

*A Voice from the Prison.*

---

THE  
TRIAL AND CONVICTION  
OF  
ISAAC E. CLARK,

BY THE UNITED STATES COURT, FOR THE ALLEGED CRIME OF

PASSING COUNTERFEIT MONEY,

CONSISTING OF ONLY TWO HALF DOLLARS,  
WHICH HAD BEEN RECEIVED BY HIM IN AN ORDINARY BUSINESS TRANSACTION ;  
WITH A STATEMENT OF HIS

CRUEL PERSECUTION,

AND FINAL SENTENCE TO AUBURN STATE PRISON, FOR FIVE YEARS ;  
TOGETHER WITH HIS

RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE.

---

WRITTEN AND PUBLISHED BY HIMSELF.

---

ROCHESTER :

STEAM PRESS OF A. STRONG & CO., DEMOCRAT & AMERICAN OFFICE.  
1859.

US 15673.90

HARVARD COLLEGE LIBRARY  
FROM  
THE BEQUEST OF  
EVERT JANSEN WENDELL  
1918

# A VOICE FROM THE PRISON.

---

## LETTER I.

### A FULL ACCOUNT OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE COURT.

---

FRIENDS OF HUMANITY:—I feel it imperatively my duty to express to you, briefly, the thoughts which have occupied my mind, during my long and weary imprisonment. In general, I have borne it with composure, awaiting, with confidence, for the ultimate triumph of Justice and Truth, firmly impressed with the belief, that whatever wrongs or injustice I have or might experience at the hand of man, He, to whom all hearts are open and fully known, in the end, through the incalculable dispensation of His providence, will rectify, and finally cause ample justice to be done.

Kind reader, I feel, under these precepts, that I should come far short of duty to God and man, were I to fail to give you a correct account of the proceedings and accusations which procured my conviction, as well as the misrepresentations which my persecutors brought to bear against me. Notwithstanding, I would throw out no base insinuations, yet I wish to convey to the public a true and accurate account of my persecution. In the following statement, I wish you, my reader, to take into consideration the proceedings of my impartial trial, that you may form a true idea which party acted with the most humanity.

The facts are simply these: At the time of my arrest, and for three years previously, I had been engaged in keeping a grocery store on the Genesee Valley Canal, two miles from the city of Rochester. I had the misfortune to receive in a fair, business transaction, the sum of five dollars, all in halves. During the same day that I took this money, I gave a person named Bishop one dollar of the same money. Bishop was engaged in running a boat, and stopped at my place to trade with me; and, in paying his bill, he asked me for two of these half dollars,

as they looked bright and new, stating that he wanted them for pocket pieces. Innocently I agreed, and in return he gave me smaller change. After he had carried them in his pocket several days with other change, as he stated in his evidence, he paid out one or both of them, when, for the first time he found the money to be spurious. Bishop went before S. W. D. Moore, Police Justice in the city of Rochester, and swore out a warrant against me. I was arrested and arraigned before the Court; and by the advice of my counsel, I waived an examination and gave bail. Bishop was sworn and examined upon oath, as to the facts which I have stated above. The Court held me to bail in the sum of four hundred dollars. The County Court being then in session in the city of Rochester, they went before the grand jury and procured an indictment against me, for letting Bishop have the one dollar. I appeared in Court, but my trial was put over to the next term. The Court held me to bail in the sum of twelve hundred dollars. I gave bail to this amount. This was in the month of September, 1853.

My persecutors did not stop here, for soon after, the United States Court being in session in the city of Albany, they went before the grand jury of that Court, and procured *another indictment against me for the very same charge!* I was informed by my friends what was being done, but, knowing that I was innocent of the accusation, I was determined to stand by my bail, and see them harmless. Some time after this, I was arrested in the city of Rochester by Marshal Tyler of Buffalo. I went with Mr. Tyler before United States Commissioner, L. Farrar of Rochester, who had the power to take bail. He held me to bail in the *enormous sum of six thousand dollars!* requiring two sureties to justify that they were worth double the amount!! *he knowing that I was then under bail in the County Court at Rochester, in the sum of twelve hundred dollars, for the very same charge!!!* However, I procured the amount of bail, as above stated, and I was released from the clutches of friend Tyler. My recognizance required me to appear at the next sitting of the United States Court, which was to be held in Buffalo. In November following, I appeared, with my counsel and witnesses, ready for my trial. I employed John H. Martindale, Esq., a gentleman with a large heart and of great popularity as a member of the legal profession, as my counsel, who defended me until the last. My counsel moved to bring on the trial at that Court, but the United States District Attorney,



Garvin, put it over. Mr. Martindale then stated to the Court, that my bail was enormous; and also, that I was indicted in a Court at Rochester for the same offence; and therefore in which ever Court I was tried, the case would be decided.

The Court was next held in the city of Albany, where the indictment had been procured; still my persecutors were not prepared to try me at that term. So, my trial was put over again and again, from court to court. And, at the same time, they continued putting my trial off in Rochester, from time to time, still holding me to bail in the sum of twelve hundred dollars, for the very same charge, making a total bail of \$7,200.

In May, 1854, the United States Court was held in the city of Rochester. My counsel made a strong effort to get my trial on. As usual, he was opposed by Samuel Garvin, Attorney for the People. But the honorable (?) Judge, Nathan K. Hall, thought proper to listen to the solicitations of the counsel for the People, and again put my trial over until the next court, which was to be held at Canandaigua, Ontario County, in the month of June. The Judge told the U. S. District Attorney that he must try me at the June term, or he would enter a *nolle prosequi*. Thus, I was confined in jail, harrassed and in suspense, from May until the Court sat in Canandaigua, in June—my expenses amounting to several hundred dollars. Finally, my trial came on at the June Term, in Canandaigua. The jury, after deliberating forty-six hours, returned a verdict of guilty of giving Bishop one dollar of counterfeit money. The second day after my conviction, I was arraigned before the Court to receive my sentence, which consigned me within the solitary walls of Auburn State Prison, at hard labor, for the term of five long years!

My reader, if you could for one moment appreciate my feelings I am sure you could not withhold your sympathy for one thus torn asunder, merely through the misrepresentation of my words—torn from all that was near and dear to me -- torn from my dear wife and five little children — and from everything that rendered life desirable — to be incarcerated within the prison walls, there to linger out the best part of my days.

I have said, kind reader, the cause of my conviction was the misrepresentation of my words. And this is strictly true. That was all they relied upon to procure my conviction. Some of the witnesses brought against me, were among the basest of the base. My reader,

I can truly say, in the presence of God and man, that I was innocent of the charge of giving Bishop money, knowing it to be spurious. I received the money as I have before stated, and as was proved upon my trial by two respectable witnesses. One of them is now numbered with the silent dead. He has gone to that bourne whence no traveler returns, to appear before Him who knows all things. And at that bar, one and all must appear, and answer for our conduct toward our fellow man, where there will be no misrepresentation of words.

Kind reader, I feel that if I had justice done toward me in this unfortunate case, the circumstantial evidence which caused my conviction, would have vanished as quickly before the piercing analyst of truth, innocence, and reason, as the snow would melt beneath the vertical rays of a tropical sun. You might think after the jury had convicted me, that this honorable (?) Judge could not have sentenced me for a less term of years—but such is not the case. He had the power to sentence me to the County Jail, by paying a fine. I omitted sooner to state that I paid Bishop at the Police Office the one dollar in current money, which was in proof upon my trial. And yet in pronouncing my sentence, this honorable (?) Judge, fined me *one dollar* in addition to the imprisonment of five years.

Kind reader, and my dear Christian friends in the Lord Jesus, I must confess to you that it was hard for me to kneel before my God, and ask the forgiveness of my sins, while at the same time my heart was filled with indignation against those who had so wrongfully persecuted me. After reading the promises of our Lord's Gospel with diligent prayer, I became fully satisfied of a regeneration of inspiration which restores the immortal spirit to the God who gave it.

I praise God for what he has done for me: He has heard and answered my weak and feeble prayer; He has for Christ Jesus' sake forgiven me my sins. I can truly say, that I have that witness within me, that I love my enemies and freely forgive them; my prayer to God is that He may forgive and bring them to the knowledge of the truth. I ask an interest in the prayers of all Christians that I may ever serve my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ—that I may never wound the cause of religion. Should I be spared to see my time expire here, which will be on the 28th day of June, 1859, passing out of the same gate by which I came, to the bosom of my dear family, God being my helper, I shall ever set such examples before them, as a Christian

parent should; and show to the world, that there is a reality in the religion of our Lord Jesus, that it cannot give, and, thanks be to God, cannot take away. They may place you unjustly in prison, and they may deprive you of the society of a kind and affectionate wife, dear children, mother, sister, or brother, but that is all they can do,—the soul will return unto the God that gave it.

I. E. CLARK.

Auburn Prison, Dec. 27, 1857.

## LETTER II.

---

### CAUSE OF LOVE TO GOD.

First of John, 4th Chapter and 19th Verse.—“We love Him because He first loved us.”

My Reader, this passage would seem at first sight to import, that a Christian's love to God is the mere exercise of gratitude. If it were so, everything like evangelical theology is laid at once in ruins. All of us know that gratitude is a feeling of nature alone; it is a tribute which bad men, as well as good men, pay to the evidence of kindness in a benefactor. It may be awakened as upon any other subject, so on that of religion; and hundreds there are, who in hearing that Christ for their sakes underwent a painful and humiliating death, will find their eyes to fill, and their hearts melt, at the story of his generous humanity, and all the time remain just as far away from the point of being real Christians as they were before. Gratitude, therefore, does not constitute that love to God which our text had in view. There is somewhere another meaning to the words, and I take it to be simply this: that mankind were sunk too deeply in sin to be reclaimed to the love of God, unless He had first felt towards them the yearnings of mercy, and devised a plan by which their sins and their stubbornness might be subdued. That such is the true import of the passage, we ascertain from the scope of the chapter to which it belongs. In the ninth verse, the apostle says, that “God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.”

Here the fact stated is, my friends, that Christ has come into the world; and the consequence of it is that we may now live; whereas, if He had not come we must have perished. A little further along it is added, that “we love God because he first loved us.” Here the fact stated is that He loved mankind, and the consequence of it is that they may now be brought to cherish a reciprocal affection, whereas, if

He had not loved them, and sent to them the provisions of a Savior, they must have remained as they were, with their enmity unsubdued, and their impenitence unawakened.

My reader, thus you see for yourself the meaning of the text. I shall aim, upon what the apostle has affirmed, to raise two points. The first, that if any one have really the love of God, they are indebted for it to His mercy in sending us a Redeemer. The second, that besides our veneration in general for the attributes of God, we must love Him, as He is made known through a Redeemer in the gospel.

As to the first point, my reader, when I speak about really having the love of God, I mean to exclude the feeling of gratitude entirely from the appellation. Gratitude is one thing, and affection another thing. They are based upon different principles; the one on the mere reception of favor, the other on the consideration of merit. Gratitude, sensibility to kindness, is perhaps the last virtue, if it be a virtue which deserts human nature even in its lowest debasement. It keeps a lingering hold upon our hearts when they have bidden farewell to nearly every other sympathy, and every other kindly emotion; and experience has shown that among the most abandoned of malefactors, there is uniformly some softened part which gives away at the approach of tenderness. But surely a feeling like this is the companion of the darkest bosom, and will not be trumpeted into identity with the breathings of a warm and confiding attachment; by no means. It is altogether a different impulse. To the man who lends me his relief in the hour of misfortune, I may tender the return of the most grateful acknowledgment, and yet, when the single attribute of his benevolence is taken from him, I may look upon the whole of what is left of his character with positive disgust. The entire emotion in me is but a kind of qualified and embelished selfishness, and nothing pertains to it which can claim the dignified rank of a pure and lofty affection. By really having the love of God, I mean the looking upon Him with satisfaction, the thinking of Him with delight, aside completely from an estimate of the favors which we have received from His bounty. In every heart there is some ruling passion, and what I say is, that in our hearts that passion should be a paramount cordiality, and a spontaneous gladness in contemplating the character of God, without giving to Him at all the aspect of our personal benefactor. This is precisely the principle which holds dominion over a Christian bosom

and I repeat, that he is indebted for it to the Divine mercy in providing a Redeemer.

Christ Jesus came into the world to save us, not in our sins, but *from* our sins — to reconcile, not God to man but man to God. He saw us fixed in the attitude of a most unbending defiance towards the Almighty, and He aimed to soften our obduracy, and bring us back to our deserted allegiance. Some there are, I know, who suppose the process of becoming the friends of God to rest entirely on their own exertions, and who, as they have never tried in earnest to dislodge the corruptions of the heart, so have not yet learned that it must be God who worketh in them both to will and to do of His own good pleasure. But surely, dear friend, every Christian will bear me witness, and their evidence alone it is which the nature of the case admits of, that the depravity of an unregenerated bosom does not, and will not give away, unless all the agencies of the Holy Spirit are matched against it — that the carnal mind is to so deadly an extent, enmity against God, that, until Divine grace interferes, every attempt we make to subdue it is futile, and serves only to show us more and more forcibly the distance of our moral alienation. If this be true, and true it is, upon every fair and legitimate testimony, if we ourselves be helpless, where should we have been but for Jesus Christ. If the work of giving us an affection for God, result, as we all confess it does, solely from the mercy of God, was not the apostle right in saying that we love Him because He first loved us, and sent His Son to be a propitiation for our sins. Then our first point is established, and the second remains, that as God has made Himself known through a Redeemer, in that character must we love Him. It is altogether useless to set before the imagination a being invested merely with natural perfections, and to make him the object of our worship. Such an one may be the god of reason, or the god of poetry, or the god of an admiring philosophy, but he is not the God of the Bible. There are those who will talk with eloquence about the great, or the magnificent attributes of the Almighty, and yet, when you come to remind them of God in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, they find the charm at once dispelled.

