for sin, proceeding much more from love to God, than from a fear of punishment, there can be no real turning unto the Lord. Your heart ought to be deeply affected with grief, on account of all your sins, particularly your unbelief and impenitence, as infinitely offensive and hateful to the God of infinite purity. In turning unto God, as your own God, it must be your fixed resolution, with reliance on his grace, that as you have done iniquity, you will do no more; but that you will henceforward walk in the righteous ways of the Lord. Without such genuine rending of the heart, on account of sin, and without the habitual practice of sobriety, righteousness, and godliness, all professions and all appearances of repentance must be vain and hypocritical. Indeed, they cannot fail to be vile and detestible in the sight of the thrice holy God.*

To conclude. Let us all be deeply concerned rightly to improve the dispensations of Providence. Let us always stand in awe of the righteous judgments of God. And when his judgments are so terribly abroad in the earth, as they are at present, let us all learn righteousness. Let us all seriously consider the infinite evil of sin. It must, doubtless, be an infinite evil, since it exposes and subjects innumerable multi-

* Isaiah i. 10.—15.

tudes of mankind to the judgments of the Almighty in time and in eternity.—Be prepared, Christian, for whatever dispensations, or trials, or sufferings may be awaiting you. You know not what a day may bring forth: but you know that it is your duty, at all times, and in every condition and circumstance, to exercise a humble steadfast reliance on Christ, and a quiet unfeigned resignation to the will of God, as your own God in him. And you know assuredly that he will make all events conducive to your welfare, both here and hereafter.* You know that death itself is one of your privileges, in consequence of your connection with Christ.† You have, therefore, no reason to be servilely “afraid for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noon day.”‡ The Cholera Morbus, that dreadful pestilential malady, which has recently proved fatal to so many hundreds of our brethren in this province, and which is still continuing its ravages, may be no object of terror to you. You can have no reason to be servilely afraid of it. It cannot possibly come nigh you, without the permission and appointment of your Redeeming God. If it do seize you, it can do you no real harm. If you even fall a victim to it, it will do you inexpressible good. The more quickly it executes its commission, you will be the more speedily delivered from this world of sin and of sorrow, and the sooner admitted into those blessed regions when “the inhabitants shall no more say, I am sick;

* Rom. viii. 28. † I Cor. iii. 22. ‡ Psalm xci. 5—6.

for the people that dwell there are forgiven their iniquity."

And be exhorted, O unbelievers! who are yet in your natural state, seriously to consider the great goodness of God, in still prolonging the day of your merciful visitation. On account of your numerous sins of heart and of life, of omission and commission, God might justly have cast you long since into the place of woe, where his mercy is clean gone for ever. He might justly now give commission to that appalling disease, which is prevailing in the province, to seize upon you, and to remove you very suddenly into the regions of eternal misery. You have reason to be afraid of that dreadful malady, especially if you be, in any degree, addicted to intemperance. For although, in the holy sovereignty of God, many individuals of sober habits, and persons of genuine piety, have fallen victims to this awful disease; it appears, from all the accounts which I have seen, that persons of intemperate habits have formed a very large majority of its victims. But, although you may be perfectly free of intemperance, you are guilty of other sins, every one of which deserves the indignation of God. And although he may never permit you to be attacked by the Cholera, there are a thousand other arrows in his quiver. The gate of death is open. You are liable to death every day. You are liable to it every hour. And in whatever form it may assail you, or in whatever form it may come, if it overtake you in your present state of unbelief and impenitence, it will most certainly carry you into the regions of woe, where you must inevitably be subjected to the wrath

of God for ever. You are yet in the place of hope. The day of salvation is not yet terminated. In the great, unmerited, and astonishing goodness of God, the day of your merciful visitation is still prolonged. Improve this goodness, by turning unto God in Christ. He is still mercifully calling you to turn unto himself. He is still waiting that he may be gracious. Let him not call and wait in vain, by disregarding his gracious voice. Let him no longer have reason to address you in these heart-rending words, in which he will sooner or later address all the finally impenitent. "Because I have called and ye refused, I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded: But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof; I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh: When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you."*

"Turn unto the LORD your God; for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil." Submit to Jesus Christ, who hath come in the name of the LORD to save you. Accept of him, and confide in him as your own Saviour, that you may not perish in your sins. And believing in him and repenting of all your iniquities, you shall be saved with an everlasting salvation.

