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**BAPTIST PREACHER.**

ORIGINAL MONTHLY.

REV. HENRY KEELING,  
*Editor and Proprietor.*

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JUNE & JULY, 1845.

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# THE BAPTIST PREACHER.

VOL. IV.

June, 1845.

NO. 6.

BRO. KEELING.—I find but few of the sermons that have appeared in the Preacher, are addressed to the unconverted. Hence, in preparing a discourse to be at your disposal, I have selected the subject presented in the following pages. Permit me humbly to express the hope that, if it should be read by any one unprepared for eternity, it may awaken him to see the fearful end to which he is hastening, and induce him to seek safety in the Saviour of sinners.

With christian regard,  
*Palestine, Greenbrier, March, 1845.*

L. A. ALDERSON.

## MEMORY ; ITS INFLUENCE ON THE TOR- MENT OF THE WICKED :

A sermon, by L. A. ALDERSON, of Greenbrier county, Virginia.

“*Son, remember that thou in thy life-time receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things : but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.*”—  
LUKE XVI : 25.

Memory is the depository of all our knowledge. It is a faculty essentially necessary for the transaction of even the most ordinary business of life. It is also the source of both pleasure and pain. It is pleasing to recur to the days of youthful innocency, and to bring up before us the scenes of our childhood, together with the many little events that caused the current of life to glide so smoothly. It is pleasing to think of those kindly friends who cheered us in prosperity, and who smoothed our pathway in adversity. It is still more pleasing to recount the merciful dealings of that Friend above, who has prospered us in health, who has sustained us in sickness, who has rescued us from destruction, and who is now our only hope of salvation. But have we intentionally injured a fellow-being? Have we needlessly oppressed the poor? Have we filled our coffers through

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treachery and dishonesty? Have we committed some secret sin, too dark for the light? Ah! how painful the recollection!

The rich man "lifted up his eyes, being in torments." Memory was the source of his keenest pangs. To Lazarus, who rested in the bosom of Abraham, it was the source of much pleasure. The rich man remembered the splendor in which he once lived, and the honor that was then paid him. Having had Moses and the prophets, he remembered the neglected opportunities once enjoyed of securing his salvation. He remembered, too, that even under the blessings of God, he had not only ruined himself, but had exerted a pernicious influence upon his five brothers, in leading them on to the pit of destruction. The language of Abraham, "son, remember," though the language of affection, must have pierced his soul through with pain inconceivably great. On the other hand, Lazarus, reclining in Abraham's bosom, and enjoying the bliss of heaven, could cast his eye down to the gate of the rich man, from which he had been borne by angels in triumph, and exclaim: "There, I was a poor beggar, sustaining life by the few crumbs that fell in my reach, and gladly receiving the friendly offices of dogs; but God was even there to bless me. Though my body was an offensive mass of corruption, and my soul was at one time still more corrupt, he enabled me to stay that soul upon him, and in my bodily sufferings he made me happy in the enjoyment of his abounding love and mercy. He conducted me safely through the valley and shadow of death, and his messengers conveyed me to this world of glory. To his name be all the praise." "Son, REMEMBER that thou in thy life-time receivest thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now *he is comforted, and thou art tormented.*"

In this discourse, it is our design to offer a few remarks upon MEMORY *as it exists in a future state, and then show that it will tend to aggravate the torment of the wicked in the world to come.*

I. IN A FUTURE STATE, THE EVENTS OF THIS LIFE, EVEN SUCH AS MAY HERE BE FORGOTTEN, WILL BE BROUGHT TO OUR REMEMBRANCE.

A few circumstances in the course of life, make such a strong impression upon our minds that they are never for-

gotten. Such, particularly, is the case in regard to the things with which we were familiar in the days of our childhood. But such is our frailty, that most circumstances, however important, in the course of time, are forgotten. Numerous other things, of daily occurrence, receive so little of our attention, as not to be remembered a single hour. They are erased from our memory as the writing of the ancients from their waxen tablets, to give room for the recording of new events. But, in the future world, thousands of circumstances connected with our present life, however unimportant they may now appear, and how long soever they may have been buried in oblivion, will be revived.\* "For there is

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\* Even in this life, there is sometimes such a revival as that to which we have alluded. An intimate friend of ours, who has gone the way of all the earth, gave us the following remarkable fact: When a youth, pursuing a course of study in England, his native country, he, with several others, was skating upon an ice-pond. Unfortunately, he broke through, and was from five to ten minutes under water. When rescued he was entirely insensible, and he remained in that state a length of time. When he came to himself, he remembered distinctly breaking through the ice, and being under water. While there, he remembered that in his last moments of sensibility, thousands of thoughts rushed upon his mind, producing such an influence as he could not describe. Said he, "the whole history of my impendent life was presented before me at one view, and such was the impression made upon my mind, that I shall never forget it as long as I live."

Many cases have been mentioned, which show the influence of disease in restoring past thoughts. "An eminent medical friend informs me," says Dr. Abercrombie, in his inquiries concerning the Intellectual Powers, "that during fever, without any delirium, he on one occasion repeated long passages from Homer, which he could not do when in health." p. 124.

"A Lutheran clergyman of Philadelphia, informed Dr. Rush that Germans and Swedes, of whom he had a considerable number in his congregation, when near death, always prayed in their native languages, though some of them, he was confident, had not spoken these languages for *fifty or sixty years*"—*Abercrombie, Intel. Powers, p. 124.*

The following is abridged from Upham's Mental Philosophy. The facts in the case were made known to S. T. Coleridge, when on a tour through Germany. In a catholic town of Germany, a young woman who could neither read nor write, was seized with a nervous fever during which she was incessantly talking Greek, Latin and Hebrew. The case attracted much attention, and many sentences which she uttered were taken down, and were found intelligible. Ignorant and harmless, as this young woman was known to be, no one suspected any deception; and no explanation could for a long time be given, although inquiries were made in different families where she had resided as a servant. A young physician however, in tracing her history back to her childhood, ascertained that at nine years of age, she had been kindly taken to be brought up by an old protestant minister. He was a very learned man. The passages which had been uttered by the young woman, were found by the physician to agree precisely with passages in books of different languages which had formerly be-

nothing covered that shall not be revealed, neither hid that shall not be known."\* It may be that this revival of forgotten events will take place at the dissolution of the soul and body. For illustration,—suppose I wish to address a letter to a friend in captivity. The contents of the communication must be carefully concealed. I write with sympathetic ink. Not a trace of the pen is visible. The prisoner receives the letter—he dips it into a solution prepared for the purpose—he holds it up before him—the whole is perfectly legible. May not the separation of the soul from the body produce a similar change? May not the record of those innumerable circumstances which time and infirmity have erased from the memory, be restored by that event, so as to be perfectly legible? Let it be remembered that, in our present state, the activity of the mind is greatly encumbered by its union with the body. Then, it will be completely divested of this encumbrance.

But it may be that the more perfect revival will take place at the time of the general judgment; that with the resurrection of the body, which the scriptures inform us will be immediately connected with the judgment, there will also be a resurrection of all the deeds, words and thoughts, which, in this life, have been buried in forgetfulness. That we shall have a lively remembrance of the whole history of our lives on that fearful day which God has appointed for the judgment of the world, is evident from the following scriptures: "Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts."† "But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment."‡ "God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."|| "And I saw the dead, small and great,

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longed to him. But this was not a full explanation. The young woman knew nothing of Hebrew, Greek or Latin. On further inquiry, it appeared that this aged minister had been in the habit of walking up and down a passage of his house, and of reading to himself with a loud voice, out of his favorite books. These passages made an impression on the memory of this unlettered girl, and though beyond the reach of her recollection when in health, they were, after several years, vividly restored by the influence of disease.

\* Luke xii: 2. † 1 Cor. iv: 5. ‡ Matt. xii: 36. || Eccl. xii: 14.

stand before God ; and the books were opened : and another book was opened, which is the book of life : and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.\* When the book of memory shall be opened, the wicked will be convicted of their guilt. Their numerous and their aggravated offences brought to their remembrance, they will feel the weight of the just sentence of condemnation before it is pronounced by the Judge seated upon his throne and clothed in terror.

The events of this life being once revived in our memory, it appears to us that not one of them can be again forgotten. We are to be judged, not according to the general tenor of our conduct, but for every particular action ; nay, more, for every word, and for every thought. How can the criminal forget the crimes that were alledged against him, on account of which he was condemned, and for which he is now suffering ? How can the pardoned rebel forget the offences for which he received a reprieve ?