They look with a sort of rapture upon the splendors of creation, or the scenery of external nature, or even the sublime moralities of the Bible; but there the curtain falls. When they are told that God, in

maintaining the dignity of His government, was induced to surrender His Son to the agonies of the Cross, and that even now He can offer salvation only to the contrite and broken-hearted sinner,—when they hear this, the subject throws off all its appendages of grandeur, and sinks down into a tame and unmoving religiousness.

But, my friend, it is exactly in this character that God must be loved, as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in and through Him the Father of him that believeth.

We must put away from us every idea of receiving a pardon, or of standing on the ground of acceptance, or of averting the positive sentence of death issued against us, except on the terms of a thoroughgoing repentance. When we have done this, we shall behold the God of the New Testament, and not till then. We shall approach Him as the hater of sin, and the inflexible enemy of the sinner, wherever He meets him, except only at the foot of the Cross. We shall, in short, forget all the natural grandeurs which surround Him, and cling to the single proffer of mercy, entering completely into that spirit which drew from holy Job the impressive exclamation, “I have heard of Thee, by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth Thee, wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes.” This is the language in which, my dear friend, we are to approach that awful Being who holds in His hands our eternal destinies. We do not, however, imagine that the affection of love is associated with terror. Far from it. We may feel terror, we must feel it when we first seriously step into the presence of the Infinite Jehovah, on the business of our souls, because we invariably carry along with us a load of guilt, without apology or palliation. But when we have caught the hope of pardon, the scene is at once changed. God, indeed, remains clothed with the same fearful perfections as ever; but then we look upon them in a different light. Terror gives way to a confiding and reverential attachment, and those severer attributes of the Deity, which once we contemplated with fear, we find to harmonize with all the rest, and to throw over them the chastening influence of a consistent explanation.

We see, then, my reader, without pressing the argument further, that in this one matter, a Christian's views are essentially distinct from the views of the man of the world. A man of the world loves God because he has shared His bounties,—a Christian, because he has discovered the beauty of His holiness; a man of the world loves God because his character is majestic and imposing,—a Christian, because it

bears upon it the lustre of punishing sin, while it offers mercy to the sinner. In a word, my friend, a man of the world loves God because his imagination depicts Him in the mere garb of His natural perfections; a Christian, because he feels himself guilty and helpless, and finds his heart warming towards that parental and compassionate Being who could stoop to provide a Redeemer for the perishing children of men. And this is the second point I wished to prove.

Now, my reader, if I were to take the subject I have in my weak way discussed, and walk through the whole of Auburn city for its application, I should not meet an individual without some semblance of love to God. There would be one accustomed to admire the works of creation, the loftiness, perhaps, and magnificence of the heavens; and he would pay homage to the Divine power. There would be another familiar with the analysis of Providence, in its protecting and merciful dispensation, and he would pay homage to the Divine goodness. My friend, there would be another prepared to go a step further still, and drop the tear of an honest gratitude over the story of a Savior's death, and he would pay homage to the Divine compassion. But if either, or if all these exercises make up the one thing of gospel love to God, what, I ask, is the meaning of the apostle in our text? To possess the feelings which I have recounted, was it necessary that God should first have that love to us which induced Him to send His only begotten Son into the world? Might we not have admired the splendors of creation — might we not have acknowledged the kindness of Providence — might we not have cherished gratitude to a benefactor, without the dreadful expenditure of the blood of Christ upon Calvary's Mount? How is it, then, that our love to God is brought about only by His previous love to us in the gift of His Son?

Why, dear friend, the plain and honest truth is this: We have within us, by nature, hearts which turn away from the holiness and purity of the Divine character. We do not relish these perfections, nor, by our own power, can we make ourselves to relish them any more than we can make ourselves to love the bitterness of wormwood. Yet, my friend, relish them we must before we cross the threshold of Heaven. They constitute there the only source of enjoyment, and even were we in Heaven with our antipathies along with us, we should be wretched forever. Something, then, must be done for us. Oh! my friend, remember that Jesus Christ has done it. He has expired in



our stead, that we might receive the Holy Spirit to mould our hearts anew, and from enemies to make us the friends of God. This is the reason that His love is the great procuring cause of ours, for without Him, our hearts would never have surrendered their hostility to the Divine perfections. We should have gone on to the day of death, incased in the panoply of war against the Almighty, unless Christ had reconciled us unto God in His own body by the Cross, having slain the enmity thereby. We see, therefore, that if any one take the standing of the friends of God, it must be through Christ alone. To Him we must **one** and all go, and on Him rely. No matter how many noble and lofty conceptions we cherish of the Deity, no matter how cordial be our veneration for His attributes, it is love which carries a sinner to Heaven, and never will it find a home in our hearts unless we seek it at the foot of Calvary on our knees, and through the merits of that all-sufficient Redeemer which God has sent for the salvation of all mankind.

I to my God my ways commit,  
 And cheerful wait his will ;  
 The hand which guides my doubtful feet,  
 Shall my desires fulfill.

As on some lonely building's top,  
 The sparrow tells her moan,  
 Far from the tents of joy and hope,  
 I sit and grieve alone.

I. E. CLARK.

Auburn Prison, 1858.

## LETTER III.

### RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE.

Psalms 66, 16th Verse.—“Come and hear all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul.”

Kind Reader, I have thought these words appropriate to my own case, and to this occasion. If my soul has been transformed and my heart renewed, God has done it. If my feet have been taken from the way of death,—if my work is changed from leading souls to ruin to turning them into the path of life, the glory belongs to God. And if I shall ever be of any service in the kingdom of God’s dear Son, and shine at last with those who have turned many to righteousness, the Holy Ghost has been the agent by whom it has been effected. Why then should I not turn and give the glory to God?

And to whom shall I speak of what God has done for my soul, if not to those who fear God. Were the theme of my discourse, pleasure, vanity, or sensuality, I should call upon the lovers of pleasure more than of God, the sons and daughters of vanity, and the slaves of sensuality to hear me, and I should address them upon a theme, and in language they could well understand. But my single purpose now is, to lay before the reader, and to magnify the grace of God in the salvation of my soul. To tell what God has done for me; to show you the way in which the Lord has led me; in bringing me up from death to life. Many, I know, have no faith in the saving of the soul by the Holy Ghost. Many regard the operation of God’s truth upon the heart, as a work that exists only in the imagination. In respect to such a blaspheming voice, to speak to such, to ask them to come and hear what God has done for my soul, would be folly. I trust few would be disposed to hear what they do not understand, and of that few, the most having prejudged the case, would “speak evil of the things that they understood not.”

Dear reader, to those then who fear God, I must speak, if I would have my subject appreciated, though all may feel interest enough to bestow a respectful attention in reading these Letters. Although, dear friends, they are penned by one who is now a convict in Auburn State Prison, and by one who can say, in the presence of God and man, that he is innocent of the charge for which he was convicted, and has been imprisoned for the term of five long years. For what? By false testimony has he had to suffer, and his dear little children been stripped of a home and of all that is near and dear to them.

#### MY EARLY LIFE.

My reader, those who have enjoyed early religious instruction, who in youth have been counselled, and in early life have been taught of God, who have grown up under impressions made around the family altar, and have all their life been followed by religious influences, can poorly sympathize with me. In my step-father's house there was no family altar, no voice of prayer was there heard, no reading of the Bible as an act of worship. I never enjoyed the benefit of Sabbath school instruction; no friend told me of God; no one instructed me to lisp his name, or fear his law. I have no recollection of having ever passed a night in my life, till I was twenty years of age, in a house in which there was family prayer, or the reading of the Bible, as an act of religious worship.

My earliest recollections as to religion are identified with Universalism. My first impressions upon the subject are very distinct at this hour. I thought the gospel was designed simply to teach that men would not be damned, that however men died, God would make all equally happy at death; that the Bible, besides this, taught little else that was important or interesting, and on the whole, was rather a dull book. The Sabbath I was taught to regard as a day of rest from toil, but not from sport; and no one who had influence upon my childhood interposed any restraint from my doing my own pleasure upon the holy Sabbath. Nearly all that I heard upon the subject of religion, was favorable to Universalism; nearly all of my relations were of that faith; and almost all of my acquaintances received the same sentiments. I had very early imbibed a hatred towards all systems that differed from this—so soon were the seeds of error planted in my heart—seeds watered by impure counsels and hurtful instructions.

## FIRST SERIOUS IMPRESSIONS.

When I arrived at the age of sixteen years, my attention was turned to the subject of personal religion; its seriousness prevailed among many of my associates, the influence of which I felt. Religion seemed to me then a great concern. I thought that my life was not what it should be, and that to be respected I must change my associates. I knew that my heart was not right in the sight of God, and that to die as I then was, would expose me to the wrath of God; my feelings were enlisted and changed; I read the Bible with pleasure, and in some small meetings urged my fellow-men to repentance.

But it was my misfortune to be thrown among a class of professors who belonged to no Christian denomination. They stood alone as a church, and though they held to experimental religion, they rejected nearly all the essential doctrines of the gospel; they denied the divinity of Jesus Christ, the immortality of the soul, and the doctrine of endless punishment. Though my feelings were excited upon the theme of religion, my understanding was not then informed; I had no settled religious opinions; the amount of my faith was this; I believed the Bible to be an inspired book, that Jesus Christ was a man, and that annihilation was the doom of the finally impenitent.

At this time I was thrown into the company of Universalists, and their system was commended to my attention; I was invited and persuaded to attend their meetings, and was assured that Universalism and personal piety could harmonize, and that one would be the better Christian, the more devoted man, for receiving that faith. I found the advocates of Universalism frequently using terms which others employed in connection with religious truth, and presuming them to be sincere, I found myself growing daily in favor of Universalism. I examined the arguments by which it was supported, became familiar with the exposition given to difficult parts of the Bible, and as my early associations favored the claims of Universalism, I adopted the system when in my nineteenth year. Believing that Universalism could do for man what no other system could, I resolved to advocate the cause of Universalism. I would state to the reader that I have devoted many years of the best part of my life; in doing this I respond to the call of the defenders of Universalism, and perform a work which they have professed themselves earnestly desirous to have performed; they invite, nay, challenge inquiry. They are confident that

Universalism is opposed, because it is not understood; they complain that their expositions of Scripture are unnoticed, that their arguments in defence of Universalism are either not examined at all, or lightly passed over, and that those who speak of the moral tendency of Universalism know not of what they affirm.

My reader, in discoursing upon Universalism, I presume to speak as one familiar with my subject; its doctrines I learned in childhood, its arguments I wielded while I had confidence in them, and only resigned them when I was convinced that they were unsound. Its moral tendency I knew too well, its influence upon man, and the best good of man, I have repeatedly seen; and it is just to say that its results are uniform, one tendency distinguishes it, bears one kind of fruit, it every where is peculiar for one sort of influence, and is characterized by the same results; describe its triumphs in one place, and describe them in all, exhibit its tendency in one case, and you have a picture of the system every where.

In this lecture I shall lay before the reader this whole process. I hope dear friend to do all this work in a kind spirit; it has been my prayer to my Saviour, that nothing may appear in these lectures that shall exhibit any spirit save that which He will own and bless. While I speak plainly, I wish to do it kindly, and while the only severity that will appear will be the severity of truth, I desire to "speak the truth in love;" I have no animosities to revenge, no passion to gratify; I bear Universalists no hatred; I believe them to be attached to a ruinous error, to a fatal delusion, as fatal to the soul as the deadliest poison is to the body; that the way in which they walk, though it seemeth right to them, is the way of destruction—"the end thereof is death." I believe the whole tendency of Universalism to be baneful in the extreme to the best interests of our race, and that its ministry is engaged in the ruin of souls, and every where is stained with their blood. I speak from the character which my own labors have born in that cause, and from my knowledge of the results of Universalism. My reasons for these opinions I shall lay before you; I have no learned essay to present. My reader, I design to meet Universalism as it is, to give you the result of my own experience upon this subject, and to say a few plain things in a plain way; "to that Universalism has no claim upon any rational mind, to set forth the withering power of error, to lift a warning voice, and bid all, not yet insnared, to shun a delusion, which with a siren song and with assurance of safety, leads down to everlasting despair all who trust its teaching."

I would remark to the reader, and to my dear Christian friends, that the present lecture, consisting of a mere recital of my own feelings, experience, and investigation upon Universalism, demands, perhaps, an apology for introducing it. Indeed, did I consult my own feelings, I should strike this lecture from my course. It is not pleasant thus to speak of myself, to recall harrowing and painful scenes. Nor do I attach importance enough to my personal feelings, to give them the prominence which they hold in this lecture.

My Christian friends, I have been enabled, by the overruling power and goodness of God, to see and abandon my remaining error and criminality, and that I may once more take my stand with those that I forsook and opposed, and with them to pray and labor for the upbuilding of God's Kingdom in the earth. I now publicly declare my entire renunciation of every form and species of Universalism and my unqualified and unwavering belief that some, and a very large number, of the human race will never be saved. I sincerely regret that I ever admitted those doubts and queries that laid the foundation for that superstructure of error that was reared in my mind. Had I more carefully and seriously watched and prayed to be guarded from every species of temptation, those doubts and queries would never have been suffered to remain and do the work they did. I lament my own blindness, haste, and perverseness, in deciding when as I did, to cut myself off from my Christian friends, and connect myself with those whom I, at the time, knew to be generally, far from the way of the true followers of Christ. I am astonished to see how I, for so long a time, blinded my eyes to evident facts in the state of things among Universalists. How I smothered my convictions, and yielded to the current of error and ungodliness. I have grieved and saddened the heart of many a Christian friend; I have emboldened many a prayerless, irreligious person to continue in the neglect of his soul's salvation. True, I argued upon the indispensable necessity of a change of heart; but all I said was neutralized by the insidious workings of that poisonous leaven which is in the very nature of Universalism.

I thank God that he has, at last, opened my eyes to see where I have been, and what I have done; I thank my Christian friends for their prayers in my behalf; and it is my prayer, that, for their tears

of sorrow at my defection and departure from the truth, they may now have hearts of joy at my return.