* Proverbs i. 24—27.

APPENDIX.

BETWEEN the years 1793 and 1816, many institutions have been formed for the benefit of mankind. Between these two periods the Missionary Societies, the Bible Societies, the Tract Societies, and the Peace Societies, have been instituted. The object of all these institutions, however diversified their operations, is only one and the same. It is to afford the purest gratification to the benevolent mind of every genuine philanthropist, by circumscribing the boundaries of the kingdom of the god of this world,—by diminishing the sum total of human wretchedness,—by widening the sphere, and accelerating the progress, of true Christian morality;—in fine, by promoting the temporal welfare, and securing the future happiness of countless millions of mankind.

To all these laudable institutions the TEMPERANCE SOCIETY, of much more recent origin, having been formed at Boston, in the State of Massachusetts, so lately as February, 1826, must be considered as a most necessary and effective auxiliary. Drunkenness had long prevailed in the United States, in Great Britain, and in other countries, to such an alarming degree, that it was annually the occasion and the cause of the premature death of many thousands of the human race. The respectable and benevolent projectors of the Temperance Society were, as might have been anticipated, subjected to much contempt and obloquy. Multitudes of the sons of intemperance naturally viewed their laudable attempts as perfectly absurd and unnecessary, and turned them into ridicule. And a great majority, or at all events, a very large proportion of those who were sober and temperate, while they wished success to their enterprise, considered their praiseworthy efforts as almost entirely visionary. They could not allow themselves to anti-

icipate the hundredth part of the success with which their important and most necessary exertions have already been happily crowned.

Among the numerous considerations which clearly shew the impropriety, the absurdity, the criminality, and the danger of drunkenness, there is not one of such magnitude and importance as that which respects the final destiny of confirmed and finally impenitent drunkards. What do the Scriptures of truth declare respecting their final destiny? In different passages they expressly assure us that "they shall not inherit the kingdom of God."* Against the degrading and most lamentably prevalent practice of drunkenness, this consideration alone contains the force of ten thousand arguments. Since we are absolutely certain that there is a future state of existence which shall endure for ever, and since we know assuredly that during all the ages of that interminable state, happiness shall be exclusively enjoyed by those who shall inherit the kingdom of God, what must be the eternal condition of those by whom that kingdom shall not be inherited? Ah! my brethren, the misery of their condition, through the ages of eternity, shall be so extreme, and so exquisitely dreadful, that it cannot be described in the language of mortals. The language of the inspired writers can enable us to form only a faint idea of their inexpressible misery. At the great day of final retribution, Jesus Christ shall command them to depart from him, as accursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. Submission to this command is obviously incompatible with the possession of happiness. This command they shall all be perfectly unable to resist. As soon as it shall be pronounced by Christ, they shall all, without exception, go away into everlasting punishment. Their consciences, which have often been *dormant* while they indulged in intemperance, shall be eternally *awakened* against them. They shall upbraid them with all their sins, and especially with their drunkenness, which so eminently contributed to shut the gates of heaven

* 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10; Gal. v. 19-21.

against them, and to bring them to the regions of eternal woe. In those most dismal regions they shall suffer the wrath of God, without one moment's intermission,—without the smallest mixture of mercy,—and without the possibility of their indulging a hope of the slightest alleviation of their misery through never-ending ages. And the smoke of their torment shall ascend up for ever and ever. As certainly as God himself exists, and is faithful to his threatenings, such shall be the terrible portion of every habitual and finally impenitent drunkard. What a lamentable infatuation, for persons endowed with reason and conscience, and capable of reading and understanding the Scriptures, to expose and subject themselves to such inconceivable misery, for the sake of indulging an unhallowed desire of drinking ardent spirits!