To the views we have advanced, it may be objected that, if the righteous in a future state remember their sins, it will interfere with their happiness ; besides, the scriptures represent the transgressions of the righteous as "*blotted out*,"— "*covered*." Can any suppose that the penitent thief, now in heaven, has forgotten the crime for which he was crucified ? Or, that Paul does not still remember that he once persecuted the people of God ? But, as it regards the latter part of the objection, we would remark that the *blotting out* and *covering* of sin, are only other expressions for the *pardon* of sin. Although the sins of the righteous will be remembered in eternity, it is very evident they will be remembered so as not to interfere with their enjoyment. If I have injured my friend, and am convinced of the fact, knowing at the same time that he is angry with me, I am unhappy. But if I have the magnanimity to go to him and confess my fault, and if he receive my acknowledgment, and we are again restored to friendship, then am I relieved of my distress ; I enjoy peace of mind. The christian, standing before the throne of God, and looking back upon his past offences, sees how numerous and how inexcusable his transgressions were. But now they are all pardoned.

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\* Rev. xx: 12.

O! amazing love!—boundless mercy! that a creature so richly deserving the wrath of God, should be plucked from the pit of destruction, and made a trophy of redeeming love. As the angels join in one general burst of praise to the honor and glory of God, he strikes his harp to a newer and more noble song—a song which none but the hundred and forty and four thousand who were redeemed by the blood of Jesus, can sing. A view of his pardoned sins inspires him with fresh motives of gratitude to God. But should he ever forget the events of this life, then would his motives to honor and glorify God, be greatly diminished.

II. MEMORY, IN THE WORLD TO COME, WILL TEND TO AGGRAVATE THE TORMENT OF THE WICKED. “Son, remember that thou in thy life-time receivedst thy good things.”

1. We have already said that *the wicked will remember the sins they committed*. Transgressors frequently violate the laws of God without feeling the pain of guilt. For most offences, however, their consciences condemn them, and, for awhile, they are miserable. But time too often heals these painful wounds. It will not be so with the ungodly in the world of misery. There, their sins will ever appear before their eyes, written in living characters. They will have a painful view of all their wicked deeds—their fraud, their treachery, their intrigues, and their unholy indulgencies. There, too, will be written their profane oaths and their blasphemous expressions. Their envy, their malice, their wicked desires, and all their unhallowed thoughts, will also be recorded, never to be blotted out. Oh! what a fearful catalogue. If, my ungodly friend, all the secret workings of your wicked heart, even for one day, were recorded, would it not present a dark page from which you would turn away with horror? But think, O think, if you continue an enemy to God, in that prison of woe, a similar record for every day of your life will be presented before you, and in the bitter anguish of your soul you will have to gaze upon it to all eternity.

2. *They will remember the character of the Being against whom they sinned*. If such laws were now in force as existed under our colonial government, and we, by these laws, were thrust into prison for preaching the gospel, we would be convinced that the laws were *oppressive*, and that

the sentence pronounced upon us was *unjust*. Hence, we should be enabled to bear our sufferings with some degree of patience and resignation. The transgressor of the laws of God, who is condemned to writhe in torment, will have no such consoling reflections as these. He will remember that God was represented to him as a God of justice, and now he will be convinced of the fact. He will consider that the sentence pronounced upon him is just, and that he is receiving the due reward of his deeds.

Again,—his sins were committed, not against a Being who took pleasure in inflicting punishment, but against Him whose name is LOVE, and whose dealings towards him were dealings of mercy; who watched over him with more than a parent's tenderness; who ministered to him all his earthly comforts; who often delivered him from impending danger, and who even provided a Saviour that he might live. Will not the reflection of having sinned against such a Being increase the pangs of his torment?

3. *That they were often urged to turn and live.* The Bible, ah! the Bible which is here so much forgotten, will there be remembered. Hear the lamentations of a condemned sinner destined to spend an eternity in misery: "That book which I so much slighted, was my best friend. It pointed out my sins; it told me of a Saviour; and it bid me seek that I might find, and knock that it might be opened unto me. There, too, was the faithful minister who portrayed to me the glory of heaven, and the awfulness of perdition; who pointed me to Jesus, 'the way, the truth and the life,' and who, in his melting appeals, called upon me to escape for my life. There, too, were my parents, now with angels before the throne of God. O, that I could blot out from my recollection their affectionate counsel and their oft repeated prayers that ascended up in my behalf! As if God, too, would hedge up my way, he warned me by his providences, and drew me by his Spirit. Then I was '*almost persuaded*;' but my deceitful heart whispered, '*there is time enough*;' and now my doom is eternally fixed."

4. *That the way to heaven was once plain, and the requirements reasonable, but now that way is closed forever.* If the sinner had been destined to a life of wickedness, and his condition unalterably fixed without any provision whatever for his escape, his pain would be more tolerable. Christ,

however, was presented to him as an all-sufficient Saviour, and all that was required of him, was to renounce his sins and accept of him as his Saviour. But he wilfully rejected the Son of God, choosing the pleasures of sin for a season, and, in the end, eternal destruction, rather than the mild sceptre of the Prince of peace, and that endless joy which is unspeakable and full of glory. Having refused the plan of salvation which was offered to him on such reasonable terms, his destiny is now forever fixed. Between him and heaven, there is a great gulf, across which none can pass. No invitations to turn and live, will again salute his ear.

“ In that lone land of deep despair,  
No gospel's heavenly light shall rise,  
No God regard *his* bitter prayer,  
No Saviour call *him* to the skies.”

The gates of heaven now barred against him forever, hope, that sustains us amid the trials of life, and that cheers us in our final separation from friends and kindred—hope, that sheds a light around the dark walls of the prisoner's cell, and that even casts a smile upon the pale countenance of death, takes her everlasting departure, and leaves him in the blackness of darkness to brood over his melancholy condition.

5. *That having rejected the gospel plan of salvation, and persisted in sin, they were their own destroyers.* That man who, by a life of dissipation, has brought on himself some mortal disease, as he lies upon his bed contemplating his wretched condition, and the speedy termination of his present existence, must be miserable beyond description. There is no one that he can blame for his misfortune. His miserable end is the result of his own imprudence. If he had contracted a lingering disease from exposure to an unfriendly climate while disseminating the truths of the gospel, or even while engaged in patriotic services to his country, he could endure it with fortitude. Can you imagine the anguish of the miserable sinner in perdition, when he reflects that there are none upon whom he can charge the guilt of his destruction?—that they were his own sins that closed the door of mercy—that dug the pit of hell—that reared its walls, and that kindled its flames?

6. *That they not only ruined themselves, but aided in the destruction of others.* It has been justly observed, "that we are so linked together in society, that we almost necessarily communicate our dispositions one to another. We draw and are drawn, in both good and evil. If we go to heaven we are commonly instrumental in drawing some others along with us; and it is the same if we go to hell."\* How painful must be the reflections of that accomplished sinner, who, in his career of wickedness, beguiled the innocent and unsuspecting youth, and led him into the vortex of destruction. There, too, the universalist, the infidel and the atheist, will remember that they did not only close their own eyes to the truth, but blinded the eyes of others. Behold the ungodly parent withering under the hot indignation of God, and surrounded by his offspring, who reprove him for his wicked example, and for having withheld from them the light of truth. Hear them exclaim: "You were an indulgent parent—you loved us, and you were concerned for our happiness: Why did you not tell us of Jesus? You taught us the value of riches: Why did you not tell us of a treasure in heaven? You relieved us when in distress, and guarded us against danger: Why did you not warn us of the pit of destruction?"

7. *Finally, the wicked in torment will remember with pain their enjoyments in this life.* "Son, remember that thou in thy life-time receivedst thy good things." The Siberian exile, as he wanders alone amidst the dreariness of almost perpetual snows, thinks of the sunny plains of his own native country—he thinks of the friends whose society he once enjoyed—above all, he thinks of his beloved children and her to whom he pledged his vows, and whose smiles so often cheered him in the hour of despondency. Can you conceive the anguish that rends his soul? Much less can you conceive the pain endured by the exile from heaven, when he reflects upon the comforts he was once permitted to enjoy. Once, when afflicted and distressed, he had friends to share his sorrows; but now, not a single tear of sympathy is to be found in all the regions of despair. Once, he could quench his thirst with the cool and refreshing draught just from the fountain; but now, even a drop

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\* A. Fuller.

of water is denied him to cool his tongue. When he returned home, wearied with the toils of the day, he was welcomed around the domestic hearth, and was permitted to rest in quietness upon his pillow; but now, his troubled soul finds no rest, day nor night.