My dear friends, I would to God that I might be able, in some way, by my pen or tongue, or by both, to fully undo what I have done; to convince some that are now clinging to Universalism, that it is a dangerous and ruinous delusion; and to warn all, who are in danger of coming under its influence, to beware of it, as they value the salvation of their souls.

I cheerfully submit this communication of my views and feelings to the public, in the belief that every truly Christian heart will be gladdened by learning that another has been recovered from the snare of the devil, who was led captive by him at his will, (2 Tim., 2 chap. 26 ver.) and in the hope that some other, yet in the same snare, will ere long see his error, be recovered from it, and testify to the truth as it is in Jesus. It is the love of God that I feel in my soul, that which calls me forth to tell what God has done for my soul. It is the Lord's doing, — the work is his. To his service be my days henceforth devoted. To his name be all the glory.

I have said that nearly all of my near relatives were Universalists, There is an exception to this remark, and did I not name it, I should do injustice to one of the best friends I ever had. My own dear father was not a Universalist. He was a religious man. I have no remembrance of him; for he died before my memory received any impressions of his words or looks. I cannot recall any thing in relation to him. But those who knew him well, speak of his piety and love for the things of God. I was three years of age only when he died. He wished to live to train me up for God, and to guide me in the way of life. It was early in my life, I was made acquainted with his dying employment. His death approached, he called for me, and took me in his arms, and pressed me to his bosom, with his dying embrace. His last tears were shed for me; his last breath was spent in prayer to God for my welfare and my salvation. It was his dying petition that I might be saved from impiety and sin, and become a useful Christian. Dear reader, that death-bed, and the last moments of my father, have never left my mind since first I was told of his dying hours. When far gone in error, this scene has spoken to me. When many have thought me hardened, past feeling and past redemption, this has made my mind tender, and sometimes almost over-

whelmed me. It has spoken to me, and I have felt the force of such appeals.

Next to my existence, and the conversion of my soul, I would bless God for a praying father. I could do no less than record this tribute to his memory, and leave on record the part he bore in my rescue from death. Let all take courage, who have the moulding of young minds, who make the first impressions upon an immortal soul. No matter how hard the soil — how long the seed lies in the ground. If it be good seed, sown in faith and prayer, it will not fail. The hand that sowed may be palsied by death, the eye that wept may be closed in its long sleep, the voice that counselled may be hushed, and the heart that prayed may cease to beat. Still the blessing will come. Your son, or brother, or friend, may be in prison, may be upon the ocean; he may fall into temptation and crime, or sit in the seat of the scorner. But upon the mast-head at midnight, in the haunt of sin, in the congregation of the impious, you will be remembered. If faithful to their souls, your sons and daughters will gather around your tomb, to bless you for what you have done for them.

How can I review my past life. The retrospect is terrible beyond description. All the best part of this short life wasted, and I may say worse than wasted. Employed in strengthening the hands of the wicked, in removing the restraints of the Bible, in arguing peace to the ungodly; in assuring them that they would not die, though they disobeyed God; in alluring men to destruction; in turning men from life to death; and in speaking encouragement to those already on the road to destruction, and urging them on their perilous way. O, what a retrospect. My pathway seemed strewed with the wrecks and ruins of souls. My hands and my garments seemed stained with the blood of my fellow-men. On every side, lost souls cry out, "But for you, we might have been saved." O, that I could recall the past; O, that I could wipe out the influence I have exerted, and make those years a blank. Could I do this, I would make any sacrifice. I would weep tears of blood, if I had them, to remove the impressions I have made upon the souls of men, in arguing that all mankind would be saved. But this I cannot do. All that remains for me is to lift my voice in defence of truth, and tell men what great things God has done for my soul.



"The world will wonder, when they see  
A wreck like me restored ;  
And cry, " Behold, how changed is he  
Who once despised the Lord.' "

Such are my reasons for renouncing Universalism, so far as connected with my religious experience. These alone would be sufficient. I could not resist such light. I could not trifle with such convictions. God has been very gracious to me. To his name be the glory—to his service be my remaining days devoted.

" People of the living God,  
I have sought the world around,  
Paths of sin and folly trod,  
Peace and comfort nowhere found;  
Now to you my spirit turns, —  
Turns a fugitive unblest ;  
Brethren, where your altar burns,  
O, receive me into rest."

"Lonely I no longer roam—  
Like the cloud, the wind, the wave ;  
Where you dwell shall be my home,  
Where you die shall be my grave.  
Mine the God whom you adore,  
Your Redeemer shall be mine ;  
Earth can fill this heart no more,  
Every idol I resign."

My friend, I would say to you and all candid and reasonable men, that the preaching of Universalism is attended with great trial. Many are the objections to it, arising from the contradictions in the system, its bad practical tendency, the irrelevency of testimony offered from Scripture in proof of it, the sophistical nature of a large part of the arguments urged in vindication of its claims, and the passages of the Bible which obviously teach the contrary. These difficulties often appall even the most blinded advocate of this fearful delusion. I am very certain that, if those who lean upon the ministers of this error, and look for salvation without holiness of heart, because certain men assure them that all will be well in the life that is to come, could know the misgivings of a Universalist preacher, the objections that surround him, and the suspicions that he whispers to a confidential friend, they would feel that the risk was great in trusting such a doctrine. The peril is fearful.

The common language of the Saviour may be cited as proof of future Judgment.

I have in another place alluded to the fact that future punishment

was the common faith of the generation to which the Saviour preached. If He was a believer in this doctrine, He would confirm them in their faith as to future retribution. All the instruction in relation to the faith as to future retribution. All the instruction in relation to the future which the Son of God gave, must have been intended to sanction their views, and through them to teach all nations to "fly from the wrath to come." All candid and reasonable minds so understand Him. "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven." "For it is profitable for thee, that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell." "But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation." "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul, but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." "For what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul." "These shall go away into everlasting punishment." What effect would such instruction have upon a people to whom these points were already matters of faith? Christ did not attempt to prove these doctrines any more than he did the truth of God's existence and perfections. The people to whom he spoke already believed them. He simply reminded them of these great and solemn doctrines, and urged them, to repentance in view of the solemn sanctions of eternity. We find no labored argument in the Bible to prove any of the leading doctrines of the gospel. Revelation is based upon them, and it would not have been given had not these doctrines been true.

Would the people who heard the Saviour preach have learned that their views of future punishment were erroneous? Would they have been converted to Universalism by such teachings? Would they have felt that their treasures were already laid up in heaven, that there was no hell to be cast into, that there was no unpardonable sin, no eternal damnation, but that all would be forgiven? Would they have learned from his language that there was no danger of being cast into hell, soul and body, and that, therefore, it is absurd to fear God, or that a man cannot lose his soul, and that there is no eternal punishment; could such opinions prevail through the preaching of Jesus? Would they now spread, if men should hear nothing but the discourses of Christ?

All the warnings and all the promises of Christ and the apostles had reference to the judgment: "But of that day and hour knoweth

no man." "It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city." "Many shall say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name." "They watch for your souls as they that must give an account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief." I ask why watch, if there is no account to be rendered up? Why fear, if all is well; what occasion is there for grief? "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but to all them also that love his appearing." But is there no day of judgment, in which the righteous Judge shall thus bestow a crown of life? Will all receive it, though it is promised only to those who love his appearing? My friends, we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men, but we are made manifest unto God, and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.

My reader, the reference of these words to eternity cannot be disputed. Paul affirms that the body is to be destroyed, and for the soul he has much anxiety. "Wherefore we labor, that whether present [with the Lord] or absent [from the body,] that we may be accepted with him." His anxiety and fear, which induced him to labor constantly, that he might stand accepted with God, arose from the consideration of this fact, that "we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in the body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad: knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men." 2 Cor. 5 ch. x xi.

The apostle assures us that he lived, labored, and preached, in view of future judgment; his aim was to secure the favor of his Lord, and stand accepted in the day of terror and of judgment. My dear friend, was there nothing to fear, no danger, if unfaithful, of his being cast-away; then was St. Paul a deceiver? but if he is true, how false, how fatal is Universalism.

Again, the conduct of holy men of old was regulated by faith in a future judgment. "Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed, for he looked for a city which had foundations, whose builder and maker is God."

Moses, when he trampled upon the honors of Egypt, released himself from royal favor, and chose "rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season," was influenced by the retributions of eternity, "for he had respect unto the recompense of reward."

Dauid's last thoughts are associated with the day of judgment; his dying advice to his son is worthy of being inscribed upon the heart of every young man. "And thou, Solomon, my son, know thou the God of thy fathers, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind; if thou seek him, he will be found of thee, but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off forever."

To the day of judgment the Saviour referred, in frequent and tender, but fearfully plain and even terrific terms. Equally faithful and equally plain were the apostles. The Athenians, when first the gospel was preached to them, heard of that "day in which God would judge the world in righteousness;" and as St. Paul "reasoned of judgment to come, Felix trembled, and quaked in the presence of his prisoner."

I would ask the reader that, in view of all this testimony, is it not the most impious trifling imaginable which can profess respect for, and belief in the Bible, while it sets aside such instruction. Must not the blood of souls be found upon such teaching; must not the destruction of those who thus wrest the Bible, and deceive and ruin their race, be deep and awful indeed.

#### PRACTICAL REFLECTIONS.

My reader, to die is a solemn thing; to look for the last time upon the golden sun and the beautiful creation, to exchange the sad farewell with all we love, to be cold as clay, is a fearful event to anticipate; yet it must come to one and all. No countenance is so radiant with health and beauty, as to escape the grasp of death; the strongest pulsations will cease, and the most elastic step will falter when death approaches; he will touch our frames with his icy finger, and all will then be cold as marble.

But much more solemn is it, to think of the judgment that follows death; to look forward to that hour in which we all shall stand before the judgment-seat of Christ—stand in the presence of our Judge, to whom all things are open and manifest, who cannot err, and from whom no one can escape.

The judgment of the great day will be equitable, it will be a righteous judgment; in it men will be rewarded according to the deeds done in the body; the condemned will acknowledge the righteousness of the decision, and in that day the righteous Judge shall give a crown of righteousness "unto all that love his appearing;" but unto all others He shall say, "depart, I know you not." Oh! my God, my God, what a sentence.

My dear friend, from this decision there will be no appeal; no error will be found in the proceedings, no passion will sway the Judge, and prevent justice; but in the face of an assembled universe, in the presence of God, of Christ, of angels, of the spirits of just men made perfect, the judgment will proceed, and men will be rewarded according to their works. He who wept over Jerusalem when he pronounced its doom, will judge the world; he will do it in the same spirit of tenderness.

Universalists, unable to meet the arguments by which the doctrine of future judgment is sustained, attempt to divert the mind from this solemn truth by mocking at the idea, or so caricaturing the subject, that disgust may arise in the mind, and thus men be prevented from receiving the truth. They represent the Christian as teaching that God is a stern and cruel being, sitting upon his throne with his sword drawn, panting for a victim, and impatient for the hour when he may strike the fatal blow.

Be not deceived, my friend, God does not desire the death of the sinner; He has no pleasure in it; the gift of his only Son, the suffering and death of that Divine Being, the descent of the Holy Ghost, and the perpetuation of the gospel, with the day and means of grace, all prove that God, is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

Dear friends, what think you of the great and awful truth before you now? "The hour is coming," said our God, when the voice of Jesus shall burst the sepulchre, when every grave shall be riven asunder, and every spot upon this wide world's surface, shall be revisited for a moment by him who lies beneath it. Called by that voice, you shall yourself come forth, your body and soul for ever re-united, and accompanied by the multitudes who lie around you, shall pass upward to the judgment seat; that "great white throne" of the descending Saviour, before which all the generations of men, from the first Adam

to the last of his descendants, who shall enter the world; at the very hour of that world's dissolution, shall one and all be re-assembled. But when there, you shall stand alone, a gathering world around you, and yet not one to help, not one to shield you from your Judge; as much alone as if no other ear were open to his voice, no other heart laid bare before his eye. Then shall be brought to view all unrepented, unforgiven sins, all words, all thoughts, all actions which, done from your cradle to your grave, shall have dishonored God, done despite of the efforts of his striving Spirit, and poured contempt upon the atoning sacrifice of his blessed Son. And for what purpose shall such additional agony be inflicted upon those who, throughout eternity, shall never again behold the face of God after that day has closed; to stamp that burning shame upon the sinner's cheek, that brand of deep remorse upon the sinner's brow, which after ages never shall eradicate, to justify before men and angels, the sentence which a righteous Saviour shall at that coming hour pronounce; and to leave every condemned and hopeless sinner utterly speechless; to deprive him even of the miserable gratification, that it was an unjust decree of a partial God which consigned him to the dreadful fate from which he shall for ever and ever suffer. Can you, my reader, anticipate such a scene without one honest, self-inquiring thought; "what is the part which I shall bear upon that day?" Let the statement of divine truth which I now open, assist you in your reply. God hath committed all judgment unto the Son, for the express purpose, "that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father." Are you so honoring the Lord Jesus Christ, acknowledging yourself as not your own, but his who has bought you with his precious blood? If you are, then are you now among those dead who have heard the voice of the Son of God, bringing to them that spiritual life here, which is the sure and only foretaste of eternal life hereafter; then shall you be among those tenants of the grave, who, having done good, having brought fourth the fruits of the spiritual life of which they were partakers, shall, when they hear that well known voice, "come forth to the resurrection of life."

But my friend, is there no other feeling with which we may anticipate the mysteries and glories of that day; no other thought awakened in our heart by this most solemn declaration. All that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth. Blessed be God, there is that which as nothing earthly ever could awaken, so

nothing short of heaven itself shall bring the full accomplishment, the perfect and unspeakable fruition. It is the anticipation of all that that voice shall be, and all that it shall bring to us, if we are among the blessed number of God's dear, and pardoned, and holy children; it will be no new, no stranger's voice to you upon that coming day; when the newly awakened ear catches for the first time the sound of the Bridegroom's cry, every accent, every word will be in the well-known, well-remembered tones of our best, our dearest friend. The first feeling of our souls will be, as our bodies rise from out of the dust, "this is the self-same voice which I once heard when dead in trespass and sin," and when I heard I lived; this is the self-same voice which often, oh how often, during my long imprisonment here, has cheered me in sickness, comforted me in the day of trouble, strengthened me in the hour of temptation; has been my guide, my counsellor, and my friend. And shall I fear it now, when I am about to step out into the world. No: Let me yet hear it once again, at thy right hand, O God! perfecting all that concerneth me, finishing thine own work, completing thine own glory, and sealing my everlasting happiness.

