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RECREATIONS

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OF

A Southern Barrister.

[Alexander Hamilton Sands.]

WITH AN INTRODUCTION,

By Rev. T. G. JONES.



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1859
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CONTENTS.

INTRODUCTORY NOTICE,	1
THOMAS CHATTERTON,	9
HOPKINS'S AMERICAN CITIZEN,	65
THE SCRIPTURAL ARGUMENT FOR SLAVERY,	83
THE NEW LITERATURE,	105
CHRISTIANITY IN THE LEGAL PROFESSION,	123
SMITH'S PHILOSOPHY AND PRACTICE OF SLAVERY,	153
MILBURN'S LECTURES,	170
NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS,	203

INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

It has been for some time the fashion to collect and publish in book form the best articles of our ablest and most respectable Reviews. We like the fashion. Many of these articles are the best productions of the finest minds of the age—the ripest scholars, the profoundest thinkers, the ablest representatives of the bar, the bench, and the pulpit, as well as the most distinguished men of science and of general literature.

No kind of reading has seemed to us better adapted to improve the taste, enlighten and enlarge the views, adorn and furnish the whole mental structure, than that supplied by the better class of essayists and critical reviewers. We are aware that it has been thought by some that this kind of reading tended to a mere smattering and superficiality of knowledge. And doubtless it is true that not a few readers of reviews are superficial smatterers, and nothing more. But we should be slow to think that their review-reading made them such. We suspect that without it they would have been more meagre and superficial still. So far are we from conceding the injurious influence suggested, that we are ready to declare our conviction that judicious reading of reviews is of the very opposite tendency. Were one, indeed, to read nothing else, provided he read deeply and understandingly, he would be wanting in neither depth nor breadth of intelligence. For as we have already intimated, the best reviews often embrace and embody the best results of the best efforts of the best minds of the age—the products of their richest and ripest scholarship, maturest thought, deepest reading, most thorough research, all condensed, severely condensed, and brought within the briefest possible space, and thus presented most advantageously, *multum in parvo*, to the intelligent and competent reader. A good review gives to the reader the very kernel of the work, (whether of philosophy, art, science, or general literature,) reviewed—the kernel stripped of the shell, which the able and experienced reviewer has learned to take away with a facility to which his unpracticed reader is a stranger. And in doing this, it often also gives, in intense and nervous style, the very quintessence of the reviewer's own genius and attainments—the distillation and crystallization, as it were, of his very intellect and heart.

More than this, the review of the book often leads to the book itself, interests one in its author, and introduces him, perhaps, to an intimate acquaintance with all his works. To the dull and sluggish mind it proves stimulant and inspiring, exciting deeply and abidingly, it may be, its interest in great principles discussed, and inciting it to a farther and fuller consideration of those principles than the reviewer or essayist himself had given them. Practical questions, too, of every-day interest and importance, which, as well as great abstract principles and propositions, it is the province of the reviewer to consider, are often made to appear in new and striking lights, to take hold of the mind with unwonted force, and thus to enkindle its ardour and arouse its energies. Sometimes a clue, that might never otherwise be furnished, is given to a wide and wondrous labyrinth of thought and speculation; and thus the active and inquiring mind, ardent and adventurous, is led forward in a career of the noblest explorations. By "a word truly spoken," by some new light shed in the glow of earnest thought and fervid conception—the reviewer "shining," as Robert Hall said of Dr. Johnson, "upon the angle of a thought," some great and glorious many-angled thought—the intellect addressed, is led, it may be, into the widest and richest realms of study and of contemplation, where exhaustless treasures, and honours immortal, await its coming.

Thus would it seem that review-reading, elevating and enlarging the conceptions, giving greater range of thought, greater extent of view in every direction, greater scope and compass to all the leading powers and functions of the mind, so far from having an essential tendency to superficiality, tends to depth as well as breadth of knowledge and of thought.

In our age, and especially in our country, to save the people not from superficiality, but from almost utter ignorance with respect to many matters of the very last importance, reviews would seem to be indispensable. They appear to have been brought into being by the very necessities of the times. Everybody goes by steam. Everything is hurry, bustle, confusion. Men in general, unlike their leisurely ancestors, who could not only afford to read ponderous folios and quartos, as well as less ponderous octaves, but to write them, and to meditate almost unbrokenly for long days, and nights, and years, upon some favourite topic, have neither opportunity of time nor place, whatever their ability or disposition, to read much, or to meditate deeply and long. They must do these things, to a considerable extent; at least, if they do them at all, by proxy. While they do *head-work* for others, others must do *head-work* for them. While they mind the material machinery

of the world, hold the helm of the vessel and the handle of the plough, fuel the fires of the furnace and lubricate the lathe of the factory, fell the primeval forest, and build up great cities in its solitude, while they construct railways and canals, steamships and steam-mills, hew wood and draw water—while they, in a word, by their husbandry and handicraft supply literary men with the necessaries and comforts of the physical life, the bread of the mere corporeal being, these men of literature must furnish them with the necessaries and comforts of the spiritual and higher life, the bread of the intellectual and moral being. Now the vocation of these latter, in part, at least, is that of the essayists and critical reviewers. And when true to their high mission, they constitute one of the worthiest and most important portions of the social organism. Honour to them! Earnest, honest, fearless, able—while truly kind-hearted, appreciative, and genial, yet strong-minded and strong-hearted—not afraid of even the famous motto of the old Edinburgh—“*Judex damnator cum nocens absoluitur.*” Men who while not on the one hand arrogating the power and authority of censors of the press; nor, on the other, assuming the poor and pitiable office of indiscriminating eulogists and loose laudators of everybody and everything that appears in print, still keep an open, ever-watchful eye upon the intricate and multifarious issues of the press, the “many books,” of “making” which, in our time as in that of Solomon’s, “there is no end,” scanning and scrutinizing them closely and severely, “gathering the good” together, and casting the “bad away,” giving the results of their labours to their less leisureable neighbours—in highest, shrillest notes sounding the alarm against error, heresy, treason; in clation tones applauding and commending the loyal, the good, and the true. Men who sit at the entrance of the sacred grove of knowledge, its true and incorruptible guardians, opening its portals to every worthy worshipper, admitting him to the innermost sanctuary, and the holiest shrine; but repelling the irreverent and profane intruder, and closing against him the gates forever.

“*Procul, O procul, este profani!
Conclamat vates, totaque abestite lucu!*”

We are, then, in favour of the Reviews. We think all, the young especially, may read them with the highest profit, and without the slightest reason to fear that they will thus be made superficial smatterers. And we are happy to be able to enforce our own commendation of this class of reading, by the great name of Foster, who while his-

self an omnivorous reader of Reviews, as well as a constant contributor to them, was at the same time, so far from being superficial as almost to deserve the title of the Thinker of his times. That unrivalled essayist, after having spoken of "a deluge of new entertainment rushing upon him in the form of the Edinburgh Review," (for a whole set of which he had a short time before "written to Paternoster Row,") called it a "terrible Review," which he read "with abhorrence of its tendencies as to religion, but with admiration of everything else," and saying that it could "not fail to have a very great effect upon the literary world, by imperiously requiring a high style of intellectual performance, and setting the example," writes to his friend, the Rev. Joseph Hughes—"It may not seem very consistent, after this, to insist that you must have this work, from the beginning; and so must, or ought, every other intellectual and literary man. He cannot pretend to have a competent library without it."*

Rich and varied as is our literature, it would suffer, in all its departments, a deep impoverishment, in the loss of its Reviews. From these invaluable productions of gifted and cultivated intellect, which "posterity will not willingly let die," scarcely would any be more missed than those which bear the image and superscription of certain celebrated Essayists and Reviewers. Indeed, one of the heaviest calamities that could befall English literature, would be the loss, from its commencement, of that one Review alone, so highly commended by John Foster. With it would perish the nervous and caustic critiques of Lord Jeffrey, the magnificent essays of Macaulay; the sparkling wit and racy humor of Sidney Smith; the ponderous philosophic thought, strong and glowing scientific statement of Lord Brougham; the easy elegance, the captivating grace, the pure sentiment, the elevated conception of Sir James Stephen—to say nothing of the occasional, but invaluable contributions of other and scarcely inferior names.

To the important class of writings, of which we have just been speaking, the articles of which the present volume is composed belong. And in this class we think they deserve to take a highly honorable position. The author's subjects all seem to us well chosen; a matter, by the way, always of the very greatest moment both to the reader and the writer, insuring the pleasure and profit of the former, and, as in the case of many an immortal author, the fortune, often, of the latter; a matter, too, not as some would seem to suppose, of chance, but of sound judgment, correct taste, proper mental and moral *affinités* and

* *Life and Correspondence of John Foster*, by J. E. Byland, p. 123.

habitudes, as well as other indefinable felicities in union with propitious but perhaps scarcely appreciable outward circumstances and relations. Several of the essays, those particularly, in which he discusses American Slavery, American Citizenship, and Christianity in the Legal Profession, seem to us to involve questions of paramount social and political, ethical and religious importance—questions, too, which many of those who may become his readers, doubtless find constantly coming up for practical solution. Some of these, discussed with no parade of argument or pomp of language, are treated with great simplicity, clearness, and strength. We think every reader will agree with us that he sets forth with remarkable perspicacity and force, the true constitutional and governmental theory upon which are based the rights and duties of American Citizenship. He has managed, too, to treat the perplexed and perplexing subject of Slavery, in the clearest and most convincing manner. And we cannot but hope, on this account, if on no other, that his book may fall into the hands of the many well meaning, but somewhat morbidly conscientious and sensitive Christian people, who are often greatly puzzled and embarrassed by certain moral and religious aspects which slavery is made to assume. We do not see how any unprejudiced and dispassionate reader, after attentively considering the cogent arguments and striking illustrations which he has furnished, in connection with his well selected quotations from the authors under review, can fail to accept the conclusions which he reaches. While not designing to forestall the enlightened reader's own judgment and taste in the premises, or in any wise to detract from other portions of the book, we trust we shall be pardoned if we say that we think those portions in which are contained the discussions just alluded to, will be found of especial interest and value. Other essays of the volume, pertaining to the realm of poetry and light literature, impart an agreeable variety, and relieve the tension of thought demanded by the severer and weightier discussions of the author.

