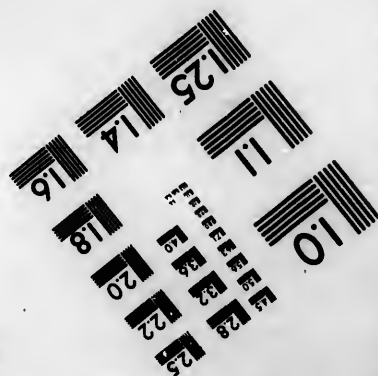
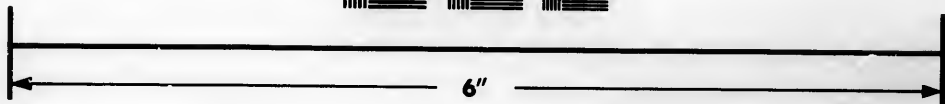
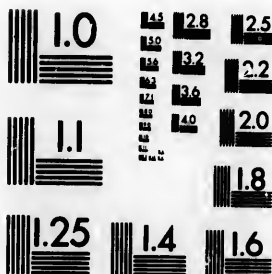


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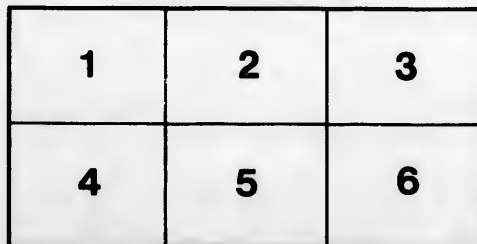
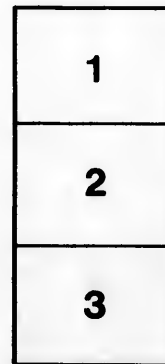
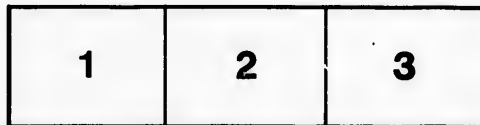
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à

THE

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN

CHRIST CHURCH,

FREDERICTON,

APRIL 6th, 1823,

THE DAY AFTER THE FUNERAL OF HIS EXCELLENCY MAJOR-GENERAL

GEORGE TRACEY SMYTH,

Lieutenant-Governor and Commander-in-Chief

OF THE

PROVINCE

OF

NEW-BRUNSWICK:

BY THE

*Reverend JAMES SOMERVILLE, A. M. Chaplain
upon Frederick's Missionary at Douglas
fellow in college. He died at Seblane*

PUBLISHED AT THE REQUEST OF HIS EXCELLENCY'S EXECUTORS.

*Came to
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THE following Discourse was not originally intended for the Publick eye, as it was composed in extreme haste; of which the intelligent Reader will find many marks. It is given to the World, solely at the particular request of HIS EXCELLENCY'S Executors, and others of his Friends, who wished to possess, even, this frail memorial of departed worth. It may to some appear strange, that a particular Address should have been made to the Young, in a Sermon preached upon such an occasion; but there were circumstances at the time, which rendered it a duty imperiously incumbent upon me, to say what I have done. There is none more sensible of the defect of this Performance, than I am myself; but if it shall be the means, by the Divine blessing, of leading any to serious thought, and consideration, "to the things which belong to their eternal peace, before they are for ever hid from their eyes", I will deem myself amply recompensed for my labour.

J. S.

Fredericton, May 7th, 1823.

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PSALM xxxvii, 37.---“ *Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace.*”



THE Psalm from which the words now read, have been selected, as the subject of our present meditation, deserves our most serious consideration. It contains many precepts, fraught with sentiments of deep piety, and replete with the justest moral reflections. An admirable contrast is drawn in it, between the condition of him who serves the Lord in sincerity and truth, and who reposes his trust and rests his hope upon God, and that man who confides in his own heart, and departs from the rock of his salvation.

Thus at the 30th verse, “The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of judgment. The law of his God is in his heart ; none of his steps shall slide. Wait on the Lord, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land : when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it. I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay-tree. Yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not ; yea, I sought him, but he could not be found.” Then follow the words of the text, “Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright : for the end of that man is peace.”

