DEVOTIONAL EXERCISES,
FOR THE USE OF YOUNG PERSONS.

BY CHARLES WELLBELOVED.

SEVENTH EDITION.

YORK:
Printed by Thomas Wilson and Sons, High-Ousegate;
FOR LONGMAN, REES, ORME, BROWN, AND GREEN,
LONDON; AND FOR WILSON AND SONS, YORK.

1826.
PREFACE.

That young persons in the present age enjoy advantages in the improvement of their minds, far superior to those by which any former period has been distinguished, is a truth too evident, not to be generally acknowledged. From the earliest dawn of reason and judgment, the mind is furnished with useful instruction; and in learning words, it obtains many valuable ideas. Fairy tales and surprising fables, the exploits of imaginary beings, and the dialogues of beasts of the field and fowls of the air, have given place to narratives of little incidents, belonging to the days of childhood, from which useful impressions are derived, and to conversations which excite and direct the curiosity, so important in the earliest stage of life. As the mental powers grow more vigorous, a wider field is gradually opened, and various pursuits in knowledge invite the most indolent. The office of the instructor is rendered more pleasing and useful; and the least informed parent is furnished with means of conveying instruction, not long since utterly unattainable.
Among the valuable works which are provided for young persons, of almost every age, between infancy and their entrance upon the world, one of a peculiar, but very important kind, has long appeared to the Author of the following pages to be wanting. Engaged in the education of youth, and having a young family rising up around him, he has long wished, in common, he believes, with many others, for a work which should inculcate religious principles, and lay the foundation of rational piety. Despairing of seeing this accomplished, by those whom he knew to be much better qualified than himself, and repeatedly urged to attempt it, by several of his friends, he at length determined to comply with their solicitations, according to the plan which appeared to him most likely to produce the intended effect. Both the design and the execution he leaves to the judgment of the candid. It has been his great object to make religion inviting; to bring the ordinary and daily conduct of young persons under its influence; and to provide a variety of moral and pious sentiment, which, by constant recurrence, may be deeply imprinted upon their minds; regulate every part of their behaviour; and prepare them for a continued attention, through life, to the important duties of devotion. In the execution of his purpose, he has studiously avoided all expressions, which might tend to render what was designed for general use ob-
noxious to any particular sect of Christians; and endeavoured to comprehend only those grand principles, in which all are equally agreed, and which are the foundation of all excellence of character, of present comfort, and of future eternal happiness. With this view, he has omitted the common doxologies at the close of the prayers, taking care that sufficient space should be left in the printing, for the addition of such as individuals may deem most proper, or the alteration of what is here given.—They who know any thing of the nature of such kind of composition, as prevails in this little work, and the difficulty of compressing momentous truths into so small a compass, will judge with candour, and excuse the defects that may and will appear.

With regard to the age at which this book may be most properly put into the hands of young persons, nothing certain can be determined by the Author; that must be left to the discretion of parents or instructers. For a very early period of youth, it is evidently not designed; the faculties must have reached some degree of improvement, and the progress of education must have been, in some good measure, advanced, before the purposes for which it was composed can be secured.

The subjects of the reflections were selected, as being of peculiar importance to young persons; many still remain unnoticed. These, it is hoped, will
soon be added, together with prayers for another week. In its present state it is sent into the world, with the Author's earnest prayer, that it may contribute to the great objects which he has had in view;—the benefit of the rising generation, and the furtherance of practical Christianity.

York, April 6, 1801.
ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE

SEVENTH EDITION.

It is with no small degree of satisfaction that the Author is at length enabled to present to his young friends an edition of his little work, enlarged by those Reflections and Prayers, which, five and twenty years ago, he promised to their parents. This long delay has been the unavoidable result of circumstances which he did not foresee, and which he could not control. That he should have disappointed the expectations of those, for whose benefit this work was originally composed and published, he very sincerely and deeply regrets. He feels confident, however, that after what he has now stated, he shall obtain their forgiveness; especially, as their disappointment has proved of great advantage to their children, and those other young persons in whose welfare they may be interested, by being the immediate occasion of the appearance of another set of " Devotional Exercises
by a Lady”; whose modesty in withholding her name from the public, may, for a time, deprive her of the reputation to which she is so justly entitled; but whose virtuous labours cannot fail to be rewarded by the heart-felt delight of conscious usefulness, and the blessings which they will gratefully invoke upon her, in whose hearts she may happily enkindle or cherish that sacred flame of devotion, which appears to burn so brightly and so steadily in her own.