But we turn away from this frightful picture. It is a theme upon which we take no pleasure in dwelling, further than it may be beneficial to those whom we address. But in taking our leave of the subject, we must observe that we have not led you to the brink of the "*lake*," whence you might have a glimpse of its awfulness; we have merely led you to the bank of one of its tributary *streams*. What then must be the "*lake*" itself? We leave you to imagine.

And now, thoughtless sinner, we affectionately entreat you to pause one moment, and consider the ground you occupy. You have long persisted in the violation of the laws of God. You have treated with the grossest ingratitude, your very best friend. You are now under his displeasure. In the court of heaven, sentence of condemnation has already been pronounced against you. You are in danger of lifting up your eyes with the rich man in torment. Do you ask how you may escape? Look to Jesus:—he died that sinners might live. He endured the wrath of God, that they might escape that wrath, and secure eternal happiness. He is now seated on the right hand of the throne of the majesty on high, and says: "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."\* Will you not go to him, humbly confessing your sins, and exercising confidence in his merits? "He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."† O that you were wise, that you understood this, that you would consider your latter end.‡

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\* Matt. xi: 28.

† Heb. vii: 25.

‡ Deut. xxxii: 29.

# THE BAPTIST PREACHER.

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NO. 7.

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## THE IMPORTANCE OF A WELL REGULATED TEMPER :

A SERMON, BY REV. C. D. MALLARY, OF GEORGIA.

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*“ He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty ; and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city.—PROV. xvi : 32.*

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Man, in his original constitution, was most happily tempered. Reason and righteousness swayed their sceptre over all his powers—there was no discord in his bosom, no war in his members, no irregularity in his intellectual and moral movements. Sin broke the sweet harmony of his nature ; reason lost its mastery over the affections, and those instincts and passions, which, in their original condition, were not only sinless, but highly subservient to the happiness and perfection of man, were turned loose to contend with each other in confused and bitter strife, and to prey upon their once happy and exalted possessor. Man becomes malignant, contentious, implacable, revengeful. His passions, once obedient and helpful, but now corrupt and rebellious, become his unmerciful dictators.

To rectify this disorder, to restore man to the right government, and proper enjoyment of himself, is one of the great designs of grace ; and to gain this desirable and happy end, should be his own high aim, and ceaseless endeavor. The proper subjugation of the impetuous and wrathful feelings, the establishment of a well balanced and healthful temper, it must be allowed by all considerate minds, is an important part of this great design, and must naturally, and necessarily, be embraced in this high aim, this rational and noble endeavor.

“ *Keep your temper,*” is a plain, vulgar precept ; yet, it is one in every respect entitled to the consideration of those

who would live happy, useful and consistent lives. It is sometimes said, that "*temper is every thing.*" This is a maxim, which, in the *letter*, may seem somewhat hyperbolic, but which, in *spirit*, exhibits a salutary and momentous truth. Who can estimate the advantages of a *well regulated temper*? It is worth more than paternal legacies—more than mere worldly greatness. He that has not learned to rule his spirit, has not learned to be happy, though he may be surrounded with innumerable comforts, calculated in themselves to minister to his peace; whilst he who has acquired thoroughly this blessed art, cannot well fail to be happy, though surrounded with circumstances of disappointment, affliction and peril.

In the prosecution of our present aim, we shall consider :

I. What is implied in a WELL REGULATED TEMPER.

II. Its great IMPORTANCE. And

III. The MEANS by which it may be secured.

.I What is implied in a WELL REGULATED TEMPER?

*Temper* is an expression often applied to the condition and qualities of the mind, and in various acceptations. It is sometimes employed, with a qualifying epithet, to designate some particular trait or disposition;—thus we speak of one quality as a *good temper*, of another as an *evil temper*. It is sometimes used, in an extended import, to express the more general condition of the affections;—thus a person, who exhibits in his conduct a well ordered state of pious feelings, is said to manifest a *christian spirit*, or temper; whilst a different course of conduct is spoken of as an indication of an *unchristian temper*. Again—it is sometimes used to express the condition of the irascible passions, in connection with those of a sweet and gentle nature, which are regarded as their opposites. A person in whom the former are easily excited, is said to be *quick tempered*; one in whom they are frequently roused to an intense and unreasonable degree, is said to be *high tempered*; and if in any one their natural tendency, when excited, is to a malignant and revengeful state of mind, he is said to possess a *bad*, or an *evil temper*. When the kind and gentle passions of the soul habitually predominate—are so exercised and cultivated as properly to soften, regulate and control the fiery qualities of our nature, we see an exhibition of what we frequently denominate a *good temper*, or a *well regulated temper*. And

this is the acceptation in which we propose, for the most part, to use the expression in our present discussion.

Our text, we conceive, describes an individual characterized by such a temper. He is *slow to anger*; he *ruleth his spirit*. The expression *slow to anger* does not seem so much to describe the natural temperament of the individual, as that well balanced state of the irascible passions, which is the result of proper discipline. The phrase which follows, (he that *ruleth his spirit*,) may be regarded as both a parallel and explanatory expression, and will consequently justify the exposition we have given of the preceding clause. But to be more particular.

1. A well regulated temper implies *habitual self-control*. Its possessor is one who has subjected his spirit to a steady, judicious and permanent rule. His will acts with promptness, vigor and effect—it stands a well trained sentinel by the crater of passion, to keep down the rebellious fires beneath. Amidst the temptations and excitements with which he may be brought into collision in the prosecution of his various duties, he is in a peculiar sense his own master; maintaining a calm and solid jurisdiction over the turbulent portion of his nature. It is not a temporary, but a permanent victory that he has gained over himself. There are some, who, for a season, manifest great equanimity of spirit; they parry the edge of many successive provocations; the bitterest insults seem not to cast them down from an apparently calm and settled equipoise; but the will, unaccustomed to long and well established command, relinquishes at last its grasp upon the passions, which, like a torrent that gathers force from a temporary obstruction, now rush forth with augmented violence, scattering abroad mischief and confusion. We see not here the operation of a well regulated temper. These are not the individuals who have learned to rule their spirits. They are like a city with broken walls—like a magazine whose train is open at a hundred points, to the falling sparks of a neighboring conflagration.

As occasional and temporary self-control is not all that is needful to constitute a well regulated temper, so the government of the irascible passions, in some of their modifications, but not in others, leaves the spirit but imperfectly defended. Our self-control must maintain a *broad*, as well as a *permanent* jurisdiction. Unreasonable anger assumes many forms.

There are some who in their wrath are sullen and silent ; there are others who are blustering, noisy and impetuous. There are some who kindle into vexation in a moment ; whilst there are others who are constitutionally slow to be moved, but when excited are like a furious bear, or a raging tempest. Some there are who can bear with a good degree of patience and fortitude, the more cumbersome and distressing afflictions of life, whilst a thousand petty provocations worry them into an unamiable and fretful humor. And strange to tell, we sometimes discover in the same individuals, at different times and in varying circumstances, more or less of these various modifications of disordered and angry feeling. That self-control, of which we are speaking, must rear its munitions at all these vulnerable points, and protect us against the insidious and imposing, as well as the more open and violent assaults of our unhallowed passions.

This self-control must itself be controlled by right reason. Reflection must be its hand-maid and its guide. We may sometimes meet with those who, on some occasions, display much self-possession and energy of will, who are nevertheless, unhappily, defective in judgment. Now is it reasonable to suppose, that the proper management of the temper will rise higher than the dictates of judgment ? That it should often fall below these dictates, is by no means strange. Superficial reflection will often allow us to palliate, if not applaud, many of the little sallies of petulance and passion, and even the wilder outbreaks of wrath, which sober reason must condemn. The man of a well regulated temper is a thoughtful, considerate man. He ponders well his goings. He avoids temptation when he can, and where duty calls him into the strifes of the world, he moves on with wise forecast and deliberate caution. If at any time he allows in himself the expression of indignation, he sees to it that the occasion which provokes his displeasure is a just one, that the motives which prompt him are in themselves pure and heavenly, that his anger does not rise to an unreasonable height, nor dwell long in his bosom, and that the expression of it be moderate and well timed.