It does not need the light shed by the title page, to enable the reader to identify the author as a Southerner and a Barrister. Both are prominent on many of his pages. As it should be, his *amor patrie* as a Southerner is ardent and strong—and it often finds for itself expression. In his treatment of the "peculiar institution," especially, does it declare itself. But there is, withal, an enlargement of view, a breadth and generosity of sentiment, really refreshing and hope-inspiring in these dark days of a narrow and selfish sectionalism. Though the South is clearly his "first love," his patriot feeling grows too expansive to be bounded by it. Passing the barriers of States and sections,

It embraces the whole Confederacy, and becomes American. His *esprit de corps* as a lawyer, is equally marked. And, this, too, we sincerely respect and cordially commend. No one ought to be a lawyer, or anything else, who is not proud of it. If there is any good and sufficient reason for one's not feeling an honourable pride in his profession, he should abandon it. If there be no such reason, and he yet have no such pride, then he will never honour his vocation, and it will never honour him. They will mutually disgrace each other. And if he will not abandon it, then it should abandon him—as we believe Themis often does many an unworthy votary, leaving him without “a local habitation,” or “a name,” clientless, briefless, penniless.

But not only in the spirit of the barrister, but in the manner also, does our author show the class of intellectual workers to which he belongs. He displays the skill and ingenuity as well as the clearness and strength of statement characteristic of the well-trained lawyer. His facts and incidents, arguments and illustrations are arranged and marshalled with great ostensible simplicity, but always with a keen discriminating view to the effect. In a quiet, easy, off-hand, half-intuitive way, (which because of its very ease and quietness, by many would be unobserved,) he fastens upon both the strong and the weak points of the subject under review. And then with similar facility and freedom from display, he presses them into his service. He fitly calls his essays “Recreations;” for, however valuable, they do not seem to have cost him any very great exertion. There is no apparent friction of the powers, no jarring and creaking of machinery, no painful and destructive “wear and tear.” All is easy, pretensionless, practical, plain.

The author's “Christianity,” too, is as conspicuous and prominent as his “Legal Profession.” Some have thought that the two could not “dwell together in unity.” He seems to us to have given in his book a double demonstration of the fallacy of that opinion. However discordant and antagonistic in the theory, and especially the practice, of some others, in his they would seem most happily to harmonize. So far from considering the one as essentially and necessarily hostile to the other, he rather regards them as really in the strictest and most beautiful accord. Both having to do essentially with *law*—law whose “seat is the bosom of God, and whose voice is the harmony of the world,” it were strange, indeed, if they should be discordant and necessarily repellent of each other. The author's Christianity is exhibited, we will not say in honesty and fairness, truthfulness and candour, as a critic—for men of very little Christianity, have sometimes, in

even an eminent degree, displayed these qualities—but, (to say nothing of his frequent and strong expressions directly or indirectly made upon the subject,) in a certain very manifest *charity* as well as conscientiousness of thought, sentiment, and allusion; strictness of statement, moderation of language, mildness of manner, indicative of self-denial; (temptations to the exhibition of very different qualities being, in numerous instances, by no means wanting;) and above all, in a certain elevation of sentiment and softness of tone eminently becoming the disciple and follower of the meek man of Nazareth, who, while not withholding from the haughty Scribe and the self-righteous Pharisee intense and burning denunciation, when truth and justice, the interest of man and the authority of God, demanded it, yet beautifully fulfilled, in its true sense and spirit the prediction,

"He shall not strive nor cry,
Neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets;
A bruised reed shall he not break,
And smoking flax shall he not quench."

We do not doubt that with the high moral qualities which we have just now mentioned, the original and native character has often much to do. But still there is something about them in their fullest and best development, which marks a higher source. The essay on *Chatterton*,

"The marvellous boy,
The sleepless soul that perished in his pride,"

while it shows the native sympathy of the author's heart ever prompting him to side with the weak and the unfortunate, rather than with the prosperous and the strong, also furnishes striking illustration of that moral and religious tone to which, as characteristic, we have called attention.

Extended as our introductory notice already is, we cannot consent to close it without a few words in respect to the style of the book. Easy, unaffected, perspicuous, natural, there is no straining after mere verbal and lingual effect—no effort at the "brilliant," and the "splendid." There are no pretty conceits—no abortive attempts at the witty, the humorous, and the epigrammatic. None of these things, and things similar, which have ever been the bane of review-writing. Whatever positive excellencies of style the author may want, whatever the literary crimes and misdemeanors with which he may be chargeable, we cannot refrain from congratulating him warmly upon his freedom

from the vices, the crying sins, of style, which we have just indicated. With him language is what language was designed to be, a means and not an end—the vehicle, and nothing more, of the sentiment and the thought. When we read some of our fine writers of the Hervey or Headley, Phillips or Gillilan type, we cannot, if we try, look aside from their language more than we can from the mists and clouds which sometimes burden and darken the air. In reading our author, however, his language is forgotten. There is something beyond it, for which we are looking, that engages and absorbs our attention. He expresses himself in a direct, plain, practical way, never being afraid as so many with weak and sickly taste would seem to be, to close a sentence with the particle “so” or “at,” or any other, that, coming at his call, pleases him. He uses language as he does his facts and arguments in a perfectly business-like manner, just as we might suppose he would in a legal case, employ the evidence upon which he relied to sustain his cause. His style is the clear and transparent atmosphere of his mind through which, bright and distinctly defined, appear its stars of sentiment and thought, unattended by any of those hazy splendours which hang around the horizon of so many minds.

Having said thus much—more, perhaps, than we should have said,—we now cordially commend to the reader’s regard as both pleasant and profitable, the “Recreations of a Southern Barrister.”

THE NEW LITERATURE.*

It is a gratifying feature of the times that so much talent is effectively employed in the service of Truth. In happy ignorance of the actual state of the matter, one might presume that talent would always be thus employed—that it would spurn the service of Error, and cast off its livery as a hated and despicable master. Yet how fallacious such an opinion. Tested by every day experience, it would appear that talent had engaged its noblest offices to every other purpose save the defence of truth,—that for this alone it had disdained to use its powers, or, if to use them at all, to do so inefficiently and feebly. What a display of talent, for example, in the department of Fiction—characterizing by the term every species of literature presenting false or exaggerated views of life? How much of thrilling eloquence, of dramatic ability, of powerful narrative? If we may trust ourself to read the pages of modern novelists of this type, we shall weep over the imaginary wrongs of some innocent heroine, while our ears are deaf and our sensibilities unawakened to the cry for bread at our doors, and the petition for relief on our streets. Or, if our novelist author has seasoned his dish

* *Confessions of a Converted Infidel; with Lights and Shadows of Inherent Life, and Miscellaneous Sketches.* By Rev. JOHN BARLEY, of the Virginia Annual Conference. Third Edition. New York: M. W. Dodd, Publisher. 1856.

for the mental palate with the ordinary condiments of latter-day fiction, we shall discover in ourself an unwonted eagerness for the success of the well-polished villain, in his scheme of villainy, while the victim of his vices, adorned crowlike with the virtues of womanly modesty and the graces of refined and delicate sentiment, secures neither pity nor remorse. Or, we are introduced, it may be, into an unnatural and unreal world, in which though there be upon its inhabitants the blight of sin, its streams of felicity are perennial and its sweets ever enduring. What a display of talent in the coteries of fashion? If we shall visit them, we will find the sparkle of wit, the frolic of humour, and the play of satire—all actively enlisted, not always in the advancement of truth, but making what efforts they may for its annihilation. At the best, society, ordinarily so called, is but a contrivance for the assassination of time!—"time, destined to perish by a mightier hand, but men are willing to assist in its destruction."*

Turning to the professions and business pursuits of life, we shall discover the frequent and vast efforts of talent in building up the wrong and pulling down the right. We are not inclined to echo the slanders perpetrated against the professions particularly. We cannot entertain the opinion uttered by some, even of respectable attainments, that no man can be a lawyer and a Christian! Yet, how few of the legal profession are numbered among Christ's people? How few have studied the truly "higher law" of his kingdom, and have deemed it more honour to fill the lowest seat at his table than to gain a heritage of fame! Of medical men, how many have found in secondary causes the origin of things; and have neglected the higher analysis of the immortal and imperishable part of

* JOHN FOSTER.

man to devote attention exclusively to the merely mortal and perishing! We repeat, that observation teaches the lesson that Talent has not always been enlisted in the service of truth. And when thus employed, as sometimes it has been, its efforts have, in great part, been feeble and inefficient. Truth lay hid and buried in the ponderous octaves and unreadable quartos of the past century, while Error was disseminated in sprightly essays and vivacious volumes. We rejoice that a change has been wrought here;—that the children of light have learned wisdom from the children of darkness, and that sanctified talent has at last been taught the lesson that precious knowledge may be communicated to the masses better in the tract than in the treatise, better in a volume of unpretending proportions than in a body of divinity. We are gratified that it has learned more—that in order to be read, in order to accomplish the very purpose for which books are written, books must be made interesting as well as instructive—must have the graces of a perspicuous style as well as an abundance of ripe thought. Few men are so highly gifted as to justify the venture to make their writings obscure in order that they may be studied. The *Oi Polloi* are now the rulers in the republic of letters—as well of Christian letters, distinctively so called, as of what is unhappily denominated profane literature; and the *Oi Polloi* demand that those who cater for their mental religious appetite, shall create the appetite as well as supply its wants. We regret that the fact is so. We would have truth sought for herself, because she is Truth. But complainings will not remedy the evil. Nor will it do to stand off and deliver learned divinity to a public mind that cannot retain the pith of a single sermon. We must come down to the capacities of the people, if we cannot lift them up to our

