THE INCONSISTENCY OF CONFORMITY TO THIS WORLD.

L. B. SEELEY AND SONS, WESTON GREEN, THAMES DITTON.

THE INCONSISTENCY OF CONFORMITY TO THIS WORLD WITH A PROFESSION OF CHRISTIANITY,

ILLUSTRATED

IN THREE DIALOGUES.

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DIALOGUE I.

MISS NEWMAN.

Good morning, Mrs. Dormer; I am glad to find that you are able to take advantage of this fine day after your late indisposition.

MRS. DORMER.

I thank you, Miss Newman, I am much better than I was, when you so kindly favoured me with a call; and this clear morning seems to brace my nerves and cheer my spirits, which have suffered by my long confinement. Pray how is your neighbour, Mrs. Philmund? for I hear that she has been ill as well as I.

MISS NEWMAN.

Yes; she has been very unwell indeed; but I am happy to inform you that she is much better. She is a woman of a very amiable temper; but I wish I could see more spirituality of mind in her. I indulged a hope that this indisposition (since affliction is the frequent means which our heavenly Father employs for the cure of our spiritual maladies) would have produced a salutary effect; and have proved as beneficial to her soul as the prescriptions of Dr. Pearson have done to her body.

MRS. DORMER.

But why, Miss Newman, do you express so much solicitude about Mrs. Philmund's state of mind? Have you heard any thing that reflects disgrace on her moral character? I have long observed with pleasure the constancy of her attendance on the ministry of the Gospel; and that, not only on the Lord's day, but also at our weekly lecture. I have found by conversation with her, that her mind is well in-

formed, and that her views are evangelical. I am also assured that an altar for God is erected in her house, where she has family-prayer morning and evening; and when I have called on her, the Bible has lain on her table, which I supposed she had been reading. If a judgment may be formed from occasional intercourse with the young ladies, her daughters, she has taken great pains with them, and devoted much of her time to them; for their conversation, though sprightly, is sensible, and frequently tinctured with a religious hue. Mrs. Philmund's charities seem to bear a proportion to her income; and when she cannot relieve, she always pities circumstances of distress, wishing that her means were larger, that she might have the pleasure of more diffusive benificence.[1]

MISS NEWMAN.

All this is true and much more of the same kind; which made me say that Mrs. Philmund is a very amiable woman. The traits of her

[1] See note A. in Appendix.

character which you have mentioned, have won my esteem to a great degree; and thence arose the wish I just now expressed when you inquired after her. That wish, I can assure you, was not uttered in a spirit of censoriousness, nor was it the result of a proud self-righteous disposition; for I do not know one individual in the catalogue of my acquaintance, at whose feet I cannot sit, knowing myself to be *less than the least of all saints;* if indeed the name of a saint can, with any propriety, be applied to one so unworthy of divine favour as I am. But my dear Mrs. Dormer well knows that *one thing is needful;* and that this ONE THING is a spirituality of mind, which, though it may vary in its degree of perfection, is a certain consequence of a true conversion to God: for *to be carnally-minded is death; but to be spiritually-minded is life and peace.*[1]

[1] Rom. viii. 6.

MRS. DORMER.

All this is certainly true, and built on the plainest declarations of the Holy Scriptures. But why should my dear Miss Newman suspect Mrs. Philmund of being so very defective in this comprehensive feature of the Christian character? With respect to the spirituality of mind and will which the law of God peremptorily demands, we are all, even the most devoted among us, very defective; for in reviewing the extensive scope and inflexible nature of the divine law, as requiring *truth in the inward parts*,[1] even St. Paul acknowledged, *I am carnal, sold under sin*, and exclaimed, *O, wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*[2]

MISS NEWMAN.

But you will observe that the apostle also says, *That which I do, I* ALLOW *not: for what I* WOULD, *that do I not; but what I* HATE, *that*

[1] Psalm li. 6. [2] Rom. vii. 14—24.

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sipation of which she is *voluntarily* a frequent witness, are calculated to carnalize the affections, and depress that elevation of soul which is the characteristic of a child of God, and which is maintained with great difficulty, without any exterior obstacles, through the constant tendency of our innate corruption to its own centre of attraction.—I speak in general terms on the subject through a sense of delicacy;—there is no need of descending to particulars.

MRS. DORMER.

I clearly understand you. But do not your views lead to unnecessary preciseness and an offensive particularity of conduct?

MISS NEWMAN.

Young and inexperienced as I am, I feel really afraid to speak on a subject, concerning which the practice of a great many respectable professors runs counter to the convictions of my mind.—I allow that the views I have stated lead

to a particularity of conduct which is *offensive to the world*, because it condemns them; and *to the god of this world*, because it is hostile to the interests of his kingdom: but *not offensive*, I think, to HIM, who says of all his disciples, *They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world;* and who tells them, that *therefore the world will hate them:*[1] nor, I should suppose, to those among his professing followers, who have *set their affections on things above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God.*[2]

MRS. DORMER.

Would you wish, my dear Miss Newman, that our friend Mrs. Philmund should banish herself and her daughters from society? that she should exclude them from all company? or that they should never be seen except at church? Would not this be the part of an unkind parent, and prejudicial in its consequences to their future conduct and respectability in life?

[1] John xvii. 14. [2] Col. iii. 1, 2.

MISS NEWMAN.

I reason, Mrs. Dormer, on the supposition that a Christian is to make the unseen realities of a future world his grand scope;[1] and that every thing in this world is to be appreciated by its connection with eternity. If I am wrong in my principle of action, do tell me. But to answer your questions, I verily think that young women in the present age are by far too much in public company; and that thereby many of them become forward, petulant, and loquacious, to the utter destruction of that *shamefacedness and sobriety*,[2] which the apostle mentions as the highest ornament of the female sex. To read a lecture on education, however, is not my province; and your questions may be answered, without adverting to that subject. For *we* are highly favoured in having so many families among us which profess godliness, with whom we may maintain a friendly and a profitable intercourse; so that there is no necessity of our

[1] 2 Cor. iv. 18. [2] 1 Tim. ii. 9.
[3] See note B. in Appendix.

seclusion from all society, on the one hand; nor of seeking it, to the danger of our peace, and the hinderance of our growth in the divine life, on the other. And therefore, though no plea can excuse a *voluntary* intrusion of ourselves into worldly company; yet our *choice* of it is more inexcusable than theirs who are differently situated, and must either bury themselves in absolute privacy, or plunge themselves into temptation.

MRS. DORMER.

But may not Mrs. Philmund innocently comply with the inclinations of her children? You know that her daughters, at least some of them, make no profession of religion. And would you debar them from all the amusements, which are suited to their age and situation?

MISS NEWMAN.

The conduct of my own honoured and beloved parents, in the management of me and

my sister, appears to me to exhibit a model worthy of imitation. It is only within a very few years, as you must remember, that I have found that satisfaction in religion which renders the pleasures and vanities of the world insipid and its society disgusting. Antecedent to the time from which, I hope, I may date my conversion to God, I felt as many other young persons feel, a powerful attraction to those scenes of vanity of which I had heard by report; though my parents (gratefully do I recall to memory the kind restraint!) had wisely kept me from any experimental acquaintance with them. While, however the piety of those, to whom I looked up as vested with an unlimited right of controling and directing my conduct, prohibited my introduction to places of amusement and the haunts of sinful gratification; they made it manifest that they were not influenced in their conduct by any motive but the promotion of my good; for they afforded me every mean of innocent and profitable amusement which their circumstances would admit; and endeavoured, by degrees, as I was capable of

receiving instruction, to lead my mind, in my juvenile studies, from nature to nature's God. By these efforts my heart, though it sometimes hankered after forbidden diversions, of which it scarcely knew the nature, was kept, in general, satisfied without them; and though as yet I knew not God, my engagements were such as rather tended to habituate my mind to the contemplation and love of his name, and not to alienate it from him. From one species of study which my father proposed, and at which I eagerly caught as a new object, I derived a considerable degree of pleasure and profit. Ever anxious to engage my attention to something useful, he one day said to me, "My dear Ann, a knowledge of the word of God is the most sublime and valuable acquisition we can make. It is essential to our present comfort and future happiness. Under this impression your mother and I, solicitous for your welfare here and hereafter, have endeavoured to instil into your mind, and into that of our dear Eliza, the principles of Christianity. You are both tolerably well instructed in the historical parts of the Bible;

and I am looking forward to the time, when I hope God will enlighten your minds, and captivate your affections, by the doctrinal and preceptive parts of it. To afford you an experimental introspection of its interior mysteries, is beyond our power: this must be derived from divine teaching, which we daily solicit from heaven on your behalf. In the interval I could wish your time to be employed, and your faculties exercised in a way that may be preparatory thereto: and with this view, I propose to your consideration an attempt of acquiring some knowledge of the primæval language, in which the first Scriptures were written. You will find the pursuit both amusing and profitable. There are charms in the language which God himself taught our first parents in Paradise,[1] which no language derived therefrom (as all other languages are) can possibly possess. At present I cannot explain to you the admirable peculiarities, by which it is distinguished from every thing of human invention.[2] But, if you consent

[1] See note C. in Appendix.

[2] See Rev. Wm. Jones's *Letter to the Hon. L. K. on the*

to my proposal, we shall be enabled, as we go on, to shed more light on the subject; and if you find the employment wearisome, we can desist whenever we please. I obtained, without the help of a master, when young, a superficial knowledge of the sacred tongue; which I shall be glad to increase for my own benefit, while I am helping you; though, indeed, the acquisition of the language is now so facilitated by Mr. Parkhurst's excellent grammar and lexicon, that the assistance of a master is by no means necessary to the student who is really desirous of attaining his proposed object.[1] And therefore, since my time is much employed, as you know, in my business, you will be able to proceed with little, or even no help from me."—Pleased with the novelty of the proposal, my sister and I immediately went to work with my father's books: and thus our time was prevented from hanging heavily on our hands. And since the period when it pleased God to *open* my *understanding to understand the Scriptures*, and to reveal to my

Use of the Hebrew Language, in the 12th volume of his works.

[1] See note D. in Appendix.

soul by his Spirit the great salvation which they display; I look back on the hours I employed in acquiring a little knowledge of the Hebrew tongue with a kind of satisfaction, which a recollection of those spent in the study of music, drawing, and the French language, by no means afford; for though the latter attainments may be of some small use to me in the present world, the former will be of advantage to me in preparing for the world to come.[1]—I am afraid I shall weary you with my detail of parental attentions (a subject of which I am never tired); or I would mention another scheme devised for the purpose of keeping our minds employed and of improving our hearts, without those time-killing and ensnaring amusements, which are now so fashionable; and of which, I am sorry to observe, that even professing parents do not see the evil.

[1] See note E. in Appendix.

MRS. DORMER.

My dear Ann, I am so interested in your narrative, especially with a view to my own domestic charge, that I shall derive great pleasure from your further effusions of filial gratitude.

MISS NEWMAN.

My dear mother, knowing the importance of bodily exercise to the preservation of health, and that a variety of employments is essential to the amusement of young persons, used to take me and my sister with her, in her morning excursions to the neighbouring cottages. There our sensibilities were excited by the objects of distress which pressed on our attention, and the tenderness of our hearts was roused to exertion on their behalf. Our benevolent wishes were readily encouraged by our dear parents, in whom the needy and miserable always find a warm friend; and we were supplied with materials of clothing; and, like Dorcas of old, employed in making them up. While we were

thus engaged, no opportunity was lost of kindling in our bosoms a sense of gratitude for the advantages we enjoyed, nor of infixing on our minds the only answer which can be given to the apostolic questions, *Who maketh thee to differ from another? and, What hast thou that thou didst not receive?*[1] Often were our young minds disgusted at the expensive gratifications of the world; and made to abhor those means of dissipating money on vain or sensual amusements which are so common, while these scenes of misery were presented to our view, and improved by the wise and well-timed admonitions of our excellent parents.—I would proceed; but I shall fatigue you, Mrs. Dormer, with my narration.

MRS. DORMER.

You will not, indeed; do go on.

[1] 1 Cor. iv. 7.

MISS NEWMAN.

Thus, then, my dear madam, did our time insensibly slide on, till I was about twenty years of age, and my dear sister Eliza about eighteen. At this period of my life it pleased God, in his great mercy, to afflict me with a fit of sickness, which threatened my life. My dear parents, whose prayers for the conversion of their children had before been incessant, were now more importunate on my behalf; and, doubtless, in answer their entreaties, some truly religious impressions were made on my heart. I began to think of the state of my soul; to feel its innate sinfulness; and to discover that a religious education, and a preservation from vicious practices, would not be sufficient to entitle me to a seat in heaven. Though accustomed to bend my knees morning and evening at my bed-side, I had never prayed till now, when I began to feel my need of Christ, and the necessity of a change of heart. My affectionate parents watched and cherished these hopeful symptoms with holy delight; but expressed their fear, lest, on my

recovery, which now began to take place, their hopes should end in disappointment. When my state of convalescence was considerably advanced, I began to look forward to the approaching Sabbath with emotions unknown before; expecting to derive from the ministry of Mr. Fidel, to which my parents were so much attached, that pleasure and advantage to which I had hitherto been a stranger. When the long-wished-for day arrived, I was sufficiently recovered to be able to resume my seat in the house of God: but, oh! with what different sensations from any which had ever before arisen in my mind. The sermon seemed to be wholly and exclusively addressed to me; and I trust I may say without presumption, that *the Gospel* was *the power of God to* the *salvation*[1] of my lost soul. From this time forward those things, from which I had before been restrained by parental authority (to which, from a sense of duty, I always felt it right to submit) became insipid and even irksome to me. My sources of enjoyment are new. In the

[1] Rom. i. 16.

company of God's people, among whom redeeming love is the subject of conversation, I find real satisfaction; but in the company of the trifling giddy *children of this world*,[1] I am out of my element. I feel pity for them, long for the interview to be at an end, and return thankful to my closet for the redemption *from this present evil world*,[2] which I hope I have experienced.—Now I think, my dear madam, that my little history demonstrates the possibility, if proper means be adopted, of amusing young people without suffering them to mix in those defiling and degrading vanities, from which none escape uninjured. And, on the sanction which the example of my own dear parents (with me oracular) gives to the sentiment, I am fully satisfied that it is a parent's duty to restrain those under his charge, while they continue so, from every scene of temptation into which inexperienced youth would heedlessly plunge.