The subject naturally divides itself into two distinct propositions: "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright,"---this is the example and model set before us to contemplate, and which we are to imitate in our own lives and conversations. The next is, the consequence, or the reward of the virtues before mentioned, viz. "the end of that man is peace." It is evident, that the word here translated perfect, does not, and cannot, mean an absolute, a sinless perfection, or a total exemption from the frailties and failings incident to our weak, corrupt, and degenerate nature. Such a state has never been attained on earth, excepting by our blessed Lord, when he assumed our nature, and exhibited to all his followers an example, without blemish and without spot. The perfection, then, meant in the words of the Royal Psalmist, is evidently not an absolute, but a relative perfection. It refers to all those, who, although not leading a life of sinless obedience, or angelical purity, do nevertheless endeavour to come as near to the standard of faith and good works, set before them in the word of God, as they possibly can. Noah is said to have been a just man, and a perfect, because in the midst of a most wicked generation, when all flesh had corrupted their ways upon earth, he still maintained his integrity, and his heart was right before the Lord, and by his faith and steady adherence to the commands of God, he condemned the perverse world around him. And in the 17th chapter of Genesis, God says to Abraham, "walk before me, and be thou perfect," that is, be not led away by the apostacy from the true God, by following the idolatrous practices, already beginning to overspread the world, but maintain the faith, and profess the worship, of one Supreme God, Lord of Heaven and Earth, in opposition to the lying vanities of the Heathen. The same, when Job is said to have been perfect, that is, that he was a Patriarch, eminently distinguished for justice, integrity, benevo-

lence, piety, patience, and resignation to the will of Heaven. And in the New Testament, when our Lord says, (St. Matt. 5, 48) "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect," His meaning, as is evident from the context, is a perfection of benevolence, viz. that we are to exclude none from our kind wishes and hearty prayers, but that we are to entreat for those who despitely use us; and, in imitation of the universal benignity of the Great Parent of us all, do good to those who persecute us: for he sendeth rain upon the just and the unjust, and maketh his sun to rise upon the righteous and the wicked. The Scripture idea, then, of a perfect man, is, one who sincerely endeavours to find out the will of God, and sets himself with vigorous resolution, with humble dependence upon Divine aid, to keep the Commandments of God, in all his thoughts, words, and actions---who thinks it not sufficient to observe the law of God in some particulars, whilst he neglects it in others---who not only practises the virtues which his natural constitution inclines him to, or those which will promote his temporal interest and credit in the world---but who is ready ever to sacrifice a right eye, or a right hand, to part with every sinful inclination, however natural, and however dear, which would obstruct him in the way of his salvation. In fine, one who endeavours to stand perfect, and complete in all the will of God; who adds to his "faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity."

These duties are evidently progressive, and not to be acquired at once, or wrought within the soul by instantaneous and mysterious conversion, as some sects of Christians have most falsely imagined, but are to be gradually attained by repeated and persevering efforts; "for

the path of the Just (as Solomon beautifully expresses it) is as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day." The upright man, is merely a repetition of the same idea, according to the genius and idiom of the Hebrew language, for uprightness or integrity between man, is necessarily included in the idea of perfection, and forms an integral part of it. Such is the character which the Royal Psalmist exhorts and commands us to observe, and attentively to consider, as a pattern by which we should fashion and frame our own conduct. "Mark the perfect man," that is, view him not simply with admiration and esteem, but sedulously endeavour to imitate his virtues, and to cultivate those dispositions of mind, which render him acceptable in the sight of God, and venerated in the eyes of man. View him in the several relations in which Divine Providence has placed him, see how he performs the different duties which the rank and station he holds in society require of him, and endeavour to transplant these into your own life and conversation. Jesus Christ is, no doubt, to us, who profess ourselves to be his disciples, the perfect model of a good life, and we ought in every thing to look to him, not only as "the author and finisher of our faith," but as a complete example of every moral virtue; "for he hath left us an example that we should follow his steps." But we are also, by St. Paul, commanded to be imitators of the Saints, as they were of Christ Jesus. And when we see men compassed round with infirmity like ourselves, subject to the same passions, and exposed to the same, or even greater, temptations, than we are, yet absolutely persisting in the path of duty, and withstanding the allurements of sin, we not only admire and esteem such characters, but if we have any ingenious feeling within us, we are fired with a generous and noble emulation to aspire after the same virtues. "The end of that man," (says the Psalmist) "is the perfect and

upright, is peace." Remarkable and striking is the wish of Balaam, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!" Although he had been far from leading the life of the righteous, yet he earnestly coveted his death. And this is, I believe, the case of most sinners, could they but separate the pleasures of guilt, from the punishment of it; could they, after having enjoyed unlawful pleasures for a season, or accumulated the wealth of this world, by unjust means, at last die in tranquillity and peace, how happy would they deem themselves. But, my Friends, this is absolutely and morally impossible. Sin is naturally connected with punishment, with anguish, torment, and despair; and this, not by any arbitrary or capricious constitution, but by the will of the Almighty, founded upon principles of eternal and immutable justice.