Now my friends, if the word of God be true, that desire shall be granted, for every believing and obeying child of God shall one day hear that self-same voice pronounce, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

A word to you who have been on beds of sickness; you who still feel the liability of your frail frame to all the thousand maladies which lead down to death, and yet in spiritual things have profited nothing by your visitation; remember that the patience of the good Physician may be too often tried, that the strivings of his good spirit may be too often resisted, his influences forever quenched. There is a day coming when the entreaties of beseeching friends, the prayers of ministers, the cry of anguish, will be alike unheard and disregarded by God; when the only companions of a sick, and it may be a dying bed, will be the recollection of mercies unacknowledged, of resolutions unkept, of compassion and love wasted upon one who has made no return.

And may the good Spirit of our God carry the present warning to which none other yet has reached. I once more ask you, my reader, to seek the Lord Jesus; trust in Him; don't put it off as I have done. May God help you, for Christ's sake.

And shall I sit alone in prison,  
 Here oppress'd with grief and fear ;  
 To God, my Father, make my moan,  
 And He refuse to hear.

If He my Father be,  
 His pity He will show ;  
 From cruel bondage set me free,  
 And inward peace bestow.

If still He silence keep,  
 'Tis but my faith to try ;  
 He knows and feels when e'er I weep,  
 And softens ev'ry sigh.

Then will I humbly wait,  
 Nor once indulge despair ;  
 My sins are great, but not so great,  
 As his compassions are.

While life's dark maze I tread,  
 And griefs around me spread,  
 Be thou my guide ;  
 Bid darkness turn to-day—  
 Wipe sorrow's tears away,  
 Nor let me ever stray from thee aside.

When ends life's transient dream,  
 When death's cold, sullen stream  
 Shall over me roll ;  
 Blest Saviour, then, in love,  
 Fear and distrust remove ;  
 Oh! bear me safe above, a ransom'd soul.

I. E. CLARK.

Auburn Prison, 1859.



## LETTER IV.

---

### HOPE OF THE RIGHTEOUS.

"The righteous hath hope in his death." The reader, may find the words in the Book of Proverbs, 14th chapter and a part of the 32d verse.

Kind reader, this is a subject of much importance. I confess that my feelings are solemn, when I think of the death of my dear, kind and affectionate wife, which took place on the 28th day of February, in the year of our Lord, 1859.

Next to the salvation of men, the loftiest aim of Christianity is to strip the grave of its terrors. This is exclusively her work. She has, kind reader, performed it unaided. Let me say to you, it is an achievement peculiarly her own, and I know of no subject better calculated to awaken in us a gratitude to God for his goodness unto us. The truth is, whether we are, or are not the children of God, we must die? With that point religion has nothing to do; but it has much to do with the manner of dying. It lends to the followers of Jesus Christ a triumph which is found nowhere else; they, like the rest of the world, are walking down to the sepulchre, but, unlike the rest of the world, they carry with them the promise of our text, to cheer them as they go along, and to shed over their path the light of its encouragement and consolation. Aside, therefore, from any further reasons, the subject of death accords impressively with the design of the Sabbath. But I have another inducement for selecting it, which you can easily divine. It is but a few days ago that I was blessed with a dear beloved wife, who was ever kind to me; she is now no more. I can safely say that she has gone to a better world. My very heart bleeds for my five dear, little children, who are left without a parent's care. And I pray God, they will consider each affliction by itself a

me-senger of good. How often she has looked forward with joy to see the day of my liberty. But she has left us; she has bidden those dear little children farewell, forever; and in her place we see only the badges of mourning. How solemn, my reader, is the dispensation? How loud and alarming is the voice which issues from her vacated seat, "be ye also ready!" Alarming, did I say? Why should it alarm you, to exchange a vale of tears for the welcoming bosom of a Saviour? No, unbelief may startle — impenitence may be dismayed, — but the child of God can survey the grave with a countenance unchanged. He can look upon the closing eye — the shivering pulse — the sinking head — the sepulchral hearse — the heavy cloud. He can view them with composure; for Christianity tramples all these chilly images under her feet, and invigorates the misgivings of nature with the triumphant assurance of the gospel. The righteous hath hope in his death.

But what is meant by the declaration that the righteous hath hope in his death? Beyond the grave, my reader, all is a dark unknown; it is the land of silence. No traveler returns to tell us what he has seen, what he has heard, or upon what state of being he has been ushered. My kind reader, this mysterious uncertainty throws over us a feeling of suspense and fear; but when an impenitent sinner walks down to the tomb, you can imagine the forebodings which must bear him company. He knows that he is guilty; he feels himself unpardoned, he sees the tribunal of a holy God before him, and no Saviour to stand by him in the moment of launching upon his final destiny. Oh! what must be his emotions? Now it is an exemption from these terrors which is guaranteed by our text to the children of God. The promise is that every real Christian shall enjoy the presence of Christ in his dying hour; that he shall find the fear of the grave retiring before him the nearer he approaches its brink, and be enabled to triumph over all its horrors. And, my reader, we might presume beforehand that this would be the case. Is it probable, that Christ should cheer his disciples through life, with his promises, and receive them beyond it to his glory, and yet leave the dreary interval — the hour of exchanging worlds unvisited and unblest with his consolation? Is it likely that, at the very moment when most they needed his presence — while the most agonizing conflict, the struggle with the last enemy, was coming on — that then they should be left deserted and disconsolate, when even the self-possession

of nature is prostrated, and the prop of constitutional firmness is torn away from under them? No;—that Saviour who pitieth the infirmities of his children in the trials of time, cannot and will not forsake them when crossing the threshold of eternity. But we have better evidence than presumptive. The word of God lends to us its plain and unequivocal confirmation. What means David when he exclaimed, “though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me?” What means the prophet, “I will ransom them from the power of the grave, for I am God and not man?” What means the apostle, “The sting of death is sin—but thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ?” Search the Bible through, my readers, and you arrive at the same result; you find a general promise issued without reserve to the followers of Christ, and comporting entirely with the sentiment of our text.

But, if you still demur, go farther, and consult the language of fact. I have never known, and after much inquiry, I have never learned a single instance of a person dying without some token of triumph, if he had strength to give it, who had lived an experimental disciple of Christ. The reverse of the position I do not assert; I do not say that every one who expires with composure, must, of course, be a Christian; but I do say that, as far as I am informed, no sincere and broken-hearted child of God has ever bidden farewell to the world in tears, unless they were tears of joy and consolation. Often, very often, have the hardihood of impenitence and the confidence of formality been dismayed at the door of the sepulcher; but never yet has been heard there the voice of consternation or terror from Christian lips. And, my kind reader, this is a doctrine of no trifling importance; when we come to stand on the last half hour of our life, we shall find it then anything but a trifle. Talk as we may, we shall then need some mighty sustaining principle to hold us up in the day when God taketh away the soul; and to banish from us the timidities and the apprehensions of nature. In vain will reason whisper her sophistry in our ears; in vain will philosophy rear around us the shelter of her delusions. Nothing can calm a sinner on the breaking brink of eternity—but an All-sufficient Saviour to take him by the hand—to wipe the tear from his cheek, and the sweat from his forehead, and to annihilate the view of the grave by the loftier view of the glory and the blessedness beyond it. And who, my reader, are meant by the right-

ous? The appellation cannot denote those who have never sinned, for we have all sinned, and all come short of the glory of God.

My reader, with the history of human guilt you are familiar. You know, without learning the secrecy of your own bosom, that there is none inwardly doeth good — no, not one. Hope, then, if hope there be, must fix upon us the offer of pardon. The criminal lies at the mercy of his judge, and the single inquiry comes up, whether mercy can and will be exercised. Here, too, you know the mighty discovery which Inspiration lays open. You have heard of a provided Saviour, and what I say is, that in and through Him alone, can a sinner aspire to righteousness in the eye of Heaven. But let me ask if you wish to sustain this relation towards the Godhead. Then, on the threshold, I call upon you to repent. It is the first step to salvation. Without it, you may lie down at once in helplessness and despair. Except ye repent, ye shall perish. Look back on your long and dreary course of alienation from God; on your unbending hardihood in making light of Christ, on the ten thousand instances in which you have trifled with the obligations of God's mercies, the warning of judgments, the urgency of sermons, the solemnity of sacraments, the admonition of sickness and death. Look back upon these things and mourn. Let the sobbings of contrition break out from your hard and unfeeling hearts. Let your closets find you on your knees, and reverberate with the agonizing voice of your supplications. God be merciful to us, sinners. But this is not all. Repentance will not make you righteous, for the righteousness of God is by faith. You must believe in Christ Jesus. Do not mistake my meaning. I have no reference to the mere assent of an understanding besieged by evidence which it cannot resist. If that were the principle of salvation, it would depopulate the caverns of woe; for not one is there — not one ever will be—who does not in such a sense believe. You are required to confide in the Redeemer — to put your trust in Him. Your moralities, your good deeds, and even your penitential tears, must be alike disclaimed and discarded at the foot of the cross. You must depend upon Christ, not because He is a Saviour in the way of His appointments. Here you are secure. As an evidence that you are righteous, I ask no more than this; but, as an evidence that this is done, I go on to demand, by the authority of the Bible, that you live religious from day to day, in all holy conversation and godliness. What doth it profit, if a man say he hath faith, and have not works?

When you have surrendered all the indulgencies of the world — when you get to disrelish the least vestige of sin — when you find yourself refreshed on the road to eternity by present prayer — when you heartily love the spirituality of God's people — when, in short, you feel that even heaven without your God would be no heaven to you, — then and not till then, can you hope that you have repented and believed to the saving of the soul.

These things, therefore, put together, make up the specific character which Inspiration pronounces righteous. Depend upon it, my reader, nothing else will pass the test of the judgment-seat — nothing else will confer immortality on a sinner. It is no matter how many visible accomplishments we put on. They may furnish us a passport to the confidence and esteem of our fellow-men, but never will they decoy the scrutiny of the heart-searching God. Over all our deportment, however lofty, and all our virtues, however resplendent, and all our feelings, however glowing, there must preside the one great principle of real religiousness, or the whole is only a magnificent superstructure reared upon sand. The thunders of the final day will rock it to atoms.

In dismissing our subject, my dear Christian friends, we are again reminded, as in beginning it, of one who longed to see me free from prison, but saw it not. She has gone down, with the hope of the righteous to the dead. Think not my reader, that I aim at the language of eulogy. No; much and tenderly as she was loved, and could she speak to us from on high, she would repress the voice of praise and the tear of regret, tell us only to put our trust in Jesus Christ, and keep our lamps trimmed and burning. Methinks she would say, if she could revisit the house of prayer and resume her seat with her dear little children, which once she loved so dearly, she would look around upon the little band of her surviving companions, and say, with affectionate solemnity; "prepare to meet thy God, O Israel!" Listen, then, beloved friends, to the admonitions of the grave. Be up and doing, for the time is short. You are treading in the footsteps of your departed friend. When another year shall have come around, some of you who are now in the bloom of life may be missing forever. But what have you to fear? if Christ be formed within you, the hope of glory, you may go on your way rejoicing. True, you, must

die; and you know not how soon or how suddenly; but your Saviour is sitting at the helm of the universe, and you may confide in him. He will bear you forward through the anguish of disease, and irradiate your expiring hour with the light of a promised immortality. Yes, more; He will watch over your slumbering dust, and present you before the throne of the Father, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing. He will open to you the portals of heaven, and wipe all tears from your eyes, and raise from your golden harps the sublime and triumphant anthem — “worthy is the lamb that was slain, through an endless eternity.” Oh! who that thinks of this, would not be a Christian? Who can look at the majestic and animating scene, and not exclaim, with the ancient prophet, “let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.” My reader, how solemn are our destinies? Have we no hope in Christ? Why not? What is our apology? In some hour of leisure let us coolly calculate the price for which we may be bartering our immortal soul away. And may God follow us with his spirit.

Dearest wife, thou wast mild and lovely,  
Gentle as the summer breeze,  
Pleasant as the air of evening,  
When it floats among the trees.

Peaceful be thy silent slumbers,  
Peaceful in the grave so low;  
Thou no more wilt join our number,  
Thou no more our songs shall know.

Dearest wife, thou hast left us,  
Here thy loss we deeply feel;  
But 'tis God that hath bereft us,  
He can all our sorrows heal.

Yet again we hope to meet thee,  
When the day of life is fled;  
Then, in heaven, with joy to greet thee,  
Where no farewell tear is shed.

God and Father, Thou didst give me,  
Sorrow for my portion here;  
But thy mercy will not leave me,  
Helpless, struggling with despair.

That I shall die, full well I know,  
 All human life is short and frail,  
 No lasting good can earth bestow,  
 All portion here must quickly fail ;  
 In mercy, Lord, direct my ways,  
 That I in peace may end my days.

When I shall die, is all unknown,  
 Except to thy omniscient mind ;  
 And lest with life, my hopes be gone,  
 May I from thee such favor find,  
 That I may always be prepared  
 For death, and for thy great reward.

How I shall die, to ask were in vain,  
 Death does his work in various forms ;  
 To some, with agonies of pain ;  
 And some sink peacefully in his arms,  
 Just as thou wilt, — if, when 'tis past,  
 My soul be found with thee at last.

Where I shall die, — I know it not,  
 Nor where my ashes shall be laid ;  
 Only be it my happy lot  
 With saints redeemed to leave the dead, —  
 Small care to me the place affords, —  
 The earth throughout is all the Lord's.