**York, April 6, 1826.**

C. W.
SUBJECTS OF THE REFLECTIONS.

SUNDAY MORNING.
On the importance of Religion ................................. 27

SUNDAY EVENING.
On Immortality .................................................... 33

MONDAY MORNING.
On Knowledge ..................................................... 38

MONDAY EVENING.
On the Virtues peculiarly becoming in youth ........ 45

TUESDAY MORNING.
On Industry ....................................................... 52

TUESDAY EVENING.
On the folly and danger of Vice, and the extent to
which it may operate ......................................... 59

WEDNESDAY MORNING.
On the Christian Religion ..................................... 66

WEDNESDAY EVENING.
On the Works of Nature ....................................... 73
SUBJECTS OF THE REFLECTIONS.

THURSDAY MORNING.
On Habit .................................................. 80

THURSDAY EVENING.
On Truth .................................................... 87

FRIDAY MORNING.
On the conduct which young persons should ob-
serve towards each other ............................... 93

FRIDAY EVENING.
On the Character of Jesus Christ ..................... 101

SATURDAY MORNING.
On Friendship ............................................. 108

SATURDAY EVENING.
Thoughts suggested by the Conclusion of a Week 116
SUBJECTS OF THE REFLECTIONS.

Second Week.

SUNDAY MORNING.
On attendance upon public Worship and the religious improvement of the Sabbath-day ...... 123.

SUNDAY EVENING.
On remembering the Creator ......................... 130.

MONDAY MORNING.
On the Omnipresence of God ......................... 137

MONDAY EVENING.
On Self-examination ................................. 144

TUESDAY MORNING.
On the happiness and the obligations of the children of pious and virtuous Parents ...... 151

TUESDAY EVENING.
On the value and importance of a knowledge of the Scriptures ............................... 159

WEDNESDAY MORNING.
On the love of Praise ............................... 168
SUBJECTS OF THE REFLECTIONS.

WEDNESDAY EVENING.
On the danger of evil company, and the importance of resolution .................................. 177

THURSDAY MORNING.
On the love of Pleasure ........................................ 186

THURSDAY EVENING.
On Sleep ............................................................... 196

FRIDAY MORNING.
Thoughts suited to the beginning of the day ... 205

FRIDAY EVENING.
On Self-love .......................................................... 214

SATURDAY MORNING.
On Health .............................................................. 224

SATURDAY EVENING.
On the anticipation of the active scenes of life ... 234
INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS

to

YOUNG PERSONS.

MY YOUNG FRIENDS,

You are here presented with a small work written solely for your benefit, and adapted, if I be not mistaken, to promote your improvement in virtue and piety. The design of it is to lead your thoughts frequently to God, as to that Being from whose goodness you have received all you enjoy; by whose power you are every moment supported, and to whom you are hereafter to be accountable for all your present conduct; who, therefore, is deserving of your warmest love and most constant reverence. I wish to teach you to pray; to furnish you with subjects of serious reflection suitable to your age; and with such addresses to the great Father of your spirits as accord with these reflections, and are adapted to your peculiar condition; and thus, to assist you in acquiring a habit of devotion.
As you advance in years and in understanding, other reflections may occur to your minds, and other words suggest themselves in your addresses at the throne of Heaven; and even at present it seems to me desirable that you should use this little work occasionally as a model, and gradually habituate yourselves to the giving of your own thoughts utterance. The purpose of the following pages will not be completely answered, until they shall not only have formed in you a habit of devotion, but shall also have taught you, without assistance, to express with propriety the gratitude which glows in your breast; or to seek the supply of those wants you may individually feel. This will be the case, if, with the habit, you gain any of the true spirit of devotion; without which the habit will be of little service. If you rest satisfied with the formal use of this little work morning and evening, the end for which it has been written will not be answered. If your love of the Supreme Being be increased, your desire of serving him enlarged, and your mind stored with useful sentiments and principles, then my purpose will be secured: I shall have contributed something to the honour of Almighty God, and to the good of my fellow-creatures.

Such is the nature and intention of the work here presented to you. If, my young friends,
you have ever thought upon the subject, you must be fully convinced of the great importance of a religious and devotional temper at your period of life. If you have never considered this, let me intreat you to delay no longer, but with the most perfect seriousness and candour, to accompany me in the reflections I am now going to lay before you.