ordinary tone of discourse. We must give them the nourishment they can digest, for nourishment they will have, and if we do not give them food of a character adapted to their capacities, they will find noxious poisons which, not allaying their hunger, will destroy the little of mental health and vitality that remains. It is for these reasons that we are gratified that men of talent, of thinking power, have not deemed it an unworthy office to supply such mental pabulum, and that while they might easily have constructed systems of divinity, they have preferred to present truth in its fragments in order to entrap into the way of right thinking the languid and almost listless reader of modern literature, and to pour over his intellect a tide of fresh and pure thought to quicken it to a healthful activity. The time has arrived for such works. When John Foster published his volume of essays, containing the essay on "Decision of Character," and that on "The Use of the Epithet Romantic," works characterized by the highest eloquence and by profound thought, he did so with fear and trembling; and was gratified that his volume had met with even a moderate success. A quarter of a century afterwards, "a kind of moral essay," such as Foster produced, would have fallen still-born from the press, while the current of modern fiction, embracing alike with the higher qualities of imagination and artistic power displayed in "Vanity Fair," "Dombey and Son," and "Jane Eyre," the disgusting detail of the lives of "Dick Turpin, the Highwayman," and "Edwards, the Forger," would have been devoured with avidity! Fortunately, the supply of the baser material has so completely glutted the intellectual appetite, that the taste for such delicacies has in a measure diminished, and is daily diminishing. One may even confess without a blush, in the literary circles of

the day, that he has not read Dickens's last work, and is wholly oblivious of, if he ever saw, the latest productions of Bennett, or Reynolds! In this decline of the modern Novel, taking its march into oblivion after its predecessor, the Romance, it is peculiarly happy that Fact and Reality are gaining their rightful power, and that Religious Fact has now an opportunity to assert its dominion.

We have placed at the beginning of this article the title of a work recently published, of this type. We hail its appearance as indicative of a higher literature for the reading public, and its extended circulation as evidencing that the public mind is now at least in part prepared for a purer and more healthful style of thought than has distinguished the days just numbered with the past.

Mr. Bayley's book is autobiographic throughout, though he may not probably have designed it as such. In the Lights and Shades of Itinerant Life and in the moral essays, as well as in his avowed Confessions, he is disclosing to us the actual progress of his own mind—a mind intensely active and stored with thought and eminently self-reflective while touching at many points the external world, and deriving pleasure and profit from the contact. We have an antipathy to the title "Confessions." We associate with it the so-called disclosures of Rousseau, his pompous bombast and his causeless and impertinent self-abasement—self-abasement having more the air of self-exaltation than of repentance, more of the spirit of the carnally proud than of the spiritually humble. We would be inclined also to condemn these "Confessions of a Converted Infidel," if they were of this type or approached it. But this is far from being true. They are a plain and unvarnished tale of the manner in which the author trod the pathway to infidelity and of his deliverance from its

unhappy power. Our author was born in an ancient borough of old England. In early childhood he lost the training of a mother. Before he had reached his fifth birth-day she was laid in the grave. His father was unhappily an admirer of Paine, Volney and Voltaire, and possibly this parental example had somewhat to do with the early aversion which he cherished toward the Bible and the avidity with which his mind fastened itself upon its unpalatable truths, leading him to discard its teachings altogether. A course of miscellaneous reading, conversation with the leaders of the infidel party, misuse of the Sabbath for purposes of recreation, contrast of the rich and wealthy with the humble and destitute, completed the work of transformation and the author became a confirmed infidel. In that spirit he bade a farewell to his native land "to see the operations of Deism" in America. A companion blessed him on his way with the exhortation "that he had been inoculated with the truth and must spread it." After passing many years in the northern portion of the Union, he came to Virginia to learn another system of truth, and to become its ardent and zealous defender. By a series of not very wonderful providences, he is led gently along to retrace his steps, to converse again with the pious and the pure, to read books of wholesome doctrine and finally to renounce his infidelity and to embrace in intellect the truth of the Christian religion. We must cite here a passage disclosing this gradual change of mind: "I began to look upon religion and religious people with more respect and to attend more frequently the house of God. It was some time after this before my heart was sufficiently humbled to lead me to the practice of prayer. Indeed, I still thought, with a marvellous inconsistency, that prayer to the Almighty was very absurd.

And one day I walked into the solitude of the woods to think over the subject, with the intention of writing an essay upon it. As I was walking about, I thought, 'If God is infinite in knowledge, why should we inform him of our own wants, since he knew them before? If he is infinitely wise, why should we attempt to direct him? If he is infinitely good, why should we endeavor to prevail upon him to supply our wants? And, above all, if he is unchangeable, why should we solicit him to change?' In the midst of these reflections, my attention was arrested by a plaintive and earnestly supplicating voice, and going in the direction from which the voice came, I saw a negro man on his knees, under a tree, with hands clasped together and uplifted to heaven, while he cried out with great earnestness, 'Jesus, Master, have mercy upon me a poor sinner!' And this he continued to repeat. The poor fellow did not observe me, so intently was he engaged in prayer. An awful feeling came over my soul; I forgot my essay, and walked back to town musing on the power of religion. That negro was happily converted, and many a time afterward have we met together at our sunrise prayer meetings, and in the use of other means of grace. These impressions, however, wore off, and it was not until it pleased the Lord to lay me upon a bed of sickness that I was led to renounce publicly my infidel sentiments, and to seek an interest in the atonement made for the whole human race by our Lord Jesus Christ."

While he lay on the bed of disease, the letter of an absent sister from across the Atlantic reached him and touched his heart. He longed to be a Christian that he might say, that if they met no more on earth they would meet in heaven. This at least would be something cheering to write; and she had told him that his letters were

unhappy and made her so. Here was the turning point in his experience. He had found before that Butler's Analogy was able to remove all his positive objections to the truths of the Christian religion, but he had not yet cherished the spirit which prompted to a cheerful and hearty surrender to its claims. "The Christian religion became," he says, "something very lovely and desirable in my sight, and though it was several months before I could make the change in my sentiments known, there was a decided change from that hour." The strugglings with conscience were not yet over: We must cite his graphic description of his conversion: "The devil was endeavoring to retain me in his bondage and I could find no rest to my spirit. I wandered into the woods in the neighborhood, and there, in the silence of the groves, sat down and wept. Often did I make up my mind to unbosom myself to some one, and as often did pride gain the mastery over me, and compel me to keep my secret. Never, while memory retains her power, shall I forget one holy Sabbath morning, when I paid a visit to the Baptist church, to hear the Rev. Mr. Fife. He gave out the hymn commencing,

'Jesus! and shall it ever be,—
A mortal man ashamed of thee?'

When the congregation began to sing the hymn, I looked around with a heavy heart; my lips were sealed, and I could not utter a word, and a voice in my inmost soul seemed to say, 'Yes, sinner, that is you—you are the only one in this congregation ashamed of Christ.' For it seemed to me that with one united heart and voice that congregation did worship Christ as a God. My troubled heart would not allow me to pay much attention to the

sermon; but I went home weary and heavy laden, anxious to obtain rest, and yet obstinately and foolishly refusing to seek it in God's appointed way. Falling into the company of some young men who had recently been converted, I made some enquiries about religion, to which they gave me evasive answers, supposing that I wanted to get into a controversy with them. Seeing their unwillingness to converse with me on the subject, my heart was grieved and my eyes were filled with tears. One of them said, 'Are you sick? you had better lie down.' And though I assured them that I was not sick, they all left the room. As soon as I was left alone, a voice in my heart seemed to say, Sinner, you should kneel down and pray. It was the wooing voice of Christ, leading the blind by a way that he knew not; but, to my shame let it be written, I thought that perhaps some one would come in and see me at prayer. So I took the key of Mr. James Jackson's store, and went to that place and locked myself in, and soon was upon my knees. With a heart tossed to and fro by a variety of conflicting emotions, I began, 'O Lord, if thou didst ever hear prayer—' Here I came to a pause, and repeated the 'if,' and it occurred to my mind that it was very absurd to pray in that way, since God had caused it to be written in his word, 'Without faith it is impossible to please Him; he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.' Strange as it may seem, I rose from my knees without offering up a prayer. I then opened the Bible and read the eighth chapter of the epistle to the Romans, at which place I happened to open undesignedly. This was entirely above my comprehension, and it occurred to my mind that I had once read it before, and asked my father if he understood it; to which he replied,

‘No, nor does any one else—it is a heap of nonsense.’ Finding nothing to relieve me here, I closed the book and left the store, and endeavored to shake off my feelings in another way. Some few weeks afterward Mr. Childs had an appointment in the village. It was in the Christmas time, and though the backsliding which generally follows great religious excitements had not commenced, there was no unusual manifestation of religious feeling at that time in the community. I was one of the congregation that night, but I have no recollection of the preacher’s text, nor of his discourse. All that I know is, that he fixed his piercing eyes upon me at the close of the discourse, descended from the pulpit, walked deliberately to me, took me by the hand, and said, ‘Get down on your knees, and begin to pray.’ I fell down trembling without a word, and began to pray and cry aloud for mercy. Thus the struggle, as far as regards my recantation of infidelity, was over, and I was before the congregation a weeping penitent suing for mercy at the foot of the cross. I remained on my knees until the congregation was dismissed, when some one came to me and whispered in my ear that I ought to go home and pray there. As soon as I got to my room, I saw a friend with whom I lodged at the time, sitting by a table reading; and throwing myself upon my knees by the bedside, I asked him to pray for me. He immediately left the room, and sent Mr. Childs, and several other brethren, who came to my room, and held a little prayer-meeting until about midnight. After they had left me, I remained up all night in a state that I have no language to describe. It appeared to me that I had committed the sin against the Holy Ghost, the sin which hath no forgiveness, and I was afraid to lie down and sleep, lest I should die, and wake up in hell. I re-

mained in my room all the next day, meditating, praying and reading, and at night went to a prayer-meeting, at which John Morris, a colored man, who has since gone to Liberia as a missionary, made a profession of religion. At that meeting one against whom I had taken up a prejudice, put his arms around me and tried to encourage me to believe, but it had a chilling effect upon my feelings, and as I walked home that night, I thought I should give up the struggle and become worse than I had ever been. But the next day my convictions returned with increased power, and I lay on my bed almost in the agonies of despair. While reflecting on my past life, and on the great subject of religion, I was bewildered; my reason seemed to be forsaking me; and then it was suggested to my mind, you will lose your reason, and then you will certainly be lost, for religion is a reasonable thing, and no one who is not in his right mind, can repent and believe in Christ. This alarmed me greatly, and I turned over in my bed and cried aloud, so that some of the neighbors came in to see what was the matter. Among others, my dear departed friend, Brother Wm. Blanton, came in and knelt by my bedside and prayed for me. The conversation of Mr. James M. Jackson, Mr. John Long, and others, was profitable and encouraging to my soul. I read Butler's chapter on the Mediatorial character of the Saviour, and was satisfied with regard to the correctness of the author's positions; but still there was a mountain of unbelief on my heart, and I could not trust in God for salvation. Though I saw clearly that God had promised to forgive the sins of all who believe in Jesus, I could not understand *how* this could be done, and therefore I would not believe. After all my company left me, I rose from my bed and sat down by the fire in profound medi-

tation. The little negro boy who sat in one corner of the room looked very earnestly at me, and inquired,

“ ‘What was the matter with you when you halloosed so?’