I. E. CLARK.

Auburn State Prison, Nov. 1858.

## LETTER V.

---

### GAMBLERS AND GAMBLING.

“Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments and made four parts, to every soldier a part, and also his coat. Now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout. They said therefore among themselves, let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be. These things therefore the soldiers did.”

Before I close my subject, as I soon must, my reader, I have condensed into one account the separate parts of this gambling transaction as narrated by each evangelist. How marked, my reader, in every age is a gambler's character! The enraged priesthood of ferocious sects taunted Christ's dying agonies; the bewildered multitude, accustomed to cruelty, could shout, but no earthly creature but a gambler could be so lost to all feelings as to sit down coolly under a dying man to wrangle for his garments, and arbitrate their avaricious differences by casting dice for his tunic, with hands spotted with his spattered blood, warm and yet undried upon them. The descendants of these patriarchs of gambling, however, have taught us that there is nothing possible to hell, uncongenial to these, its elect saints. In this lecture my reader, it is my disagreeable task to lead your steps down to the dark path to their cruel haunts, there to exhibit their infernal passions, their awful ruin, and their ghastly memorials. In the hour of darkness, amid fierce faces gleaming with the fire of fiercer hearts, amid oaths and groans and fiendish orgies, ending in murders and strewn with sweltering corpses, — do not mistake, and suppose yourself in hell.



Gambling is the staking or winning of property upon mere hazard. The husbandman renders produce for his gains; the mechanic renders the product of labor and skill for his gains; the gambler renders for his gain the slights of useless skill, or more often, downright cheating. Betting is gambling, there is no honest equivalent to its gains. Dealings in fancy-stocks are oftentimes sheer gambling, with all its worsts evils. Profits so earned are no better than the profits of dice, cards, or hazard. When skill returns for its earnings a useful service, as knowledge, beneficial amusements, or profitable labor, it is honest commerce. The skill of a pilot in threading a narrow channel, the skill of a lawyer in threading a still more intricate one, are as substantial equivalents for a price received, as if they were merchant goods or agricultural products. But all gains of mere skill which result in no real benefit, are gambling gains.

Gaming as it springs from a principle of our nature, has in some form, probably existed in every age. My reader, we trace it in remote periods and among the most barbarous people; on the contrary it loses none of its fascinations among a civilized people. Our land, not apt to be behind in good or evil, is full of gambling in all its forms—the gambling of commerce, the gambling of bets and wagers, and the gambling of games of hazard. My reader, there is gambling in refined circles, and in the lowest, among the members of our national government, and of our state-government. Thief gambles with thief, in jail; the judge who sent them there, the lawyer who prosecuted, and the lawyer who defended them, often gamble too. This vice, my friend, once almost universally prevalent among the Western bar, and still too frequently disgracing its members, is however, we are happy to believe, decreasing. In many circuits, not but a few years ago, and I fear in some now, the judge, the jury, and the bar shuffled cards by night, and law by day—dealing out money and justice alike. The clatter of dice and cards disturbs your slumber on the boat, and rings drowsily from the upper rooms of the hotel. This vice pervades the city, extends over every line of travel, and infests the most rural districts. The secreted lamp dimly lights the apprentice to their game; with unsuspected disobedience, boys creep out of their beds to it, it goes on in the store close by the till; it haunts the shop. The scoundrel in his lair, the scholar in his room, the pirate in his ship, loafers in the street-corner, the beggar under the hedge, the

rascal in prison, and some professors of religion in the somolient hours of the Sabbath, — waste their energies by the ruinous excitement of the game. Besides these players, there are troops of professional gamblers, troops of hangers-on, troops of youth to be drawn in. My friends, the universal prevalence of this vice is a reason for parental vigilance; and a reason of remonstrance from the citizen, the parent, the minister of the gospel, the patriot, and the press. I propose to trace its opening, describe its subjects, and detail its effects.

A young man, proud of freedom, anxious to exert his manhood, has tumbled his Bible, and sober books, and letters of counsel, into a dark closet. He has learned various accomplishments, to flirt, to boast, to swear, to fight, to drink; he has let every one of these chains be put around him, upon the solemn promise of Satan that he would take them off whenever he wished. Hearing of the artistic feats of eminent gamblers, he emulates them; so he ponders the game; he teaches what he has learned to his shopmates, and feels himself their master; as yet he has never played for stakes; it begins thus:—Peeping into a book-store, he watches till the sober customers go out; then slips in, and with assumed boldness, not concealing his shame, he asks for cards, buys them, and hastens out. The first game is to pay for the cards; after the relish of playing for a stake, no game can satisfy them without a stake. A few nuts are staked, then a bottle of wine, an oyster-supper; at last they can venture a sixpence in actual money — just for the amusement of it. I need go no further — whoever wishes to do anything with the lad, can do it now; if properly plied, and gradually led, he will go to any length, and stop only at the gallows. Do you doubt it my friends? let us trace him a year or two further on.

With his father's blessing, and his mother's tears, the young man departs from home; he has received his patrimony, and embarks for life and independence. Upon his journey he rests at a city; visits the "school of morals," lingers in more suspicious places, is seen by a sharper, and makes his acquaintance. The knave sits by him at dinner, gives him the news of the place, and a world of advice; cautions him against sharpeners, and inquires if he has money, and charges him to keep it secret; offers himself to make with him the rounds of the town, and secure him from imposition. At length, that

he may see all, he is taken to a gaming house, but, with apparent kindness, warned not to play; he stands by to see the various fortunes of the game; some forever loosing; some touch what number they will, gaining piles of gold; looking in thirst where wine is free, a glass is taken, another of a better kind; next the best the landlord has, and two or three glasses of that, a change comes over the youth; his exhilaration raises his courage, and lulls his caution. Gambling seen, seems a different thing from gambling painted by a pious father; then his friend remarks that one might easily double his money by a few ventures, but that it was, perhaps, prudent not to risk. Only this was needed to fire his mind. What, only prudence between me and gain! then that shall not be long. He stakes, he wins; stakes again, wins again, and gains. Glorious, I am the lucky man that is to break the bank; he stakes and wins again; his pulse races, his face burns, his blood is up, and fear gone; he loses, loses again, loses all his winnings, loses more, but fortune turns again, he wins anew. My friends, he has now lost all self-command; gains excite him, and losses excite him more; he doubles his stakes, then trebles them — and all is swept. He rushes on, puts up his whole purse, and loses the whole; then he would borrow, no man will lend; he is desperate, he will fight at a word; he is led to the street, and thrust out. The cool breeze which blows upon his fevered cheek, wafts the slow and solemn stroke of the clock, — one, — two, — three, — four; four of the morning, and quick work of ruin; — an innocent man destroyed in a night. He staggers to his hotel, remembers as he enters it, that he has not even enough to pay his bill. It now flashes upon him that his friend, who never had left him for an hour before, had stayed behind where his money is, and, doubtless, is laughing over his spoils. His blood boils with rage. Ah, but at length comes up the remembrance of home; a parent's training and counsels for more than twenty years, destroyed in a night. O, my God, what a wretch I have been! I am not fit to live; I cannot go home, I am a stranger here. Oh! that I were dead. Oh! that I had died before I knew this guilt, and were lying where my sister lies. O God! O God! my head will burst with agony. He stalks his lonely room with an agony which only the young heart knows in its first horrible awakening to remorse — when it looks despair full in the face, and feels its hideous incantations tempting him to suicide. Subdued at length by agony, cowed and

weakened by distress, he is sought again by those who plucked him. Cunning to subvert inexperience, to raise the evil passion, and to allay the good, they made him their pliant tool.

Now farewell, young man. I see thy steps turned to that haunt again. I see hope lighting thy face, but it is a lurid light, and never came from heaven. Stop, dear friend, before that threshold; turn, and bid farewell to home; farewell to innocence; farewell to venerable father and aged mother; the next step will part thee from them all forever. And now, henceforth be a mate to thieves, a brother to corruption. Thou hast made a league with death, and unto death shalt thou go.

Let us here pause, my reader, to draw the likeness of a few who stand conspicuous in that vulgar crowd of gamblers, with which hereafter he will consort. The first is a taciturn, quiet man. No one knows when he comes into town, or when he leaves. No man hears of his gaining; for he never boasts, nor reports his luck. He spends little for parade; his money seems to go and come only through the game. He reads none, converses none, is neither a glutton nor a hard drinker; he sports few ornaments, and wears plain clothing. And upon the whole, he seems a gentlemanly man; and sober citizens say, "his only fault is gambling." What then is this "only fault?" "In his heart he has the most intense and consuming lust of play. He is quiet because every passion is absorbed in one, and that one burning at the highest flame. He thinks of nothing else, cares only for this. All other things, even the hottest lusts of other men, are too cool to be temptations to him; so much deeper is the style of his passions. He sees none come in, none go out. Death might groan on one side of the room, and marriage might sport on the other — he would know neither. Every created influence is shut out, one thing only moves him — the game; and that leaves not one pulse of excitability unaroused, but stirs his soul to the very dregs.

How very different, my reader, is the roistering gamester? He bears a jolly face, a glistening eye something watery through watching and drink. His fingers are manacled in rings, his bosom glows with pearls and diamonds. He learns the time which he wastes from a watch full gorgeously carved, and not with the most modest scenes, and slung around his neck by a ponderous golden chain. There is

not so splendid a fellow to be seen sweeping through the streets. The landlord makes him welcome—he will bear a full bill. The tailor smiles like May—he will buy half his shop. Other places bid him welcome—he will bear large stealings.

Like the Judge, he makes his circuit, but not for justice; like the Preacher, he has his appointments, but not for instruction. His circuits are the race courses, the crowded capital, days of general convocation, conventions and mass-gatherings. But night is his day. These are mere exercises, and brief prefaces to his real accomplishments. He is a good fellow, who dares play deeper; he is wild indeed, who seems wilder; and he is keen, indeed, who is sharper than he is, after all this show of frankness. No one is quicker, slyer, and more alert at a game. He can shuffle the pack till an honest man would as soon think of looking for a particular drop of water in the ocean, as for a particular card in any particular place. Perhaps he is ignorant which is at the top and which at the bottom. At any rate, watch him closely, or you will get a lean hand and he a fat one. A plain man would think him a wizard or the devil. When he touches a pack they seem alive, and acting to his will rather than his touch. If he loses, very well, he laughs; if he gains, he only laughs a little more. Full of stories, full of songs, full of wit, full of roistering spirit—yet do not trespass too much upon his good nature with insult. All this outside is only the spotted hide which covers the tiger. He who provokes this man shall see what lightning can break out of a summer-seeming cloud.

My reader, these do not fairly represent the race of gamblers,—conveying too favorable an impression. There is one, often met on steamboats, travelling solely to gamble. He has the servants, or steward, or some partner in league with him, to fleece every unwary player whom he inveigles to a game. He deals falsely; heats his dupe to madness by drink, drinking none himself; he watches the signal of his accomplice, telegraphing his opponent's hand; at a stray look, he will slip your money off and steal it. To cover false playing, or to get rid of paying losses, he will lie fiercely, and swear uproariously, and break up the play to fight with knife or pistol—first scraping the table of every penny. When the passengers are asleep, he surveys the luggage, to see what may be worth stealing;

he pulls a watch from under the pillow of one sleeper; fumbles in the pocket of another and gathers booty throughout the cabin. Leaving the boat before morning, he appears at some village hotel, a magnificent gentleman, or polished traveller, or even a distinguished nobleman.

There is another gambler, cowardly, sleek, stealthy, humble, mousing, and mean — a simple blood-sucker. For money, he will be a tool to other gamblers, steal for them, and from them; he plays the jackal, and searches victims for them, humbly satisfied to pick the bones afterward. Thus, (to employ his own language,) he ropes in the inexperienced young, flatters them, teaches them, inflames their passions, purveys to their appetites, cheats them, debauches them, draws them down to his own level, and then lords it over them in malignant meanness. Himself impure, he plunges others into lasciviousness, and with a train of reeking satellites, he revolves a few years in the orbit of the game, the brothel, and the doctor's shop; then sinks and dies; the world is purer, and good men thank God that he is gone.

Besides these, my reader, time would fail me to describe the ineffable dignity of a gambling judge; the cautious, phlegmatic lawyer, A detail of the evils of gambling should be preceded by an illustration of that constitution of mind out of which they mainly spring — I mean its excitability.

Now let me say to the reader, that gambling is founded upon the very worst perversion of this powerful element of our nature. It heats every part of the mind like an oven. The specific evils of gambling may now be almost imagined. First: It diseases the mind, unfitting it for the duties of life. Gamblers are seldom industrious men in any useful vocation. A gambling mechanic finds his labor less relishful as his passion for play increases. He grows unsteady, neglects his work, becomes unfaithful to promises; what he performs he slights. Little jobs seem little enough, he desires immense contracts, whose uncertainty has much the excitement of gambling, and for the best of reasons; and in the pursuit of great and sudden profits by wild schemes, he stumbles over into ruin, leaving all who employed or trusted him in the rubbish of his speculations.

A gambling lawyer, neglecting the drudgery of his profession, will court its exciting duties. To explore authorities, compare reasons, digest, and write, this is tiresome. But to advocate, to engage in fiery contests with keen opponents, this is nearly as good as gambling. Dear reader, many a ruined client has cursed the law, and cursed a stupid jury, and cursed everybody for his irretrievable loss, except his lawyer, who gambled all night when he should have prepared the case, and came half asleep and debauched into court in the morning to lose a good case mismanaged, and snatched from gambling hands by the art of sober opponents. No man will drudge for cents, who gambles for dollars by the hundred; or practice a piddling economy, while, with almost equal indifference, he makes or loses five hundred in a night.

Second: For a like reason, it destroys all domestic habits and affections. Home is a prison to an inveterate gambler; there is no air there that he can breathe. For a moment he may sport with his children, and smile upon his wife; but his heart, its strong passions, are not there. A little branch-rill may flow through the family, but the deep river of his affections flows away from home. On the issue of a game Tacitus narrates that the ancient Germans would stake their property, their wives, their children, and themselves. My friend, what less than this is it, when a man will stake that property which is to give his family bread, and that honor which gives them place and rank in society.

