


FRIENDLY EXHORTATION

TO THE

UNINSTRUCTED POOR.

*Supposed to be written
by the Rev. Dr. Horne
of Chiswick*



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ALTHOUGH the Author of the following little Work is perfectly sensible that there is no want of Tracts greatly superiour in point of matter, to that he here offers to the Public, yet he could but think there was some room for improvement in point of Form. How far he has succeeded in his attempt at such an advantage for the instruction of those for whose benefit this Address is designed, he cannot pretend to be a proper judge. If it should be thought worthy the notice of those who interest themselves in the reformation of the Age, he will reflect with no small pleasure on the contribution of his feeble endeavours to aid their exertions in so truly charitable and patriotic an undertaking.

Friend and Neighbour,

YOU know it is our duty to do one another all the good in our power: and, as I now come to you purely for that purpose, I hope you will not refuse to lend an ear to the few words which I have to say unto you: especially, as you see I want nothing of you, and therefore can have no other end in view, but that of performing a friendly and charitable piece of service.

Now then to the business of my visit; for, such you may look upon the letter which is now put into your hand, by

means of which I speak to you, though not personally present with you.

If you should be one of those thoughtless people, who are living as if there were no God to see, or call them to an account for their doings; suffer me to admonish you to consider in time, what you have to expect, if you should be cut off, (as thousands have been, and daily are) in this hopeless condition.

If you have been unfortunately brought up in such deplorable ignorance, as to be led to believe that, at death, there is an end of you; believe me, you lie under a mistake altogether as gross and absurd, as it is mischievous and ruinous. For, even the poor beasts can
hardly

hardly discover a greater degree of stupidity. Your body dies, it is true ; and yet, that only for *a time* : because it must rise again from the grave, at the great day appointed by God for the judgment of the world. For, judged it *must* be, as sure as it was *made*. But, your soul which dwells within your body, and enlivens, and moves it as it pleases, will never die ; because, being wholly spiritual, and not liable to corruption, or decay, it is not of a perishable nature. This therefore, when it leaves the body, which is its tabernacle, only changes its situation, by passing into another, and to us, at present, an invisible world.

Now, that the soul is a thing quite different from the body, and that it is

that which acts upon, and animates it, you may be assured from this circumstance : viz. that the body is no more able to think and reason, when the soul has left it, than a piece of wood or stone : as you may see in a corpse ; which lies motionless and senseless as a log.

Now, this could never be the case, if the matter of which it was made, had any powers of its own, independent of the soul : and, hence it is, that immediately after the separation of the soul from it, it putrifies, and returns to the dust from whence, as your Bible tells you, it was at first taken : for, the body of Adam, the first man, was, we are by that informed, made out of the *earth*.

It requires no learning, to understand what has been above observed ; as your own common sense will enable you to comprehend the truth of it, as well as the wisdom of the greatest philosopher.

Now then, neighbour, let me ask you, if you ought not to be concerned for the welfare of that *immortal* part of which I have been speaking ? From what has been before said, you see that when men die, they do not cease to live, but only shift their quarters from one world to another. And, their disposal in that other state, will be determined by their behaviour in *this*.

Good souls will be admitted into a place of inconceivable happiness called *Heaven* ; and, the wicked will be

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turned

turned into an abode of as extreme misery called *Hell*; which is described in the Holy Scriptures, as a *lake burning with fire and brimstone*, echoing continually with the dismal sounds of *weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth*: than which, I doubt not you will think with me, there cannot any thing be imagined more terrible. And, that all this is really and strictly true, you may be perfectly assured, because *God himself hath expressly told us so*; who can no more deceive, than he can be himself deceived.

To ask you if you would knowingly throw yourself into this dreadful place, would be to ask you, if you had lost your senses. I will only therefore ask you, if you have ever *thought* about
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the matter. For, if you have not, it is certainly high time you should, lest you drop into it before you are aware; because there is no avoiding it, if you die unprepared for your departure: that is, before you have repented, and made your peace with God. For, remember, there is no repentance in the grave; but, as you go down to it, you must rise from it to judgment. And, remember further, that that is no repentance which is not followed by a *change of life*.