As soon, then, may the rivers flow back to their source, as soon may the stars stop their course, and the sun withdraw his light, as that sin and iniquity, unrepented of, under the moral government of an absolutely perfect Being, can ever bring solid comfort and peace. "The wicked is like the troubled sea, whose waters cast up mire and dirt." "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." The man, therefore, who would enjoy tranquillity and peace at his latter end, must keep innocence, and take heed to the thing that is right; or, if in any part of his life he have deviated from the pure and holy law of God, he must endeavour, by hearty repentance and sincere reformation, through the merits of his Redeemer, to reconcile himself to his offended, but ever placable, and merciful heavenly Father. And what the value of that peace of God is, ask those who stand around the beds of the sick and the dying, but, above all, ask the departing themselves, and they will tell you, that all the wealth, the pomp, and the power of this world, are lighter than dust upon the balance, when compared with

that triumphant exclamation of Saint Paul: "I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith, I have finished my course."

Reflections upon death, and the awful consequences which must follow the separation of the soul from the body, are seasonable at all times, and do ever regulate the thoughts, and guide the conduct, of the real and sincere christian. But there are occasions and events, when such meditations are in a manner pressed upon the thoughts, and imprinted upon the hearts of even the most careless and indifferent---and such, my Friends, is the present.

We, yesterday, deposited the mortal Remains of the late **LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR**, under this Sacred House; and last Sunday, we committed to the dust of the earth, the Body of the late **RECTOR** of this Parish; who departed this life within ten short hours of one another, after nearly the same period of illness: forcibly reminding us all, "that in the midst of life, we are in death." I shall now proceed to point out some of the virtues which adorned the character of the late **GOVERNOR**, and which may be worthy of our imitation. This is neither the time, nor the place, for idle and pompous panegyrick, nor for bestowing encomiastick praises upon those who have gone to answer at the Bar of an unerring Judge; at the same time, it is but proper, that the genuine virtues of those who have departed this life, particularly those who have filled eminent stations, should receive their due meed of praise, and be held forth to the imitation of others. The publick character of the Deceased, who, for the long period of ten years, has governed this Colony, must be much better known to the majority of my hearers this day, than it possibly can be to me. Politics have nothing to do with this Sacred House, and men of our order are the very persons who ought to intermeddle with them: "Fear God, and

honour the King, and meddle not with those that are given to change," are the only politics of the Christian Clergyman. His attachment to the Church of England, into the bosom of which he had been received by Baptism, when an Infant, and in the principles of which he had been early initiated, and of which he was, in this Country, the Head, was affectionate, ardent and sincere. Whilst he was an enlightened friend to the principles of toleration, and to that liberty of conscience, which all who dissent from the Establishment, ought to enjoy, whilst they do nothing to violate the Laws, and teach no Doctrines inconsistent with the peace of Civil Society, his affection for his own Church, in her constitution, her doctrine, her service, and ordinances, was warm and fervent. His anxiety to procure Missionaries for the different and distant parts of the Province, and to make for them suitable provision; the readiness and zeal with which he entered into every plan for the erection of new Churches, and the efforts he made, as far as depended upon him, amply to endow them, will be long and affectionately remembered, by those who had the best opportunities of knowing them. To the Ministers of that Church, whilst they acted in a manner suitable to their profession, he was ever ready to extend his countenance, patronage, and support. The unwearied exertions which he made for the education of the Youth of the Country, particularly those of the lower orders, are universally known through the whole extent of this Province. Through his means, aided by the bounty of the Legislature, it is now in the power of the poorest and meanest in the Country, to give their offspring a religious and a moral education, and to train up those in the true fear of the Lord, who would otherwise have been left, through ignorance of their duty, to profligacy and to vice; thereby enabling them at some future day, to become sincere Christians, and useful members of society. Thus far

with respect to his public conduct: And it may not be improper to add, that great allowances are ever to be made for those in high public stations, who are necessarily involved in a vast multiplicity of business, intricate, and complicated, and who must often see with the eyes, and hear with the ears of others, but too often induced, by regard to selfish motives, to deceive them. This is one, among many other reasons, for that Divine precept, "Thou shalt not speak evil of the Ruler of thy People." In the domestic, and private relations, of a Husband, a Father, and a Master, his conduct was most humane and exemplary, and can be best witnessed by those who had the most frequent opportunities of witnessing his conduct and deportment, when retired from the eye of public observation. To the necessitous, his bounty and charity, were, there is every reason to believe, liberal, delicate, and well-timed; though, from the true spirit of a Christian, they were often carefully concealed from the notice and applause of the world. And that his virtues were real, and founded upon the true fear of God, and love to his law, were clearly evinced, when he was laid upon the bed of sickness and of death, to which melancholy, though edifying sight, I myself, was an eye witness.