When playing becomes desperate gambling, the heart is a hearth where all the fires of gentle feelings have smouldered to ashes; and a thorough-faced gamester could rattle dice in a charnel-house, and wrangle for his stakes amid murder, and pocket gold dripping with the blood of his own kindred. Remember, dear friend, gambling is the parent and companion of every vice which pollutes the heart, or injures society.

To every young man who indulges in the least form of gambling, I raise a warning voice. Dear friend, under the specious name of amusement, you are laying the foundation of gambling. Playing is the seed which comes up gambling. It is the light wind which brings up the storm. It is the white frost which precludes the winter. You are mistaken, however, in supposing that it is harmless in its

earliest beginnings. Its terrible blight belongs, doubtless, to a later stage; but its consumption of time, its destruction of industry, its distaste for the calmer pleasure of life, belong to the very beginning. You will begin to play with very generous feeling; amusement will be the plea. At the beginning, the game will excite enthusiasm, pride of skill, the love of mastery, and the love of money. The love of money at first almost imperceptible, at last will rule out all the rest — like Aaron's rod — a serpent swallowing every other serpent. Generosity, enthusiasm, pride and skill, love of mastery, will be absorbed in one mighty feeling — the savage lust of lucre.

Let me trace, young friend, your course from the amusement of innocent playing to its almost inevitable end. Such a garnished game is made the text to justify the whole round of gambling. Let us, then, look at

Scene the first. In a room so silent that there is no sound except the shrill cock crowing the morning, where the forgotten candles burn dimly over the long and lengthened wick, sit four men. Carved marble could not be more motionless, save their hands. Pale, watchful though weary, their eyes pierce the cards, or furtively read each other's faces. Hours have passed over them thus. At length they rise without words; some with a satisfaction scrape off the piles of money, — others, dark, sullen, silent, fierce, move away from their lost money. The darkest and fiercest of the four is that young friend who first sat down to make out a game. He will never sit so innocently again. What says he to his conscience now. I have a right to gamble and I have a right to be damned, too, if I choose, and whose business is it?

Scene the second. Years have passed on. He has seen youth ruined, at first with expostulation, then with only silent regret, then consenting to take part of the spoils; and finally, he has himself decoyed, duped, and stripped them without mercy.

I ask the reader, this bright day, stand with me, if you would be sick of humanity, look back over that multitude of men kindly gathered to see a murderer hung. At last, a gnarled cart drags on a thrice-guarded wretch; at the gallows-ladder his courage fails, his coward feet refuses to ascend; dragged up, he is supported by bustling officials; his brain reels, his eye swims, while the meek minister utters a final prayer by his leaden ear. The prayer is said, the noose is fixed, the



signal is given, a shudder runs through the crowd as he swings free. After a moment, his convulsed limbs stretch down, and hang heavily and still; and he who began to gamble to make up a game, and ended with stabbing an enraged victim whom he had fleeced, has here played his last game, — himself the stake.

I feel my reader, impelled, in closing, to call the attention of all sober citizens to some potent influences which are exerted in favor of gambling.

In our civil economy we have legislators to devise and enact wholesome laws; lawyers to counsel and aid those who need the law's relief, and judges to determine and administer the laws. If legislators, lawyers, and judges are gamblers, with what hope do we warn off the young from this deadly fascination, against such authoritative examples of high public functionaries? With what eminent fitness does that judge press the bench, who in private commits the vices which officially he is set to condemn? With what singular terrors does he frown on a convicted gambler with whom he played last night, and will play again to-night? How wisely should the fine be light which the sprightly criminal will win and pay out of the judge's own pocket.

With the name of judge is associated ideas of immaculate purity, sober piety, and favorless justice. Let it then be counted a dark crime for a recreant official so far to forget his reverend place, and noble office, as to run the gauntlet of filthy vices, and make the word judge, to suggest an incontinent trifler, who smites with his mouth, and smirks with his eye; who holds the rod to strike the criminal, and smits only the law to make a gap for criminals to pass through. If God loves this land, may he save it from truckling, drinking, swearing, gambling, vicious judges.\*

My reader, with such judges I must associate corrupt legislators, whose bawling patriotism leaks out in all the sinks of infamy at the capitol. These living exemplars of vice, pass still-born laws against vice; are such men sent to the capital only to practice debauchery? Laborious seedsmen — they gather every germ of evil, and laborious

---

\* The general eminent integrity of the bench is unquestionable — and no remarks in the text are to be construed as an oblique aspersion of the profession. But the purer our judges generally, the more shameless is it that some will not abandon either their vices or their office.

sowers — at home they strew them far and wide. It is a burning shame, a high outrage, that public men, by corrupting the young with example of manifold vices, should pay back their constituents for their honors.

Our land has little to fear from abroad, but much from within. We can bear foreign aggression, scarcity, the revulsions of commerce, plagues, and pestilences, but we cannot bear vicious judges, corrupt courts, gambling legislators, and a vicious, corrupt, and gambling constitution. My reader, do not be deceived; the decay of civil institutions begins at the core; the outside wears all the lovely hues of ripeness, when the inside is rotting. Decline does not begin in bold and startling acts; but, as in autumnal leaves, in rich and glowing colors; over diseased vitals, consumptive laws wear the blush, a brilliant eye, and transparent skin.

Could the public sentiment declare that personal morality is the first element of patriotism; that corrupt legislators are the most pernicious of criminals; that the judge who lets the villain off, is the villain's patron; that tolerance of crime is intolerance of virtue; — our nation might defy all enemies and live forever.

And now, my young friends, I beseech you to let alone this evil before it be meddled with; you are safe from vice when you avoid even its appearance, and only then. The first steps to wickedness are imperceptible; I do not wonder at the inexperience of Adam; but it is wonderful that six thousand year's repetition of the same arts and the same uniform disaster, should have taught men nothing; that generation after generation should perish, and the wreck be no warning.

Dear reader, let me ask you in the close of this volume, to "what purpose have you lived?" If you would "glorify God in your death," you must show forth in your life, the praises of Him who hath called you from darkness into his marvelous light, Remember dear friend, we are traveling the same road that Christ and the "collected excellence" of all past ages have trodden.

I. E. CLARK.

Auburn Prison, 1859.

## LETTER VI.

---

### DUTY TO ORPHANS.

"Take the child and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages."  
Exodus, 2d chapter and 8th verse.

---

### IN BEHALF OF THE PROTESTANT FEMALE ORPHAN ASYLUM IN THE CITY OF ROCHESTER.

The institution in whose behalf I address you, has already that sort of standing which saves me the trouble of pushing its claims. You have seen it from its origin to the present hour, passing, unhurt, the different stages of its progress, till now, if I may say so, its character is formed. None of us at this late day need be told that, in bestowing our bounty here, we do an act which is not merely dictated by benevolence, but approved by the soundest maxims of political economy. I say political economy, and yet a spirit of discouragement has arisen, I admit, both in England and America, towards the general principle of public charities. And why? Because, by holding out the offer of gratuitous support, they go to perpetuate idleness and dissuade it from every effort to take care of itself. Why is it that the poor-rates for the last ten or fifteen years have increased, on both sides of the Atlantic, more than thirty per cent. beyond the proportionate increase of population? There is no cause for it which we can see, unless it be that charitable institutions, in the same time, have been multiplied in very nearly the same ratio. All this, however, has nothing to do with the political economy of maintaining indigent female orphans. They constitute a splendid and honorable exception to the rule, and

in every document on the subject of pauperism, foreign or domestic, the provision made for their support is invariably shielded from the censure to which ordinary forms of systematical charity are exposed. The reason of it is obvious; none of the objections which lie so formidably in the one case can be detected for a moment in the other. For example; there is no facility for idleness; on the contrary, the inmates of the asylum are trained to every species of occupation which their probable allotment in life may require. Again; there are no encouragements to poverty. So far from it, when the individuals become of an age to gain their own subsistence, they are expected, in the pursuit of a virtuous and honorable employment, to provide for themselves. What less, I would ask, can be done for them, if any thing be done, than this? What less than to rescue them from the world till they are prepared with safety to enter it? to shelter the tender plants from exposure till they may be exposed without the certainty of ruin. No, my reader, never will an institution like this withdraw its claims to public patronage, till helplessness ceases to deserve relief and innocence to require protection. Now, if it were supposable, that a female child, thrown parentless on the world, especially in a slave country, where the chance of labor is often the necessity of degradation; that such a one, with no instructions to follow, and no example to imitate, should travel along to womanhood without a lost character, extinguished virtues, and blasted hopes, if she ever had any. Could we conceive of such an event in the common course of things? Then, but not till then, might we rally philosophy enough to lower the female asylum a single inch from its present dignified and lofty elevation.

But it is time, my reader, that I return to the passage which I have read from the sacred Scriptures.

During the reign of one of the most celebrated of the Egyptian monarchs, an order was issued to check the increase of the Hebrews who resided in the country, by destroying all their male children. At that period, Moses, the subsequent author of the Pentateuch, was in the cradle. His mother, hunted and terrified by the public officers, concealed her child in a basket under the banks of the Nile; while his little sister, as being less liable to suspicion, stood at a distance to await the almost hopeless event. In this situation a daughter of the king, whom Josephus calls Thermutes, while walking near the river,

discovered the basket and sent one of her attendants to bring it. It was accordingly brought to her, and, when opened, she saw the infant, who, from being so long deserted, was weeping. As might have been presumed, she was extremely affected herself; but, aware of the royal edict, instead of taking the babe home, she instructed his little sister, who was standing by, to go for a Hebrew nurse. The messenger obeyed, and on return brought with her a female, whom the princess addressed in the words of the text, — "Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages?" We need not wonder that the woman readily undertook the office, for she proved to be none else than the child's own mother.

Such, kind reader, is the story as it is told in the simple and touching language of Inspiration, and such is the intrepid heroism of philanthropy, and such is the mysterious way in which God becomes father to the fatherless, by making use of the feeble instrumentalities entrusted to mankind. Alas, my reader, how affecting a representation does this narrative convey of those helpless orphans whom you have with you. True, they are not abandoned to the waters of the Nile; they are not condemned by the cruelty of despotism to the horrible process of premature strangulation. But what then? They are orphans; and where, in the whole variety of human epithets, is a name which carries along with it so many images of sorrow and woe. They are orphans; and if you have had a father to fold you in his arms and bless you, and a mother to press you to her heart and call you her child, — if you have felt the kiss of parental tenderness imprinted on your lips, or the tear of parental solicitude dropping on your cheeks, you can imagine their condition. They are orphans; and through all the vast profusion of this world's magnificence and wealth, not a dwelling opens where they can go and say, "we are at home,"

Human life is sweetened by the serenity of domestic peace, but it is not for them. The fireside collects the happy family, and gladdens the brow of affection, but they have no part there. Silent, solitary, and forlorn, they look to the sky for their shelter, and to mankind for their friends. One thing, however, blessed be God, they do possess; and that is, an asylum, which has taken them, and nursed them on the bosom of its charity; from the wreck of all their earliest and warmest expectations, it has devised a plan for their rescue; it has

supplied their wants, and cheered their despondency; it has fed their hunger, and clothed their nakedness, alleviated their affliction, and housed them at last beneath the roof of a protecting beneficence. Tell me, ye patrons of deserted misfortune, whence come your project of mercy? Was it not from mothers? From those who had looked forward to the possibility of lying themselves upon the bed of death, with their dear children clustering around them in the interested attitude of predestined and unprovided orphanage. If so, the event is explained. If so, it is easy to account for all you have yet done, for all you may do hereafter; and let me only say, that if there be on earth a spectacle of unrivalled sublimity and glory, it is when the loveliness of woman embarks in the sacred enterprise of collecting the wandering little outcasts of her sex, and leading them along, with a mother's care, in the paths of innocence and virtue. Do not think, however, you who have achieved all this, that you will go unpaid. No; in the language of our text, you will have your wages, and the bread which you have cast upon the waters will return to you after many days. Methinks you would be rewarded enough, could these dear little children find words to testify their gratitude; in listening to them, they would say, you ransomed us from the contagion of the world; when our dear mother's were sleeping in the dust, you came forward and offered us a home. You shed over us the tears of pity, and we saw your eyes fill, and your bosom throb, while you heard the tale of our wretchedness. You have been our mothers, our more than mothers; you have fed us, when we were poor and fatherless, and had none to help us.

But this is not all; let me show you your reward in another light. Go then, — you know my meaning; if not, I dare not tell you. Go where woman is incarcerated in the sepulchre of her own pollution; but for you, nine out of ten of these little orphans would sooner or later have been there, consigned to the irretrievable damnation of that earthly hell. And O, if you have saved but one, — if one, by your instrumentality, has been kept back from that terrific and appalling charnel-house, where all within is horror, and all around is desolation, — if this single triumph has followed the march of your benevolence, your wages are already paid; you have gained a lawrel which does not crimson the brow it decorates. And if the justice were done on earth which is done in heaven, your names would live in

columns of marble, while hundreds of monarchs and heroes, dripping with blood, would be lost, as they ought to be in irrecoverable oblivion.

But, my kind reader, I should be insincere to push the subject with anything like such a vehemence. If I know my heart, I would not have you give this hour what you might withhold the next. On the contrary, had I never so great a power to goad you up to an artificial excitement, I should blush to use it in a case like that of an asylum — an asylum for those poor helpless female orphans, who know no other parents than you, and no other support than your liberality.

After all, however, it would be foregoing my duty, not to tell you that there are some motives to your charity which ought not to be passed over in silence. You are called upon to help forward a sex to whom all of us owe much of our happiness in a work which they have deeply at heart. How many of them you have in number, I know not, some, within the last year, perhaps are dead; a few have been removed perhaps, by their friends, and the rest, where are they? lost, indolent, or abandoned. No, my reader, they are placed in respectable virtuous families, to earn their own subsistence.