“ ‘God was punishing me for my sins,’ I replied.

“ ‘What did that little man do for you?’

“ ‘He prayed for me.’

“ ‘Would God hear him?’

“ ‘Here I was puzzled, and knew not what to answer. I thought, if I say no, I shall contradict the Scriptures, for God has said, ‘Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and the door shall be opened to you.’ And if I say yes, I shall not speak the truth, because I do not believe it. So I remained in silence. With a sigh the little boy exclaimed, ‘I wish I could pray.’ I still made no reply, and he said, ‘Won’t you teach me to pray, sir?’

“ ‘You must ask the Lord to teach you,’ I responded.

“ ‘Must I? What must I say?’ he again inquired.

“ Struck with the earnestness of the little fellow, I began to be more attentive to him, and remembering a verse of a hymn which I had been taught when I was a little child, I said, say, ‘Lord, teach a little child to pray.’

“ He instantly knelt down at my feet, put his face to the floor, and whispered, ‘Lord, teach a little child to pray?’

“ The thought instantly flashed into my mind, if that little boy can believe in me, why cannot I believe in God. He says in his word, that He ‘so loved the world as to give his only-begotten Son, that WHOSOEVER believeth in Him, might not perish, but have everlasting life.’ This declaration embraces me, if I believe it, and whether I understand how it can be done or not, I must and will be-

lieve it on the authority of God himself. In a moment the burden seemed to fall from my heart. I felt greatly relieved; and though I did not take it for conversion at the time, from that moment I began to look at the Saviour with the eye of faith. When I laid down in bed that night, a couplet of one of Charles Wesley's hymns was continually suggested to my mind,—

' Now, e'en now, the Saviour stands,
All day long he spreads his hands.'

A friend read to me after I laid down the tenth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, which contains the same sentiment:—'But to Israel he saith, all day long have I stretched forth my hand to a gainsaying and rebellious people.' I was still more convinced of sin, and prayed more earnestly to God. Before I fell asleep the words of the Psalmist came to my mind, 'For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favor is life; weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.' I fell asleep in hope of obtaining a still clearer assurance of the pardoning mercy of God, and I was not disappointed. About four o'clock I awoke, and began to reflect, what am I? and the answer came to my mind in a moment, I am a child of God, and an heir of everlasting life, and then I began to sing in the beautiful language of Kirke White;—

' Once on the raging seas I rode,
The storm was loud, the night was dark,
The ocean yawn'd, and rudely blow'd
The wind that toss'd my found'ring barque.

' Deep horror then my vitals froze,
Death struck, I ceased the tide to stem;
When suddenly a star arose,
It was the star of Bethlehem.

'It was my guide, my light, my all,
 It bade my dark forebodings cease,
 And through the storm and danger's thrall,
 It led me to the port of peace.'

My voice was feeble at first, but it gradually became louder, until my room-mate awoke, and asked me what was the matter. To which I replied, that my soul was happy, and that it made me feel comfortable in body and in mind. I arose from my bed, and continued in reading the Scriptures, prayer, and praise, until the break of day, when I took a walk on the banks of the Appomattox river, and on that memorable morning all things appeared more bright and beautiful than had ever before appeared to me. The trees, all withered and lifeless as they were, appeared to be covered with glory, and all Nature had a voice exhorting me to praise her great Creator. 'O sing unto the Lord a new song, for He hath done marvellous things. With his own right hand, and with his holy arm he hath gotten to himself the victory.' I felt then disposed to shake hands with every one that I met, and thought it strange when any one did not sympathize with me in my joy. I was not, however, without strong temptations. Satan continued to assail me with his fiery darts, and I had many a struggle with the powers of darkness, but I generally drove them away by singing and prayer."

The author subsequently becoming convinced of his duty to preach, at the earnest solicitation of his friends, began the ministry at once. He united himself with the itinerancy, and entered with cheerful heart upon its laborious duties. We have already said his entire book is autobiographic. The Lights and Shades of Itinerant Life are confessedly such, and disclose the sunshine and the storms of the travelling minister. These sketches are racily written and will

amply repay the curious reader. They tell us what the man of God sees and handles in his effort to do good, and how his philosophy and patience are put to the test alternately by awkward politeness and impudent swagger. The writer does not omit an occasion to shoot at folly as it flies, and his shot is usually effective. In illustrating the case of those who bless the Lord for a *free* gospel, meaning one that costs them nothing, he appends the following note :

“A penurious member of the church said in a religious meeting, ‘I bless the Lord for a free gospel; I have been a member of the church for many years, and it has never cost me anything except *twenty-five cents!*’ The preacher looked on him with mingled surprise and pity, and a small infusion of contempt, and said: ‘God bless your stingy soul!’”

An extract from the sunny side of the itinerant life will be in place here :

“It must not be forgotten, however, while we are musing on these petty pains, which small as they are individually, in the aggregate are not to be despised, that the itinerant of the present day is free from many of the cares and anxieties that harass his brethren who lead a more settled life; nor that he has many advantages which flow from the nature of his wandering life. By a proper management of his time, and habits of self-denial, he may find opportunities for reading and reflection, and for the improvement of his own heart and mind. The great book of human nature is ever open to his view. Nature, with all her charms, smiles upon him, and spreads before him all her treasures. He has the privilege of visiting villages, towns, and cities, mountains and valleys, rivers and lakes, which he never would have seen if he had not been

an itinerant minister. Sometimes, as he communes in his closet with the master spirits of past ages, or as he pursues his solitary way through the woods, and forests, and gazes upon the sublime and beautiful scenes of nature, his heart swells with joy, and he blesses God who called him to this glorious work. He has the advantage, too, of free and familiar intercourse with many of the choice spirits of the Church of the living God. Still more: he enjoys the counsels, the prayers and the sympathy of the holiest among the children of God, and he looks forward to the time when he will mingle with them in the General Assembly of the Saints in the Glorious Land. When he sees these things by faith, he feels that he would not exchange positions with the wealthiest and the most honorable of the human race. On the other hand, he has a heavy load of care, and an awful responsibility to the world, to the Church, and to God. He occupies a perilous height, on which it is difficult to stand, and from which it would be damnation to fall. And, therefore, with the great apostle of the Gentiles, he exclaims, 'Who is sufficient for these things?' In the midst of grief or gladness, sickness or health, success or failure, he toils on, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. If he succeeds in winning souls for Christ, and building up the Church of God, he rejoices like one who has found a great treasure. Occasionally he has the mortification to find that his own brethren are the greatest obstacles in the way of his usefulness. Some Diotrephes, who 'loves to have the pre-eminence,' some Demas, who 'loves the present world,' or some cross-grained brother, whose whims and caprices have not been sufficiently attended to may raise a clamor against him; or some emissary of Satan

may succeed in raising prejudices against him, so that he is sent away from his field of labor, before the harvest is ripe. A stranger enters and reaps the crop. In his next field of labor, however, the case is altered. He is the reaper this time, and those who look only at the surface of things take him to be something; and yet he is the same man that he was before, while the circumstances around him are altered a little."

A Second trip across the Atlantic opens up in our author's history a fresh spring of delightful incidents, and under the titles "Home Again," "London," "Farewell," and "Reflections on the Ocean," he makes us familiar with his friendships and his dear loved ones at home. We regret our inability to make more than a simple reference to these and to the essays on "Reading," "Thinking," "Christian Conversation," "The Study of Human Nature," and "Superstition." From the article on "Loquacity," the longest and best of the sketches, we make a brief extract:

"Apart from higher considerations, it would be well for these incessant talkers to remember, that they lose much by their want of moderation in the exercise of their gifts. By monopolizing all the time, they prevent others who are their company from speaking, especially the modest and unassuming; and to say nothing of the injustice of such a course, in this land of equal rights, who can tell how much information, sparkling wit, and brilliant eloquence, they lose by their conduct? It has been remarked that celebrated authors, with few exceptions, have had little to say in company; but they have been great listeners—'swift to hear, slow to speak.' It might be well then, if those persons who are afflicted with the talking mania, would occasionally, at least, impose silence upon

themselves for a season. And this brings to mind an observation made by a shrewd gentleman in Richmond, Virginia. A love-feast had just been held in one of the city churches, in which very few persons had anything to say. When some one complained of the dulness of the meeting, that individual observed, that the meeting must have done good, for certain persons who were at it had not kept silence so long for many years! It is said, also, that one of the loquacious tribe went to a Quaker meeting, at which nothing was said, and he becoming excessively tired of it, went out in a pet, and exclaimed, 'That is enough to kill the d——!' 'That is exactly what we want to do,' quietly remarked the Quaker."

It was an apt remark of Robert Hall that "it is the fortune of some men to labor under an incapacity of discerning living worth—a sort of moral virtuosi who form their estimate of character as the antiquarian of coins, by the rust of antiquity."