[1] Luke xvi. 8. [2] Gal. i. 4.

MRS. DORMER.

Though the termination of our morning's walk interrupts our conversation for the present, I hope soon to resume it with you. For though I am fully satisfied with the goodness of your intentions, and the uprightness of your heart; I am not clear that, in the ardour of your zeal, you have not been carried too far in your views of that separation from the world, which is suitable to the Christian character. If you can convince me that you are right, I shall feel it my duty to take a liberty, which my intimacy with Mrs. Philmund will justify; and fulfil your wish by speaking to her concerning that part of her conduct which so much grieves you. Will you walk in and rest yourself?

MISS NEWMAN.

I thank you; the walk home is but short, and my mother will wonder what is become of me.

MRS. DORMER.

Good morning, Miss Newman, and thank you for your company.

MISS NEWMAN.

Madam, good morning.

A few days after the conversation detailed in the preceding Dialogue had taken place, Miss Newman, taking her sister Eliza with her, called on Mrs. Dormer. For her mind had been deeply concerned for the honour of God, and for the spiritual welfare of her friends, Mrs. Philmund and Mrs. Dormer; the latter of whom she was surprised to find concurring in sentiment and practice with the former. She determined, therefore, while she felt all the timidity natural to her sex, and was conscious of her disqualification, in consequence of her youth, for debating the momentous point with a person so much older than herself; that, as so fair an opportunity was afforded her of bearing her testimony to the truth, it should not be lost. After earnest prayer, and a serious examination of her Bible, in which she turned down those passages which appeared to support her cause, she was comforted by recollecting the story of David and Goliah.

DIALOGUE II.

MISS NEWMAN.

You see, my dear madam, that I have taken a very early opportunity of calling on you; to which I have been encouraged by the kind attention which you showed me during our walk on Monday.

MRS. DORMER.

My dear Miss Newman, I am truly glad to see you. Pray be seated. I have been rather uneasy, since the interview of the day you have just mentioned, thinking that you carry your religious preciseness to an unreasonable extent.

MISS NEWMAN.

I am truly sorry, madam, to incur your disapprobation by any thing I have advanced; and shall be ready to receive correction from you, if I have erred. That I may be led in the right way is my daily prayer to God; especially as I am aware how prone I am, through youth and inexperience, to go astray.

MRS. DORMER.

In the further prosecution of our inquiry into the conduct which Christian believers are obliged to observe with respect to worldly connections, I must beg leave to premise, that I do not plead for any immoral practices, nor for the devotion of too much time to any amusements whatever. I allow also that the playhouse is a sink of impurity, and a school of profaneness;[1] and acknowledge that some persons waste too much time in friendly visits. I do not, however, see any harm in taking a cup of tea occasionally

[1] See note F. in Appendix.

with my neighbours, though they do not think with me on religious matters; nor that any evil can result to me from such intercourse with them. And if a card-table on these occasions be introduced, a song, or a dance proposed (though I neither play cards, sing, nor dance myself), my conscience is not rendered uneasy thereby; nor do I feel myself under any necessity of shortening my visit, or declining a repetition of it. I do not perceive any breach of the divine law, nor any thing contrary to the spirit of a Christian, in an occasional concurrence with these innocent amusements.

MISS NEWMAN.

With all due deference to your superior age and judgment, I must beg leave to say, that I differ from you in opinion. For if I were *obliged* to be present where a company of rational and immortal beings, standing on the very brink of eternity, were so employed (a trial from which, I thank God, my father's character and connections wholly exempt me), I should be very

miserable. For, believing in a future state, and realising the nearness of death and a judgment to come, with the truths of Scripture before my eyes, could I contemplate the situation of such triflers with the precious season of probation for eternity, without feeling the most pungent apprehensions on their account? The pain, which a conviction of their danger must produce, would surely prove a bar to all enjoyment; even though, through the necessity of the case, I should feel no guilt arising from my own presence in such a scene of folly. Either I must, on such an occasion, have the moments embittered by a sight of my fellow-creatures standing on the brink of the grave without any regard to eternity or the needful preparation for it; or I must sink into the same spirit of inconsideration and levity with them. Either alternative is most anxiously to be avoided.—The general opinion, my dear madam, of the Lord's people is to be treated with respect, and not to be rejected without very full proof of its fallacy. Now you know that the concurring voice of those who have been most eminent for their attachment to

the cause of Christ, has borne an united testimony against these recreations. You know also that many an humble child of God is grieved to hear of a fellow-professor, who yields to the practice of them. And surely, if no inconsistency with the Christian character were thereto annexed, the determination of St. Paul in another case may well be imitated by us in this; *I will eat*, says he, *no flesh while the world standeth, if thereby I make my brother to offend.*[1] This apostolic resolution was an instance of real self-denial; but an abstinence from the things you have mentioned as innocent, in order to avoid offending the weakest of Christ's flock, even supposing that their views originate in prejudice, can hardly be dignified with the same appellation.[2]

MRS. DORMER.

But the advocates of innocent amusements, as they are called, will still ask, with a tone of the utmost confidence in the goodness of their

[1] 1 Cor. viii. 13. [2] See also Matt. xviii. 6.

cause, "What harm is there in them? Are they any where prohibited in the divine law? And if not, must not a refusal of joining in them be the effect of sanctimonious pride?"

MISS NEWMAN.

These, and other such like questions, on account of the frequency of their proposal, the plausibility of their appearance, and the air of importance with which they are brought forward, require an explicit reply, though their futility would otherwise consign them to contempt.

MRS. DORMER.

Do let me hear what can be said in answer to them; for I own I am at a loss to conjecture. What harm, for instance, can there be in the exercise, or diversion, of DANCING, and where is it forbidden?

MISS NEWMAN.

That the exercise, or diversion, of DANCING is no sin *in itself*, is readily acknowledged. Action, at proper seasons, and in due moderation, is conducive, nay essential, to the health of the body. But the frequenters of nocturnal balls have no such defence to make; and their practice is as hostile to the health of their bodies, as to that of their souls. Many persons have been guilty of unintentional suicide, by going half-covered with thin attire to a revel, called an assembly; and then, in the middle of the night, with heated blood and pores opened by violent exercise, exposing themselves to the damp and chilling air of the winter season. On this topic let the physician be consulted, and the increase of pulmonary diseases be well considered. Leaving the frequent injury of bodily health occasioned by these amusements out of the question, since no one will urge the promotion of health as the inducement to them; we will contemplate them in their relation to morals, and inquire how far they are conducive to purity

of heart and life, or hostile to it; an inquiry, surely, of the highest consequence, since *the pure in heart* alone *are blessed;* and none, without this qualification, can see *God* with comfort in the great day.[1] We will admit that the sprightly and active sports of children are an irregular dance, and that a formal dance of adults is the exercise of children reduced to rule; and that neither the one nor the other is *in itself*, and in its own nature, sinful. But, having admitted this, we must ask, since the principle of any branch of conduct either hallows or defiles it,—What are the circumstances which produce in young people of either sex a love of this amusement? Is not the intercourse of the sexes the impelling motive for a fondness for it? Is not the ball-room, or even the scene of a more private dance, a place of temptation to an infringement of the divine law?[2] If it be a scene of tempta-

[1] Matt. v. 8.

[2] Before this question is answered, let the seventh commandment to be compared with our Lord's comment on it, Matt. v. 28. The manner in which the apostle has expressed his exhortations, 1 Cor. vi. 18. and 2 Tim. ii. 22. is worthy of notice. He does not say, *Resist* "youthful

tion, could any one, while preparing to attend it sincerely and devoutly offer up the Lord's prayer? Is not the mode of ornamenting the body on such occasions calculated and designed to irritate the concupiscential passions of the mind? Can any honest cause be assigned for the exuberance of exterior embellishment, and the defect of decent clothing,[1] too generally adopted in such places? Is not the desire of exhibiting personal beauty, either possessed or supposed to be possessed, another usual allurement to this diversion? And to what does such an exhibition naturally tend? And where nature or age denies a claim of admiration on this account, do not the decorations of dress supply food for vanity and emulation? And are not vanity and emulation sinful emotions? Is the injunction of the apostle,[2] *That women adorn themselves with modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety, not with broidered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array, but (as becometh*

lusts," but *Flee* from them. To parley, is to be overcome: safety can only be insured by flight.

[1] See note G. in Appendix. [2] 1 Tim. ii. 9.

women professing godliness) with good works: is this *ever* attended to by persons who frequent the assembly-room? What are *the pomps and vanities of this wicked world,* which we have solemnly promised and vowed before God and man to *renounce,* if they are not to be found in these circles of dissipation? Let this question be answered under a recollection that *the pomps and vanities,* renounced in our baptismal vow, are distinguished from the works of the devil and those of the flesh, though too nearly related to both.[1]—Is it possible that the conversation on these occasions should be, as a Christian's conversation ought *always* to be, *to the use of edifying.*[2]—But I desist from asking any more questions: let these, my dear Mrs. Dormer, be seriously weighed, and surely it will appear that an attendance on these fashionable assemblies is, by an implication of consequences, unlawful; whether a person considers the peril to which he exposes himself, or the sanction which his presence gives to those scenes which expose

[1] See note H. in Appendix. [2] Eph. iv. 20. Rom. xv. 2.

others to a danger of moral contamination. If any kind of food were found, by frequent experiments, to be generally, if not universally injurious to the human constitution, it would be my duty and interest to avoid that species of aliment, even though the whole college of physicians had declared that they could discover no unwholesome properties in it.

MRS. DORMER.

Whatever may be said about balls and assemblies, the same objections cannot be raised against a quiet and friendly GAME OF CARDS.

MISS NEWMAN.

Not exactly the same in all respects; but I apprehend that others, equally cogent, may without difficulty be started. In the *mere* act of shuffling, cutting, and distributing a set of square papers, differently spotted and distinguished, there is certainly no moral evil.[1] But

[1] How much more rational would be the introduction

is there no contrariety in it to the precept which we have received *to redeem the time?*[1] In the desire of winning, is there no breach of the commandment *not to covet any thing that is our neighbours'?*[2] From the success of a game, won by superior skill, is there no danger of the mind's being inflated with pride, while the less

of a book, or a philosophical apparatus, at our social meetings; if among persons called Christians, or persons of any liberal education, conversation can be supposed to fail of affording profit and amusement.

[1] Eph. v. 16.

"Where is that thrift, that avarice of TIME,
(O glorious avarice!) thought of death inspires,
As rumour'd robberies endear our gold?
O *Time!* than gold more sacred; more a load
Than lead to fools; and fools reputed wise.
What *moment* granted man without account!
What *years* are squander'd, *wisdom's* debt unpaid!
Our wealth in days all due to *that* discharge.
Haste, haste, he lies in wait, he's at the door,
Insidious death; should his strong arm arrest,
No composition sets the pris'ner free.
Eternity's inexorable chain
Fast binds, and vengeance claims the full arrear."

Young.

[2] See note I. in Appendix.

skilful or less fortunate opponent is subjected to irritation by a mortification of his vanity? The interest in the game, necessary to render it an amusement, and the fondness which is too generally discovered for it, will afford proof that these questions are not futile, nor the dangers to which they relate chimerical. Is there no temptation to *emulation*, *wrath*, or *strife*,[1] the proscribed works of the flesh, in a game of cards? Let the countenances of its amateurs, while engaged in what is frequently by a misnomer called amusement, answer the question. Can it conduce to the improvement either of the body or mind? Is there nothing degrading to the character of one who professes to have *his treasure in heaven*, and his *heart* there also, as every Christian does, in such an employment of time and talents? Above all, is there any man living who would consent to be arrested by death, at an unexpected and unguarded hour, with the cards in his hands?[2]

[1] Gal. v. 20. James iii. 14—16. *Where envy and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.*

[2] See note K. in Appendix.

MRS. DORMER.

But unless the evil consequences which you have described as resulting from the practices of dancing and playing cards are *necessarily* produced by them, your argument against them will not be conclusive.

MISS NEWMAN.