To think, therefore, that it will be enough to cry for mercy on a death-bed, is, of all others, the greatest error you can possibly fall into. And, you may depend upon it, it is nothing but a vile trick of Satan, to persuade men into such an opinion, that he may more securely

lead them to destruction, and gratify his malignant temper by reproaching, and insulting them for the folly of their credulity. For, this cruel treatment will surely be experienced by every one of those unhappy souls, who fall a prey to the wretched delusion of the Prince of darkness here pointed out. And, as it is one of the most capital pieces of policy, by which he enlarges the boundaries of his kingdom, it is here I would advise you to place your strongest guard.

Lose no time then in leaving those wicked courses, whatever they may be, in which you have hitherto been engaged, and by which you have exposed yourself to the wrath of God. For, there is no such thing as salvation to be hoped for, till you have humbled yourself by unfeigned sorrow,

sorrow, and confession of your sins, and earnest prayer for the divine forgiveness, *through the merits of the Lord Jesus Christ*, accompanied with a sincere resolution of obedience to the commandments of God for the time to come, and fervent supplication to him for grace, to enable you to *keep that resolution*. For, take notice, the weakness of your corrupt nature is such, that you will not be able to do it without the aid of his Holy Spirit; which, for your comfort, I am also to observe, he hath *promised* to all that faithfully ask it; that is, by humble and hearty prayer. Be sure, therefore, to be *diligent* and *fervent* in the discharge of so necessary and important a duty.

Consider, how great reason you have to be thankful to Almighty God for admitting

mitting you again to his favour upon such easy terms ; for, if he had treated you, as you have deserved, by your numberless and heinous offences, you must long ago have been condemned to the vengeance which you have provoked. And, what would then have been your condition ! How infinitely then should you think yourself indebted to His goodness for having so long spared you, after having so daringly flown in the face of his authority !

If what is here said to awaken you to a sense of your danger, should have that happy effect, (as, I hope, through the Divine blessing upon this humble endeavour it may) you will soon shew it by the change of your conduct ; no longer disgracing your *nature*, as well as the heavenly religion into which you
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have been baptized, by that reprobate conversation, and those heathenish manners, which have hitherto so sadly marked your character, but living as a man, and especially as a *Christian*, ought to live. Instead of *Cursing, Swearing, Lying, Slandering, Stealing, Drunkenness, Whoredom, Idleness, Sabbath-Breaking*, and such like, by which you have given such great offence to all *good men*, as well as grieved the Holy Spirit of God, you will henceforth practise the direct contrary to all these: you will study to approve yourself sober, modest, chaste, and temperate, true in your words, honest in your dealings, and peaceable in your actions, easy to be entreated, gentle and kind to all, not wishing to hurt even your *bitterest enemies*; but returning *blessing* for *their curses*, and ready to forgive.

give, as you yourself hope to *be forgiven*. And, you will take care to complete this course of duty towards men, by devotion and piety towards God; keeping strictly his Sabbaths, reverencing his sanctuary, *and walking blameless in all his commandments and ordinances*. You will *delight* yourself in the law of the Lord, and *find your pleasure in his service*. And, an additional motive for you to be more zealous in this work of reformation is, that you may repair, as far as is in your power, the mischief done by your former *bad example*; which you will be the more desirous of doing, when you consider what a cruel thing it is to be the means of leading others into misery.

If, as is too likely to be the case, you should be laughed at, and ridiculed by
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the former companions of your vices, for such an alteration of your conduct, do not be moved thereby from your purpose; but, by patient forbearance, and manly perseverance, endeavour to convince them of the wisdom of your determination, and gain them over to your side. For, when they shall see you become so much more respectable and happy, by doing what their consciences continually tell them they themselves *ought* to do, how know you but you may be the instrument in the hand of God of converting *them* from the error of their way, and securing to yourself by that *no-blest of all acts of charity*, the glorious reward of *shining* in the kingdom of heaven *as the stars for ever and ever*? Think then only what an encouragement this is
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to constancy, and exertion in the discharge of your duty.

Let me assure you, neighbour, it is only through *ignorance* that men look for happiness in wickedness; and, that if they once knew the satisfaction and enjoyment attendant on a virtuous, and religious life, they would not continue a moment longer in their evil courses. But, how are they to know this, if they will not make the *trial*? And, what is the reason that they will *not* make the trial? Surely, the experiment must be worth the making, where so much is promised to pay them for their trouble: especially, as nothing could be *lost*, even if nothing were *gained* by the attempt.