In every age, and in every condition of life, the influence of devotion is highly needful and important. The adoration of the great Source of all enjoyment, by whose providence all exist, and from whose goodness all derive the comfort of their existence, is an employment worthy of the human faculties, reasonable in itself, and productive of the most excellent dispositions. In the day of prosperity, what more natural or becoming, than the language of praise at the throne of God; in the hour of adversity, what more suitable or consoling, than the expression of confidence in the divine government, and the wish that devotion breathes; "Father, not my will, but thine be done;" in the whole conduct of life, in all the events of this ever-varying scene, what more likely to keep the mind in a calm and tranquil state, or to render the present moral discipline efficacious in preparing us for future eminence and glory, than the habit of devout intercourse with the great Father of our spirits?
A practice so excellent in maturer life, is recommended to youth by reasons peculiarly forcible. Piety, a crown of glory to the hoary head, is an ornament of peculiar beauty upon that which has not seen many years. It is the language of the most absurd and fatal folly, that religion and its duties are not suited to the innocent gaiety of youth; that devotion belongs to those only who have passed that period; and that it will be sufficient to think of preparing for a future state, when we begin to lose our relish for the present. Such sentiments as these are not, I hope, adopted by any of those young persons who shall take this little work into their hands. The reverse are such as they ought to maintain; such as alone are worthy of a rational mind. Is it reasonable, my young friends, that living as you do upon the bounty of Providence, you should feel no gratitude, nor express any thankfulnes, for its bounties? that dependent as you are upon God for life, and health; and all things, you should live without any regard for your unceasing Benefactor, and think yourselves improperly employed, when celebrating his praise? Are the blessings you receive, undeserving of your thanks? Are you insensible of the value of kind relations, judicious friends, and wise instructers; of bodily strength and activity, of cheerfulness of mind, of all the numberless means by which life is not
INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS.

only supported, but rendered happy? Is it possible that you should not see and feel the ingratitude of employing your best days, and your most vigorous powers, without one thought of God; and of contenting yourselves with the resolution of devoting to his service the imbecility of old age? With so many monuments of death around you, with so many awful warnings of the uncertainty of life, even at your period of it, is it not the height of presumption and folly, to defer the formation of a religious and devotional temper to a season which it is probable, or at least possible, may never arrive? Have you seen so little of life as not to know, that the feeling and conduct of maturer years, and of old age, are almost invariably marked by the character which distinguished the youth; that the man who neglected God and religious duties when young, becomes more averse from them as he advances in life, and leaves the world with the same irreligious temper, with which he entered upon it; unimproved by the events that have happened to him, bearing no similitude to God, without the favour of his friendship, and unprepared for the joys of his presence? or, is this the envied character you desire to form? is this the happy end to which you aspire? is such the life you wish to lead, or such the death you hope to die? My young friends, let not any evil
suggestions enslave you, and prevent you from pursuing that conduct which Reason and Scripture pronounce to be honourable and safe. If it be an awful thing to die without hope of future happiness, it is an awful thing to live every moment liable to death, without those dispositions, which, by the wise appointment of Almighty God, are necessary to obtain the blessedness of the world to come.

You cannot be insensible of the value of devotion, without being totally ignorant of the nature of your present condition. You are beset with many dangers, you are surrounded with powerful enemies. In circumstances of the most hazardous nature, you have to provide for your future worth and happiness; amidst allurements to evil, you have to form a determined habit of acting well. If there be one period of life more dangerous than another, if there be one age in which attention to right conduct is peculiarly important and wise, it is that which intervenes between infancy and manhood. Passions most destructive of virtue generally arise, and are too frequently cherished in youth, when the habit of self-government cannot have been acquired, and reason wants that ascendency which experience alone can impart. The impulse of nature, the effect of bad example, the allurements of pleasure, are all aimed against your innocence and your peace; and how will you
oppose these enemies? Think not that the issue of the contest is unimportant, regard not the victory as unattended with momentous consequences. Your present peace and your future, perhaps your eternal happiness, may depend upon your passing through the dangers which surround you with firmness, and upon your conquering the temptations with which you are now assailed. Prayer to God is amongst the most powerful of the arms you must employ; devotion is one of the most certain means of success. Frequently and regularly to address that great Being who is your moral governor, and will be your judge; who notices all your actions in order to make ample retribution hereafter, will surely keep you from falling into evil, and render you careful to do that only which will ensure his approbation. "O Lord, thou hast searched me and known me; thou knowest my down-sitting and my uprising; thou understandest my thoughts afar off; thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways: for there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo! O Lord, thou knowest it all together:" these are thoughts which the practice of devotion will render familiar to your minds, and their influence will not fail to appear in uniformly virtuous conduct. Contemplating the goodness of God, you will abhor the ingratitude of doing what is
displeasing to him; adoring his holiness, you will be careful to avoid the impurity of vice; praying to be preserved from temptation, you will not thoughtlessly rush into danger; and resolving in his sacred presence to live constantly in his fear, and in the practice of virtue, you will diligently abstain from the appearance of evil.