I cannot, my dear Mrs. Dormer, allow the truth of your inference: for it is to be observed that, in our examination of the lawfulness of dancing and card-playing (with which many other vain amusements may be connected as implicating the same kind of guilt), we reason on the axiom that man is a fallen and corrupted creature; that in his natural or unconverted state, EVERY *imagination of the thoughts of his heart is* ONLY *evil* CONTINUALLY;[1] and that *This infection of nature doth remain, yea, in them that are regenerated, whereby the lust of the flesh*

[1] Gen. vi. 5.

——— *is not subject to the law of God;* and that *concupiscence and lust hath of itself the nature of sin.*[1] From hence it appears that the seed of every vile affection is in the heart of every one; which needs only to be watered by temptation, in order to occasion the production of its baneful fruits. *That* man has no proper acquaintance with his own heart, nor with the doctrines of the Bible, who does not know by painful experience that his fallen heart is as inflammable as tinder, when it is brought into contact with the weakest spark of temptation. And, if this be admitted, the unlawfulness of those scenes of vanity which have been mentioned, will be incontrovertible; for to run *needlessly* into temptation (and there can be no *necessary* call to visit the ball-room or the card-table) is directly contrary to the gracious command of our blessed Lord, *Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation;*[2] and to that of St. Paul, *See that ye walk circumspectly*[3] or warily. The people of the world, indeed, are like persons

[1] IXth Article of the Church of England.
[2] Matt. xxvi. 41. [3] Eph. v. 15.

who walk about in their sleep, unconscious of danger. Most pitiable state! But a Christian is awakened out of his sleep; and is supposed to be alive to the dangers of the road in which he is to walk, to the importance of his journey, and to the necessity of circumspection and a constant attention to the means of self-preservation in pursuing it. To expose my bodily life to any risk, without a necessity, or some equivalent advantage to be attained by it (even though a moiety of those who had before made the experiment had escaped unhurt,) would be very culpable, and a species of suicide: and, surely, as *the wages of sin is* eternal *death*,[1] any needless exposure of myself to that which is more to be dreaded than the fracture of every bone in my body, must be far more culpable and inexcusable.—Can you suppose, my dear madam, that either our Lord or his apostles ever practised these or such like things; or that, if they were now on earth, they would do so? And is not their example a model for our conduct?

[1] Rom. vi. 23.

Can we err in imitating them? May we not err in these instances of non-conformity to the copy which they have set us?[1]

MRS. DORMER.

But I know, my dear Ann, many persons whom you will consider to be real and exemplary Christians; who, though indeed they do not participate in the amusements I have mentioned, yet occasionally keep worldly company.

MISS NEWMAN.

Do the persons, Mrs. Dormer, whom you mention, *voluntarily make choice* of worldly associates? It is readily admitted, that it is, in many cases, impossible to avoid some intercourse with the world. Our relatives and acquaintances are many of them in an unconverted state: to shun their company altogether is neither feasible nor desirable. But do you not suppose

[1] See note L. in Appendix.

that these excellent persons would, if duty and Christian affection did not induce them to regard such connections, prefer the conversation of spiritual friends? In their interviews do they not wish, and try, on proper occasions, to introduce some remarks which may be profitable? Do they not bear a frequent and pointed testimony against the evil they are obliged at any time to witness? Such an intercourse with the world as that you have now specified, appears to me to differ widely from that *voluntary* association with it, which is formed for no other purpose than that of squandering time in idle chat or trifling amusements. In the one case, a sense of duty to God and man, and a hope of being useful to others, are the impelling motives: and, in the other, worldly society is *sought after*, for no other reason than the pleasure which is expected from it. And surely an expectation of pleasure from such a source argues, at least, a very low degree of spirituality in the mind, if not a total ignorance of those higher satisfactions which flow from religion.

MRS. DORMER.

If these persons associate with the world with a view to the spiritual benefit of their acquaintance; why may it not charitably be supposed that Mrs. Philmund and myself are influenced by the same motive?

MISS NEWMAN.

It would ill become me, madam, to make myself a censor of your conduct. But, under similar circumstances, I think I should feel myself obliged to catechise my own conscience very closely as to its motives. I should be bound to ask myself,—'Is the glory of God the supreme and governing principle on which I act in this step?[1] Is it with a predominant desire of promoting the conversion of my neighbours, and with a firm resolution of attempting it, that I go into their company? Do I not deceive myself in these points; and, while the unhallowed pleasure derivable from

[1] See note M. in Appendix.

their society is the real cause of my seeking it, do I not make the idea of profiting them a mere pretence for carnal gratification? Have I made any effort to diffuse the savour of religion on these occasions? Have I been able to reprove sin in the face of a large company; or has not my sinful silence rather sanctioned its commission? Let me clearly determine these points before I again venture into such company, unless duty evidently calls me thereinto.' Must not all, Mrs. Dormer, who mingle much with the world, frequently hear the blessed *name* of GOD *taken in vain?* Is not that which is essential to real godliness, ridiculed as needless scrupulosity in most worldly companies? Are not the comforts of Christianity treated as enthusiastic dreams? Are not the most important doctrines of the glorious Gospel sneered at as methodistical whims?[1] Are not the characters of Christ's disciples defamed, and idle tales injurious to their reputation received and propagated with delight? And are not the most faithful and upright

[1] See note N. in Appendix.

ministers of Christ often treated, in these assemblies of the gay and fashionable world, with the utmost contempt? Now can any truly Christian person conscientiously listen to such things without reproving them? Or would he expose himself to the torment of the rack, which such conversation must occasion within him, without the most urgent necessity?

MRS. DORMER.

I have frequently been in large companies of worldly people, where no outrage on decency has been committed: for such conversation as that which you have mentioned, is a gross violation of good manners. I must, however, admit that these topics, in defiance of the laws of politeness, are not uncommon.

MISS NEWMAN.

Then, madam, you allow that, when you place yourself in the company of worldly people, you have no security from the introduction of those

things which must be grievous to a pious mind. Indeed I cannot conceive how one who loves our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, if unavoidably thrust into the way of hearing his name, character, doctrines, ministers, or people blasphemed, can possibly continue a silent auditor thereof: surely such a one must either testify his abhorrence by leaving the party, or by a bold defence of the truth. For he will remember, that *Whosoever is ashamed of Christ and of his words before men, of him will Christ be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with his holy angels.* Now I consider, my dear Mrs. Dormer, that, if a Christian were to act faithfully in worldly company, to manifest the spirit of his Christian profession, to introduce conversation on the subject of vital godliness, and to demean himself as one who has the glory of God and the eternal welfare of his acquaintance uppermost in his mind; much trouble would not be necessary to extricate himself from worldly connections; for they would be as glad to drop all fellowship with him, as he would be to break off his intercourse with them.

MRS. DORMER.

Is there, then, no neutral ground on which the Christian and the world can meet?

MISS NEWMAN.

Yes; for the conduct of worldly business, and the reciprocation of the civilities of life; but not, as I conceive, for the derivation of mutual satisfaction. An austere moroseness of spirit and sanctimonious pride are as inconsistent with a Christian spirit, as the levities of carnal pleasure; but what concord can there be between Christ and Belial? Every Christian believer's heart is the temple of God; every unconverted heart is a temple of idols. In what can these concur? A careless sinner, from his indifference to all eternal concerns, may consent to leave religion out of sight in his social interviews, for the purpose of inducing a serious neighbour to visit him; and may, by a misnomer, dignify that indifference with the appellation of candour or charity. But could a

Christian consent to meet him on these terms of communion? Surely not. And I am moreover convinced that, if such terms of communion were made and adhered to, the gravity of a genuine Christian, the seriousness of his aspect, his want of taste for worldly vanities, his wrinkled brow at the commission of sin, and his sighs occasioned by the objects of pity that surrounded him, would become in a short time, without any other language, so offensive to a worldly mind as to be intolerable. A truly Christian spirit must prove such a reproach to an ungodly man, and such a bar to the ebullitions of the carnal mind, that fire and water may as easily coalesce, as the spirit of the world and the spirit of God. *How can two walk together except they be agreed?*

MISS DORMER.

But did not our blessed Lord accept several invitations to the houses of unawakened sinners? Was he not present at several feasts? Was it not truly said of him, that he ate and drank

with publicans and sinners? And may not his disciples follow his example?

MISS NEWMAN.

All this is justly stated. And if we can go into similar society for similar purposes, our conduct may be justified by his example. But in this case we shall certainly meet with the same treatment which he experienced. You cannot suppose, my dear madam, that our Lord ever sought such company on account of any correspondence between his spirit and theirs, or of any pleasure he expected to derive from their conversation and ways.—No; *He came to seek that which was lost:* and this, in union with his Father's glory, was the constant motive of his conduct. And, accordingly, we always find him, on those occasions, engaged in the prosecution of the great work of his mission; and his conversation generally produced either the spiritual benefit of his associates, or their bitter enmity and opposition. I need not refer you to particular instances. An exemplification of

his spirit in our conduct will assuredly draw on us, in spite of the most polite behaviour, and the most courteous and gentle manners, a portion of the same enmity. And the more we resemble our blessed Lord in heavenly-mindedness, the more we shall resemble him also as *despised and rejected of men.* It is the unsanctified part of a Christian's character, in which the world finds any attraction.

MRS. DORMER.

Still, Miss Newman, I am not convinced that the things which have been the subject of our friendly debate, are not of so indifferent a nature, that every one may follow the bias of his own inclination respecting them without incurring guilt.

MISS NEWMAN.

Nothing, Mrs. Dormer, but the fullest conviction of my own mind could induce me to continue the conversation a moment longer.

But the truth of those views which I have espoused appears to me as clear as the noon-day.——We will suppose that you and Mrs. Philmund are invited to a rout, likely to be conducted in the most inoffensive manner possible in such assemblies. You determine to accept the invitation. Could you, permit me to ask, in the prospect of the evening's engagement, fall on your knees and say, "Lord, the promotion of thy glory is my supreme object in the employment of my precious time this evening;[1] and I implore thy grace, that my object may be thereby attained. Though the scene into which I am going, is full of temptation to levity, to the love of the pomps and vanities of life which in my baptism I have renounced, and to a forgetfulness of thee; yet, as I have not thrust myself into it, but merely attend in compliance with custom and politeness, I am encouraged and entitled by thy promises[2]

[1] See note O. in Appendix.

[2] Psalm lxvi. 18. *If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.* May we not often trace our complaints of ill success in our prayers to this cause? Let

to expect thy preserving and sanctifying presence therein. Let my heart, therefore, O Lord, be occupied in the contemplation of those pleasures which are at thy right hand. Let my meditation of thee be sweet; and let me be meetened by this engagement for thy service here and thy glory hereafter."—Does not the mind, madam, recoil from the use of such a prayer, under such circumstances? And yet, *Whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do,* we are to *do all to the glory of God. In every thing, by prayer and supplication, our requests are to be made known unto God.* And it is a just criterion of duty, that whatever step precludes the propriety of prayer in reference to it, is unlawful for a Christian to take. We will suppose farther, that being seated in the circle

the case of Israel at Ai, Joshua vii. 11—13, be well considered. If we do not prosper in our souls; if our prayers be unanswered; if our attendance on ordinances be unprofitable; it behoves us to examine the state of our hearts and inquire if there be not some accursed thing there, which deprives us of those blessings, which our faithful God has promised to bestow on those who sincerely seek his favour.

of gaiety, you are seized with sensations which seem to you to indicate approaching death. Would there appear to be no unsuitableness in your situation, employment, and the temper which must prevail in every bosom that can relish such a scene, to the solemnities of a dying moment? Did you ever find (for I speak to you as one that possesses an acquaintance with vital religion), did you ever find, during such an interview, the spirituality of your mind (I will not say increased but) maintained in a state of vigour and without diminution? After the termination of such an entertainment, as your soul been in a proper frame for family—or private worship? Have not the personal decorations, deemed necessary on such occasions, a tendency to induce a spirit of vanity, totally inconsistent with the original design of clothing, which was to cover our shame? Might not the time, devoted to the rout and a preparation for it, have been more usefully spent? These and such like questions will enable us, my dear madam, to decide the question controverted between us.

MRS. DORMER.

I must own that these questions seem to discover the impropriety of all unnecessary mixture with worldly company; especially on those occasions which are particularly set apart by them for idle amusement. But may not such intercourse with them have a tendency to conciliate their affections towards the people of God, to take off the edge of prejudice, and to pave the way for other opportunities of being useful to them, either by private conversation in a more serious moment, or by bringing them under the means of grace?

MISS NEWMAN.

To *do evil that good may come*, is never lawful. That which is necessarily injurious to the seriousness and spirituality of my own mind, cannot be required of me by the word of God, any more than I can be therein enjoined to take slow poison to the destruction of my bodily health. Any sinful compliances which the peo-

ple of God make with the customs and ways of the world, so far from being calculated to do good, are the sources of inconceivable injury to the cause of God and the success of his Gospel. You know, I think, Mr. and Mrs. Luscus, who for some time past have attended on the means of grace, and assumed a profession of godliness. I believe they are indeed gracious people. But, in consequence of a connection with some worldly persons of rank and fortune, they have lately been drawn into some of their parties. What has been the result? Why, these very persons have made Mr. and Mrs. Luscus's compliance a ground for sneering at religion, while they have triumphed in the success of their schemes. The consciences of their seducers are thereby lulled faster asleep in the arms of their Delilah, sinful pleasure, and their hearts more hardened against the truth than before. If we work for God, we must work with his tools and not with those of his enemy and ours. If we pursue the most lawful and desirable object by unlawful means, we have

no ground to expect success, and shall certainly suffer loss thereby.