*"Unit enim fulgore suo, qui pregravat artes
Infra se positas: extinctus amabitur illem."*

We have not followed the timorous example set us by such critics; and we are assured that the reader who will consult the pages of our author, will not regret our departure, in the present instance, from a standard of judgment so narrow and contracted. For the ripe instruction with which the volume abounds, and chiefly of all, for its charming simplicity of style, we heartily commend this specimen of the New Literature.

CHRISTIANITY IN THE LEGAL PROFESSION.*

Our main purpose is not so much with Mr. Brown's book, as with a topic he has incidentally discussed—the ethics of the legal profession. We fully agree with him in the statement that his work has no pretensions to style. The frankness of the disclaimer will somewhat blunt the edge of criticism. As mere collectanea of anecdotes, and brief sketchings of legal biography, his volumes will prove to be passably interesting, and pleasant light reading; had their author claimed for them a higher position, they would unquestionably not have secured it. Humble, however, as are the claims of Mr. Brown's work, it should not go wholly unrebuked. We admit his perfect right to publish as many of his personal recollections as he may choose; and if designed and heralded as his own life, to mingle with it as much of egotism and self-laudation as may suit his taste; but we strongly question his right to devote largely more than a hundred pages of a work, professedly giving an account of the practice and practitioners of Pennsylvania, to a discussion of his own merits and position, while his recital of the character and life of such a man as Justice Washington is compressed into about twenty. The disproportion may not have been noted by

* *The Forum; or, Forty Years Full Practice at the Philadelphia Bar.* By DAVID PAUL BROWN. Two Volumes. Philadelphia: Robert H. Small, Law Bookseller, No. 21 S. Sixth Street, 1836.

Mr. Brown. He may possibly imagine that each has been treated according to his deserts—that the author of “The Forum” is entitled to fill a much larger space in the public eye, than the great, venerable and distinguished Justice; but Mr. Brown will scarcely get the reading public, either professional or non-professional, to agree with him. To prevent mistake here, let us say that the memoir of Mr. Brown prefixed to his work was not written by his own hand. It seems to have been prepared originally by a friend of the author, for a place among the catalogue of the distinguished living, published by Mr John Livingston in his “Biographies.” The writer, however, had peculiar advantages for the work. He quotes the private journal of Mr. Brown, and gives us an account of his first public effort. From this it appears that Mr. Brown’s debut in the courts of Pennsylvania equalled, if it did not excel, the highest efforts of Grecian or Roman oratory, and instantly placed the orator upon the pinnacle of fame. The biographer does not tell us, that like Erskine on the occasion of his famous first speech before Lord Mansfield, the Philadelphia orator received thirty retainers before he left the court room. He doubtless deserved them.

Having said thus much in censure of these volumes, we must say what it is in our heart to say in commendation of the writer and his work. He seems to be a good natured, cheerful old gentleman, liberal to a fault, and a sincere teacher of the lesson of good fellowship. He has placed a high, but not too high, estimate upon the practical value of strict professional decorum; and inculcates as one of the essentials to success as well as to comfort in the practice of the law, the cultivation of an equable temper, and seasonably and shrewdly remarks, that “no client would be safe in trusting the management of his cause to a

lawyer who is incapable of self-government." He also calls attention to another feature in legal life, which may strike with some surprise those who are not familiar with its inner departments: "The result of professional harmony is the greatest mutual confidence. They rely upon each other's word as an infalible bond. As between themselves, they rarely require any writing as assurance. They neither doubt nor are doubted. This, among the other lofty principles of the profession, has secured them here and everywhere a position which neither envy nor calumny can ever destroy or impair."

The legal profession has been the subject of calumny. No one will doubt this who has taken the pains to acquaint himself with the ordinary opinions cherished and expressed by some even of the more intelligent classes who have devoted themselves to other pursuits. As the result of calumnies widely and industriously diffused by those who believe them to be true, we think we do not err in saying, that a large proportion of thinking men, outside the profession, regard the vigorous, faithful and earnest prosecution of the law as incompatible with the highest standard of morality; as inconsonant with a sincere attachment for the principles of the Christian religion.

It is our design, in the present article, to vindicate the profession from these charges, and to show that the prosecution of the law is not only consistent with the sincere profession and practice of Christianity, but that, in some particulars, the lawyer enjoys peculiar advantages for attaining eminent usefulness in the Christian life.

It is scarcely necessary to say that if the law may be practiced at all, its practitioner is called upon to discharge its duties with vigor and fidelity. It argues neither a Christian heart nor a Christian head to falter in the prose-

cution of any work we may properly undertake. Energy and striving for success are as obligatory upon the Christian in the pursuit of lawful secular callings, as diligence and fidelity in the discharge of any peculiarly Christian duty. If, then, the Christian may be a lawyer, he should prosecute his profession vigorously and earnestly; he should not hesitate to meet its full responsibilities, and to discharge them all; and if the life of the Christian be incompatible with the energetic discharge of the lawyer's office, duty to the client, duty to himself demands that the Christian lawyer should lay aside his professional robes, and devote himself to some other pursuit. This is the practical question to which we invite attention; may the Christian practice the law without soiling his character, or impairing his Christian influence?

There is nothing essentially variant between the profession of Christianity and the practice of the law. To embrace the principles of the one does not, in itself, imply the denial of the principles which should rule in the other. So far as human laws are written on the statute books of the country, or have been unfolded and expounded in the decisions of the courts, the principles which underlie and regulate them are found to be, are designed to be modelled after and built upon the principles of Divine truth. If there be occasional aberrations from the standard, these have occurred, not from intentional disregard of the claims of the "higher law," but from misinterpretation or misapplication of the text; and as fallible men have had to expound and interpret the statutes and to apply in practice these principles, it is surely not without excuse that occasional departures from their true development have been made—occasional errors committed.

There is not only no essential variance between the prin-

ciples of Christianity and the principles which should rule in the practice of the law; there are designed coincidence and harmony between them.

In civilized countries the great code regulating the dealings of man with man is the code contained in the Holy Scriptures. Various expressed as their statutes have been,—assuming with every different nation and people a distinct and separate form, varying according to the mental habits, and circumstances of the people for whose control they are designed,—they all acknowledge, and are all designed to inculcate, obedience to the Divine law, as promulgated from Mount Sinai, and as interpreted by the *Infallible Interpreter*. Let a man but obey this law, in its spirit and letter; and he need not fear breaking any of the positive statutes, or running counter to the written decisions of the courts of a civilized people. Legislatures and courts alike have bowed in homage to the Divine model; and have striven to make their enactments and their rulings conform to its high standard. The Common Law of England, though its foundations were laid in a dark and inauspicious age, has become the boast of lawyers and statesmen, and the pride and glory of the Anglo-Saxon race, its highest and happiest accomplishment, in a history crowded with wonderful successes, and almost unexampled fortunes. No wonder that it was cherished with affectionate remembrance by our fathers; and though they were compelled to sever the national bond of union between them and the mother country, no wonder they fondly clung to this, the earliest and the best boon they had inherited. Yet after all, what is this Common Law, which law writers proudly characterize as the highest reason? Whence has it derived its splendor, its justness of proportion, its solidity of principle, and its

practical value? From what source has it received the maxims which it has written as the guide of the courts? Whence derived the canons which govern and control them? When we assert for this Common Law these high claims, we are not asserting them as due to its intrinsic and self-derived excellence; we are only commending a glory and a grace which are reflected from it, only as it has imitated and embodied the principles of the Divine law. David Hoffman, in his excellent treatise on a course of legal study—a work distinguished for its comprehensiveness and completeness—instructs the student to lay the basis of his legal studies by securing an accurate acquaintance with the Bible. We quote his language:

“The purity and sublimity of the morals of the Bible have at no time been questioned; it is the foundation of the common law of every Christian nation. The Christian religion is a part of the law of the land, and, as such, should certainly receive no inconsiderable portion of the lawyer's attention. In vain do we look among the writings of the ancient philosophers for a system of moral law comparable with that of the Old and New Testament. How meagre and lifeless are even the ‘Ethics’ of Aristotle, the ‘Morals’ of Seneca, the ‘Memorabilia’ of Xenophon, or the ‘Offices’ of Cicero, compared with it.” * *

* * * “If treatises on morals should be the first which are placed in the hands of the student, and the structure of his legal education should be raised on the broad and solid foundation of ethics, what book so proper to be thoroughly studied with this view, if no other, as the Bible. But the religion and morals of the Scriptures by no means constitute the only claim which this inestimable volume possesses on the earnest attention of the legal student. There is much law in it, and a great deal which sheds more

than a glimmering light on a variety of legal topics. Political science is certainly indebted to it for an accurate account of the origin of *society, government, and property*. The subjects of *marriage, the alienation of property inter vivos, its acquisition by inheritance and bequest, the obligation of an oath, the relations of governor and governed, of master and servant, husband and wife, the nature and punishment of a variety of crimes and offences, as murder, theft, adultery, incest, polygamy, &c., the grounds of divorce, &c., &c.*, still receive illustrations from this copious source; and this high authority is often appealed to by legal writers, either as decisive or argumentative of their doctrines." * * * * "We have been thus particular on the subject of the utility of the Bible to the *lawyer*, from a deep conviction that its ethics, history and law cannot fail of being eminently serviceable to him; from our observation that young lawyers frequently read any other book but this; and, lastly, from the fact that nearly all the distinguished lawyers with whom we have been personally, or through the means of books, or otherwise acquainted, have not only professed a high veneration for Biblical learning, but were themselves considerably versed in it. Lord Coke had, no doubt, made the Scriptures his study, long before Archbishop Whitgift sent him a copy of the New Testament, with a request that he, who had so thoroughly mastered the Common Law, should study the law of God; be this as it may, his writings abound with arguments and illustrations taken from that source. The names, also, of Bacon, Hale, Holt, Jones, Erskine, Yates, Grotius, D'Aguessau, and very many others, who have testified their respect for this knowledge, by frequent reference to the sacred volume; added to the like tribute, so often paid to it by poets and orators,

were a sufficient warrant, if one were needed, for the urgent manner in which I press this subject on the student's attention."