Devotion will not only preserve you from the danger to which your innocence is exposed, but will elevate your views, ennoble your desires, and excite you to worthy and excellent pursuits. The mind will unavoidably take its character from the objects most frequently presented to it. If these be low and trifling, so will be its pursuits and its desires; if they be sublime and rational, the thoughts and conduct will be noble and dignified. Now, what objects more grand, what objects more adapted to raise the human intellect above every thing low and unworthy, than those which devotion offers? the Supreme Being and his attributes; religious and moral duties; and a future state of endless existence?

To be in the habit of daily contemplating the character and perfections of that great Being, who formed the universe with a word, and upholds it by boundless and unremitting power; whose goodness provides for the happiness of the whole, and who
INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS.

"From seeming evil still educes good,
And better thence again, and better still
In infinite progression;"

must surely not only preserve the mind from evil and degrading thoughts, but supply it with a constant succession of such as shall purify and enoble it. Regularly to reflect, as this exercise will lead you to do, upon the great duties you owe to God, to your fellow-creatures, and to yourselves; and to strengthen and enforce the obligations you are under to perform them, must effectually guard you against that inattention to virtuous conduct, which frequently arises from want of consideration; but which generally terminates in the confirmed influence of evil principles. Habitually to contemplate that future glorious scene which the Christian Scriptures open to your view; to look forward to that grand consummation of your present existence, when freed from all moral imperfection, you shall make endless and uninterrupted progress in knowledge, virtue, and holiness, in the similitude and friendship of God, must lead you to form a just estimate of human life, and preserve you from all those pursuits which would bereave you of these exalted hopes. The habit of carrying your thoughts forwards, and of regulating your conduct by those principles which arise from the revelation of a future state, will gradually enlarge the comprehension
of your minds, and prevent the effects of inexperience, so fatal to many in the beginning of life. If you engage in the exercise of devotion in a rational and serious manner, your minds will be filled with the sublimest sentiments, your thoughts will be habitually turned upon the noblest objects, your breasts will expand with the most virtuous desires, you will

"Feel how awful Goodness is, and see,
Virtue in her shape how lovely."

And these effects, frequently impressed, will inevitably counteract all the evil principles, with which a corrupt world will try to seduce you into the ruinous paths of folly and of vice. So pure and so perfect will be the pleasure you receive from devout intercourse with God, that you will despise the false joys proposed to you by the trifling and inconsiderate, and be satisfied with none that do not, in some measure, resemble those experienced in the happy moments of religious retirement; joys that are pure, virtuous, and stable. As your minds enlarge, these principles will become more firmly fixed; and having resisted the temptations to which the young are peculiarly exposed, and established the authority of reason and religion in your breast, you will be prepared to act that part in society, which, in proportion to your influence there, will entitle you to its gratitude, and render you meet for that re-
ward which a purer state alone can bestow. In you virtue will find a constant friend, the wretched a ready support; every scheme which has for its object the improvement and the happiness of others, will meet in you a zealous promoter; vice will receive from you a determined opposition; and your principles and example will enforce and recommend the love and practice of whatever is excellent. Is it possible that you can be indifferent about the attainment of this character? Will you need any other arguments to induce you to cultivate a spirit of devotion?

The judgment of an eminent person, that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One understanding," is not unsupported by reason and experience. If the issues of virtue and vice be not the same, if they who have done good shall rise to life, and they who have done evil to condemnation; assuredly the man who adheres to the cause of truth and virtue, amidst the temptations of the world, discovers more true wisdom, than he who sacrifices a future inestimable good, for the transient and unsatisfying enjoyment of the present hour. If wisdom consist in the use of the best means to obtain the most valuable end, who has so fair a title to the character of wise, as the man, who by the uniform discharge of his duty, seeks for honour and immortality, and
aspires after eternal life? If it be folly to reject a permanent good, in order to secure a momentary gratification, to regard with indifference the most sacred duties, and to treat with contempt the most exalted privileges, who incurs the charge of folly, if not the man who is the slave of vicious passions, who contemns God and his laws, and who, madly,

"To the mercy of a moment leave
"The vast concerns of an eternal world?"