Again, and I have no more to say. You now see the affecting group of dependence and orphanage for which I plead. They once had a father to guard, and a mother to counsel them, but they have them no more. These are my little clients, lying at your mercy; will you spurn them from you? O, shall they, must they, go from you with a fresh burst of tears over their unpitied misfortune. Then be it so. The God of the fatherless will take care of those dear little orphans. He will fold them to His heart, and bless them. The Lord Jesus will seek them out, as He did us, in the solitude of their uncompassionated bereavement, and cheer them, as he has cheered us, with the accents of protection and mercy. Have you ever thought, my reader, that there is a most impressive sense in which we once were all left fatherless and poor? I ask you, have you ever looked back to the time when we were cast into the open field, weltering in our blood, and barred to a heart-rending distance from our heavenly parents? Yes, and there was no hope but in the charities of Christ. Did he stand unmelted and unmoved over the scene of desolation? Did he hesitate in the offer of a gratuitous relief? Did he say, as he might have said, I cannot leave the joys of heaven to go down and

bleed, and suffer, and die? Ah, no. He did leave his father's glory, to suffer, and die the just for the unjust. He looked upon a world of orphan sinners, unpitied and unprovided, and cried, save them, O, save them, and I will be myself the ransom. While the prodigal was yet a great way off, the father ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him, and said, "this my son was lost, and is found." Christ has said, to-day is the day; now is the time, the excepted time, to seek the Lord. To-day my reader, we are called to imitate the high example of our Saviour.

There are the little sufferers who are pleading for your help; they lift to you their imploring look, as if to say, do not blame us for our misfortune, for it was God, and not we, who laid our parents in the grave. There they sit, waiting the result of their appeal, with tearful eyes and throbbing hearts, and O, what a gladsome hour will it be, if the anniversary which reminds them, on the one hand, of their dependence, should show them on the other, that they can never want while you are living to provide for them.

Oh ! that the Lord would guide my ways,  
To keep his statute still ;  
Oh ! that my God would grant me grace,  
To know and do his will.

Oh ! send thy spirit down to write,  
Thy law upon my heart ;  
Nor let my tongue indulge deceit,  
Nor act the liar's part.

I. E. CLARK.

Auburn Prison, Oct. 19th, 1858.



## LETTER VII.

### LITTLE SCOFFERS AT RELIGION.

“Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts.” 2nd Peter, 3d Chapter, 3d Verse.

A very little acquaintance with human nature will inform us, that there are few men who can patiently bear the imputations of being wrong; and that there is no action, how unreasonable or wicked soever it be, which those who are guilty of it, will not attempt to vindicate, though, perhaps, by such a defence as will aggravate the crime.

It is, indeed, common for men to conceal their faults, and gratify their passions in secret; and especially when they are first initiated in vice, to make use rather of artifice and dissimulation than audaciousness and effrontery. But the arts of hypocrisy are in time exhausted, and some unhappy circumstance defeats those measures which they had laid for preventing a discovery. They are at length suspected, and, by that curiosity which suspicion always excites, closely pursued and openly detected. It is then too late to think of deceiving mankind by false appearances, nor does any thing remain but to avow boldly what can be no longer denied. Imprudence is called in to the assistance of immorality; and the censures which cannot be accepted must be openly defied. Wickedness is in itself timorous and naturally skulks in coverts and in darkness, but grows furious by despair; and, when it can fly no further, turns then upon the pursuer.

Such is the state of a man abandoned to the indulgence of vicious inclinations. He justifies one crime by another, invents wicked principles to support wicked practices; endeavours rather to corrupt others

than own himself corrupted, and, to avoid that shame which a confession of his crimes would bring upon him, calls "evil good, and good evil, puts darkness for light, and light for darkness." He endeavors to trample upon those laws which he is known not to observe; to sneer at those truths which, if admitted, have an evident tendency to convict his whole behaviour of folly and absurdity, and, from having long neglected to obey God, rises at length into rebellion against Him.

My reader, "no man ever became abandoned at once," is an old and common observation, which, like other assertions founded on experience, receives new confirmation by length of time. A man ventures upon wickedness as upon waters with which he is unacquainted; he looks at first upon them with horror, and shudders at the thought of quitting the shore, and committing his life to the inconstancy of the weather, but, friend, by degrees, the scene grows familiar, his aversion abates, and is succeeded by curiosity. He launches out with fear and caution, always anxious and apprehensive, lest his vessel should be dashed against a rock, sucked in by a quicksand, or hurried by the current beyond sight of shore; but his fears are daily lessening, and the deep becomes less formidable. In time he loses all sense of danger, he ventures out with full security, and roves without inclination to return, till he is driven into the boundless ocean, tossed about by the tempests, and at last swallowed by the waves.

Most men have, or once had, an esteem and reverence for virtue, and a contempt and abhorrence of vice; of which, whether they were impressed by nature, implanted by education, or deduced or settled by reason, it is at present of very little importance to inquire. Such as these notions are, however, they were originally received, as reason cannot but adopt and strengthen, and every man will freely confess that reason ought to be the rule of his conduct. Whoever, therefore, recedes, in his practice, from rules of which he allows the obligation, and suffers his passions to prevail over his opinions, feels at first a secret reluctance, is conscious of some sort of violence done to his intellectual powers; and though he will not deny himself that pleasure which is present before him, or that single gratification of his passions, he determines, or thinks he determines, that he will yield to

no future temptation, that he will hereafter reject all the solicitations of his appetites, and live in such a manner as he should applaud in others, and as his own conscience should approve in himself.

Perhaps the reader may recollect that this was the tempter of his mind when he first permitted himself to deviate from the known path of his duty; and that he never forsook them, in the early part of his life, without a design to return to them, and persevere in them; and that, when he was tempted another time, he complied always with a tacit intention to add but this one more to his offences, and to spend the rest of his life in penitence and obedience. My reader, perhaps there are very many among the most profligate who frequently still their consciences, and animate their hopes with views of a reformation to dedicate at least their last years to piety, and at some moments give way to wishes that they may some time taste the satisfaction of a good life, and "die the death of the righteous."

But these, however given up to their desires and passions, however ignorant of their own weakness, and presumptuously confident of their natural powers, have not yet arrived at the summit of impiety, till they have learned, not only to neglect, but to insult religion; not only to be vicious, but to scoff at all virtue.

This seems to be the last effect of a long continued habit of sin, the strongest evidence of a mind corrupted almost beyond all hope of a recovery. Wickedness in this state seems to have extended its power from the passions to the understanding; not only the desire of doing well is extinguished, but the discernment of good and evil obliterated and destroyed. Such, my friends, is the infatuation produced by a long course of obstinate guilt.

Not only our speculations influence our practice, but our practice reciprocally influences our speculations. We not only do what we approve, but there is danger lest in time we come to approve what we do, though for no other reason but that we do it. A man is always desirous of being at peace with himself; and when he cannot reconcile his passions to his conscience, he will then attempt to reconcile his conscience to his passions; he will find reason for doing what he is resolved to do, and rather than not "walk after his own lusts" will scoff at all religion.

Now these scoffers may be divided into two distinct classes, to be

addressed in a very different manner; those whom a constant prosecution of their lusts has deluded into a real disbelief of religion, or convinced of the truth of revelation, but affect to contemn and ridicule it from motives of interest or vanity.

I shall endeavor, therefore, to convince the reader, first, of the folly of scoffing at religion in those who doubt the truth of it; and secondly, the wickedness of this practice in those who believe it.

First, I shall endeavor to evince the folly of scoffing at religion in those who doubt the truth of it.

Those who in reality disbelieve, or doubt of religion, however neglectful they may be in their inquiries after the truth, generally profess the highest reverence for it, the sincerest desire to discover it, and the strongest resolutions to adhere to it. They will frequently assert, and with good reasons, that every man is valuable in proportion to his love of truth; that man enjoys the power of reason for this great end, that he may distinguish truth from falsehood; and that not to search for it is the most criminal baseness; and not to declare it, in opposition to the frowns of power or the prejudice of ignorance, the most despicable cowardice.

When they declaim on this darling subject, they seldom fail to take the opportunity of throwing out keen invectives against bigotry; bigotry, that voluntary blindness, that slavish submission to the notions of others, which shackles the power of the soul, and retards the progress of reason; that cloud which intercepts our views, and throws a shade over the light of truth.

Such is the discourse of these men, and who that hears it would not expect from them the most disinterested impartiality, the most unwearied assiduity, and the most candid and sober attention to any thing proposed as an argument upon a subject worthy of their study. Why, one would not imagine that they made it the grand business of their lives to carry the art of reasoning to its greatest height, to enlighten the understanding of the ignorant, by plain instructions, enforced with solid arguments, and to establish every important truth upon the most certain and unshaken principles.

There seems to be nothing more inconsistent with so philosophical a character than careless vivacity and airy levity. The talents which

qualify a man for a disputant and a buffoon seems very different, and an unprejudiced person would be inclined to form contrary ideas of an argument and a jest.

Study has been hitherto thought necessary to knowledge, and study cannot be successfully prosecuted without solitude and leisure. It might, therefore, be conceived, that this exalted sect is above the low employments and empty amusements of vulgar minds; that they avoid every thing which may interrupt their meditations or perplex their ideas; and that, therefore, whoever stands in need of their instructions, must seek them in privacies and retirements, in deserts or in cells.

But these men, reader, have discovered, it seems, a more compendious way to knowledge. They decide the most momentous questions amidst the jollity of feasts and the excesses of riot. They have found that an adversary is more easily silenced than confuted. They insult instead of vanquishing their antagonists, and decline the battle to hasten to the triumph.

It is an established maxim among them, that he who ridicules an opinion confutes it. For this reason they make no scruple of violating every rule of decency, and treating with the utmost contempt whatever is accounted venerable or sacred.

For this conduct they admire themselves, and go on applauding their own abilities, celebrating the victories they gain over their grave opponents, and loudly boasting their superiority to the advocates of religion.

As humility is a very necessary qualification for an examiner into religion, it may not be improper to depress the arrogance of these haughty champions, by showing with how little justice they lay claim to victory, and how much less they deserve to be applauded than despised.

There are two circumstances which, either single or united, make any attainment estimable among men. The first is the usefulness of it to society; the other is the capacity or application necessary for acquiring it.

My reader, if you can consider this art of scoffing with regard to either of these, we shall not find great reason to envy or admire it. It requires no depth of knowledge or intenseness of thought. Con-

tracted notions, and superficial views, are sufficient for a man who is ambitious only of being the author of a jest. That man may laugh who cannot reason; and he that cannot comprehend a demonstration, may turn the terms to ridicule.

This method of controversy is indeed the general refuge of those whose idleness or incapacity disable them from producing any thing solid or convincing. They who are certain of being confused and exposed in a sober dispute, imagine that by returning scurrility for reason, and by laughing most loudly when they have least to say, they shelter their ignorance from detection, and supply with impudence what they lack in knowledge.

Nor will the possessors, my reader, of this boasted talent of ridicule appear more to deserve respect on account of their usefulness to mankind. These gay sallies of imagination, when confined to proper subjects and restrained within bounds of decency, are of no further use to mankind than to divert, and can have no higher place in our esteem than any other art that terminates in mere amusement.

But when men treat serious matters ludicrously; when they study, not for truth, but for a jest; when they unite the most awful and most trifling ideas, only to tickle the imagination with the surprise of novelty, they no longer have the poor merit of diverting; they raise always either horror or contempt, and hazard their highest interests, without even the low recompense of present applause.

If I may say, that they hazard their highest interest can hardly be denied, when they determine, without the most scrupulous examination, those questions which relate to a future state; and none certainly are less likely to discuss these questions with the care which they require, than those who accustom themselves to continual levity.

The mind long vitiated with trifles, and entertained with wild and unnatural combinations of ideas, becomes in a short time unable to support the fatigue of reasoning; it is disgusted with a long succession of solemn images, and retires from serious meditation and tiresome labor to gayer fancies, and with less difficult employments.

Besides, he that has practiced the art of silencing others with a jest, in time learns to satisfy himself in the same manner. It becomes unnecessary to the tranquility of his own mind to confute an objection; it is sufficient for him if he can ridicule it. Thus he soon grows

indifferent to truth or falsehood, and almost incapable of discerning one from the other. He considers eternity itself as a subject for mirth, and is equally ludicrous upon all occasions.

My friend, what delusion, what sophistry will you say is equal to this? Men neglect to search after eternal happiness, for fear of being interrupted in their mirth. If others have been misled, they have been misled by their reverence for great authorities, or by strong prejudices of education. Such errors may be extenuated, and perhaps excused. They have at least something plausible to plead, and their assertors act with some show of reason; but what can the most extensive charity allege in favor of those men who, if they perish everlastingly, perish by their attachment to merriment, and their confidence in a jest.

Reader, it is astonishing that any man forbear inquiring seriously, whether there is a God; whether God is just; whether this life is the only state of existence; whether God has appointed rewards and punishments in a future state; whether He has given them by revelation; and whether the religion publicly taught carries any mark of Divine appointment. These are questions which every reasoning being ought undoubtedly to consider with an attention suitable to their importance; and he whom the consideration of eternal happiness or misery cannot awaken from his pleasing dreams, cannot be prevailed upon to suspend his mirth, surely ought not to despise others for dulness and stupidity.

Dear friend, let it be remembered that the nature of things is not alterable by our conduct. We cannot make truth; it is our business only to find it. It is not impossible that he who acts in this manner may obtain the approbation of madmen like himself, but he will incur the contempt of every wise man; and, what is more to be feared, amidst his security and supineness, his sallies and his flights, "He that sitteth in the heavens will laugh him to scorn; the Lord shall have him in derision."

Thus have I, my reader, endeavored to give a faint idea of the folly of those who scoff at religion, because they disbelieve, and, by scoffing, harden themselves in their disbelief. But I shall be yet more unable to describe in a proper manner, what I am to mention in the second place, as my time, and the chance that I have, will not allow it.