2. A well regulated temper is one that is habitually free from bitter, malignant and vindictive feelings, and is sweetened by a due admixture of meekness, gentleness, forbearance and love. We suppose that there may be a lawful

expression of anger. This is implied in the declaration "be ye angry and sin not." We may receive injuries that may awaken a just and holy resentment. We may witness folly and sin that may demand the expression of open, decided and intense disapprobation. It is not the possession of that attribute of character, that renders us capable of indignant feelings, which constitutes our sin, but the perversion of that attribute. This perversion, in a greater or less degree, is almost universal. There is a strong and fearful tendency in the irascible passions to wrath, hatred and revenge. Our hatred of an injurious and provoking act is apt to be transferred to the person who performs it, and thus, instead of pursuing him with our pity and our prayers, we follow after him with malediction and spite. To struggle resolutely against this perversion, is the imperative duty of all; and a high degree of success in this struggle, secures to us one happy item of a well regulated temper. Our anger, to be without sin, must be like that of our Father above, blended with tender benevolence and endearing compassion; like that of Christ, our great and spotless exemplar, who wept over those whose hard-heartedness provoked his indignation. It must be under the control of that wisdom which is from above, which is first pure, then *peaceable*, gentle and easy to be entreated, and full of mercy. It must be tempered and sweetened with that heaven-born charity which suffereth long and is kind, is not *easily provoked*, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

3. A well regulated temper, in a high, evangelical sense, implies a proper state of mind with reference to the adverse providences of God. The turbulent nature of man, does not allow him to confine his unhallowed resentments to his fellow-man. It were far less to be blamed, if this were the case. But alas! it rises up in an indignant attitude against the allotments of heaven, and calls forth the Almighty to the field of battle. His dispensations are questioned with the spirit of bitterness and anger. The afflictions which seem to fall, as it were, visibly from his hand, disconcert, and irritate, and enrage. It is occasionally so, at least for a season and in some degree, with the people of God. Look at peevish and fretful Jonah. The smiting of his fondly cherished gourd, fills him with vexatious disappointment. The very compassion of Jehovah, that rescued for a season a mighty

city from destruction, was the occasion of angry disquietude. Such was his strange and unreasonable selfishness, that in the unhallowed excitement of the moment, he would seem to prefer that all Ninevah should perish, rather than that he should run the risk of suffering in his prophetic reputation, by the interposition of mercy in behalf of that guilty city. Surely he was a badly tempered believer! Happy would it be, if querulous Jonah had no imitators in this unreasonable controversy with the providence of God. A well regulated temper is a quiet, meek, submissive temper. "The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord." "Surely I behaved and quieted myself," says Daniel, "as a child that is weaned; my soul is even as a weaned child; I was dumb and opened not my mouth, because thou didst it." Here then we have a lovely exhibition of a right temper, with reference to the providence of God.

In concluding our remarks upon this point, we may be allowed to say, if the views just presented be correct, a well regulated temper is one which is habitually governed by the Scriptures of divine truth. It implies self-control—this self-control must be guided by right reason; reason to guide us right, must be enlightened from on high. The Scriptures constitute the only safe guide to the understanding, and in them are to be found those motives and restraints which are the most effectual to subdue the rebellious spirit, and bring it into sweet and habitual subjection to the teachings of an enlightened judgment. A proper temper of mind is only to be found under the powerful and sanctifying operations of divine truth. The Spirit, like a peaceful dove, must brood upon the heart, and infuse into it his own lovely and harmonizing nature. Many persons, it is true, are naturally amiable and self-possessed; we have read of heathen philosophers who advanced far in the art of self-government, and whose example might well reprove the childish petulance, and hasty wrath, of many of Christ's professed disciples; yet, if the testimony which the Scriptures present of the native malignity of the human heart, is to be received; if the evidence afforded by our own consciousness of the secret, subtle, malignant workings of our depraved nature, is entitled to consideration; what right have we to say that human nature, unaided by grace, undisciplined by the effectual influence of divine truth, is able to attain to the highest attributes

of a well regulated temper. Its existence, therefore, in any individual, implies an humble reverence for the word of God. It implies that the motives and precepts of the gospel have thrown their restraints upon his impatient and unruly spirit; tempering his anger with moderation, his displeasure with gentleness, his indignant resentments with forgiving and heavenly meekness.

II. We are now to consider the IMPORTANCE of a well regulated temper.

1. In estimating its *importance*, it is natural that we should reflect upon the advantages it brings to its truly fortunate possessor. It contributes greatly to his happiness; his spirit dwells in a peaceful calm; in adversity, as well as in prosperity, a delightful sunshine rests upon his soul; the fountain of comfort within is deep, and well sealed up from external intrusions; he is the master of his own comfort, because the ruler of his own spirit; he is better prepared than other men for temptation and for duty; and he partakes, with a pure and undisturbed relish, of the sweet enjoyments of life. On the other hand, the passionate man robs himself of comfort; he is not his own master; he is like a badly equipped vessel upon the driving surge; like the troubled sea, whose waters cast up mire and dirt; he is the servant and the prey of circumstances; he gives his enemies ten thousand advantages over him; the pure joys of domestic life, of neighborhood intercourse, and more especially of communion with heaven, are to him often embittered, and perhaps destroyed. After the bitterness of the storm, comes the bitterness of the calm, the reproaches of his better judgment, the stings of a disquieted and condemning conscience. "What a fool have I been," exclaims the poor man in the hour of reflection—"what a fool to yield so needlessly to the impulse of passion, and cherish for such slight provocations the feelings of revenge. I have justly exposed myself to the reproaches of friends and enemies, and what is worse, to the condemnation of my own bosom." But his complaints do but little good: as he has not learned to rule his spirit, he is soon hurried again to the same foolish excess, and compels himself again to repeat the same humiliating sentence of self-condemnation.

He that has gained a decided and permanent victory over his spirit, possesses a friendly and effectual safe-guard against

many dangers; where others stumble, he moves with a firm step; where others are pierced with fiery darts, he stands clad in bright, impenetrable armor: in times of aggravated excitement and provocation, he appears erect in calm dignity, like a rock amidst the angry billows. But what is the security of a man who possesses a hasty and ungovernable spirit? To what folly, to what calamity—may not heaven abandon a man in the hour of his wrath? At such an hour, he may not only inflict a deep wound upon the cause of the Redeemer, but may embitter the slumbers of his whole subsequent life: he may utter some fearful imprecation; he may raise his hand in violence, and wound or slay an enemy: but if mercifully restrained from such extremes, there is one fearful danger to which a man of an undisciplined spirit is peculiarly exposed. Passion, unsubjected to wholesome restraint, is likely to wax worse and worse. It adds gall to its own wormwood—it casts fuel upon its own unhallowed fires. Many that were once mild and amiable, have gradually become sour, and sullen, and hateful. In prosperity they seemed all smiles and loveliness; scarcely a ripple of anger moved over the surface of their bosom. But temptations, disappointments, vexations came; their equanimity was disturbed; their spirits were ruffled, and they ruled them not; misfortunes and provocations multiplied; sorrow, dejection and wasting disease came on, and those once gentle and amiable tempers, yielding by degrees to the increasing and long continued pressure, and unchecked in their descent by any firm and well directed efforts, have at last sunk down into unmingled bitterness. Whilst living in a world which sin has so fearfully cursed—where ingratitude, selfishness, and injustice on all sides multiply their provocations—where sad and sudden reverses so often blast the fondest hopes of men, have we any right to look for exemption from vexation and trial, and if we are not duly prepared for such emergencies by habits of self-government, what is to prevent us from gliding along the same declivity, and settling down at last in wormwood and gall!

2. Shall we estimate the influence exerted by a man of a well-regulated temper upon those around him. This influence is most salutary. The calm, self-collected man, not only dwells himself in a pure sunshine, but he reflects abroad the sweet radiance. Wife, children, neighbors rejoice

in the light. His spirit falls with subduing influence upon his enemies. What reason, entreaty, remonstrance and force cannot do, he often accomplishes by the might of a meek and quiet temper. His gentleness makes him great; his soft answers turn away wrath. But how is it with the passionate man? He is not only shaded himself, but he often casts a gloomy shade upon others. In his calmest moments, the ripples of his spirit are scarcely so much allayed as to allow a bright and unbroken reflection—and even if the light seems bright and perfect for a time, there is the chilling apprehension in the bosom of his friends, that the storm will soon rise and mar the beauty of the scene. His repulsive demeanor increases the displeasure of those who are already partially estrayed; and often, by a hasty and unreasonable discharge of his bitterness, he makes a friend an enemy forever.