In the course of our professional duties, we are often called upon, to visit the sick and the dying. Sometimes we behold them, from the consciousness of an ill spent life, in the agonies of horror and despondency. Sometimes they are in a state of insensibility, and callous to every pious reflection, and serious admonition. Sometimes we find them clinging fondly to life, and eagerly laying hold of even the slightest shadow of hope; and that often at a time, when the faltering voice, the closing eye, and the sinking pulse, afford the surest marks, to all but themselves, of rapidly approaching dissolution. And sometimes it is our happy lot to witness the departure of those, who, while they feel the terrors natural to

men, are nevertheless, supported by that hope of the Christian, which never maketh ashamed.---And this was eminently the case, in the instance alluded to : Here was exemplified, true faith, sincere repentance, unfeigned humility, fervent charity, and triumphant, but unassuming hope. His own words, when I first saw him, were, that this was no time for complements ; and to speak to him no false peace ; but to prove, to examine, and to try the state and condition of his soul to the uttermost. Our blessed Lord hath said, that it is the characteristic mark of the wicked, that they shun the light, lest their deeds should be reprov'd ; and conversely, that the righteous come to the light, that their deeds may be shown that they are wrought in God. Sincerely, impartially, and without reserve, condemning himself for the errors of his past life---reposing, at the same time, full trust in the covenanted mercies of God, through Christ Jesus---he exhibited such calm resignation, and christian peace, such unfeigned love to God, and such charity and good will to all men, as I earnestly wish could have been witnessed by every one who this day hears me, for the lesson would have been powerful, and impressive indeed. He felt no regret in leaving this world, but only, that he would not have it in his power to admonish his child to walk in the paths of holiness, virtue, and truth : And all this, let it be well marked, was at a time, when dissimulation was out of the question, when power could no longer protect, when pomp could no longer dazzle, and when human pride was soon to be laid in its kindred dust, a prey to corruption and to worms. And now to come to the closing scene : The word of God having been read to him, which he listened to with great attention, and frequently desired pauses to be made, that he might meditate on what he thought most important and suitable to his case ; and the commendatory prayer for the departing, having been offered up for him, he fell into a

state of insensibility, and after a few hours, calmly breathed his last, without a struggle, and without a groan. "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace." This is but a feeble sketch, and faint outline, of the character of the deceased; and I am deeply conscious, that I have done justice, neither to the subject, nor to my own conceptions and feelings. It is in obedience to the request of the Ecclesiastical Commissary, that this task has devolved upon me, as circumstances would not permit him to pay this last melancholy tribute to the memory of his Friend. It is our bounden duty, to give its due meed of praise to departed worth, and to impress the imitation of it upon others; and I hope, that what has been already said, will not be deemed exaggerated, nor imputed to any other motive than a love of truth, and a sense of duty; as proceeding from one, who is no man's flatterer, no man's idle eulogist, no man's calumniator, but who would gladly do justice to the virtues and good qualities of all men. I would now beg leave to point out to your notice, some of the virtues which adorned the character of the deceased: I would recommend to every christian, to imitate his piety in private. He made it his universal practice, (as himself told) that no evening closed upon him, without sincere and fervent prayer to God, in secret; and no morning arose, which found him not at the same holy and christian exercise: He never approached the sacred Table of his Lord, without sincere and serious self-examination, and extraordinary acts of piety and devotion. Begin and end every day with God; without his protection, you are not safe one moment; and without his blessing, none of your designs can prosper. In the morning, pray, therefore, for the guidance of Him, who spieth out all your ways, and whose countenance doth ever behold the upright; and in the evening, commend yourselves to the paternal care of Him, who never slumbers

nor sleeps. I would particularly recommend to the Householder, to imitate him in the excellent practice of Family Prayer. The head of a Family, after reading a portion of the word of God, and then kneeling down, and offering the joint requests of all those under the roof, to the Throne of Grace, is a spectacle sublime, and affecting in the sight of Angels and of Men, and highly pleasing to our Heavenly Father. Was this practice universally adopted, we should soon see the state of Families greatly changed, we should not hear so much of the stubbornness, and disobedience of children, the dishonesty of servants, and the increasing profligacy of the rising generation. This, we may venture to say, would do more to preserve the peace and good order of society, than all penal laws ever enacted by the wisest Legislature, and carried into execution by the most active, upright, and consciencious of men.