In proportion to the ascendancy of vice, the mind is weakened, and the rational powers destroyed; and as opposite causes must produce opposite effects, virtue, which is formed and cherished by devotion, must strengthen and preserve the reasoning faculties. The practice of piety, tending to bring all the passions under control, to keep the mind calm and unruffled, to affix to every object its due value, and to excite constant attention to virtuous and active pursuits, must not only enlarge the powers by nature vigorous, but give to the most moderate talents all the improvement of which they are capable. So true is it, that "godliness is profitable in all cases, having a promise of" what is excellent in "the present life, as well as of a life to come."

Let me place this subject before you in another point of view. There are few young persons so careless and indifferent, as not occasionally to look
INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS.

forwards to the time when they shall become devout. However they may neglect God and disregard the duties of religion at present, they hope to serve and obey God, and to live virtuously before they die. Alas! they reflect not that by a continuance in evil practices, they render it almost impossible that they should attain to any love of virtue; that by forming habits inconsistent with piety, in the early period of their lives, they expose themselves to the almost certain hazard of never acquiring one pious sentiment, how protracted soever their existence in the present world. Be careful, I entreat you, my young friends, not to indulge such fallacious hopes. To whatever you now devote yourselves, to that you will most probably continue to adhere to the latest hour. Your future pursuits may be in some respects altered, but they will never be totally changed. A vicious youth almost invariably becomes a vicious man; and they whose declining years are dignified by virtue and piety, are, for the most part, those who sought Wisdom early, and found her. We are the creatures of habit, and if we wish to be found, in old age, proceeding in the paths of wisdom and virtue, we must yield ourselves to the counsels of religion in the days of our youth. It is both the safest and the easiest way to form no habits which you wish hereafter to break; to cherish no dispositions which
you hope, when time has confirmed them, to relinquish; to gain a fondness for no practices which you know will, if not abandoned, disqualify you for the happiness of a future state. If you cannot resolve to be pious now, how can you hope for the resolution hereafter? If passion exerts so strong an influence at present, how can you expect that long indulgence will lessen its power? If you neglect to form habits of virtue, when every thing invites and assists you in this important work, how can you trust to that period, when to the labour and difficulty of acquiring new principles, will be added, that of undoing all that the former years of your lives have effected? A moment’s reflection will shew you that the attainment of pious affections in old age, after a long pursuit of folly, must require nothing less than an entire change of dispositions and of conduct, a complete regeneration of the mind and character. Old things must pass away, and all things become new. From reflecting, turn yourselves to the experience of mankind, and observe how few are capable of the exertion so necessary in this momentous concern. “Remember, then, your Creator in the days of your youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, in which,” disturbed by reflections upon the past, oppressed by the consciousness of your inability to relinquish what you disapprove, and alarmed at
the prospect into futurity, "ye shall say. We have no pleasure in them?"

It is an error too commonly prevalent, that the duties of piety are inconsistent with the enjoyment of youth, and that they tend to damp, if not to extinguish, the vivacity which adorns that season of life. You will perhaps be told, that devotion is not required in you; that it will serve only to render you gloomy, disqualify you for the society of those who are young like yourselves, and render you a fit companion for those only who have forgotten the days of former years, and have arrived at the verge of the grave. Be not influenced by such assertions; make the experiment for yourselves; and if you do not find that the ways of piety are the only ways of pleasantness, and her paths the only paths of peace, I ask you not to walk in them: if the service of God do not yield you the only rational and pure pleasure, I will cease from advising you to avoid the debasing slavery of sin. That devotion will interfere with the pursuits which young persons sometimes follow, and prohibit the pleasures in which they are too frequently seen to indulge, I will not deny. Yes, my young friends, if you will be virtuous and devout, you must refrain from all those pleasures which end in pain; you must abandon all those pursuits which lead to disgrace
and ruin; you must apply to other sources of gratification than those, which, however sweet to the taste, contain a deadly poison; you must fly the society of those, "whose feet go down to death, whose steps take hold on the grave:" and often send your thoughts to that land of promise, where all the wise and virtuous shall enjoy inconceivable and uninterrupted happiness. Are these requisitions unreasonable? are these injunctions oppressive? will these destroy your innocent gaiety, or render you gloomy and austere? The most thoughtless and inexperienced will acknowledge, that no joys but such as are innocent can be pure and lasting; and piety requires of you no more, than that you indulge not in those that are impure and deceitful. The peculiar enjoyment of youth arises from innocence, inexperience in the vicissitudes and trials of life, and ardent hope. Devotion, therefore, will increase your enjoyment, instead of lessening it, by rendering you secure against temptation, assuring you of the favour and friendship of God, encouraging you to contemplate with satisfaction, and with pleasure, whatever his providence shall reserve for you in future; and above all, by giving a wider scope for your expectations to range in, by opening before you the eternal abodes of the wise and the good.
INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS.