MRS. DORMER.

My dear Ann, God has endued you with wisdom and experience far beyond what is usually to be found in persons of your age. I feel my own inferiority, my unfaithfulness to my profession, and a keen remorse in the recollection of what is past. Though we are now interrupted, and I am obliged to attend to the concerns of my family; I hope you will call again in a day or two, as I want to hear more from you on this subject. In the mean while pray for me, that these salutary convictions may not wear off. Promise me that you will come soon.

MISS NEWMAN.

(Blushing.) My dear madam, I am covered with shame at the recollection of the free manner

in which I have been talking to you. Do pardon me, if I have said any thing wrong. If I have been too bold and assuming, let my motive plead my excuse.

MRS. DORMER.

You will call soon.

MISS NEWMAN.

I shall deem it a favour and a privilege to call on you. Good morning, madam.

MRS. DORMER.

Good morning, my dear young monitor;—Good morning, Miss Eliza. My best respects to your worthy parents.

Mrs. Dormer finding her mind to be much affected by her last conversation with Miss Newman, could not be satisfied without a further conference with her on the important subject which had engaged their attention. On the following day, therefore, she called on Miss Newman, and after the usual introductory inquiries thus addressed her.

DIALOGUE III.

MRS. DORMER.

My dear Ann, I am come to thank you for the light which your conversation has afforded me on the very important topic, which, in our late interview, has engaged our attention. It has convinced me, that the conformity to the world which prevails among many professing Christians, is both injurious to themselves, and dishonourable to the cause of God. For it must necessarily prove a great obstacle to the growth of the soul in the divine life; and it seems to be equivalent to a declaration, as impious as it is false, that it is not in the power of Christianity to fill up the time, and satisfy the minds of its

votaries, by affording them sufficient employment and delight, without a recourse to the world for an additional supply. And I am determined, through grace, to seek *all* my comfort henceforth in the ways of religion, to leave the broken cisterns, to which I have repaired with constant disappointment, and to fix my station at the side of the fountain of living water. This occasions a desire, that some of my friends, especially Mrs. Philmund, who (I fear) have hitherto acted the same foolish part with myself, could view things as I now view them; and I am resolved to expostulate with them on the subject. But it is indeed so new to me, that I feel incompetent to enter on this task without further assistance; and I am come to beg a little more conversation with you about it.

MISS NEWMAN.

My dear madam, while I rejoice in every thing that is likely to prove conducive to your happiness here or hereafter, and in every fresh instance of his favour, which God bestows on

you; I am confounded that you should think me capable of affording you any assistance in the good work in which you have resolved to engage. I am a poor casuist, and unable, without a constant derivation of light and strength from above, to take one step aright in the path of my own duty. I am a mere child in spiritual experience, and know very little of God or his will. I wish therefore that you would apply, if you need information, to some older Christian.

MRS. DORMER.

I will not distress you, my dear friend, with compliments. But if you will allow me to ask you a few questions, I will promise that, if your solutions should not satisfy me, I will seek further instruction.

MISS NEWMAN.

I cannot refuse to answer any questions which Mrs. Dormer may propose, and which it may be in my power to solve.

MRS. DORMER.

Well then, without further circumlocution, I want to know what the Scripture says on the subject of our late conferences, and to be furnished for the engagement from the armoury of heaven. Can you recollect any passages which indicate a Christian's duty with respect to the world, its society, its amusements, and customs?

MISS NEWMAN.

I have, at different times, and especially since we have conversed on this subject, marked some passages which have struck me, in my daily reading of the Scriptures; and which appear to me precisely and definitely to determine a Christian's duty in this respect.

MRS. DORMER.

Do direct me to some of them.

MISS NEWMAN.

That I will do with pleasure. *(Takes her Bible and opens it.)* The first passage on which I have opened, as marked in the course of my reading, is Rom. xii. 2, which is full to our purpose: *Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove*[1] *what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*

MRS. DORMER.

This passage is certainly in point; but it

[1] An *experimental* acquaintance with the excellency of religion (such as is implied in the word δοκιμάζειν *to assay*, as refiners do metals by fire) is exclusively attainable by those who obey its precepts. "If any man will do his will he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." John vii. 17. If conformists to the world therefore complain, that they have not found in the Gospel of Christ that which they had been instructed to expect from it, the complaint is accounted for; and can occasion no surprise to genuine disciples, nor reflect any disgrace on the promises and declarations of Scripture.

will be said, in answer to the inferences which are deducible from it, that *some* conformity to the world, while we are in it, is absolutely necessary. As for instance: The people of the world eat and drink; we must do the same, or be guilty of suicide by starving ourselves: they wear clothing; we must do the same for decency's sake. Can any line be drawn between those acts of conformity to its manners which are lawful and proper, and those which are prohibited?

MISS NEWMAN.

A general rule is laid down in a passage to which, if I mistake not, I referred in our last conversation; I mean 1 Cor. x. 31. Whatsoever steps we can take, with the design and expectation of promoting *the glory of God* thereby, are certainly justifiable; and, on the other hand, no act, in which this object cannot be proposed to the mind, is proper for one whose *members* are to be *instruments of righteousness unto God.*[1]

[1] See note P. in Appendix.

MRS. DORMER.

Still much is left by this definition of duty to the decision of private judgment, with respect to particular circumstances of our conduct.

MISS NEWMAN.

Certainly it is so, and it was impossible that it should be otherwise; for if the Scripture had minutely described every step which a Christian believer might lawfully take, and every act which it is his duty to avoid, in the ever-varying situations of mankind, "even the world itself," as St. John speaks with reference to another subject, would "not have been able to contain the books that must have been written." But the rule, properly applied, is (I think) sufficiently clear for the solution of all doubts. And if in any case, through a want of skill in applying the rule, any doubt should remain on the mind respecting the lawfulness or expediency of any step proposed, it is clearly our duty to refrain from that which is doubtful.

For here St. Paul's canon, respecting the use of things indifferent (introduced with regard to the alternative of eating or not eating flesh), is plain and positive: *He that doubteth is condemned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith; for whatever is not of faith is sin.* Rom. xiv. 23.

MRS. DORMER.

This is certainly just; but do see to what your next index points. What does our infallible guide say particularly about worldly company? It seems impossible *wholly* to avoid it. And as it is impossible, so it would be inexpedient; for then many opportunities of being useful must inevitably be lost.

MISS NEWMAN.

Let then my next reference be weighed, which is to 2 Cor. vi. 14—18. *Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness?*

And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God, as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate,[1] *saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.*

MRS. DORMER.

Does not this passage refer to the conjugal

[1] This is a quotation from Isaiah, lii. 11, on which the excellent Vitringa comments thus: "Horum vero *purificatio*, et *spiritualis separatio* in eo consisteret, ut se per gratiam Spiritus S. ab omni *affectu carnali* penitus purgarent, et se Deo, sacerdotum ac Levitarum instar, (in quibus, a Deo ad opus sacrum secretis, exactissima requirebatur puritas) totos devoverent ac consecrarent, *Obliti domus paternæ, et non retrospicientes* εἰς τὰ ὀπισω *ad ea quæ a tergo sunt*; et quæ sibi olim *lucro deputaverant*, nunc *damna censerent*."

union, and prescribe, in common with other similar directions, that a Christian man or woman may marry *only in the Lord.*[1] i. e. a fellow Christian?

MISS NEWMAN.

That it relates to the marriage union, as the most intimate of all friendships, is evident. But it likewise refers to every instance of close association whatever: for the terms, *fellowship, communion, concord, participation, agreement,* which the Apostle has used in the foregoing animated interrogatories for the purpose of showing the absurdity of attempting to reconcile two opposite points, certainly require an interpretation which extends to all human connections. The spirit of a man of God, and that of a man of the world, are like two parallel lines, which, though extended to an infinite length, can never unite. *As far as the east is from the west,* so far distant is God from Mammon. They resemble two opposite points of the

[1] 1 Cor. vii. 39.

compass, which can never be brought into contact.

MRS. DORMER.

But as *some* intercourse with the world is allowed to be both lawful and expedient; how may I determine the limits which are thereto assigned, and thus be free from the danger of turning either to the right hand or to the left from the path of duty?

MISS NEWMAN.

An illustration of our duty in this respect strikes my mind, which I will lay before you. The rule of duty must be a general one, because the circumstances of the Lord's people differ so widely.—We will suppose then, for the sake of illustration, that a man is engaged in a journey to a distant place; on the termination of which, by his arrival at his point of destination, depends the acquisition of an estate immensely valuable. He meets on the road an acquaintance,

who endeavours to stop him, by requesting to be favoured with his conversation for a little while; which might occasion a pause in their respective journeys, or cause, by accompanying him for a short space, a retrograde motion. The first-mentioned traveller, with his eye and his heart on his journey's end, would naturally say, "My progress is of so much moment, and so much depends on the diligent use of the few precious moments of day-light that remain to me, in hastening to the object I have in view, that it is impossible for me to stop and talk with you on the road; and much more to increase the risk of a failure in my aim by returning with you a single step; if you will come with me, come on; and I shall be glad of your company. Be quick in your decision, for my time is short, and valuable, beyond all calculation." Now this conduct in the supposed case approves itself at once to the mind. Let us therefore apply it to the subject of our inquiry. There are two roads, as we learn from our blessed Lord,[1] in which, though tending to different points, the

[1] Matt. vii. 13, 14.

travellers are within sight and hearing of each other. The one, *broad* and thronged with multitudes, *leadeth to destruction;* the other, *narrow* and trodden only by a few passengers scattered here and there upon it, *leadeth to life.* In the former all unconverted persons are walking; the latter is the path in which Christian believers are moving. In every stage of the latter the voice of a kind monitor is continually heard, or may be heard, by every pilgrim Zion-wards; crying with the utmost earnestness of persuation, *Go forward!* And, pointing with his outstretched hand (on the palm[1] of which LOVE has been inscribed in indelible characters by the point of a nail with which it was once pierced) to a distant and elevated spot, he adds, *Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed.* While the

[1] How beautiful a metaphor is that which we find in Isaiah xlix. 16, where God, speaking of his church, under the common emblem of a city, says, "Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands." Ought not his name to be graven on our hearts, and his honour to be dearer to us even than life itself?

pilgrim is obeying the admonition, his attention is arrested by a call from the opposite road, wherein he perceives an acquaintance who beckons to him to stop that he may enjoy a little of his conversation, and to pass over the space which separates the two roads from each other. The duty of the pilgrim has already been described; and, if it had not, no doubt could exist about it. If he can, without losing time, persuade his acquaintance to join him in his own road, it will be his duty to admit him to his society. But, if his acquaintance refuse to accompany him; no concession on his part must be made, as it would be a positive act of disobedience to the express command he has received. His duty is clear: he *must press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus;*[1] closely stopping his

[1] Phil. iii. 14. A beautiful allusion to the Olympic games, in which the prize to be contended for was placed in an elevated situation, that the competitors in the race might be animated to exertion by the sight of it. The *high calling*, or calling from above, seems to allude to the *proclamation* which was made before the commencement of the games, in which an invitation to contend in them

ears against every solicitation, which carnal reason may suggest to the contrary.

MRS. DORMER.

Your illustration diffuses much light on the subject of our discussion. But shall we not, by adhering rigidly to such a line of conduct as that which it prescribes, incur the charge of singularity, expose ourselves to contempt, and injure the cause of truth, by bringing general ridicule on our religious profession?

MISS NEWMAN.

Ridicule is not the test of truth. You know, my dear madam, that there is nothing, however sacred and true, which has not been attacked by this dangerous weapon. Let us remember, that *a candle* diffusing light through a dark room, *cannot be hid;*[1] and that singularity, and an

was given, the prize described, and the rules of the combat proposed. With this proclamation the promulgation of the Gospel corresponds in its design. [1] Matt. v. 15.

exposure to observation, are inseparably connected with the metaphor, by which our Lord has exhibited the duty of his followers, and their office in the world. By endeavouring to avoid that singularity which a holy life necessarily produces, we are attempting to put our *candle under a bushel*, and deprive ourselves of the honour attached to our profession, by letting our *light shine before men*, so *that they may see our good works, and glorify our Father which is in heaven*. There is, indeed, a needless scrupulosity, which ought to be avoided with great care; because the world's vulture-like eye, discovering such an effect of an ill-informed conscience, will be pleased with an opportunity of confounding things indifferent with things criminal, for the purpose of self-justification in the practice of the latter. It is, however, at the same time, to be observed, that a Christian's chief danger arises from things in themselves lawful. For his mind would revolt at the proposal of any thing directly opposite to the revealed will of God; his fears would be thereby excited; and he would exclaim with Joseph,

How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God![1] But when things in themselves indifferent, and which are only criminal, either by excess in the indulgence of them, or some effects which usually arise out of them, are proposed; the Christian is in danger of sliding insensibly forward towards the margin of the ice on which he has incautiously ventured, till it becomes too thin to bear his weight; and he sinks, before he is aware, into the waters of keen remorse. It is a self-evident truth, never to be forgotten by us, that the partition between that which is lawful and that which is unlawful, is so slight, as to make little or no resistance to any one who has foolishly proceeded to the utmost bounds of the former. The limit between obedience and transgression, virtue and vice, is only an hair's breadth in extent, and may imperceptibly be stepped over. Between a solid basis for the feet on the edge of a precipice, and the termination of the cliff, the distance is so small, as to be alarming to every one who has the use of his eyes. Who that is

[1] Gen. xxxix. 9.

wise, would venture to the utmost extremity; lest he should be seized with a giddiness, or take one fatal step too far, and so plunge himself by his temerity into danger of destruction, in which fractured bones form the least object of apprehension? Can they who frequent the assemblies of the gay and dissipated sons and daughters of worldly pleasure, who visit the play-house, the ball-room, or the route, &c. &c. while they make a profession of Christianity; can they, I say, believe, what they profess to feel daily, that there is an enemy within their own bosoms, the carnal mind, which is always ready to yield to every temptation, and to side with every seductive influence from without?[1] Would the commander of a besieged town, if he knew that there was a large party of disaffected persons within the walls, suffer frequent parleys to take place between the rebellious subjects and the hostile troops without? And if he were to permit so dangerous an intercourse; would he not be justly chargeable with supineness, a vicious carelessness, a want of vigilance, or an

[1] See note Q. in Appendix.

overweening confidence in the safety of the place? And would he not be liable to be called to an account by his prince, whenever the event, naturally to be expected, even the capture of the town, should unhappily occur?