Give me leave to recommend to you, of his own honourable profession, to imitate his habitual temperance and sobriety. Many men invested with the military character, are spoken of in divers places of Holy Writ, with marks of great affection and esteem; and many are the emblems and allusions taken from that mode of life, and applied to the lot and condition of a christian. "Be ye, therefore, good soldiers of Jesus Christ, and fight the good fight of faith": Flee from intemperance, debauchery, and riot; contend with your own passions, and come off victorious in that most honourable of all contests. Ever remember, that there is no victory so glorious as that which a man gains over himself; no courage like that courage which fights manfully under the banners of Christ, against the devil, the world, and the flesh. As you live, you shall at last enter the gates of the city of Jerusalem, with the great Captain of your salvation, and dwell with him forever and ever. Lastly: I now address myself to the Young,---to those who

are entering upon the career of life : “ Remember your Creator in the days of your youth,” is a precept fraught with heavenly wisdom, of more value than all the moral instruction to be found in the volumes of Greece and of Rome. At a time of life, when men are most apt to forget Him ; when too frequently, giddiness, health, high spirits, and frivolous amusements, banish every serious thought, and efface every religious impression ; draw you near to your Lord and Master, and cleave to Him with full purpose of heart. There is something ingenuous, something noble, in dedicating the prime of your days, and the vigour of your strength, to the service of your Creator ; and piety at an early age, is sweeter than incense, and more fragrant than all the perfumes of the East---And such early piety, God has never failed to distinguish with peculiar marks of his regard : Read the histories of Moses, of Joseph, of Joshua, of Samuel, and of David, and other Worthies recorded in Holy Scripture, and you will find them all remarkable for early devotion, and obedience to the Divine Law. Turn a deaf ear, then, to those unprincipled men, who at any time may endeavor to seduce you from the good and the right way. Remember that what men of the world palliate, by delusive and sophistical terms, calling by the soft names of frolick and natural wildness, and vernal indulgences of youth, God in his Holy Word calls damnable sins, and threatens, “ that for these things, He will bring you into judgment.” Remember that time is constantly on the wing, therefore, improve the moments as they pass, to the very best advantage ; for soon the years will come, “ when ye shall say, we have no pleasure in them.” Soon the years will come, when nothing but piety and virtue, can yield you any solid comfort. Happy, therefore, are ye, if you shall learn wisdom by the advice and experience of those who have gone before you, or by the dear bought wisdom by actual sufferings.

I have already trespassed too long upon your time and patience, and, therefore, shall be very brief in what I have to say concerning the late Pastor of this Flock. That he was a man of great natural abilities and extensive learning, is unquestionable; and it is but justice to his memory, to say, that he seemed to bend all his studies, and to apply all his erudition, profound and multifarious as it was, to the searching of the Scriptures, and to the composition of Sermons, to be delivered from this place, for your edification. Profit, therefore, by the advices and admonitions which he hath often given you from this Pulpit, with great ability and zeal.

Imitate the virtues of every man in a publick station; for the sake of charity cast a veil over the failings incident to our frail nature; and leave the faults which you may think to have been committed, to the judgment of an unerring God; and be careful for yourselves, to be found of our Lord in peace, at his second coming.

To conclude: Your own experience, my Friends, will tell you, that in this world, there is but little real satisfaction, and no stability. Let this reflection, therefore, quicken you in your progress to that City which hath foundations, "whose maker and builder is God."

Be, therefore, true followers of your heavenly master, wean your hearts and affections from this vain and fleeting world, and place them upon the unfading treasures of the next. If thus you live, you shall at last pass over the gloomy vale of death, free from fear and from danger, for the Lord himself will protect and support you. And when, at last, you shall awaken from the dust of the earth, at the sound of the last Trump, you shall, in presence of Men and Angels, and all the Company of Heaven, hear that most joyful voice, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the World."

Which God, of His infinite Mercy, grant, &c.