But, tell me, neighbour, have you ever felt any thing like pleasure in those
heathenish

heathenish ways above-mentioned? Did not your conscience reprove, and smite you after the commission of any of those sins there specified*? Did you not feel uneasy, displeas'd and angry with yourself, at having done what deserved punishment, and seem'd to *call* for it? And, did not the secret apprehension of it, some time or other, embitter your days, and make you, at times, weary of your life? I am certain, whether you will own it or not, this *must* have been the case: because it is the declaration of God himself, that *there is no peace to the wicked; but, they are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest.* This is the fate of every wicked man, from the least to the greatest: and, the worst curse that

* See Page 15.

the most malicious bosom could vent against it's most inveterate enemy, would, doubt not, be, that he might become the *wickedest of all men.*

And, as this is the invariable fruit of wickedness, so no less certain is it that the very contrary is the lot of goodness; and, that of all men living, the virtuous and pious are the most truly to be envied. For, whatever their outward condition may be, they inwardly enjoy a peace *which passeth understanding*, arising from an assurance of the divine favour and protection in this life, and from *a hope full of immortality* in the next. And, if you want further satisfaction on this head, let me recommend it to you to go to a truly good man in his Cottage, and ask him if he would change situations with
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the richest and greatest sinner in the kingdom: whether he would not *rather* be a door-keeper in the house of his God, than to dwell in the most splendid tents of ungodliness. You may depend upon it he would, and that all the world would not tempt him to determine otherwise.

I have only to add therefore to this friendly address, my most earnest wish, and desire, that you may make no delay to *become* this happy man, by entering upon that virtuous, Christian life, which, and which *alone*, can bestow so invaluable a privilege. In your present state of slavery to *the lusts that war in your members*, your captivity to that evil spirit, who is equally the enemy of God and man, and who seeks to inveigle you into sin here, only that he may plunge you
into

into everlasting misery hereafter, it is impossible you should have any solid enjoyment while you live, or any hope when you shall come to die: seeing you are every day encreasing your guilt, and *treasuring up to yourself wrath against the day of wrath.*

Think then in time of this perilous, this terrible condition, and while it is yet in your power, *lay hold of eternal life,* by embracing the gracious offer of salvation, which God of his infinite mercy tenders to you in the Gospel, through the merits and mediation of that *well-beloved Son,* whom he sent into the world, that he might *die for our sins, and rise again for our justification.* And, think, oh! with trembling think, how justly you may be denied the opportunity of

of another day, or even another hour, *to flee from the wrath to come*, if you should refuse to listen to the call *now* given you, by me, the unworthy instrument of his Providence.

If you wish, as I hope you do, for fuller information, let me refer you to the minister of your parish, as your appointed spiritual pastor; who will rejoice in receiving the lost sheep again into his fold. Lay without reserve your wants before him, that he may guide you by his counsel, and relieve you by his comfort. Both which that you may partake of in full proportion to your necessities, and to the final security of your eternal welfare, is, neighbour, the sincere, and ardent prayer of your unknown monitor and friend,

BENEVOLUS.

APPENDIX.

AFTER I had finished the foregoing Exhortation, it came into my mind, neighbour, that, considering how little notion you might probably have of the nature of the duty of Prayer, which was so earnestly recommended to your practice; it may not be amiss to observe, that you need not make yourself at all uneasy about the manner in which you express your meaning. God knows the thoughts of the heart, before they are clothed in words; and therefore, if you be but sincere, you may be sure your petitions and supplications for the pardon of your sins will be graciously accepted at the throne of mercy, however simply, or imperfectly they may be made. If you should say only, “*God be merciful to me a sinner!*” “*Lord save me that I may not perish, for thy Son Jesus Christ’s sake!—Lord, give me grace to turn from my evil ways;*” and such like: If it be the real language of your heart, accompanied with an unfeigned sorrow for your past transgressions, and a firm resolution of obedience to the will of God for the future, doubt not of being heard, and of obtaining the blessing you ask for. But, whatever assistance you want, I take it for granted, you will easily acquire it, by betaking yourself to the Minister of your Parish, to whom I have referred you; and with whom I now leave you.

THE END.