> "Force never yet a gen'rous heart did gain;
> We yield on *parley*, but are storm'd in vain."

But I shall tire you with my harangue; and, while I ought to be sitting in the posture of a pupil, I appear to be arrogating to myself the chair of instruction.

MRS. DORMER.

Do go on; remembering your promise of answering my questions so far as you are able.

MISS NEWMAN.

I have often been comforted, under the unmerited imputation of singularity, scrupulosity, censoriousness, uncharitableness, and other such charges (which the world is ever ready to lay

against the faithful followers of Christ, in order to screen themselves from accusations of an opposite nature), by reflecting that the frowns of the world are far less dangerous than its smiles. The former have a natural tendency to detach the affections of a Christian more and more from its vanities; while the latter as naturally tend to rivet his heart to them. I find that, if it be my grand aim to *please men*, I cannot be the *servant of Christ;*[1] and that, if my spirit and conduct are such as conciliate the esteem and respect of the world, instead of congratulating myself on my success, I have reason to tremble on account of my state towards God; for *Woe unto us, if all men speak well of us.*[2] *The friendship of the world is enmity with God; whosoever, therefore, will be the friend of the world, is the enemy of God.*[3]

[1] Gal. i. 10. [2] Luke vi. 26.

[3] James iv. 4. How awful the address in this passage—*Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not, that the friendship of the world is enmity with God!!!* A religious professor, who has given himself up to Christ by the most solemn obligations, and who rescinds his sacred vows by

In reading my Bible, I see that I am to be *blameless and harmless, the child of God, without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom I am to shine as a light in the world:*[1] that, instead of dreading those accusations by which the world has always excused its own inattention to religion, I am to have no *fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness,* not even by sanctioning them with my presence, *but rather to reprove them*[2] by a determined opposition to them in every shade of existence in which they may appear. My time is to be spent, not to *the lusts of men, but to the will of God.*[3] It is to be my ambition to walk as Christ walked; and wherever I see the consecrated print of his foot, there with holy awe and grateful love I am to place my own: and though I am conscious of the impossibility of attaining to *the measure of the stature of the*

desecrating his affections to any other object, is guilty of spiritual whoredom and adultery.—Comp. Lev. xx. 10.

[1] Phil. ii. 15, [2] Eph. v. 11.

[3] See note R. in Appendix.

fulness of Christ; yet I am to keep this in view as my object of pursuit, aiming to be *perfect, even as my Father which is in heaven is perfect. The testimony of conscience that, in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, I have had my conversation in the world,* will be an acquisition infinitely more valuable, than the united applause of an undiscerning world. It is an acquisition that will be valuable in a dying hour. For though that testimony must necessarily be too imperfect to afford me any ground of acceptance before God (and blessed be his name, we need no such unstable basis, since the righteousness of our Surety is a firm foundation!); yet the comfort resulting from it, as an evidence of our interest in Christ, will be felt when *the fashion of this world passeth away.* When I inspect the histories of God's people in various ages of the world; when I contemplate the conduct of Noah, of Abraham, of Lot, and of the prophets in a later æra; when I survey the circumstances of the Jewish economy, divinely framed for the

express purpose of adumbrating the state of the Christian church;[1] when I view the conduct of our Lord himself, of his apostles, and of the primitive believers, I find that the favourites of Heaven have always been "*men wondered at*;"[2] distinguished from their contemporaries by their spirit and temper, their maxims and principles, their words and actions. They were all charged with singularity, censoriousness, and uncharitableness,[3] incurred the displeasure of the world, because they bore witness of it, that its ways were evil, and its end destruction; and excited its astonishment, because they would not *run to the same excess of riot*[4] with others.

[1] See among other passages, Deut. vii. 1—11. Numb. xxiii. 9. [2] Zech. iii. 8.

[3] See particularly 1 Kings xxi. 20. and xxii. 8. Jer. xx. 2. and xxxviii. 4. Mic. ii. 11. Matt. v. 10—12. John v. 16. and xv. 20. Acts vii. 52. Gal. iv. 16, 29. 2 Tim. iii. 12. and iv. 3. 1 Peter iv. 4, 5.

[4] 1 Pet. iv. 5. "What mean these precise fools?" (will they readily say) "What course is this they take, contrary to all the world? Will they make a new religion, and condemn all their honest civil neighbours that are not like them? Ay, forsooth; do all go to hell, think you, except you, and those that follow your way? We are for no more-

When I think of these things, I am consoled under the reproach I meet with; and only wish to be found worthy of being numbered with *the noble army of martyrs* and confessors of my blessed Redeemer. Those who have gone before me Zion-wards, have viewed the world as a foreign country,[1] through which they were passing in their journey homewards; whose language, fashions, and customs, were so contrary to those of their native land, that they were disgusted at them, and could not be induced to imitate them; while the votaries of this world have regarded them as strangers and foreigners, whose language was unintelligible, whose ways were very offensive, and who were only worthy of contempt and scorn.[2] And unless we are willing to join this cross-bearing company on earth; what reason can we have to expect, that we

than good fellowship and liberty; and as for so much reading and praying, these are but brain-sick melancholy conceits; a man may go to heaven like his neighbour, without all this ado." *Archbp. Leighton's Comment on the first Epistle of Peter*, vol. ii, 180.

[1] Heb. xi. 13. 1 Pet ii. 11. [2] 1 Cor. iv. 13.

shall find ourselves united with them in heaven?[1]

MRS. DORMER.

Many professors object to the requisition of renouncing the pomps and vanities of the world on this ground, that the Divine Being is too gracious to debar his creatures from any innocent gratification; and that, if the situation of a Christian in the world be such as is represented by those who consider the literal sense of Scripture to be an unbending rule of conduct, the follower of Christ is of all men most miserable.[1]

[1] Matt. x. 33. and xvi. 24. *If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.* 2 Tim. ii. 12. *If we deny him, he also will deny us.* "We receive this child into the congregation of Christ's flock, and do sign him with the sign of the cross, in token that hereafter he shall not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under his banner against sin, the world, and the devil; and to continue Christ's faithful soldier and servant unto his life's end."—*Public Baptism of Infants.*

[1] See note S. in Appendix.

MISS NEWMAN.

This argument against the necessity of inward spirituality and abstraction from the world, though totally void of force when properly examined, becomes of consequence by its plausibility and by its frequent adoption. In order to take off its edge, I would ask, Has the Creator dealt hardly with the papilio because, in consequence of his ordinance, it changes its nature, ceases to crawl on the ground, and mounts aloft in the air, deriving its pleasures from a new source? Has the captive, long a prisoner and a slave in Siberian mines, any reason for accusing his Sovereign of barbarity, when his chains are knocked off, and he is restored to the light of day, and the pleasures of society on the surface of the earth; because he is now separated from those low gratifications to which he was obliged to resort for want of better, while he was confined in subterranean caverns? The argument which you have stated is built on falsehood: for it supposes the things of the world to be suited

to the faculties of an immortal mind, which is made for the enjoyment of God, and which nothing but God, his favour and friendship, can ever satisfy. But the believer is become, by regeneration, *a new creature; old things are passed away, and all things are become new.*[1] The aspect of all those things, with which he has hitherto been conversant, is now changed. The follies of the world have lost their power of giving him contentment; if, indeed, they can be said to afford it to any persons.[2] His hopes and fears, his desires and aversions, his joys and sorrows, arise from new causes, and

[1] 2 Cor. v. 17. This is predicable of every *Christian* or person *in Christ.*

[2] Of the idolater (and every lover of the world is an idolater) the prophet Isaiah says (chap. xliv. 20.) *He feedeth on ashes: a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand.* Let the worldling compare his past experience with this description; and then let him attend to the expostulation of the same prophet, (chap. xliv. 2.) *Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.*

are directed to new ends. What he receives in lieu of the bubble which he relinquishes, is sterling gold. Had the prodigal son any cause of complaint when, in consequence of the gracious reception which his Father gave him, he was no longer under a necessity of feeding on husks with the swine which his former master had set him to keep? Let the Christian who is enjoying the privileges of his profession, be asked, Whether the requisition of renouncing the world be harsh; and whether God who makes it be an Egyptian task-master. He will know how to answer the question, by replying, *I am dead: and my life is hid with Christ in God.*[1]

MRS. DORMER.

Will you now, my dear Miss Newman, bring the statement and directions of Scripture on this momentous subject into one point of view? Such an epitome may be very useful to my own mind, and may furnish me with materials for the embassy in which I mean to engage.

[1] Col. i. 1—4.

MISS NEWMAN.

This, madam, I will do with as much perspicuity as I can; but I fear that the subject will be greatly injured by my attempt. The book of God divides the inhabitants of the world into two classes, which are described by various traits of character therein specified. The great majority, called, by way of emphasis, *the world*, are said *to lie in the wicked one*,[1] to *walk after the flesh*,[2] to follow *the course of this world*,[3] to have their *conversation in the lusts of the flesh*, to *fulfil the desires of the flesh and of the mind*, and to be *the children of wrath*.[4] The minority, who are chosen out of the mass called *the world*, are denominated *children of light*[5] *and of God*.[6] They are said to be *not of the world*, even as their Lord and Master was *not of the world*.[7] They have their *conversation in heaven*,[8] *live in the Spirit*, and *walk in the*

[1] 1 John v. 19. εν τω πονηρω. [2] Rom. viii. 5, 12, 13.
[3] Eph. ii. 2. [4] Eph. ii. 3.
[5] Luke xvi. 8. Eph. v. 8. 1 Thess. v. 5.
[6] Rom. ix. 8. Gal. iii. 26. 1 John iii. 10.
[7] John xvii. 16. [8] Phil. iii. 20.

Spirit.[1] They *look not at the things which are seen, and are temporal; but at the things which are not seen and are eternal.*[2] These, on account of the contrariety apparent in their spiritual manners, the world is said to *hate.*[3] They are accounted as its filth,[4] and are a spectacle of astonishment and detestation to it.[5] *The world is crucified unto them* and *they unto the world.*[6] The things of the world, *the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye,* and *the pride of life,*[7] are their enemies, against which they maintain an incessant state of hostility; and they are enabled, by *believing that Jesus is the Son of God,* to *overcome the world.*[8] Christ *gave himself for them, that he might deliver them from this present evil world;*[9] and through his grace they *deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.*[10] Between these there is an irreconcileable difference, which keeps them at a distance from each other. The world avoids the com-

[1] Gal. v. 25.
[2] 2 Cor. iv. 18.
[3] John xv. 18, 19, and xvii. 14.
[4] 1 Cor. iv. 14.
[5] 1 Pet. iv. 4.
[6] Gal. vi. 14.
[7] 1 John ii. 16.
[8] 1 John v. 4, 5.
[9] Gal. i. 4.
[10] Tit. ii. 12.

pany and conversation of those who are endued with the Spirit of God, because that spirit is offensive to them; and the Christian is afraid of any intimacy with the world, lest he should suffer loss thereby in the state of his own soul; for he feels that he is walking on dangerous ground while maintaining any intercourse with them. The world is, in his estimation, a place infected with the plague;[1] into which nothing but necessity, a sense of duty, or a hope of being useful, would induce a man to enter; where he would stay as short a time as possible; and where, while he is obliged to stay, he would use every precaution for his own preservation, which prudence, suggested by the apprehension of peril, would dictate. He walks in the world, as a person would walk who was aware that traps and pitfalls endangered every step. And while a Christian has his conversation in the world under these convictions, and is depending on his unseen Guide and Guardian for direction and defence, he is in little danger of falling. But if he forget

[1] See note T. in Appendix.

the hazardous situation in which he is involved, and choose worldly company for its own sake; his danger is imminent, he is already infected with the plague, and has fallen into the snare, from which nothing but Almighty power can rescue him. While the Christian is hastening onward to *the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens*, he earnestly calls to the men of the world, among whom he is conversant, in the words with which Moses addressed Hobab, his father-in law, *We are journeying unto the place, of which the Lord said, "I will give it you:" Come thou with us and we will do thee good; for the Lord has spoken good concerning Israel.*[1] On the other hand, the World, like the strumpet in the book of Proverbs, whose *lips drop as an honeycomb*, and whose *mouth is smoother than oil*, retorts the invitation, soliciting the affections of the religious professor to her meretricious charms and delusive enjoyments.[2] Happy is he who, through grace, *keeps himself unspotted from the world;*[3] and who, with Moses, *chooses*

[1] Numb. x. 29. [2] See Prov. vii.
[3] James i. 27.

rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; and esteems the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, having respect to the recompence of the reward.[1] Thrice happy that pilgrim, who shall be found at last to have imitated the part ascribed by Milton to the Seraph Abdiel, at the close of the fifth book of his Paradise Lost: of whom he says,

> "The Seraph Abdiel faithful found
> Amongst the faithless, faithful only he;
> Amongst innumerable false, unmoved,
> Unshaken, unseduced, unterrified,
> His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal;
> Nor number nor example with him wrought
> To swerve from truth, or change his constant mind,
> Though single. From amidst them forth he pass'd,
> Long way through hostile scorn, which he sustain'd
> Superior, nor of violence fear'd aught;
> And with retorted pity[2] turned his back
> On those proud tow'rs to swift destruction doom'd."