In arresting the collisions which frequently occur in society, the man of a well governed spirit is of great value. He, of all men, is the best peace-maker, who maintains an unbroken peace in his own bosom. Whilst the man of an angry, nitric soul, stirreth up strife where it is not, and aggravates every little contention that already exists, the influence of that man who has thoroughly mastered himself, distils like reviving dew upon the languishing plants of tranquility and affection, whilst it descends upon the fields of strife, like copious rains upon a burning forest. Who can estimate the worth of such an individual in the church of Christ? Conflicts will often occur amongst unamiable and querulous professors, and on such occasions he is like the healing branch in the waters of Marah. For the want of such members, many churches have fallen into remediless ruin.

A well regulated temper aids essentially in the exercise of authority. It is indispensable to the master, the parent, the ruler. He that cannot govern himself, is not fit to govern others. A passionate ruler resembles a lion amongst the tender flocks, rather than a kind shepherd who knows how to carry the lambs in his bosom, and gently lead those who are with young. What considerate and patriotic American has not blushed for the disgrace inflicted upon our country, by the petty squabbles and furious contests of peevish, angry, boisterous legislators! The history of the world testifies,

that important political measures are often moulded in the heat of personal animosity ; and that empires have been involved in war, and drenched with blood, to gratify the spleen of a few poor petulent mortals !

In our domestic governments, we often fail for the want of a good temper. In our peevish, angry haste, we make unreasonable laws, and inflict unreasonable punishment ; and even if the laws be just, and the punishment deserved, a bitter, repulsive administration of them often destroys their salutary influence. In our moments of reflection we sometimes retract the decisions of our passionate mood, and thus our government becomes uncertain and fickle. We soon lose our influence, and our capricious authority perhaps at length becomes positively hateful. We impart our own spirit to our servants and children ; they drink in the gall ; their brows gather up and reflect our angry frowns ; they learn and repeat the phraseology of petulance and passion. We may lecture them very eloquently upon the value of calmness, and the beauty of a sweet temper ; but in vain do we reach out the hand to smooth the brows of our children, when our own are darkened with the clouds of anger. He that can habitually rule himself, is well calculated, in the exercise of his authority, to give to reason its proper sway ; he can blend discretion with law ; mildness with reproof ; and kindness with needful severity. Such authority will be respected ; it gains its object ; it conciliates those whom it controls ; and sweetens those whom it vanquishes.

3. A well regulated temper is one very important part of our preparation for religious duties. That such services may be acceptable to God, and profitable to ourselves, they must be spiritual ; that they may be spiritual, they must of course be performed with a temper of mind in accordance with the pure and peaceful dictates of the blessed comforter. That frame of mind is ever to be dreaded, which unfits us for prayer, religious conversation, reading the word of God, and for the services of the sanctuary. But hands that are lifted up in *wrath* and doubting, cannot reach the heavens ; a tongue that often speaks in anger, is illy trained for pious discourse ; the inflamed and agitated bosom derives but little sweetness from the pages of divine truth ; and he that goes to the sanctuary with an angry and wrathful spirit, will seldom find solace in compassing God's altar. In these sacred

services, especially in the duty of prayer, calmness and self-possession are peculiarly needful. What hypocrisy, to offer up the pretended sacrifice of penitence, confession and praise, upon a heart burning with indignation! What presumption, to seek and expect forgiveness from that God whom we owe ten thousand talents, when we reflect with a revengeful and unforgiving spirit upon the petty injuries we may have received from our fellow men! Is this the way to come into the presence of a holy and jealous God? We need the preparation of a calm, pacified and humble spirit. But this preparation should not be that of a momentary calmness, which is forced as it were grudgingly upon the heart, just as the hour of worship draws near. If the soul stands still but for an hour, a dark, poisonous sediment will settle down upon our devotions. The dregs of our long and oft repeated resentments will be likely to mingle with the sacrifice, and it will rise in no grateful odor to the God of peace and consolation. Habitual quietude and self-possession are what will the most effectually clarify the soul, and thus prepare it to let in the beams of permanent blessedness, and reflect with a steady light the image of Jehovah. Is it strange that those persons should often complain of deadness in their meditations, and want of comfort and success in their prayers, who are peevish and petulant in their families, and are often aroused to intemperate heat in their intercourse with the world at large?

4. In illustrating the importance of a well regulated temper, may we not speak of the honor which it brings to Christ and his blessed gospel. The gospel, in its spirit and inculcations, is most directly arrayed against all the boisterous and malignant passions of men. It is gentle, and kind, and dove-like. It inculcates the entire subjection of all the turbulent feelings, to sober reason, to calm, steady, righteous control. It requires us to live in peace with ourselves, and with all around us. The charity which it inculcates, is not easily provoked; the wisdom which it teaches, is pure and peaceable; the temper which it enjoins, is that of the Prince of Peace, "who when he was reviled, reviled not again;—who did not strive, nor cry, neither did any man hear his voice in the streets." Its injunction is, "let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from among you, with all malice." And whilst the gospel urges upon us these divine precepts, it aids us, as has already been

intimated, by its motives and instructions, to obey its commands. It claims to be the power of God. It claims for itself the ability to regulate effectually the jarring machinery of our natures;—to make “the wolf dwell with the lamb, the leopard lie down with the kid, and the calf, and the fawning, and the young lion together.” It denies this ability to every other system which has ever been devised for the improvement and government of man. He therefore that has thoroughly learned in the school of Christ, the blessed art of ruling his spirit, in one very essential and prominent point, honors the holy requirements and sanctifying power of divine truth. He lets his light shine, and God receives praise. As the sky, and the forests, and the hills are reflected in their sweet and unbroken harmony, from the bosom of the calm lake; so Christ, and holiness, and heaven, are sweetly reflected from his calm and peaceful spirit, and well regulated life. This is what our Saviour, so to speak, reasonably expects; this is what the world have a right to expect from the advocates of the gospel, and this is what we have virtually promised by the solemn profession we have made. To meet this expectation, to redeem this sacred pledge, is indeed a mighty and honorable achievement.

And yet how different is the conduct of multitudes! How many peevish, fretful, passionate professors are there in the churches! Go to their families, and how many harsh looks will you see, and how many angry speeches will you hear! Follow them to the public concourse in market places, and at political convocations: they lift up their angry voices in the streets, and mingle in the strifes of the clamorous and the revengeful! Follow them to the churches—to associational councils—and even there, whilst deliberating upon the interests of the blessed kingdom of righteousness and *peace*, they are often ready to bite and to devour. You would scarcely suspect that they had owned the meek and lowly Lamb of God as their guide and Saviour, and the Heavenly Dove as their sanctifier. They fall out with their children, their servants, their neighbors, their brethren, with almost every thing around them. Like poor fretful Jonah, they are sometimes angry even unto death, and when reproved for their unchristian conduct, they are ready to say like him, “*we do well to be angry.*”

It is truly melancholy to reflect, that there are some whose

characters are dignified with many substantial virtues; who possess much real kindness, generosity and good will; who would make many sacrifices to aid a friend, and even to benefit an enemy; who are the advocates of pious undertakings, and perhaps liberal contributors of their substance to the cause of Christ, at home and abroad; who, nevertheless, exhibit more or less of the sad deformity of a hasty, unsubdued temper. Their very benevolence seems, at times, embittered. Their pious services, which flow from a heart really kind and compassionate, not unfrequently go forth with an uninviting air. And some we find, whose hearts seem effectually purged from bitterness, upon whose exterior, nevertheless, rigid and antiquated habit has entailed the forms of moroseness and anger, and they seem to us like unlovely crucibles that we are afraid to touch, though we know that the fiery liquid they once contained, is all evaporated. Thus, the characters of many worthy christians are marred in their symmetry, and the heart of the Saviour is made to bleed in his own spiritual members. O Jesus! when will thy professed friends cease thus to pierce thee! O Jesus! when shall these unseemly spots be washed from thy sacred vestments! O ye professed disciples of the Lamb! how long will ye cast these stumbling blocks before your families, your brethren, and the feet of blind, perishing sinners! Look at pure, heaven-born christianity: is there one unlovely wrinkle upon her countenance—one drop of bitterness in the cup which she presents to the lips of her followers? Why, then, will you dishonor your profession, grieve your Saviour, and reproach his sacred cause, by your unlovely conduct?