To rescue our brethren, who have unhappily addicted themselves to the custom of drinking such liquors, from the danger of being subjected to that indescribable and eternal misery, to which inebriation exposes them; and to prevent the rising generation from copying their demoralizing and most pernicious example, is the important and benevolent design of every Temperance Society. This God-glorifying and soul-saving object may, in a certain degree, be promoted by every individual here present. One of the very least degrees of that self-denial, which is essential to the character and practice of a genuine Christian, is all that is requisite for any person of sober habits to become a member of a Temperance Association. Those who are truly religious, and are distinguished by habits of sobriety, are the very persons chiefly who ought to become members of Temperance Societies. And of such persons, it may reasonably be believed, Societies of this description are chiefly composed. These Societies, however numerous as they now are, in the States, in Scotland, in England, and in Canada, are still far from comprehending in any one of these countries, all those to whom this honourable character justly belongs. The holding aloof from such Societies has hitherto been lamentably common among many

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persons who are truly religious, and distinguished by habits of sobriety. This must certainly be owing to their not paying proper attention to the subject. Were they duly to consider the subject in its various bearings, they would soon perceive that those reasons which have kept them from avowedly countenancing the Temperance cause, are quite insufficient. Let no such person say, "It is needless to become a member of a Temperance Society, while some who are members do not observe the rules which they have subscribed, and indulge in drinking ardent spirits, when they have an opportunity, or whenever a temptation presents itself to such an unhallowed indulgence." There are no doubt individuals who violate their subscription. It is to be hoped they are few in number. But although they were far more numerous than they are, their unworthy conduct ought by no means to prevent others from becoming members, who would act more properly. Let every one who possesses a real regard to the glory of God and the welfare of mankind, and who has hitherto kept back from becoming a member of a Temperance Society, on account of the reason above stated, seriously consider whether or not the apostasy of Judas, would have warranted Matthias to refuse to become an Apostle? Or, when many of the disciples of Christ went back, and walked no more with him, would their treacherous conduct have justified any individual, who afterwards heard the gospel, in refusing to become a disciple of the Saviour?

Let no person of sober habits abstain from patronizing the Temperance cause, supposing that his temperate habits are a sufficient reason for his not becoming a member. Let him not say, as too many have done, "I have always been accustomed to take a little spirits now and then; I have seldom or never gone to excess; and it is needless for me now, for my short remaining time, to deny myself the use of them. What good could I possibly do by becoming a member of a Temperance Society? The Apostle Paul might with as much propriety have said—"I have been accustomed to the eating

of flesh; I have never eaten it riotously, or to excess; God allows me the use of it; I am not conscious of any harm that can result from the use of it: I am therefore determined to use it as long as I can. Why should I not use it?" But in all his writings, we never read that he used such expressions as these. We find that he used a very different language—"If meat make my brother to offend," said he, "I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend." To every person of sober habits, and especially to every true Christian, I do earnestly recommend, and were the Apostle himself now in our world, I believe he would still far more earnestly recommend the immediate imitation of this generous and most excellent example, with reference to the use of ardent spirits. Your abstaining from drinking such intoxicating liquids, though ever so moderately, excepting as a medicine, can do you no harm. Your drinking them, unless for a medical purpose, can do no good to yourself. But your abstaining from them, and becoming a member of a Temperance Institution, may do much good indeed, both to yourself and to others. It will afford you the pure pleasure which arises from a consciousness of having done your duty. It will enable you to say—"If any of those around me drink to their own hurt, they cannot impute their practice, nor the injury which it does them, to my example." It may be the means of inducing some individual friend, or relative, or acquaintance, in whose welfare you certainly feel an interest, to desist from a custom which, of all others, is the most demoralizing, and degrading, and ruinous. In fine, your example may, through the blessing of God, be the means of preserving a number of mortal immortal beings from forming habits, which, when finally and impenitently persevered in, do most infallibly lead to everlasting destruction.

FINIS.