Similar recommendations of the study of the Holy Scriptures are given in every respectable treatise on the study of the law. The uniformity and urgency of these commendations at least show that legal writers have never discovered in the sacred writings anything to discourage, or embarrass, or hinder the young legal student in the pursuit of his profession; on the contrary, they show that lawyers of eminent learning and experience believe that the practitioner will be better equipped for the successful discharge of his duties as a lawyer, if he has stored his mind in youth with the truths of the Divine Word, mastered its teachings, and familiarized himself with its principles. Nor will it be objected, we are sure, that these writers are wanting in perspicacity. In claiming for the legal profession the power to understand their true interests, we are but claiming what every one will, without argument, acknowledge.

There is, moreover, no external circumstance attending the study of the law, in itself considered, preventing the prosecution of Biblical and religious truth.

The professional student may be helped in his legal studies by the prosecution of religious studies; he will hardly be hindered by them. A too great devotion to strictly professional treatises has in some instances, doubtless, contributed to divert the attention of the legal scholar from the claims of the Holy Scriptures; but this may be objected as well to every other engrossing science; whether geology, astronomy, chemistry or botany, or leaving the departments of natural science, whether one's studies incline to metaphysics, strictly so-called, or to the belles

lettres. Many of these, we know, have sometimes fully occupied the time and attention of those whose chief business it should have been to study and to preach the Gospel. If we would then discountenance the study of the law, because in some instances its prosecution has hindered growth in spiritual knowledge, consistency requires that we should discourage the prosecution of the sciences and arts, and indeed every occupation or study of life not strictly and technically religious. The critical objector to the practice of the law would hardly insist on carrying out his principles to consistent conclusions, if he should thereby peril or destroy his own pursuit. He would find the claims of Divine philosophy not altogether so exacting and so exclusive as he had been accustomed to believe. To nourish and sustain the "little ones at home" he would speedily know to be of as lasting obligation, and, perhaps, of as high character, as the most intimate acquaintance with the Divine teaching.

So far, also, as the study of the law is a mental exercise, calling for the use of the highest powers of the mind, for severe analysis, for the accurate investigation and elimination of principles, and their practical application to human relations and duties, so far will it prove of advantage in enabling one to know religious truth, and to understand how to apply it. No one will question that the lawyer is advantaged in a mental and moral point of view by his frequent application of moral principles to human conduct. This is an important item, and ought not to be neglected in making our estimate of the peculiar facilities of the bar. We call attention to the fact here, simply to show the superior vantage ground of the lawyer as a hearer of religious truth.

Every minister of the Gospel has experienced a difficulty

in securing attention to the doctrines he proclaims. The people lack consideration. It is very hard work to think; —to think on new topics when totally new, to continue to think on old topics, when very old. We would account it strange, were we not so familiar with the fact, that the minister encounters both these difficulties in nearly every congregation he addresses. Some of his auditors have never seriously thought upon the topic he discusses; to them his teachings are misty and confused, and the impressions received dim and imperfect. Others have thought upon the truths so often, have heard them handled and applied so often, that they have become old and trite. The lawyer —the true lawyer will not generally be found in either class. He has learned by continual and repeated practice, to grasp a novel subject in all its relations, and he follows with delight the preacher into new fields of thought: and is gratified by the amplest range and largest discourse. He will know too how to value the old; and will not unfrequently, while a hearer, contribute from his own stores of thought, or by some practical and recent experience in illustration of its truth, invest the teachings of the pulpit with freshness and power. When attendants on the ministry, we may claim for the bar that they are attentive and appreciative hearers.

While what we have stated is conceded to be true; and the probability of Christian sentiment at the bar, if there were no hindrances in the way, is also conceded; it is objected that the facts tell on the contrary side of the question; that legal men are not often professedly religious; that the large majority of them acknowledge no allegiance to Divine truth, neither obey it themselves nor encourage its obedience in others; that among them infidelity numbers its advocates, and that a practical and a theoretic dis-

regard of the claims of Christianity is the rule, and not the exception; and indeed, it is further objected that this disregard of Christian obligation is not a mere accident of the profession, but one of its essentials, the due discharge of legal duties requiring a sacrifice of Christian principle. If the latter branch of this charge be true, attempts to defend the practice of the law would be vain, and the necessary and consistent conclusion would be that pure morals and a regard to the public welfare would demand the suppression of the legal profession. Is it true?

In proof of its truth, the objector cites the familiar example of an advocate's defence of a criminal known to be guilty. He says that such a defence is always immoral and utterly incompatible with Christian character.

We shall test the soundness of this declaration: but before passing condemnation upon the bar, let us see what are their teachings upon the point. To begin with the work of Mr. Brown:

"The best system of forensic ethics or moral philosophy, as applied to the legal duties of men, is of Divine authority; 'Do unto others as you would be done by;' that is, as you justly deserve to be done by; 'Love your neighbors (or your clients) as yourself;' which means, do the same justice to them that in their condition you would be rightly entitled to expect—you are not to do more for them than you would rightly expect; nor to love them better than yourself—not to sacrifice your conscience or your heavenly hope to them."

Again:

"We repeat it, a lawyer is bound to refuse a case that he believes to be dishonest, or to retire from it the moment he discovers it to be so. And he is also bound to avoid litigation, unless it is necessary and when unneces-

sary or unavoidable, always to adopt the least offensive means for bringing it to a satisfactory result. The law is the handmaid of justice, and in its administration should never be attended with undue severity or malevolence."

Again :

"A lawyer has a right to take all the advantage his learning and talents afford him, in order to sustain a good cause or defeat a corrupt one: but he has no right to substitute his talents or learning for the honesty of a case, and thereby render iniquity triumphant. When he has doubts as to the correctness of his position, he may fairly incline in favor of the party he represents, and sustain his views by every authority and fact that the law or evidence may supply, leaving it of course to the court and jury to ratify or reject them. He is not to decide the case, nor is he morally answerable for the correctness of its decision; but he is answerable for the correctness of the motives by which he is influenced."

Judge Sharswood's testimony is to the like effect, and, indeed, every legal writer of eminence and learning has taught the same doctrines.

In making these citations from legal authorities on the ethics of the bar, we shall not be accused of introducing testimony which ought not to be regarded. Had these works been written as defences of the bar, we might suspect the sincerity of the testimony; but they were written for no such purpose; they were designed for those who had already determined upon, or were actively engaged in the pursuit of the profession; and they show the animus of the profession in its claims to sincerity and just dealing, as much as the ordinary conversation and tone of remark of a private individual would disclose more aptly than in any other way, his personal character.

But while legal writers teach thus decidedly and emphatically the duty of the lawyer, not willingly to undertake the espousal of an unjust cause—one that he knows to be unjust, and with the view to forward or protect injustice—much diversity of opinion exists among them, as to the obligation a lawyer is under to a client whose cause he may lawfully espouse. Some, but very few, maintain with Lord Brougham in his famous defence of queen Caroline, that “an advocate, by the sacred duty he owes his client, knows, in the discharge of that office, but one person in the world—his client and none others,”—that “to save his client by all expedient means; to protect that client at all hazards and costs to all others, and amongst others to himself, is the highest and most unquestionable of his duties;” and that “he must not regard the alarm, the suffering, the torment, the destruction which he may bring upon any other.” We know of none, however, who would adopt the further sentiment of this distinguished lord, when he adds, that “separating even the duties of a patriot from those of an advocate, and casting them, if need be, to the winds, the advocate must go on reckless of the consequences, if his fate it should unhappily be, to involve his country in confusion for his client’s protection.” Others, however, and the larger and more considerate part, adopt the sentiments of Hale: “I never thought,” says that distinguished jurist and Christian, “I never thought that my profession should either necessitate a man to use his eloquence, by extenuations or aggravations, to make anything look worse or better than it deserves, or could justify a man in it; to prostitute my eloquence or rhetoric in such a way, I ever held to be most basely mercenary, and that it was below the worth of a man, much more a Christian to do so.”

We can not suppose that Lord Brougham's remarks expressed the deliberate results of his ripe judgment. They were uttered in the progress of a trial of unusual interest and importance; one which might have hurried a speaker of even cooler and more dispassionate consideration than himself into extravagance of statement. If such sentiments were generally adopted, no one can doubt that justice would be corrupted at its sources, and then, indeed, would he be a bold advocate who should undertake the defence of the bar and endeavor to commend the practice of the law as a high and honorable and Christian calling. While duty demands the exercise of the best gifts with which the advocate is endowed by his Maker, and their exercise to the utmost extent, it has never required—it never will require, that he should plead ~~the~~ cause of injustice, or espouse the defence of iniquity. Strictly consonant is this remark with the further one, that even the guilty man should be defended. Guilty as he is, the law annexes to his guilt but a certain penalty; and the infliction of a penalty variant from that either in character or degree, would be a clear violation of justice, and of the plainest dictates of right. He needs, then, an adviser and defender to protect him from the unjust infliction of a severer penalty than he deserves; and the Christian lawyer may rightly assume his defence for that purpose. It is equally true that even guilt had better go unpunished, than that the solemn sanctions and safeguards the law has thrown around the lives and liberties of people should be violated. And so, when in order to execute speedily upon the culprit the extreme penalties of the law, lynch-law is restored to, every just-minded and reasonable and law-loving citizen exclaims against the outrage—even though the object of

it be notoriously guilty of crimes of deepest malignity. If in popular outbreaks thus characterized, the guilty are punished without the law and against the law, and the punishment is thus decried as unjust and iniquitous, it is true, also, that when any of the barriers erected for the protection of life and liberty are disregarded by a yielding or timid judiciary, or removed by a truculent and triumping bar, and even the guilty are punished, a wrong is done—an injury is inflicted which the culprit may not only complain of, but the body of the people as well. The honour of the State, the vindication of justice, and the lives and liberties of the citizens are as much concerned in the proper defence of the accused culprit at the bar, as in his due prosecution and conviction by legal means, by the prosecuting attorney; and a high philosophy and a profound knowledge of the question in its diversified relations, would teach us that we are as much interested in the one as in the other. Take, for example, the case of a man indicted for murder. He has been guilty of an atrocious crime. He deserves to suffer the extreme penalty of the law; but he must suffer it in a legal way. He is a freeman, entitled under the laws to be tried by a jury of his peers—his equals. Did a jury of slaves sit upon his trial, a verdict of guilty might be returned against him, or without a verdict, the judge might pronounce the sentence of execution, but in neither case ought the law or justice to sanction it. He is entitled to be confronted with his accusers. A conviction obtained by testimony secured privately, apart from his presence, and without offering him an opportunity to test the accuracy of memory, or the veracity of the witness, would be unjust, and such a conviction ought not to stand. He is entitled to have his triers sworn or solemnly affirmed, before passing upon the question of