But we hasten to consider,

III. In the third, and last place, the MEANS to be employed for securing a WELL REGULATED TEMPER.

1. It must be settled in our minds, that such a temper, by the grace of God, is attainable, and that, by the assistance of that grace, we must attain it. Unless this point is well established in our plans and purposes, further instruction will scarcely be needful; for who is properly prepared to use those maxims which may be prescribed for the accomplishment of an important end, so long as that end is regarded as unattainable, or for which he has not resolved diligently to labor. In many cases, perhaps I may say in most, the victory is difficult; and I am not unwilling that the arduous-

ness of the conflict should be fully apprehended. Some are by nature so happily constituted, and are thrown by the providence of God into circumstances so favorable to the preservation of their natural equanimity, that they know but little of the pain and ardor of the strife. But few, very few, are thus highly favored. Most persons, in getting the mastery over themselves, are compelled to wrestle with many stubborn, mighty influences—with angry enemies in high and fortified places. We often flatter ourselves that our spirit has been subjected to a wholesome and effectual discipline, when in the very temper which we have long trained, and which, on the whole, we may humbly and honestly approve, a careful inspection will occasionally detect somewhat that savors of childish fretfulness, hasty resentment, or unreasonable indignation. We may drive the enemy from one lurking place, but soon he entrenches himself in another. He may slumber for a long time; we may congratulate ourselves that we have at last obtained the victory; but some unexpected occurrence rouses him from repose, and calls us forth to a new and desperate encounter. How difficult to lay up all that amount of strength and self-control, which will stand the test amidst the numberless, sudden and powerful provocations of life. Some are constitutionally hasty and wrathful; how hard to struggle against the strong, deep tide of nature. Some are thrown by accident, or the calls of duty, into irritating company and perplexing occupations: how difficult to rise superior to the force of adverse circumstances. In some cases, an irritable spirit is deposited in an afflicted, irritable body: how difficult to harmonize a jarring soul, amidst the discord of disordered, contending nerves! A man may be wise, and learned, and powerful, and yet never have acquired the art of ruling himself. Napoleon, that towering colossus of military power, that resistless conqueror of nations, was often as peevish and indomitable as a spoiled child. How true is the inspired sentiment of the text: "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city." He is better, he is greater; for the course of action, which leads him to this victory, demands, in most cases, more circumspection, watchfulness and self-denial; a more refined and exalted exercise of true wisdom, that those which conduct the military chieftain over prostrate cities,

and blood-stained battle fields, to victory and a throne. Behold, my brethren, the nature of the conflict! Are you fully ready for the struggle? Some seem to regard the conquest as a thing impossible, and therefore do not attempt it in serious earnest. "We admit," say they, "that our tempers are stubborn and unruly; we have suffered all our lives long, from their unholy dictation; a hasty spirit is our besetting infirmity; we have often struggled, but in vain, for the mastery; all else seems comparatively easy and practicable, but the truth is, *we CANNOT keep our temper.*" Is this the language that should ever fall from the lips of a christian? It indicates both an unbelieving and an indolent spirit. There is a criminal want of faith in the power and grace of God, which are ever equal to our necessities; and a slothful indisposition, most highly culpable, to encounter that labor and self-denial, through which only, we may confidently look for the blessing of the Almighty. And besides, who does not see that, in this very confession, there is a covert defence, or at least a palliation, of the very sin acknowledged. Our guilty stubbornness is made a plea for non-resistance. The sin is to be tolerated, because it is so sinful; the enemy is to be submitted to, because he does us so much harm! But all this is wrong. The christian has not so learned of his Master. The gospel requires us to believe, that all things are possible with God; that every evil temper is to be encountered and subdued; that the prayerful and persevering struggles of faith, will terminate in certain victory. The gospel allows us not to palliate sin, by its own enormity, but to hate it according to its hatefulness, and resist it according to its strength. Let this resolution, formed with an humble dependence on divine grace, be our starting point, *the Lord being our helper, our evil, rebellious tempers, must be, and shall be, effectually subdued.*

2. Watch, my brethren, the first risings of unholy feeling, and raise up, at once, a barrier against it. Nip anger in the bud. "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath." Anger, when indulged, ministers, as we have seen, to its own bitterness. When the passions are up, the imagination is busy in magnifying the causes of disquietude; in the mean time, we allow our resentment to boil and expand, that it may correspond with the imagined enormity of the provocation. This fomentation being often repeated, and allayed, not by reflec-

tion and prayer, but by its own violence; our feelings will be likely to subside in settled malignity. What a fearful issue! Surely, beginnings that may possibly tend to such a consummation, are not to be tampered with. Let the spark be quenched—let the little rivulet be dammed up. It is easier to extinguish a spark, than a mighty conflagration; to check the rippling Kidron, than to arrest the swellings of Jordan.

3. We should study well our characters, and learn what are the things which most easily excite us. No man can *govern* himself, unless he *knows* himself. Individuals are variously constituted; all are not equally exposed at the same points. That which would be to one man a weak and unsuccessful temptation, might prove to another a keen and fiery dart. “Know thyself,” and then carefully avoid those things which you know to be dangers. A wise man will not rush needlessly into temptation; he will turn away his eyes, and search out some other path. But if duty lead him into exciting and dangerous scenes, every step will be well pondered; the shield of watchfulness will be thrown before every weak point of his nature; his eye be steadily fixed upon his subtle enemies, and his hand upon the strength of the Eternal.

Intimately connected with these remarks, is another suggestion which I would beg leave to urge, viz: that we should carefully watch our peevish moods. Our evil humors have their periods, their ebbs and their flows. The same temptations do not always operate upon the same individuals alike; at least, this is the case with many, particularly those in feeble health, and of a nervous temperament. Many occurrences take place which have a tendency, at certain times, to play severely upon our natural sensitiveness. We are busy, and no not wish to be disturbed; or we are weary, and desire repose; or we are sick, and desire to be left in quiet; or we have met with disappointment, and, for the present, we have no relish for the pleasantries of social intercourse; or, perhaps, it is a cloudy and dark day, and our inner man sympathises with the external dreariness. At such times, if our wishes are incidentally crossed, it is difficult to be composed. The crying of a child, the barking of a dog, or a rap at the door, may throw us from a just balance, and call forth some foolish expression of discontent. We vent our spleen upon the horse we ride, or the kind domestic animal

which fawns upon us, or even upon senseless and inanimate objects. On all sides, the eye sees provoking things; and to our excited nerves, even the ministrations of friendship and love seem acrid and unwelcome. On occasions like these, prudence suggests to us the necessity of great circumspection. Here are revealed to us the weak points of weakness itself. Our besetting temptations have now a tenfold advantage. Now are we to summon to our aid our best judgment, and our firmest resolutions; now should we watch unto prayer. We should at such times avoid, as far as possible, all those trains of thought and conversation, which would be likely to aggravate our ill humor. If we cannot speak peaceably, let us not speak at all; if we cannot act with moderation, let us forbear acting. Let us be much by ourselves, and commune with our hearts, with the meek and lowly Saviour, with the Scriptures of divine truth, and with the solemnities of an eternal world. Saturdays and Mondays are often trying days to ministers; on the former they are generally busy in their more immediate preparations for the pulpit; on the latter, they are often enfeebled by their Sabbath labors; and, on these occasions, they are frequently liable to be impatient and fretful; they would do well to consider this, and watch and pray that they enter not into temptation.

4. It might often be profitable for us to imagine ourselves acting in the presence of a friend or a neighbor, and especially to realize that we are ever in the presence of God. Much of our peevishness, in its more visible and unlovely exhibition, is confined to a narrow circle. We wish to be thought amiable and good natured, by our neighbors. Home is the principal store-house of hard looks and angry words. How many there are, who appear to the public eye gentle, lovely and slow to anger, that assume a very different aspect in the eyes of their fire-side associates. In the crowd, their brows seem clothed with the serenity of a fine summer morning, but at home, it appears the citadel of storms. All are not such; but a majority are apt to be more unguarded at home, than abroad; before the members of their own households, than visiting friends, or strangers. If a neighboring window is open, they scold in a suppressed and guarded tone; if a tap is heard at the door, the excited voice mellows into sweetness, and as the visiter enters, the

countenance is robed in smiles. One would think that they breathed the atmosphere of perpetual peace. And is the presence of a neighbor sufficient to restrain us? This shows that we have power to keep our temper, or at least greatly to modify the expression of it. We would do well, therefore, often to imagine a neighbor near, and act, in some measure, as though his eye were perpetually upon us.