The wickedness of those that disbelieve religion, and yet deride it from motives of interest or vanity.

This, friend, is a degree of guilt against which it might seem, at the first view, superfluous to argue, because it might be thought impossible that it should ever be committed; as, in ancient states, no punishment was decreed for the murderer of his father, because it was imagined to be a crime not incident to human nature. But experience taught them, and teaches us, that wickedness may swell beyond imagination, and that there are no limits to the madness of impiety.

For a man to revile and insult God whose power he allows, to ridicule that revelation of which he believes the authority divine; to dare the vengeance of Omnipotence, and cry, "Am not I in sport?" is an infatuation incredible, a degree of madness without a name. And yet there are men who, by walking after their own lusts, and indulging their unholy passions, have reached this stupendous height of wickedness. They have dared to teach falsehood which they do not themselves believe, and to extinguish in others that conviction which they cannot suppress in themselves.

The motive of their proceeding is sometimes a desire of promoting their own pleasures, by procuring accomplices in vice. Man is so far formed for society that even solitary wickedness quickly disgusts, and debauchery requires its combinations and confederacies which, as intemperance diminishes their numbers, must be filled up with new proselytes.

Now, my reader, let those who practice this dreadful and awful method of depraving the morals and ensnaring the soul, consider what they are engaged in. Let them consider what they are promoting, and what means they are employing. Ah, let them pause and reflect a little, before they do an injury that can never be repaired; before they corrupt the heart of their companion by perverting his opinions; before they lead him into sin, and by destroying his reverence for religion, take away every motive to repentance, and all the means of reformation.

This is a degree of guilt before which robbery, perjury and murder, vanish into nothing. No mischief, of which the consequences terminate in our present state, bears any proportion to the crime of decoying our brother into the broad way of eternal misery, and stopping his ears against that holy voice that recalls him to salvation.



Oh, friend, what must be the anguish of such a man when he becomes sensible of his own crimes. How will he bear the thought of having promoted the damnation of multitudes by the propagation of known delusions. What lasting contrition, what severe repentance must be necessary for such deep and accumulated guilt. Surely, if blood be required for blood, a soul shall be required for a soul.

There are others who deride religion for the sake of displaying their own imaginations, of following the fashion of a corrupt and licentious age, or gaining the friendship of the great or the applause of the gay. How weak must one be, who can be overcome by such temptations as these. And yet there are men who sell that soul which God has formed for infinite felicity, defeat the great work of their redemption, and plunge into those pains which shall never end, rather than lose the patronage of villains and praise of fools.

It may be useful to such men to reflect, betimes, on the danger of "fearing man rather than God;" to consider that it shall avail a man nothing if he "gain the whole world and lose his own soul," and that whoever "shall be ashamed of his Saviour before men, of him will his Saviour be ashamed before his Father which is in heaven."

O, reader, that you may never be in the number of those unhappy persons who thus scoff at the means of grace, and relinquish all the hope of glory, may God of his infinite mercy grant, through the merits of that Saviour, who hath brought life and immortality to light.

I shall now, therefore, leave it to your own meditation, to carry this way of thinking farther, hoping that you, my reader, are enough directed by what is here said, to convince yourself that a true and exalted piety is so far from rendering any life dull and tiresome, that it is the only joy and happiness of every condition in the world; and may God help you to choose the wise part, that in the end you may be saved in heaven.

Thus far the Lord has led me on ;  
 Thus far His power prolongs my days ;  
 And every evening shall make known  
 Some fresh memorial of His grace.

Much of my time has run to waste,  
 And I, perhaps, am near my home ;

But He forgives my follies past ;  
He gives me strength for days to come.

See the Saviour bleeding,  
His countenance is all Divine ;  
Yet grief appears in every line,  
And yet his countenance is all Divine.

He bows beneath the sins of men,  
He cries to God, and cries again,  
He lifts his mournful eyes above,  
" My Father, can this cup remove ! "

When storms of sorrow round us sweep,  
And scenes of anguish make us weep,  
We'll look, and see the Saviour there,  
And humbly bow, like Him, in prayer

How oft, alas ! this wretched heart  
Has wandered from the Lord ;  
How oft my roving thoughts depart,  
Forgetful of his word.

Yet sovereign mercy calls,  
" Return," dear Lord ; and may I come ;  
My vile ingratitude to mourn ;  
Oh ! take the wanderer home.

And wilt thou yet forgive,  
And bid my crimes remove ;  
And shall a pardoned rebel live,  
To speak Thy wondrous love ?

Dear friends, I have now finished what I intended in this Treatise. I have explained to you the nature of devotion, both as it signifies a life devoted to God, and as it signifies a regular method of daily prayer. I have now only to add a word or two in recommendation of a life governed by the spirit of devotion. For though it is as reasonable to suppose it the desire of all Christians to arrive at Christian perfection, as to suppose that all sick men desire to be restored to perfect health ; yet my friend, experience shows us, that nothing wants more to be pressed, repeated and forced upon the minds, than the plainest rules of Christianity. But the thing which I have here pressed upon all is a life of great and strict devotion ; which, I thin k

the reader will say has been sufficiently shown to be equally the duty and happiness of all orders of men. Neither is there any thing in any particular state of life, that can be justly pleaded as a reason for any abatement of a devout spirit.

My friends, through the kind interposition of my Heavenly Father, my life has been preserved, in the most imminent danger, by long imprisonment in Auburn State Prison. Let me beg the prayers of all Christians, that it may not be in vain that I have been afflicted.

My time will be up to leave this prison-house in fifteen days more. O, that I may once more return to my dear children, who have so long been deprived of a parent's care. I must say to the reader, that my feelings are solemn. But, when I come to behold my home made desolate, and to seek the grave of my fallen companion, oh, my very heart bleeds for my dear little children. My friends, there are some feelings which are too sacred for public utterance.—There are sentiments of respect and regard, which, whispered to the ear, or spoken in the privacy of confidential intercourse, are pleasant and refreshing as the breath of spring. Now were I to express my own feelings toward my friends, my admiration, my confidence, my gratitude, my regard, I should say many things that would seem out of place. On hearing of the death of my dear wife, one, who has not only done all that was in her power to do for me, but even lost her life for me, and never, when awake, has it been out of my mind, to think of her and my five dear little children, weeping around the bed of their dying mother whom they so dearly loved, and to take their last farewell look on her, I could not help abandoning myself to heart-breaking sorrow. But dear friends, the promises of the gospel came to my aid, and faith stretched her view to the bright world of eternal life, and anticipated a happy meeting with those beloved beings whose bodies are mouldering in the silent grave.

True, she has been torn from the bleeding hearts of her dear children; but infinite wisdom and love have presided, as ever, in this most afflicting dispensation. Faith decides that it is all right, and the decision of faith eternity will soon confirm.

I am unable, with my pencil, or by my tongue to express to the reader my feelings, when the tidings of her departure reached me, I was almost overwhelmed with grief. But the only pleasant reflection

— the only one that assuages the anguish of retrospection — is that she now rests far away, where no perjurer can fill her heart with terror, and where no unfeeling judge can extort the scanty pittance which she had preserved through every risk, to sustain her fettered husband from bondage, and famishing children; no more exposed to lie on a bed of languishment, and stung with the uncertainty, what would become of her poor husband and little children when she was gone. No, she is gone, and has one of her dear little ones around her, and, I trust, has taught that to praise the source whence its deliverance flowed. Yes, her little daughter, her soul enlarged to angel's size, was perhaps, the first to meet her at heaven's portals, and welcome her dear mother to her own abode.

I desire an interest in the prayers of all my Christian friends, that I will ever be faithful, to serve my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and God being my helper, I will ever set such examples before my children as a Christian parent should, and show to the world there is a reality in the religion of the Lord Jesus that this world cannot give, and thanks be to God, cannot take away.

I feel a strong desire henceforth to know nothing of this world, but Jesus Christ and Him crucified; and under an abiding sense of the comparative worthlessness of all worldly things, to devote the remainder of my days to the simple declaration of the all-precious truth of the gospel of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ.

I would state to the reader in conclusion, that such a variety of heads have necessarily been handled but briefly, as I intended to bring them within the bulk of a moderate volume. I have not, therefore, discussed them as a preacher might properly do in sermons, in which the truths of religion are professedly to be explained and taught, defended and improved, in a wide variety and long detail of propositions, arguments, objections, replies, and inferences, marshalled and numbered under their distinct generals. I have here spoken in a looser and freer manner, as a friend to a friend, just as I would do if I were to be in person admitted to a private audience by one whom I tenderly loved, and whose circumstances and character I knew to be like that which the title of one subject or another of this treatise describes.

I hope what I have so far stated, may awaken the convictions of my reader, so as to bring him to this purpose, "that some time or

other he would attend to religious considerations." But give me leave to ask, earnestly and pointedly, when shall that be? "Go thy way for this time, when I have a convenient season I will call for thee," Acts 24, 25, was the language and ruin of unhappy Felix, when he trembled under the reasonings and expostulations of the apostle. The tempter presumed not to urge that he should give up all thoughts of repentance and reformation; but only that, considering the present hurry of his affairs, (as no doubt they were many,) he should defer it to another day. My dear friend, the artifice succeeded and Felix was undone.

Will you, reader, dismiss me thus? For your own sake, and out of tender compassion to your perishing immortal soul, I would not willingly take up with such a dismissal and excuse — no, not though you shall fix a time; though you shall determine on the next year, or month, or week, or day, I would turn upon you, with all the eagerness and tenderness of friendly importunity, and entreat you to bring the matter to an issue even now. For if you say, "I will think on these things to-morrow," I shall have little hope, and shall conclude that all that I have hitherto urged, and all that you have read, has been offered and viewed in vain.

When I invite you to the care and practice of religion, it may seem to the reader, strange that it should be necessary for me a convict, affectionately to plead the cause with you, in order to show your immediate regard and compliance. What I am inviting you to is so noble and excellent in itself, so well worthy of the dignity of our rational nature, so suitable to it, so manly and so wise, that one would imagine you should take fire, as it were, at the first hearing of it; yea, that so delightful a view should presently possess your whole soul with a kind of indignation against yourself, that you pursued it no sooner. May I lift up my eyes and my soul to God! may I devote myself to him! May I even now commence a friendship with him — a friendship which shall last forever, the security, the delight, the glory of this immortal nature of mine. And shall I draw back and say, nevertheless, let me live at least a few weeks or a few days longer without God in the world. Surely it would be much more reasonable to turn inward, and say, "O my soul, on what vile husks hast thou been feeding? Shall I desire to multiply the days of my poverty, my

scandal, and my misery? On this principle, surely an immediate return to God should in all seasons be chosen, rather than to play the fool any longer, and go on a little more to displease God, and thereby starve and wound your own soul, — even though your continuance in life were ever so certain, and your capacity to return to God and your duty ever so entirely in your power, now, and in every future moment through scores of years yet to come.

But who and what are you, that you should lay your account for years or months to come? What is your life? "Is it not even as a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away." James 4, 14. And what is your security, or what is your peculiar warrant, that you should thus depend upon the certainty of its continuance? Why, you will perhaps say, "I am young and in all my bloom and vigor; I see hundreds about me who are more than double my age, and not a few of them who seem to think it too soon to attend to religion yet."

You view the living, and you talk thus; but I beseech you, think of the dead. Return in your thoughts, to those graves in which you have left some of your young companions and your friends; you saw them awhile ago, gay and active, warm with life, and hopes, and schemes; and some of them would have thought a friend strangely importunate that should have interrupted them in their business and their pleasures, with a solemn lecture on death and eternity. Yet they were then on the very borders of both; you have since seen their corpses, or at least their coffins, and probably carried about with you the badges of mourning which you received at their funerals.

But this I will confidently say, that if you will delay any longer, the time will come when you will bitterly repent of that delay, and either lament it before God in the anguish of your heart here, or curse your own folly and madness in hell. Yea, when you will wish that dreadful as hell is, you had rather fallen into it, sooner than have lived in the midst of so many abused mercies, to render the degree of punishment more insupportable, and your sense of it more exquisitely tormenting.

I do therefore earnestly exhort you, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the worth, and if I may so speak, by the blood of your immortal and perishing soul, that you delay not a day or an hour longer. I can truly say with regard to you, my reader, I have

endeavored to show you, in the plainest and the clearest words, both Christ and the Father; I have urged the obligation you are under to both; I have laid before you your guilt and your condemnation; I have pointed out the only remedy; I have recommended these things to you, dear friend, which, if God gives me an opportunity, I will, with my dying breath, earnestly and affectionately recommend to my own dear children, and to all the dearest friends that I have upon earth, who may then be near me, esteeming it the highest token of my friendship, the surest proof of my love to them.

And if, believing the word of God to be true, you resolve to reject it, I have nothing further to say, but that you must abide the consequence.

Now let me say to you, my friend, whatever you suffer, endeavor to show "yourself an example of patience." Let that amiable grace "have its perfect work," and since it has so little more to do, let it close the scene nobly. Let there not be a murmuring word, and when you feel anything of that kind arising, look by faith upon a dying Saviour, and ask your own heart, "was not his cross much more painful than the bed on which I lie?" Was not his situation, among blood-thirsty enemies, infinitely more terrible than mine amidst the tenderness and care of so many affectionate friends? Did not the heavy load of my sins press him in a much more overwhelming manner, than I am pressed by the load of these afflictions? "And yet He bore all," as a lamb that is brought to the slaughter. And I am willing to hope, that in these views you will not only suppress all passionate complaints, but that your mouth will be filled with the praises of God.

Can any more encouragement be wanting, when He says, "fear not, for I am with thee, be not dismayed, for I am thy God, I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." Isaiah, 41, 10. And "He is not man that he should lie, or the son of man that he should repent." The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid? This God, dear friends, is our God, for ever and ever. In the hands of God alone, dear friends, I leave the decision.

I. E. CLARK.

Auburn Prison, June 23d, 1859.

ERATTA.—The death of my dear wife occurred in 1858, and not in 1859, as stated in the first paragraph of Letter IV.