his life or death. If they are not, and they convict, the conviction is, it ought to be naught. He is entitled to a speedy trial, while the recollection of witnesses is fresh, and the circumstances attending the fact, preceding or following it, may be accurately detailed—while his own witnesses are living and may be had. If his trial be unreasonably delayed, and the facts have faded from the memory, and witnesses have died or removed to distant places, beyond the reach of the court, and he is convicted because of their absence or death, the conviction is unjust, and should be annulled. Last of all, he is entitled to an acquittal *until he is proved to be guilty*, and if the proof fails, and the judge, pressed by outside popular sentiment, or thirsting for blood, or influenced by the moral conviction of guilt upon his own mind, either by actions or by words, either in admitting improper testimony or rejecting that which is proper, influences the mind of the jury wrong, and they convict, and the man is hung—the culprit is judicially murdered!—he has suffered a penalty the law did not demand, and his execution should be regarded with no higher favour than if, immediately upon the commission of the crime, a fierce and angry populace had hurried him to the gallows without the mockery of an unjust trial. In all these steps, the man needs assistance. To protect him in his rights he should have the counsel and aid of those who know his rights, and who will maintain them. Who shall say that the Christian lawyer, in such a case, owes it not to himself and to the ordinary law of humanity, to the cardinal rule of love to his neighbour, laid down specifically by the Saviour, to undertake the cause of the culprit, and to guard for him his rights? Rights he has; the law has guaranteed them to him; the culprit is wronged, he is unjustly dealt with, if they be taken away.

This is an extreme case, and one usually put to the lawyer as a test of conscience. We have seen that to espouse even such a cause is not beyond excuse; that in fact it is right. We confess that we cannot see that a judicial trial and conviction by any unfair or unlawful means, and subsequent punishment, differ from an execution by lynch-law; or if there be differences, that they are not in favour of lynch-law, for while the process of lynching must, from the necessity of the case, be notorious, and of infrequent and extraordinary occurrence, judicial murderings without law or evidence, might be perpetrated in secret and without responsibility! If prisoners are protected by appropriate counsel, such cases will infrequently occur: if they are wholly undefended, their numbers would be greatly enlarged.

Mr. Brown mentions a remarkable case in which an innocent man narrowly escaped final conviction, though without the leanings of the court against him, and though defended by counsel. The case was this: "Van Vliet, the defendant, was prosecuted for having stolen three thousand dollars in foreign gold, (#overeigns.) The prosecutrix swore that she had that amount of money which she had been collecting for a long time: that the prisoner upon one occasion introduced himself into her house, under pretence of desiring to buy old watches or jewelry; that at the time he entered, she was engaged in counting her gold; but put it in her bureau for the purpose of bringing down an old watch; that when she came down, after a few minutes conversation the prisoner left the house, and upon her then going to the drawer, the gold was gone. She swore, also, to the identity of the prisoner, who was a Frenchman, and speaking very broken English, and somewhat deformed in person.

The next witness was a confederate, who testified that he knew the defendant, and had lived with him about two weeks; that on the day of the alleged loss of money, the defendant came home and had with him a large quantity of gold, of the description sworn to; that they counted it together, and that the number of sovereigns exactly corresponded with the amount lost; that the day after, these sovereigns were melted down by the mint, and that the product in new American coinage, was handed over to the defendant. The officer of the mint proved the melting, and the payment to the defendant. The new coin was all found on the person of the defendant.

Now, upon this testimony what could be plainer than the guilt of the defendant?

The defendant was a stranger—he denied his guilt; nobody knew him. He averred he had brought the money from Liverpool—produced some little evidence that he had such money on his arrival. But this would not do; he was convicted, and the money was about passing into the hands of the prosecutrix.

Newly discovered testimony was the ground of motion for a new trial. The new trial was granted, and by consent of the Attorney-General, a commission issued to England.

Upon the second trial, it appeared that the prosecutrix had no such money.

That the defendant had received English sovereigns for French gold, in Liverpool. That he had employed the confederate to interpret for him for two weeks, and had counted the money with him, and then carried it to the mint, and obtained in lieu American gold. That having dismissed his interpreter, that person concocted the above scheme, with the prosecutrix, for the purpose of gratify-

ing his revenge, obtaining the money, and dividing the spoils.

He was, of course, acquitted."

Had not this man been assisted by counsel, he would doubtless have been condemned and punished as a felon.

Having disproved the charge of immorality, when alleged as an universal fact in relation to the defence of a known criminal, we are now ready to examine into that branch of the objection urged against the bar, which charges them with the neglect of Christianity. It is too true that as a class legal men are not peculiarly distinguished for Christian character. While not falling behind others in contributing its quota of excellent Christian men, the legal profession has not, in proportion to its superior advantages, multiplied the numbers of sincere and devoted Christians. The fact is, there are hindrances not a few to Christian devotion among barristers. The prevailing tone of sentiment of leading men in the profession seems to discourage a high degree of spirituality, and, indeed, all spirituality whatever. In some circles, and those too claiming respectability and influence, the name of Christian is flouted, or spoken of in light and irreverential terms. Unfortunately, it is too true that there are very many at the bar who willingly unite in unjust and harsh criticisms of barristers who profess Christianity. This is practical skepticism. Besides, skepticism and infidelity in theory, are openly avowed and defended. There are not a few who are led into these delusions by a desire for the reputation of superior sagacity; and others have learned to repeat by rote the ordinary objections to the Christian religion, and to dwell with apparent satisfaction upon the errors and inconsistencies of professors of Christianity. All this is beyond question true; and the Christian barrister is often

tempted to believe he encounters more discouragements in his Christian life than he would do, were he engaged in any other pursuit.

Many of the bar do, as we have said, pay an outward and decent respect to the observances of the house of worship. Many, however, on the other hand, regard public worship as but a veil to conceal hypocrisy, and cover over deformities of heart and life. It is here, perhaps, that the barrister is more peculiarly exposed than in other professions. He has in active practice such frequent occasions of detecting the covert motives of men. Daily, almost hourly, disclosures of insincerity and double-dealing are made known to him; in some instances affecting those who hold high positions in the community, men whose honesty and integrity are unquestioned; in other instances, attacking the fair name of Christian professors. These are but too well calculated to make the lawyer a skeptic in the matter of sincerity and to cause him to doubt whether the observances of the Christian temple, and the seeming worship of an Infinite God are not mere cloaks to conceal lives of impurity and dishonesty. If lawyers doubt more the sincerity of Christian worship, it is attributable to the fact that they see more in daily life to shake their confidence in the integrity of their fellows. Sadly true is it that each of them has a tale to unfold—a chapter of experiences to disclose, which would make many a professing Christian blench before his fellows, and drive from the communion table many who with sanctimonious air and solemn countenance, now outwardly partake of the sacred elements, without having inwardly experienced the grace of which they are at once the type and the encouragement. It is, too, a matter of sufficient importance to note that the lawyer, more perhaps than one engaged

in any other calling—certainly more than any class whose life is not so exclusively devoted to subjects of thought—discovers in a nasal tone and canting phrase neither eloquence nor sanctity; but is sometimes deterred from the regular attendance upon a ministry whose chief recommendation consists in these very questionable attainments. John Foster has shown, however, that this aversion is not exclusively confined to members of the bar; that intelligent men of all classes are sometimes driven from a decent respect for the worship of Jehorah because of the ignorance of His worshippers. True, intelligent men are guilty of ill logic in this. They should reason that the adoration of an Infinite God ought not to depend upon the feeble and imperfect devotions of men confessedly ignorant; but after all that is said, that can be said upon the point, even the most thoughtful are swayed more by these external exhibitions of Christianity than by any amount of abstract truth. Let us point such, however, to the career of one who began as a contemner of Jesus and persecutor of the saints, who subsequently became a zealous defender of the Gospel, and who with a force of logic almost unparalleled, and eloquence at once simple and impressive, reasoned with the men of Athens, caused guilty Felix to tremble upon his throne, and compelled from Agrippa the surprising confession, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian;" a man of faith and power, of energy of character, and sincerity of purpose; with whom the life of the Christian was a reality,—to the apostle of the Gentiles. Or, if a higher example be needed, let us point them for imitation to the perfect life of Jesus, the son of Mary, as the model, and challenge at once their respect and their love for his faultless character.

Why, in the nature of things, we again ask, may not

the lawyer be the sincere and devout Christian? We have already shown that there is nothing essentially variant between the profession of Christianity and the practice of the law; that so far from there being such variance, there is a designed coincidence and harmony between them; that the study of the sacred Scriptures is enjoined upon the young professional student as a fit preparation for the solemn and responsible duties of the bar; and that while, on the one hand, there is no external circumstance attending the study of the law, in itself considered, preventing the prosecution of biblical and religious truth, on the other, the mere study and practice of the law as a mental exercise, calling for the use of the highest powers of the mind in severe analysis, in the investigation and elimination of principles, and in their practical application to human relations, will help and not hinder the student of the law in his study of the truths contained in the Word of God, and cause him to be more profited by the teachings of the Gospel minister, following him with delight into new realms of thought, and investing by his daily experience even trite themes with freshness and force. We have also shown, that while Infidelity has reared its head among barristers, it has done the same no less boldly in other pursuits in life; and that there is nothing in the daily exercise of the profession, even in the defence of criminals justly found guilty, to cause the Christian lawyer to swerve from the pursuit of right; why then, we ask, may not the lawyer be sincere and devout as a Christian? Do hindrances beset him?—the like encompass the goings of every man. Do peculiar temptations try him?—peculiar powers and gifts to resist them are his. Does the prevailing tone of a bar, half-enlightened and with no Christian sentiment to curb them, in any wise hinder his advancement in the

Christian life?—he would find the same in all departments of business, in every employment. We see then nothing to deter the Christian from the proper pursuit of the profession, and nothing to keep the lawyer from being a Christian in devotion and life. But we must not content ourself with this merely negative argument in behalf of Christianity. Independently of considerations which might be profitably addressed to the bar, in common with other classes, Christianity has its peculiar and positive claims upon the barrister, of manifold and urgent character, and demanding his earnest attention.