But if the presence of man will restrain us, how should we be affected by the presence of Jehovah? God, our maker and our judge, is ever near; and a realizing sense of this, will do much to bridle our unhallowed anger. "Thou God seest me." What a solemnizing thought! "Thou understandest my thought a far off; there is not a word in my tongue, but lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether." What a motive to circumspection and self government. Shall we dress our countenance in wrath, under the very gaze of Jehovah? Shall we utter passionate and revengeful words, in the very ear of our Maker? Shall that heart, which is every moment pierced through and through by the glance of omniscience, nourish its unhallowed resentments? We live so far from duty, because we live so far from the presence of God. We are not fully prepared to sin, till we forget that the eye of the Lord is upon us. Cherishing a constant and solemn sense of his purity, majesty and nearness, we shall be *slow to anger*, and learn to *rule* our rebellious spirits.

5. The lovely character of the Saviour, should be the subject of distinct and frequent contemplation. Let us ever keep it before us in its full-orbed brightness, that in its sweetness and glory our own evil tempers may be called into subjection. Were the Saviour to visit our families in person, and mingle with us in the various walks of life, his presence would no doubt often fill us with shame and confusion. He would find us not only like Martha, careful and troubled about many things, but perhaps like her, peevishly complaining that some of our pious friends should remain so long at the feet of their master, and leave us to serve alone. Perhaps he would often have occasion to say to us, as he did to some of his disciples of old, "ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of." But although the Saviour is not personally with us, yet, his holy image visits us in his word, and he is ever looking down upon us from his lofty throne, to see if we make that image our study and our model. We

know what manner of spirit he was of, and we know that his spirit must be ours; "for if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Did the patient and lowly Saviour ever utter a peevish word? Was his meek brow ever darkened by a resentful frown? He was indeed once said to be angry; but his anger was not fretfulness, it was not resentment, it was not malice; but that strong, vehement displeasure, with which infinite and insulted holiness looks upon incorrigible transgression. Neglect never irritated him; insult never provoked him; hunger, weariness and want, never made him peevish. When in their scorn his enemies mocked him, and in their spite they spit upon him, and in their wrath they scourged and crucified him, there was no scorn, no spite, no wrath, in his spirit. What unparalleled meekness! What unspeakable forbearance! "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter, and like a lamb dumb before his sheavers, so he opened not his mouth." Christians, this is your pattern, this is your Saviour. Behold the man! You have taken upon you his name; his image you profess to bear. Then take upon you, daily, his yoke, and learn of him; let the same mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus; be ye followers of him, as dear children.

6. We have already hinted at the importance of prayer, but this must be urged as a distinct point. That we may prevail over own evil spirit, we must know how to prevail with God, at the mercy seat. Without prayer, all other prudential maxims for the regulation of our temper, will lose much of their efficacy. It is in the near and frequent communion with the King of kings, that the heart receives its salutary and abiding impressions. In that devout and spiritual exercise, a powerful antidote is conveyed to the very fountain of disease. The Holy Spirit draws near in his gentle, soothing, dove-like influence, and enlarges and strengthens his dominion in the inner man. It is then the soul receives that precious, heavenly anointing, which causes the vexations of life to glance off without penetrating and poisoning; or if they should inflict a partial wound upon the spirit, the healing oil is present to arrest the inflammation, and effect a speedy cure. He that has an irritable nature, and would thoroughly rectify its disorders, has the most urgent occasion for pondering, and practicing the law of inspiration, "*pray without ceasing.*" Whenever he

may feel the fire of wrath kindling in his bosom, he should take the alarm, as though his habitation were in flames, and lift up his cry for the quenching influence of grace. When the great Robert Hall, on a certain occasion, became unduly excited, he withdrew to the opposite side of the apartment, and ejaculated in a suppressed tone, "Lamb of God, Lamb of God, calm my perturbed spirit." How admirably appropriate! How appropriate the occasion: he was gliding off beyond his own strength and resources, and needed divine help. How appropriate the phraseology of his petition; he needed the help of the Saviour, in its soothing, lamb-like influence. We would do well, on similar occasions, to withdraw, if possible, from the scene of conflict, and silently, at least, invite the assistance of heaven. We would do well, also, at such a time, to contemplate the Saviour, in our petitions, in the character of the meek, patient, inoffensive Lamb of God. Is any danger foreseen? Let us anticipate it with prayer. And what, though there be no visible cause of alarm, a thousand secret perils lurk around, and we should still, most fervently, bespeak grace and help for our unknown times of need. How do we know but that a prayerless frame was the prelude to that rash offence, which barred the feet of Moses from the land of Canaan; and to that unhappy contention of Barnabus and Paul, which has been recorded for the caution and reproof of all succeeding generations. Where the spirit proves incorrigible, occasional fasting should be joined with prayer. "This kind," said the Saviour, on a certain occasion, "goeth not out, but by prayer and fasting." From this it would seem, that in ancient times, some evil spirits were more formidable and malignant than others; and that their expulsion from their unhappy victims demanded extraordinary means. In some individuals, nay, in many, an unruly temper may be likened to one of those malignant, indomitable spirits. If fasting, in connection with strong crying and tears, would aid in its subjugation, what individual that truly hungers and thirsts after righteousness, would refuse to set his face unto the Lord with sackcloth, and fasting, and ashes.

7. Proper reflections upon own imperfect and sinful conduct, will furnish us with weighty motives for meekness and moderation. If we had never sinned ourselves, we might,

with less inconsistency, cast abroad our hasty and bitter resentments. If we had never been the occasion of provocation to others, we might find some excuse for bearing with so little equanimity the insults which are cast upon ourselves. If we had never insulted our Heavenly Father, we should be less guilty in quarrelling with his afflictive and mysterious providence. But how stands the case? In a thousand instances, perhaps, have we unreasonably provoked our fellow-men; in ten thousand instances of unreasonable and wanton rebellion have we provoked Jehovah. We are irritated by the little follies of our children: have we forgotten that we were once thoughtless and wayward children, and that often our kind parents were annoyed by our intractable tempers, captious complaints, and insubordinate behavior? We are sore vexed with our neighbor for some little slight, or impertinence, or unkind expression: how often may that neighbor have had equal cause to complain of our impertinence, neglect, or unkind expressions? We fall out with the dispensations of heaven, and, like Jonah, are ready to say, "it is better for us to die than to live." O have we forgotten that our compassionate and indulgent Father in heaven has registered against us an infinite debt of forgetfulness, ingratitude and insults; that the smallest of our numberless provocations, if visited upon as it merits, would subject us to his insupportable, eternal wrath? Such reflections, frequently and solemnly indulged, will teach us calmness and moderation. They will hush the storms of anger. They will rebuke and quell our corroding resentments. They will suggest to us, that as we desire and expect forgiveness for our own sins, we must look with forbearance upon the follies of others; and that least of all should the sin-polluted culprit, that merits eternal death, fret against that being, whose mercy and goodness have followed him all his days, and whose almighty and gracious arm has been every moment extended to ward off this merited destruction.

*Lastly*, we should cherish frequent and solemn thoughts of a dying hour. This will naturally lead us to reflect upon that frame of mind which would be most suitable for death, and an eternal state. It would lead us to realize the force and solemnity of the truth, that no disposition of heart should be cherished for an hour, which would be unfit for that

hour, were it to be our last. Under the influence of proper views of death and judgment, and that eternity which rolls beyond, could we give loose reins, as we too often do, to our angry passions! Would wrath, and malice, and revenge find entertainment in our bosoms? The hour of passion may be death's hour; death heeds not our moods and our temper. Who would die in his wrath, and be carried to the grave with a frown congealed upon his brow? But though we might be certain that a calm hour would usher in our dissolution, yet surely the uniform composure of a whole life is a sweeter preparative for death, than the calmness of a few transient moments. Must not the recollection of angry disputes, of wrathful indulgence, diminish the blessedness of dying? "Those servants—how often have they listened to my needless and unchristian-like threatenings! Those dear children that I am so soon to leave behind—how often have I provoked them to anger, to their discouragement and injury! This beloved wife that is now weeping in anguish her long, her last farewell—how often has my petulance planted deep stings in her affectionate bosom! This husband, my prop, my solace, my earthly all, from whose arms death is now tearing me away! O how often has he been pierced by my angry looks; how often has he wept in secret over my harsh words, and unreasonable contentions!" Ye saints of God, why will you treasure up for your dying beds such melancholy reflections?