O how great will be the joy of the faithful

[1] Heb. xi. 25, 26.

[2] *Pity* is here substituted for *scorn*, because the latter forms no ingredient of a Christian's feelings towards the world.

combatant against the devil, the world, and the flesh, when from "the seat supreme," "from midst a golden cloud," the applauding voice of God shall be heard, saying,

> "Servant of God, well done! well hast thou fought
> The better fight, who single hast maintain'd,
> Against revolted multitudes, the cause
> Of truth ————
> And for the testimony of truth hast borne
> Universal reproach, far worse to bear
> Than violence; for this was all thy care
> To stand approved in sight of God, though worlds
> Judge thee perverse." [1]

Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. [2]

MRS. DORMER.

This indeed will be an ample compensation for every sacrifice made and every trial sustained. Even here the self-denying follower of Christ must have his reward in the conscious felicity of his own soul; and hereafter a crown of glory

[1] Milton's Par. Lost, book vi. [2] Matt. xxv. 21.

will be the portion of all those who now take up their cross, and *follow* their Lord *in the regeneration.*[1] Animated by these hopes and prospects, I trust that I shall be enabled, henceforth, *to walk worthy of the Lord,*[2] and *to adorn the doctrine of God my Saviour in all things;*[3] testifying both with lip and life, that *the Gospel of Christ is, to every one that believeth, the power of God unto salvation*[4] from the love of sin and of the world, as well as from its guilt and condemnation.——Many thanks, my dear Miss Newman, for your labour of love. May the Lord abundantly bless you in every good word and work.

MISS NEWMAN.

A good day to you, Mrs. Dormer.

[1] Matt. xix. 28.
[2] Col. i. 10.
[3] Tit. ii. 10.
[4] Rom. i. 16.

THE END.

APPENDIX.

Note A. p. 3.

Persons of this description are ready to ask, with the amiable youth of whom we read in Matt. xix. 16—22, "*What lack I yet?*" But let them remember that, with all the exemption from evil which this lovely youth claimed, he was destitute of that renovation of heart without which no one can see God; and that, when brought to the test, he discovered his unfitness for the kingdom of God; and, so far as we know from the short history which is given of him, he never entered it. Let those persons whose characters are moral and estimable among men, narrowly scrutinize their own hearts, lest they deceive themselves; for their good qualities may render them more liable to self-deception

than some others. It is the tendency of the soul towards God or the world, that constitutes the spiritual or carnal mind. To be *sensual, not having the Spirit,* is characteristic of the unconverted heart.

Note B. p. 10.

Whether the consciences of many professing parents are free from the guilt incurred by Eli, must be left to the determination of the individuals concerned in the inquiry. It is certain, that power is lodged in the hands of parents by the great Lord of all; which is to be employed, like every other talent, for the glory of God and the advantage of those committed to their care. It is to be feared that, in this day of liberty and equality, neither parents nor children are duly sensible of the extent of parental authority; of the awful responsibility resting on the former respecting the exercise of it, nor of the obedience due to it by the latter; that the reins of domestic discipline are

held with too slack a hand, and are given up at too early an age, even in professing families. These considerations appear to the author to involve one of the crying sins which prevail in the religious world at the present æra, and to threaten the most fatal consequences both to society at large and to the church of God. Whether many Christian parents, whose children prove irreligious or profligate characters, may not be implicated in their children's guilt, by the defect of early restraint and instruction, and especially the former, is a solemn question. Certain it is, that the word of God has laid down a general rule on this subject, in which, though there may be exceptions, as in other general rules, something must be implied; *Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old he will not depart from it.* Prov. xxii. 6. Even the heathens saw the importance of education, as appears by the well-known lines of Horace:—

> Quo semel est imbuta recens, servabit odorem
> Testa diu.

On the story of Eli (1 Sam. ii.) Mr. Scott

makes the following reflections: 'The neglect of properly educating children, and *the indulgence of their wayward inclinations*, is a sin which God severely chastises in his own people: because it seems to imply a contempt of *his* authority and special favour, and a disregard to his glory, as well as to *their* immortal souls; and because it tends to the most fatal abuses and apostasies.'—*Scott's Bible.*

Note C. p. 14.

'From the account given by Moses of the primæval state of man, it appears that he was not left to acquire ideas in the ordinary way, which would have been too tedious and slow, as he was circumstanced, but was at once furnished with the knowledge which was necessary for him. He was immediately endued with the gift of language, which necessarily supposes that he was furnished with a stock of ideas, a specimen of which he gave in giving names to the inferior animals which were brought before him for that

purpose.'—*Dr. Leland's Advantage and Necessity of the Christian Revelation.* Vol. 2, part ii, chap. 2, p. 21.

'Language must have come by inspiration, and that inspiration was necessary to give man the faculty of speech; to inform him that he may have speech; which I think he could no more find out without inspiration, than cows or hogs would think of such a faculty.'—*Dr. Johnson: see his Life by Boswell.* Vol. 2, p. 447.

'Whatever fantastical notions some men may advance concerning the origin of language, and the possibility of man's gradually inventing it by his own unassisted powers; yet, in fact, not a single instance can be produced, since the creation of the world, of any human creature's ever using articulate sounds as the signs of ideas; or, in other words, of his speaking or having language; unless he was first taught it, either immediately and at once by God, as Adam at his formation, and the apostles on the day of Pentecost, Acts ii, or gradually by his parents or nurses.' *Parkhurst's Lexicon.*—On this subject see also *Ellis's Inquiry*, p. 8; and

Eusebius's Præparat. Evangel. lib. xi. cap. 6. —Probably 'the celebrated Cadmus, who, according to Herodotus (lib. v. cap. 57, 58), came from Phenicia into Greece, and whose companions introduced the use of the Phenician letters into that country,' derived his name from the Hebrew word קדם the East, whereby the derivation of language from its true source seems to have been traditionally preserved.

Note D. p. 15.

'Before I conclude———, it may not be amiss to offer some directions concerning the best method of acquiring a knowledge of the Hebrew language, to those who have not the benefit of a master. In the first place, then, I would advise such persons to acquaint themselves with the common grammatical rules and inflexions (a task, which, by the assistance of the grammar now put into their hands, and particularly of the sheet grammar, they will, I believe, upon trial, find much easier than they

could well have imagined);—then to begin reading the first chapter of Genesis with the grammatical praxis (Gram. sect. xi.); and after having well mastered every word in it, proceed to the following chapters with the help of Montanus's interlineary version, if they understand Latin; if not, our English translation, with the marginal readings, will very well supply the place. But as they advance, they should still take care grammatically to account for every word in the manner of the praxis, and according either to the longer or the shorter grammar, &c. And I can venture to assure any person of tolerable parts and abilities, that an application thus directed, of two or three hours every day to the Hebrew language, unadulterated with the Rabbinical points, will, in a few months, enable him to read in the original, with ease and delight, most parts of those Holy Scriptures, all of which, St. Paul assures us, were given by inspiration of God, and are able to make us wise unto salvation, through faith, which is in Christ Jesus. 2 Tim. iii. 15, 16.'—*Preface to Parkhurst's Lexicon.*

Note E. p. 16.

The account which is given of Miss Elizabeth Hutchinson, who died July 10, 1800, at the age of 21, in a funeral sermon by the Rev. Edward Burn, is calculated for great usefulness among young persons; and is therefore earnestly recommended by the writer of these pages to their perusal. From this account the following passage is extracted. "Her inquiries on the subject of religion were those of a mind deeply in earnest. Though vigilant to an example, in her attention to the ordinances of public worship, she was much in retirement; and though extensively read in the works of our best modern divines, her principal books were her Bible and her own heart. And here her progress was truly astonishing. Not satisfied with an enlarged and accurate knowledge of what may be obtained by our English version, she applied herself to the study of the *Hebrew Scriptures;* and with such success that, during the last two years of her life, she read the *original* of the Old Testa-

ment, not only with ease, but with a degree of accuracy and critical discernment, that would justly be held reputable in the sacred profession, Such was her facility and delight in this holy study, that she abridged, at the age of *sixteen*, the Hebrew Grammar and Lexicon of Parkhurst; and during the last six months of her illness, she compiled, and wrote out with her own hand, a large grammar and praxis of the sacred tongue, both of which are executed in a style of superior accuracy and beauty. These were presented to her parents as tokens of filial regard, and remain as interesting memorials of a most ingenious and affectionate daughter."

Note F. p. 26.

The theatre is often defended, and even spoken of with approbation, by persons who pretend to be friends of religion and of the established church; who would fain have it believed, that all objections to its amusements are *puritanical* and *methodistical*. To allow this

would be a compliment to the puritans and methodists, which they by no means merit; for it would be an acknowledgment that they *only* are enemies of vice, and friends of religion, morality, and virtue. To restore a small part, at least, of the credit which arises from a determined opposition to vice to its lawful proprietors, the members of our church, will be an act of justice, with which no persons can be offended but her false friends, who have basely wrested it from them. For this purpose a passage from the words of Dr. Thomas Bray (a person to whom no imputation of puritanism or methodism can possibly be attached, and whose epistle dedicatory testifies the highest regard to the Church of England) will suffice. In his lectures on the Church Catechism, when he speaks of the baptismal vow which relates to *the pomps and vanities of this wicked world*, p. 217, he says, " These (*pomps*), as they were part of the Pagan idolatries, so they were what the primitive Christians were most particularly concerned to renounce. But, however, since the same renunciation of the pomps of this world is

still retained in our church, though the very same things which were at first meant thereby, are perhaps become obsolete and out of use in Christendom; and yet it is not to be supposed, but that our church had respect to something still in use in the Christian world, as fit to be renounced under that title by every disciple of JESUS: I shall, therefore, together with a short account of the meaning of *pomps*, in the sense they were renounced by the primitive Christians, take care especially to show you, what amongst us is most analogous to the ancient heathenish *pomps*, and bear such a near resemblance to them, as to render these our modern *pomps* fit also to be *renounced* by every Christian.

"By *pomps* were anciently meant (in the opinion of our learned and excellent Dr. Hammond) those pompous shows and spectacles exhibited by the emperors, and great men of Rome, in the Roman theatres, wherein multitudes of captive wretches were put to slay one another in their sword-plays, for the diversion of the people. And, indeed, it is not unlikely

that thereby may be meant, not only those bloody sword-plays, but all those *scenical representations and plays* whatever, acted in memory of their false gods upon their great festivals, which were sometimes so very lewd and impious (for instance, those which were acted in honour of Flora,) that the people of Rome were ashamed to proceed in them whilst Cato, a person of renowned virtue amongst them, was present in the theatre. They were also wonderfully pompous and the scenes magnificent, the greatest grandees of Rome appearing at them, and having their seats, or *boxes*, appropriated to each order or rank of great men, according to their degrees and qualities. And here also very likely it was, that the lewd crew of both sexes met together to make their assignations; for near to the *circus* and *theatre*, there were those stews, where they withdrew to act their vile abominations.

"And now, that which approaches in these our days, nearest to those sort of heathenish pomps, and which, in pompousness and magnificence of scene, are not much inferior to them, are those profane and lewd plays, acted in our

public play-houses, where, for aught I know, more souls are now murdered, than in the former were bodies; more profaneness uttered, and more lewd assignations made, than at the Pagan theatres: and how infinitely unfit then is it, that those kind of diversions should be suffered in a Christian state, or that persons professing Christianity should be permitted to go near them? The primitive fathers looked on the theatres and play-houses as no other than the devil's territories; insomuch that, it happening once that when a Christian, being prompted by curiosity to be present at the spectacles therein, was possessed by the devil, the father was not startled at it, but readily owned, that Satan had a right to take that person captive, whom he found within his own precincts. And if those who frequent our modern play-houses, do generally return thence possessed with a spirit of profaneness, lust, or vanity, it is but what may reasonably be expected; for though all evil conversation is infectious, yet vice does then most easily insinuate itself into our dispositions, and flies to the very heart, when the poison

is mixed with pleasure, wit, and smartness of conceit.