The lawyer is a minister of justice. His practical dealings with men and with human motives are mainly designed to further this end. In the prosecution, as in the defence of causes, this is, it ought to be his chief, and only purpose. And in furthering justice, he not only regulates the motives and actions of men by human law, but applies as well the sanctions of the divine law. He finds, as we have already said, the most powerful motives furnished by these sanctions.

Will he wisely apply to the conduct of others a test which his own will not stand? Will he willingly measure the motives of parties, and the responsibility and credibility of witnesses by their regard to moral duty, while he himself disregards it? Will he utter as decisively true, and as not admitting of contradiction or doubt, that the Infidel is unworthy of credit; and shall he be an Infidel? Aye more, will he vindicate the claims of human justice, and demand the enforcement of its penalties, while he disregards and disavows the claims of Divine justice? True, we have seen such anomalies; but are such persons consistent? Do they act wisely or well? Will they—can they plead in extenuation of their conduct any plea which

would be received by the candid and intelligent? We ask, in all sincerity, what right have such men to prefer for themselves the claim of wisdom and right-thinking? Ought they not to be covered with confusion, when these glaring inconsistencies of conduct are brought to view?

As a teacher of moral truth, then,—an expounder of the laws (which are but moral truths condensed) in their applications to the varying circumstances of life, we call upon the lawyer to be a Christian. We will not say he may not properly discharge some of the offices of a lawyer without being a Christian; we will say he cannot properly discharge all of them without it. Weight of character necessary for making due impression upon the minds of men, for influencing a right courts as well as juries, in some measure may be secured outside of the Christian Church; but it will not be denied that the mere worldly-minded barrister, the frequenter of feasts and revelry, the champion of gambling-clubs and race-courses, is less likely to secure confidence, and command respect in his vocation than the Christian. One not in the habit of attending courts might be surprised at the potency of moral character—might stagger at the assertion that as much depends upon the confidence of a judge or jury in the truthfulness of the advocate, as upon the merits of his cause. To secure our rights, to vindicate justice, it is not unfrequently of paramount necessity that we should have one espouse our defence who can secure confidence not only in his ability, but also in his integrity; and who so likely to command respect and to ensure success, as the Christian lawyer who, by a life of devotedness to the right, has won for himself the confidence of the community? If then, as is undoubtedly true, weight of character is an essential ingredient in the successful prosecution of the profession,

and if to enforce one's views of truth and to vindicate justice, he ought in his own life to exemplify its excellence, may not the lawyer earnestly covet, even for success in his profession, the special gifts of the Christian?

Again: the study and practice of the law, when associated with sincere Christian principle, afford opportunities of almost unparalleled usefulness.

Second only, if second at all, is the vantage ground of the advocate to that of the minister of the Gospel. The intimate relations subsisting between pastor and people are copies of those subsisting between the counsel and his client. In some respects, the latter are more closely intimate and blended. A pastor experiences no little difficulty in *getting at* his people; there seems to be a something (he cannot tell what) which hinders his full access to their hearts, and the pious minister is stripped of the opportunity to do much good which he would do if he knew how to make his people unbosom themselves to him. Very little of this embarrassment attends the conferences between the lawyer and his client. The merely perfunctory in his legal character is lost sight of by the applicant for legal aid, in his anxiety to secure assistance; and all embarrassment is taken away. The man shows more of his heart to the lawyer than he would dare to do to his preacher. He unfolds with specific minuteness, and in detail, his condition in life, it may be, or some sad chapter in his experience, needing a skillful and a faithful hand to bind up the wounds. He knows—that is, he sometimes knows that to protect his interests, he must be honest; and he tells the whole, as well the questionable and doubtful as that above suspicion and beyond doubt. How ample then the opportunity to direct to the right—by a suggestion of the proper course of conduct to incline to it—by a word

of counsel wisely given to save one from ruin or from shame. These are not merely imaginary cases. The history of every sincere, conscientious, Christian lawyer, in full practice, would disclose not a few such examples. We know that this is not the feature of the legal character usually presented to the public; but it is nevertheless true, and faithfully drawn; and in nothing have even wise and good men more erred, than in the harsh judgments they have rashly and indiscriminately pronounced against the bar. Let the truth be told. Professional gentlemen will be the last to deny that there are tricksters and fraudulent pettifoggers, who are with them but not of them, who would not hesitate to do a dishonest or scurvy thing, and whose opportunities for villainy being so great, have accomplished an untold amount of evil; and by how much on the one hand these are enabled to do more harm in the superior advantages afforded them, by so much on the other are the upright enabled, prompted by proper motives, to promote the good. In the single example of peace-making—the quieting of family disturbances, where else there had been feuds perhaps bitter and unrelenting, what has not been—what may not be accomplished by Christian lawyers? Who can not call to mind one such instance, in which such an one has interposed, and poured oil over the troubled waters, and caused a great calm?

Again: the lawyer's peculiar talents fit him for usefulness in the Christian Church. For the main advancement of the cause of Christianity in the earth, for its full progression and final success, there are many whose influence is comparatively inefficient. Their introduction into the Church is a blessing to themselves, and may, in some instances, lead to the blessing of others; but their lives are passed in obscurity, their talents are not commanding,

their influence is contracted. Not so with the Christian lawyer. If he has wisely selected his profession; if he has not been thrust into it by injudicious and imprudent considerations; if he is adapted by natural gifts and ample studies for its successful prosecution, his introduction into the Christian Church will be a matter not merely of personal concern and importance to himself, but will prove to be of essential advantage to the body of which he becomes a member. His talents will fit him for the discharge of many of the offices, not strictly clerical; and by his conversation and example he will win many more of like capacity with himself to the service of Christ. A body of such men, animated by a sincerely humble and devoted spirit, would wage no light warfare with the hosts of sin; and even when segregated and separated from each other, their information, their talents and their capacities would greatly promote the cause of Christianity. We have sometimes looked with no little admiration at a bar consisting of many of the wise, the eloquent, the talented and the energetic, in an inland city, and pictured in our imagination the good these might accomplish, the harvest of true fame they might reap, if they were all sincerely pious. Alas! how few have been proud to call themselves Christians—how many of the few have been self-deceived; or have perhaps wittingly and willingly worn the Christian profession for the purpose of deceiving others. It is proper, also, to remark that the ministry looks for some of its recruits from the bar. We are not of those who imagine it to be the duty of every Christian lawyer to undertake the office of preaching the Gospel. True; the gifts and the acquirements which fit him for the successful prosecution of his profession, will most probably adapt him to the pulpit. But this is not universally true; and if it were

so, yet other traits of character and capacities than the gift of merely speaking from the pulpit are demanded in the Gospel preacher and pastor; and the lawyer may be a Christian without having these. Besides, the vocation of the law demands as high Christian principle, and the exercise of the purest Christian character; and for the sake of the rest, it would be unwise and imprudent to withdraw from the bar the entire Christian element. Some professing Christianity ought to remain, that the influence of their example upon those in the same calling may be the more felt; as well as for the sake of those who shall come after—the young men in the profession, whose example and character are to be determined largely by the prevailing tone of character among their elder professional brethren. Yet, the pulpit looks to the bar for recruits; and many of the most distinguished and useful pulpit orators have risen from that profession. Why may there not be among the twenty thousand practitioners of the law in the Union, one-twentieth of them, or even a larger proportion, who shall devote their time, their talents and their fortunes exclusively to the service of Christ, in the proclamation of the Gospel?

But this is not all, nor indeed the chief service which Christianity demands of the legal profession. She wishes to fill up her ranks of laymen with intelligent, thinking, laborious men; she wishes counsellors in the churches, in the prayer-meetings, in her more public congregations. She wishes to point to "honorable counsellors," not a few; her adherents and supporters, in the courts and in the offices; men of uprightness and integrity; men of moral weight and justness of views; men of thought and men of purpose. She wishes that examples of holy living may be given; and that the ministers of justice, strictly so called,

may become themselves the lovers of just dealing and just doing. She wishes that in every vocation of life, in every employment and pursuit, her votaries may be found; and especially desires that the guardians of the law, the defenders of human rights and the avengers of human wrong, shall be controlled and swayed by her sweet and chastening influences—shall illustrate in their lives and example, and teach by their language, that there is a law higher than human authority, of sacred and universal obligation, and that they honor themselves and honor humanity by bowing to its commands.

It will appear from what we have said, that we desire that barristers should do something more than make a merely external profession of religion. We would have the Christian barrister and counsellor exemplify, in his life and by his words, the truth and the power of Christianity. His inner life would then disclose a high state of spiritual earnestness and sincerity. While engaged in the active pursuit of his profession, in vindicating by his eloquence and wisdom the right, and holding up to just censure the wrong, he would find it not impossible to cherish a sacred nearness to Jehovah, and to preserve that intimate communion with Christ which are the distinguishing marks of the active Christian. Such a lawyer might write upon his law-books and legal opinions—upon his legal conduct and legal life, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD; and in every act and word, in every public effort at the bar, in every opinion given at chambers, in dissuasion from strife, in exhortation to justice and charity, would utter in no uncertain language, the sentiments, and exhibit the life of the Christian. Some Christian lawyer once said—“that he never undertook a cause for the success of which he could not pray, and he had never lost a cause for which

he had prayed." Could the principle underlying this action be carried into universal practice, there would be no need for defences of the bar; the life of the Christian barrister would be its best exposition and ablest defence; and the slanders so often recklessly and wantonly uttered against this honorable and useful calling would rebound to the damage of the assailant.