With some practical reflections and appeals we shall now conclude. From the foregoing views which we have presented of the subject, we are confident that it must appear to all as one of great importance. The theme has been too frequently overlooked in our hours of meditation, self-scrutiny and prayer, and too seldom has it been urged from the sacred desk.

Need I say, my younger brethren, that it is one which claims your special consideration. You are now forming your characters for future life—how important that these characters be shaped in the mould of the gospel of peace. Now learn, my dear young friends, to be *better than the mighty—than he that taketh a city*. Be *slow to anger*; learn thoroughly to *rule your spirit*; and you have gained this honorable, and, I might say, this enviable distinction.

If youth is allowed to be passionate, manhood may be wrathful, and old age malignant.

Parents, cultivate and exhibit at all times a well balanced temper; then will you not needlessly *provoke your children to anger*. Husbands love your wives and be not *bitter* against them; wives obey your husbands, not with a reluctant and peevish air, but with an affectionate and winning demeanor. Masters, mingle a good temper with the exercise of your authority, *forbearing threatening*. Teachers, rule well your own spirit; then will you more successfully control and fashion the minds and tempers of your pupils. Legislators, banish afar your undignified and hurtful contentions—write down, in massive capitals, upon the walls of your council chambers, the instruction of a wise monarch of Israel, “HE THAT IS SOON ANGRY DEALETH FOOLISHLY—ANGER RESTETH IN THE BOSOM OF FOOLS.” Christian Editors, be careful to manifest in your discussions and controversies, a *good temper*; be courteous, kind, magnanimous; pour not abroad upon the public mind the streams of bitterness, to irritate and distract; but the oil of gentleness and peace, to soothe and to gladden.

Brethren in the ministry, consider well, we entreat you, what we have said. In the pulpit, in your families, in your social visits, in deliberative councils, be careful to maintain a well regulated temper. “*Not soon angry*,” is one of the scriptural qualifications of him that is to take the oversight of souls. He is to be neither “*a striker*,” nor a “*brawler*.” He must avoid those things “*that gender strifes*.” The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men,—in meekness instructing them that oppose themselves. The plea of christian faithfulness and zeal for the truth, should never be urged in defence of a harsh and petulant manner in reproofing sin, and enforcing the injunctions of the gospel. “*Speaking the truth in love*,”—this is the inspired exposition of that temper which is to accompany all the communications of the ambassador of Christ.

A minister must not obstinately stand upon every unimportant punctilio; nor catch and quibble at every little roughness that comes in his way. He must, in the true sense of the phrase, be a *high minded and honorable man*. With a generous forbearance and noble magnanimity, must he pass over a thousand slights and provocations, which may

be thrown before him by the forgetful, and the inconsiderate, as well as by the captious, designing and inimical. His duties are too urgent and too sacred to allow him to come down, and fritter away his time and his strength in brooding over his childish grudges, and contending for hair-breadth rights, which, if gained, would add nothing to his reputation and usefulness. The magnanimous conduct of Abraham, on a certain occasion of difficulty and vexation, may furnish a lesson which christians in general, and ministers in particular, would do well to remember. "And Abram said unto Lot, let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee; and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren. Is not the whole land before thee? Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left." Is it not to be feared that the want of a well regulated temper amongst many of the ministers of Christ, has greatly aggravated those unhappy contentions, which are now agitating the churches, and even threatening the safety of our country. *Money* is said to be the *sinews* of war:—the *mercury* of the soul may, with equal truth, be said to be at least *one* of the sinews of theological strife and ultraism. An unruly temper, connected with blind zeal and a misguided conscience, with an adequate seasoning of pride and self-consequence, will soon generate ultraism enough to turn the world upside down.

Sinners, impenitent sinners, can I close without a word to you? Aim at securing, as a most important and desirable possession, a well regulated temper. That you may be successful, learn in the school of the meek and lowly Saviour; submit at once to the discipline of the gospel. Possibly, without the grace of God, you may live what is generally called an amiable and harmless life. But I beg you to remember, that nothing is entitled to the name of a well regulated temper, which is connected with enmity against God. And I beg you further to remember, that all which you may consider amiable and lovely, you will leave behind you at the grave, if you die impenitent; that you will go into eternity with nothing but the unmingled dregs of your fallen nature; and that, with the tormented victims of your own malignity, and spite, you will forever

“Curse

Almighty God, and curse the Lamb, and curse  
The earth, the resurrection morn, and seek,  
And ever vainly seek, for utter death.”

What cheering results should we witness from the universal prevalence of that temper, which we have been endeavoring to describe. Happiness, on all sides, would be greatly increased. Many domestic trials, neighborhood conflicts, and even national calamities, would be warded off. Religious controversies would be softened down into kind, courteous and useful discussions. Church and associational difficulties would, in a great measure, come to an end; a dark cloud would be rolled away from the prospects of Zion; new brightness would be imparted to the christian name; our prayers would have more free access to the throne of grace; and the God of love and peace would be more abundantly honored.

Brethren, friends, one and all; let us, like good soldiers, rush to the conflict. Let us be men; let us be christian men. In that encounter, which is carried on in the name and strength of the Most High, for the mastery over our spirits, we see human nature struggling for its just rights. It is reason contending with madness. It is man striving to be man. It is the sublime struggle of an immortal spirit, endeavoring to re-establish in the bosom, the reign of primeval harmony which sin had destroyed. It is not the contest of brute force, but of wisdom, faith, prayer, patient endeavor, and holy courage. It is sustained by pure motives, elevated desires, and rational, holy principles. The victory, which crowns such a course of conduct as this, cannot but be great and ennobling, fully worthy the aims and efforts of an intelligent, immortal being.

But I must close. Come my hearers, go with me to an humble dwelling, and let me introduce to your acquaintance an individual, whose example, in my conclusion, I beg leave to present, as well worthy of your imitation. He lives in a retired vale, far from the pomp of cities. His name is Pacificus. He is unknown to fame; genius never owned him as her favorite son; wealth never saw him in her glittering train, nor science in her academic groves. His name never echoed beyond those little hills which bound his rural prospect. Yonder is his lowly cot. Retired, contented, pious, happy, he cultivates his paternal acres. But

he is a great man. When young, he possessed a wrathful, ungovernable spirit. If there was clamor, if there was contention, if there was confusion, he was in the midst. But grace at length awakened in his bosom, the contest between the flesh and the spirit. He commenced a christian life. Long and doubtful seemed the conflict with his hasty temper. He resolved, and wept, and wrestled in prayer. Often did he seem discouraged; sometimes was he nigh the borders of despair. But deriving fresh vigor from the promises of the Most High, he renewed and prosecuted the battle. At length he prevailed. He is now meek, peaceable and lovely—he is one that can rule his spirit. A sweet serenity ever rests upon his brow; peace reigns at his fire-side, and his rustic neighbors rejoice in the influence of his gentleness. Immortal man! Though the proud, busy world knows thee not, thou art known in heaven. There thy name is enrolled amongst the illustrious, and precious, and eternal will be the fruit of thy victory.

Beloved friends, whoever you may be, go ye and do likewise. In a word, " whatsoever things are true; whatsoever things are honest; whatsoever things are just; whatsoever things are pure: whatsoever things are *lovely*; whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, THINK OF THESE THINGS.

PLAGIARISM, SOMETIMES ONLY APPARENT,—  
NOT REAL.

The sermon published in our May No. as original, purporting to be from the pen of the late Rev. Jas. A. Payne, of Albemarle County, Va., turns out to be an exact copy of a sermon, published a year or two since in Philadelphia, by Rev. Albert Barnes. It is due to the memory of Mr. Payne to say, that we have no evidence that he preached, or otherwise used it;—that it was found among his manuscripts after his decease, whether in his own hand-writing or that of another we know not; and that it was furnished by his executor for this work. It was published in our absence; but had we been present, we might not have detected the mistake, as we do not read every thing good, nor recollect all that we read. We hope this explanation will be as satisfactory to Dr. Barnes, to the friends of Bro. Payne, and to our readers, as it is to ourselves. EDITOR.