"And now, since it is universally agreed amongst all serious persons, that a more irreligious spirit did never reign upon any theatre, than has in this last age in our modern playhouses: since (as is the general complaint) in these houses piety is so strangely ridiculed, the holy and reverend name of God profaned, and his glory and interest rendered so contemptible and vile: since the youth especially of our nation are so allured thereby into the love of, and delight in, idleness, excessive vanity, revellings, luxury, wantonness, lasciviousness, whoredoms, and such debaucheries, by oaths, looseness of conversation, and corrupt atheistical principles: since our gentlemen are here taught to deride religion, to dissolve in luxury, to abandon themselves to their pleasures, to be debauchers of women, to be profuse and extravagant in their expenses, and to be entirely libertines: since the young ladies of our nation are here thoroughly instructed in intrigues and assignations; to scoff at the prudent reservedness

and modesty of the best of their sex, to despise the best instructions of their parents and guardians, to be disobedient to their authority, and, at last, without their knowledge and consent, to marry themselves to some loose or lewd libertine; and, indeed, since the minds and manners of the great ones, especially, of both sexes, are hereby so foully corrupted, and their affections so sadly alienated from the love of God and goodness; all these things considered, it were greatly to be wished, our playhouses were totally suppressed. However, in the mean time, I think it concerns all, that will be secure from ever apostatising from the faith of Christ and a religious life, so far to reject these our modern pomps, as never to enter within those houses where these plays are acted."

If it should be objected to this statement of the truly excellent divine whom we have quoted, that the vices and errors of the stage have been corrected since the æra of Dr. Bray; the objection may be confronted by a reference to almost every popular theatrical performance of the present day, and by proofs adduced

therefrom that the modern dramas have a direct tendency to produce the same awful effects, which Dr. Bray attributes to those of the last century. Nay, it may be demonstrated that the stage can never cease to be a school of vice; for were nothing exhibited thereon that is congenial to the corrupt inclinations of the depraved heart of man, it would attract no spectators, and could not be supported. If an attendance on the amusements of the theatre be not an explicit and positive breach of the *baptismal vow*, it will be difficult to prove that it can be broken at all. *See also Milner's History of the Church of Christ*, vol. i. p. 463, &c.

Note G. p. 33.

"It is impossible to advert to the present state of female manners, without noticing a still more melancholy proof of the decay of those feelings which are the grand bulwarks of female virtue, than even a growing indifference to the character of those who are admitted into the

parties of fashionable life: I mean the indecent modes of dress, which are becoming more and more prevalent among women of all classes. These modes, and indeed the whole style of modern female dress, were evidently invented for the purpose of exciting sensuality and of inflaming passions that stand in the greatest need of restraint; but they have been adopted by women who lay claim to unsullied reputation, and by them transmitted to the lowest ranks of female society, with a rapidity of communication, which affords a most striking instance of the contagion of bad example. The prevalence of such a fashion in those ranks, where it can be but little counteracted by education or reflection, must inevitably prove an inexhaustible source of prostitution and debauchery;—a consideration which ought surely to induce every woman, who has the least regard for her sex, to exert all her authority, and all her influence, in discountenancing a practice which leads to such direful consequences. This scandalous violation of the laws of decency, on the part of those whose duty it

was to be the guardians of those laws, has already, in many instances, been followed by a severe, though it must be owned, a just punishment; with a punishment which, however just, is calculated to wound the tenderest feelings of our nature. Many women who, a little while since, shone forth among the loveliest of their sex, are now dressed in their shrouds, because, in an evil hour, they laid aside those parts of their apparel, which health, as well as decency, forbade them to relinquish. What must be the emotions of those parents, and of those husbands, who have been thus bereft of their dearest comforts, which a little seasonable and kind admonition might have still preserved! A very moderate degree of reflection, indeed, without the aid of admonition, should be more than sufficient to prevent the adoption of so baneful a fashion. What woman, having any claim to character, would suffer herself to transgress the laws of decency, if she considered for a single moment, how cheap she thereby renders herself in the eyes of the other sex? The female who makes an improper display of her person,

may become an object of transient desire, but forfeits all title to respect. The man of sense, who is ever the friend of decency (for never was a maxim more true, than that which represents a want of decency as a want of sense) looks upon such a woman as a disgrace to her sex. Nay, the shallow superficial coxcomb has sense enough to discover her unfitness for the sacred duties of conjugal life; and to know that decency is the least pledge that a woman can give for chastity. Even the licentious admiration which the profligate libertine pays to her charms, is mingled with secret contempt; and he talks of her among his dissolute companions, with a grossness of familiarity, the very idea of which would raise in her cheeks the glow of indignation, if it did not suffuse them with the blush of modesty.

"Does the degraded female console herself, for such mortifications, by the reflection that she has not sacrificed her virtue? Does she think her conduct and character irreproachable, because, in the ordinary sense of the word, she has preserved her chastity? Alas! what erro-

neous ideas has she formed of female chastity? To abstain from the grossness of vice, is the least, though an indispensable, part of this most important of virtues. This divine principle is seated in the mind; it is enthroned in the heart, and there maintains a sovereign sway, not only over the external deportment, but over the hidden thoughts and inmost feelings. These thoughts and feelings are not within the reach of human observation; and consequently it cannot always be ascertained, whether the claims of any particular woman to chastity be unimpeachable; or whether they be founded merely in that counterfeit quality, the very existence of which depends on the want of opportunity to indulge the licentious passions, without inconvenience or danger of discovery. But though it be difficult to pronounce, with certainty, on this delicate question, it is easy to come to a fair decision upon it. Genuine chastity —that is, the chastity of the heart and of the mind—has some characteristics with which it never fails to be accompanied. Of those characteristics, the most indubitable, as well as the

most indispensable, is that nice and extreme sensibility, which instinctively shrinks from whatever can give the smallest offence to the most refined delicacy: and which acts as the vigilant centinel—the jealous guardian—not only of the citadel itself, but of the remotest outworks of female chastity. What then shall be said of those women, who, instead of displaying any symptoms of those delicate feelings, set decency itself at defiance, and prove themselves to be destitute of all sense of shame? How dare *she* claim to be considered as virtuous, who gives the most glaring proof that she is not even a *modest* woman? That this is a just description of the fashionable females of the present day, no one, who is witness to the indecent exposure which they make of their persons, can pretend to dispute. So scandalously indecent is that exposure, that to judge from appearances, *virtuous* women seem now to have less modesty, than belonged to the prostitutes of former times. Justice, however, requires a distinction between the blooming but unfortunate maid, whose native blushes are over-

powered by the influence and example of a venal mother: and the chaste matron, who, by a wanton exhibition of her person, shows that she is incapable of a blush. The former is an object of compassion; and still more so than she would be, if her life were to become a sacrifice to the brutal rage of her from whom she received it. The latter displays the female character in the most odious form which it is capable of assuming. She is even more odious and detestable on account of her pretensions to chastity. The monstrous and unnatural alliance, which she endeavours to establish between virtue and helplessness, tends not only to bring the former into contempt, but to endanger its very existence, by depriving it of its natural and necessary defence. Compared with such a woman, the female who has fallen a victim to temptation, and who hides herself in retirement from the disgrace which she can never wipe away, is an object of commiseration.—Nay, compared with such a woman, the bold and abandoned profligate, who, with dauntless effrontery, appears publicly in her true character,

is less disgraceful to her sex, and less injurious to society."

The above quotation (the importance of which must apologize for its length) is taken from a pamphlet, intituled, *Remarks on Modern Female Manners, as distinguished by indifference to character, and indecency of dress: extracted from "Reflections, Political and Moral, at the Conclusion of the War: by John Bowles, Esq."* Octavo, price 6d. Rivingtons, 1802. As a further recommendation of this tract to public notice, the just praise bestowed on it in the British Critic is added for the reader's perusal. "This is a striking extract from a work which we have formerly praised, on the female modesty so little consulted in the present fashionable modes of dress. The influence of the female character on the great interests of society, is here ably displayed; and the British fair are reminded into what degradation they plunge themselves, by condescending to adopt the appearance of wantons. That which has most surprised us, on many occasions, is, that parents themselves of strict characters, should suffer

their unthinking daughters, even in their presence, to make an appearance which *they* surely cannot contemplate without a blush."—*British Critic for October*, 1802.

From the above citation, it appears that the politician and moralist concur with the theologian in reprobating the corruption of the present æra.

Note H. p. 34.

It may be remarked, that no notice has been taken of the extravagance in the expenditure of money which prevails, respecting dress, furniture, and other things, in the present day. The silence which is observed in the dialogue on this subject arose, not from the infrequency or innocence of profuse and luxurious habits, of which the gratification of pride and vanity is the aim; but from the multiplicity of other objects which demanded censure. It will not, however, be improper to observe, that this kind of vanity is as much a breach of our baptismal

vow, as any other instance of it which has been specified; and that it is, moreover, a breach of more than one commandment. It is a transgression of the first, since it is a surrender of the heart to the world, which Jehovah claims as wholly his own. Of the sixth; as thereby we withhold from our poor neighbour, that which might contribute to the comfort of his life, or even save him from perishing by cold or hunger, and so become accessaries to his death; while neither our necessities nor our accommodations demand the surplusage we desecrate to the pomps of the world. Of the eighth; since we thereby unjustly alienate from the poor that which is their due, the superfluities of our income not being ours, but theirs. It would be easy to show, by a just deduction of consequences, that several other commandments are infringed by profuseness in the expenditure of our money, and that the whole second table of the law is thereby violated; since it requires us to *do unto others, as we would they should do unto us.* Bishop Beveridge, in the resolutions he formed for the conduct of his life, writes thus: "I am

resolved, by the divine grace, to employ my riches, the outward blessings of Providence, to the same end (the glory and service of my great Creator); and to observe such a due medium in the dispensing of them, as to avoid prodigality on the one hand, and covetousness on the other.—This, without doubt, is a necessary resolution, but it is likewise very difficult to put in practice, without a careful observance of the following rules: *First*, Never to lavish out my substance, like the prodigal, in the revels of sin and vanity, but after a due provision for the necessities and conveniences of life, to lay up the overplus for the acts of love and charity toward my indigent brethren. I must consider the uses and ends for which God has intrusted me with such and such possessions; that they were not given me for the pampering my body, the feeding my lusts, or puffing me up with pride and ambition; but for advancing its glory, to my own and the public good. But why do I say given? When, as I have before observed, I have no propriety in the riches I possess: they are only lent me for a few years,

to be dispensed and distributed as my great Lord and Master sees fit to appoint; *viz.* for the benefit of the poor and necessitous, which he has made his deputies to call for and receive his money at my hands. And this, indeed, is the best use I can put it to, for my own advantage, as weil as theirs: for the money I bestow upon the poor, I give to God to lay up for me, and I have his infallible word and promise for it, that it shall be paid me again with unlimited interest, out of his heavenly treasure, which is infinite, eternal, and inexhaustible. Hence it is, that, whensoever I see any fit object of charity, methinks I hear the Most High say to me, Give this poor brother so much of my stock, which thou hast in thy hand, and I will place it to thy account as given to myself; and *look what thou layest out, and it shall be paid thee again.*

"The *second* rule is never to spend a penny, where it can be better spared; nor to spare it where it can be better spent. And this will oblige me whensoever any occasion offers of laying out money, considerately to weigh the circumstances of it, and according as the matter

upon mature deliberation requires, I must not grudge to spend it; or if at any time I find more reason to spare, I must not dare to spend it; still remembering that, as I am strictly to account for the money God has given me, so I ought neither to be covetous in saving, nor profuse in throwing it away without a just occasion. The main thing to be regarded is the end I propose to myself in my expences; whether it be really the glory of God, or my own carnal humour and appetite. For instance, if I lay out money in clothing my body, the question must be, whether I do this only for warmth and decency, or to gratify my pride and vanity? If the former, my money is better spent; if the latter, it is better spared than spent. Again—do I lay it out in eating and drinking? If this be only to satisfy the necessities of nature, and make my life the more easy and comfortable, it is, without doubt, very well spent; but if it be to feed my luxury and intemperance, it is much better spared; better for my soul in keeping it from sin, and better for my body in preserving it from sickness."

NOTE I. p. 36.

Col. iii. 5. Psalm x. 3. "Every species of gaming originates from an undue desire and hope of increasing wealth by proportionably impoverishing other men; and is therefore a direct violation of this law," viz. the 10th Commandment. "Public gaming, by lotteries, so far from being less criminal than other species of that vice, is the worst of them all: for it abets and sanctions, so far as example and concurrence can do it, the practice that opens a door to every species of fraud and villany; that is pregnant with the most extensive evils to the community and to individuals, &c."—*Scott's Essays*, p. 59.

NOTE K. p. 37.

The too frequent and more terrible effects of gaming, such as enmity, malice, duelling, murder, suicide, and the reduction of flourishing families to poverty, have been purposely omitted

in the dialogue; because these horrid consequences will be said to result only from hazarding large sums, which the more sober amateurs of cards will concur in condemning. *These*, however, strongly enforce the propriety of our Lord's affectionate caution, as applicable to the case before us, *Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.* Hazael resented the prophetic intimation, that he would be the murderer of his master, &c.; and indignantly asked, *Is thy servant a dog that he should do this thing?* Yet, although he thought himself absolutely incapable of perpetrating so atrocious an action, and was confident of his own integrity; by yielding to the first emotions of ambition, he actually became guilty of this enormous crime. (See 2 Kings, viii. 12, 13, 15.) When a round body is set in motion on a declivity, no one can be certain that it will stop, till it arrives at the bottom. Now the way of sin is a declivity; not indeed precipitous or perpendicular, but a gradual descent: the mind of man is corrupt, and under the influence of a powerful attraction to the very nadir of criminality; and when it

has yielded to the first solicitation to the practice of sin, its progress therein is natural and unavoidable, if unchecked by extrinsical restraint. PRINCIPIIS OBSTA, *Nip sin in the bud*, is a maxim, which, though it flowed from the pen of a heathen, is worthy of being written in letters of gold; and, enforced by the pen of inspiration, 1 Thess. v. 22, should be inscribed on every Christian's heart.

NOTE L. p. 41.

The exhortations, which are to be found in Scripture, to an imitation of Christ and of his apostles, are so numerous, as to make a particular reference to them unnecessary. Why do Christians bear his sacred name: why are they termed his disciples and followers; but because they are supposed to be imitators of his example? See 1 John ii. 6. John viii. 12. 1 Cor. xi. 1. Matt. xix. 28. Rev. xiv. 4. "No one can fail to see that the life of Christ was designed as a pattern for his followers, who considers how

admirably it is calculated for that purpose.—And should we not find it the best compendium of morality, the most perfect and unerring rule whereby to direct ourselves *in all cases*, if we would only ask our own hearts before we enter on an action, how the blessed Jesus would behave in our circumstances? A conscience but moderately informed from the Gospel would seldom, perhaps, give a wrong determination. But the truth is, we are afraid of the answer; and therefore dare not ask the question." *Bp. Horne's Sixteen Sermons.* vol. 1, p. 9, 10. —"Let the whole world go whither it will, I am resolved to walk in the steps that my Saviour went in before me: I shall endeavour, in all places I come into, in all companies I converse with, in all duties I undertake, in all the miseries I undergo, still to behave myself as my Saviour would do, was He in my place. So that wheresoever I am, or whatsoever I am about, I shall still put the question to myself, Would my Saviour go hither? Would he do this or that? &c." *Bp. Beveridge's Private Thoughts.* —Leaving our Divine Master out of the ques-

tion, in order to avoid the crime of blasphemy; to paint St. Paul or St. John as engaged in either of the *innocent* amusements which are censured in the Dialogues, would be too ridiculous to be borne, and would expose the painter to contempt, if not to a charge of profaneness.

The charge of novelty, or unnecessary preciseness, which may be adduced against the opinions stated in the Dialogue (though of no moment whatever) will be fully obviated by the 75th canon of our church; from which it is evident that the sentiments of our excellent Reformers concurred with those which are here adopted. For therein ministers are strictly prohibited, under the sanction of severe ecclesiastical censures, to *spend their time* IDLY, *by day or by night, playing at dice, cards, or tables, or any other* UNLAWFUL *game.* In the opinion therefore of our Church, *Dice, cards, and tables,* are *unlawful games,* and an *idle* mode (comp. Matt. xii. 36.) of spending time. And whereas, by abstaining from these unlawful things, the clergy are exhorted, at the close of the same canon, to be *examples to the people to live well and Chris-*

tianly; it is plain that our church does not consider that layman as *living well and Christianly,* who does not abstain from them. The canon indeed is grown old and gray-headed; and the prescribed *ecclesiastical censures* are not inflicted *with severity;* nor indeed at all, *according to the qualities of these offences.* But *the qualities of these offences* continue the same; for if these things were unlawful, when the canon was made, they are unlawful still. If the founders of our church are deemed enthusiasts, the author would say to each individual of their corps, *Tecum vivere amem, tecum obeam libens.*

It is not to be expected that the considerations which are suggested in these pages, will have any weight with those persons whose consciences are not under the influence of the Divine word; and who, of consequence, have no concern whether their conduct be regulated by it or not. But it is hoped, that they will be tried at the bar of calm reason, and also be weighed in the balance of the Sanctuary, by all those persons, who wish to *adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour in all things.*

NOTE M. p. 43.

'Shall I grudge to spend my life for HIM, who did not grudge to spend his own blood for me? Shall not I so live that he may be glorified on earth, who died that I may be glorified in heaven? Especially considering, that if my whole life could be sublimated into holiness, and moulded into an exact conformity to the will of the Most High, I should be happy beyond expression. O! what a heaven should I then live on earth! What ravishments of love and joy would my soul continually be possessed with? Well, I am resolved, by the grace of God, to try. And to that end do, this morning, wholly sequester and set myself apart for GOD, resolving, by the assistance of his grace, to make all and every thought, word, and action, to pay their tribute unto him. Let this man mind his profit, a second his pleasures, a third his honours, a fourth himself, and all their sins; I am resolved to mind and serve my God, so as to make him the *alpha* and *omega*, the first and

the last, of my whole life.' *Beveridge's Private Thoughts.*

Note N. p. 44.

'Methodist is the present term for one who has too much vital and practical Christianity for the bulk of professed Christians, and of course for the world at large; and I shall affirm, without fear, that whatever be the rank, talents, and general respectability of such a one—however steady and consistent his attachment and conformity to the established church—however free from eccentricity and irregularity in his walk—yet let him be in *earnest* and in *action* as a Christian, and he shall be a proof of my remark.

"*Fœnum habet in cornu, longè fuge.*—"

'Some, indeed, have thought that by a nice adjustment of the phrases, habits, and connections, they might maintain the *truth*, and yet escape the *term*. I pity from my heart an honest man making such fruitless attempts. He is

another Sisyphus.[1]—He may be wise, but he is not wise enough: he does not see that as far as *he is of the world, the world will love its own*, and no further.' Must he, however, from conscience enter his protest? Let him do it in God's name; but let him know that, as far as he does it *in simplicity and godly sincerity*, the world will come forward with theirs.' *Cecil's Life of Cadogan*, p. 30.

Mr. Cecil afterwards very properly distinguishes those persons, who, in spite of the warmest attachment and strictest conformity to the doctrine and discipline of the established church, are branded with the name of *Methodist;* from others who, to use the terse description of Mr. Jones, in his life of the late bishop of Norwich, maintain *Christian godliness, without Christian order.* With the former may the author be numbered both in life and death!!!

[1] '*Optat supremo collocare Sisyphus*
In monte saxum: sed vetant leges Jovis.'

Note O. p. 51.

"In a due sense of the vanities and follies of my younger years, I desire to take shame to myself for what is past; and do, this morning, humbly prostrate myself before the throne of grace, to implore God's pardon, and to make solemn promises and resolutions for the future, to *cast off the works of darkness, and to put on the armour of light;* and not only so, but to redeem the precious minutes I have squandered away, by husbanding those that remain to the best advantage. I will not trifle and sin away my time in the pleasures of sense, or the impertinences of business; but shall always employ it in things that are necessary or useful, and proportion it to the weight and importance of the work or business I engage myself in; allotting such a part of it for this business, and such a part for that, so as to leave no intervals for unlawful or unnecessary actions to thrust themselves in, and pollute my life and conversation." *Bishop Beveridge's Private Thoughts.*

NOTE P. p. 64.

Rom. vi. 13.—Every reader of these pages, whose mind is open to the admission of truth, will perceive, that most of the arguments therein adduced are equally conclusive against the pernicious practice of novel-reading as any other worldly amusement. Let the experiment be made by their application to this growing and destructive evil, whether their effect will not resemble that which is attributed by Milton to Ithuriel's spear. As the influence of novels on the heart corresponds exactly with the design of the great deceiver of mankind, described in the passage above alluded to, that passage is laid before the reader, that he may himself draw the parallel. Speaking of the discovery of Satan in Adam's bower by two angelic guards, the poet says:—

"Him there they found
Squat like a toad, close at the ear of Eve,
Assaying by his dev'lish art to reach
The organs of her fancy, and with them forge
Illusions as he list, phantasms and dreams,

Or if, inspiring venom, he might taint
Th' animal spirits that from pure blood arise
Like gentle breaths from rivers pure, thence raise
At least distemper'd, discontented thoughts,
Vain hopes, vain aims, immoderate desires,
Blown up with high conceits engend'ring pride.
Him thus intent, Ithuriel with his spear
Touch'd lightly; for no falsehood can endure
Touch of celestial temper, but returns
Of force to its own likeness: up he starts
Discover'd and surpris'd. As when a spark
Lights on a heap of nitrous powder, laid
Fit for the tun some magazine to store
Against a rumour'd war, the smutty grain
With sudden blaze diffus'd inflames the air,
So started up in his own shape the fiend."

Paradise Lost, book iv.

In common with the other degrading diversions which have been reprobated, the practice of reading novels is a waste of precious time given us for far different purposes; it inflames the passions; corrupts the heart; tends to alienate the affections from divine things, and to set them on things beneath. The author scruples not to avow his full conviction, that no one, whose mind is spiritually disposed, can relish such an employment; and that no parents,

whose consciences are regulated by the word of God, and who are at all concerned for the eternal welfare of those who are committed to their charge, can suffer their children to indulge themselves therein. This practice, independent of its irreligious tendency, is hostile to all temporal improvement and comfort; for it unfits the mind for all useful reading, and disqualifies it for the sober business and satisfactions of life.

For the confirmation of these sentiments, the author refers to a letter *On Novels*, in the 11th volume of the works of the Rev. William Jones, p. 234, from which the following extract is made:

"It were well if the reading of novels were nothing worse than the loss of time and money, though this is bad enough; but young people will not escape so; it has generally a bad effect upon the mind; and, in some instances, a fatal effect upon the morals and fortune. In novels, plays, and romances, (for they have all the same general object, which is *amusement*) good and evil are disguised by false colourings and unjust representations. The end is, *to please:* and how is this end to be obtained? Nothing will

please loose people but intrigues and loose adventures; nothing will please the unlettered profligate but blasphemous sneers upon religion and the Holy Scriptures; nothing will please the vicious but the palliation of vice and the contempt of virtue: therefore novellists and comic writers, who study popularity either for praise or profit, mix up vice with amiable qualities to cover and recommend it, while virtue is compounded with such ingredients as have a natural tendency to make it odious."

The same general observation may be made concerning novels, which has already been made respecting the playhouse, that they must be corrupt in order to be palatable.

Note Q. p. 76.

"A man wickedly and sinfully tempts himself when by presuming on his own strength he unnecessarily runs into danger, and ventures upon the next occasion of sinning; for this is to come within the devil's purlieus, and if any

such be made his prey, they must thank their own venturousness and folly. We tempt ourselves to the commission of those sins, which we beforehand know such company, or such employments, or such like circumstances will prompt us to commit.

"We find the propensities of our wicked hearts strongly bent towards sin at all times, even then when we have no external objects propounded to excite them; but when these inward inclinations do meet with outward enforcements, as alluring objects, fit opportunities, strong persuasions from others, inducing examples, or the like; the temptation then grows headstrong and wild to purpose; and if grace doth not rein it in with a hard hand, it will certainly hurry us into the commission of that sin which hath so many advantages to commend it to the soul." *Bishop Hopkins on the Lord's Prayer*, p. 133. The works of this right reverend author are a rich treasury of divine knowledge, and are strongly recommended to the reader's attention. They have been reprinted in four vols. 8vo.

Note R. p. 79.

1 Pet. iv. 2. Archbishop Leighton, speaking of conversion in his commentary on this passage, says, "Half-reformations in a Christian turn to his prejudice; it is only best to be thoroughly reformed, and to give up with all idols; not to live one half to himself and the world, and, as it were, another half to God; for that is but falsely so, and in reality it cannot be. The only way is to make a heap of all, to have all sacrificed together, and to live to no lust, but altogether and only to God. Thus it must be. There is no monster in the new creation, no half new creature, *either all or not at all*, ολος η μη ολως." If this extract should recommend the admirable work from which it is taken to the attention of any one, the recommendation will afford him a solid ground of thankfulness to God for these pages, even though he should meet with nothing in them beside that is worth the trouble of a refusal.

NOTE S. p. 83.

"Man is that link in the chain of being which connects the animal with the angelic nature. Compounded of both natures, he is capable, in his present state, of pleasure suited to both. It would be absurd, therefore, we grant, to deny him those of the animal kind under their proper regulations; but how much more absurd (even by how much the joys of an angel must be supposed superior to those of a brute) to refuse him such as are spiritual? That men should practically esteem the former better than the latter, is a sad proof of the corruption of the human heart; that they should coolly plead for the unjust decision, and thus mistake their degradation for their privilege and their interest, demonstrates that, in the fall of man, the *head* has suffered equally with the *heart*." *Christian Observer*, vol. ii. p. 13.

Note T. p. 89.

"Sin universally prevails; and, except where it greatly interferes with the welfare of society, is countenanced and approved. The customs of the world sanction the practice of it to a certain extent in every one, whether male or female; though the greater latitude of indulgence is allowed to men. The very education that is given both to our sons and daughters tends only to foster in them pride and vanity, wantonness and sensuality, worldliness and profaneness; let but these dispositions assume the names of ease, elegance, and gaiety, and they instantly lose all their malignant qualities; and, instead of exciting our abhorrence, endear to us the persons by whom they are indulged." *Simeon's Helps*, vol. ii. p. 624.

THE END.

James Lenox