You need not look far into the world, in order to observe the exemplification of the important truths, which I have been solicitous to recommend to your serious attention. The effects of evil principles, and corrupt maxims, are unhappily too general, not to afford many instances of the fatal effects of irreligion, at your period of life. Observe, then, the indolent youth, who throws off the salutary restraints of religion, laughs at the counsels of piety, and yields himself to the uncontrolled guidance of his passions; rejecting all concern about the future, he seeks only the gratification of the present moment; regardless of the consequences of his conduct, he gives his heart to know evil, and withholds not himself from any of the guilty pleasures that the world affords. One vicious indulgence leads on to another, and he pursues with eagerness a course of evil conduct, the very thought of which would have once filled him with alarm; his mind becomes enfeebled; the fruits of his own, or of the industry of his friends, are wasted in riotous living; others are affected by his crimes, or their innocence ruined by his example; he becomes injurious to society, and lays perhaps the foundation of a painful disease. At length the scene closes: in the midst of his pursuits (alas! how often does it happen) he is arrested by the hand of death; just
entering upon the world, he is compelled to leave it; with his mind hardened by vice, he departs with brutish insensibility, or, as is more commonly the case, with inexpressible terror and dismay. The wise man had long ago warned him of his danger, but he treated it as an idle tale; the hour of death convinces him of its reality. "Because I have called and ye refused, I have stretched out my hand, and no one regarded; but ye have set at nought my counsel, and would have none of my reproof, I also will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when darkness and anguish come upon you, then will ye call upon me, but I will not answer; ye will seek me early, but ye shall not find me; for that ye hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord; ye would have none of my counsel; ye despised all my reproof; therefore shall ye eat of the fruit of your own way, and be filled with your own devices." Is this the enjoyment the votaries of Folly choose? Is this the termination of the transient pleasures to which they devote themselves? "O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, my honour, be not thou united."

How different the character and the fate of him, who in the days of his youth remembers his
INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS.

Creator; and, aware of the important consequences which must result from his present conduct, wisely and diligently endeavours to acquire pious dispositions. Seeking after that pleasure alone, which accords with reason, he does not seek in vain; engaged in pursuits not forbidden by religion, his mind is continually at ease, and his desires are all gratified. Enjoying all the cheerfulness and vivacity natural to youth, depriving himself of none of the rational amusements that may offer themselves, and which prudence will allow; he is a stranger to those misgivings, and to those fears, which are the sure consequence of evil conduct, in a heart not hardened by continuance in folly. He knows that "seriousness is not hard constraint; nor levity, freedom;" and that gratifications which end in disappointment and in pain, are sought for only by the foolish and the thoughtless. He does not fly from the youthful companions whom nature points out to him, but is careful to avoid those who think the privilege of youth consists in lawless pleasures, whose example would lead him from virtue, whose intercourse would pollute his mind; while he selects those who choose the path of wisdom, whose conduct will aid and encourage him in the pursuit of what is good, and who, in the future part of life, may prove constant and valuable friends. In the active scenes into which he is
thrown, he is distinguished by diligence and fidelity; and obtains, by his virtue, the esteem and affection of those with whom he is connected. A stranger to disease brought on by irregularities of conduct, his piety enables him to bear, with perfect resignation, all that Providence inflicts; he discovers no impatience, he utters no repining under the dispensation that deprives him of that degree of health which the young around him are enjoying; he betrays no fretfulness at the want of those innocent amusements, in which others of his age indulge; he knows that Almighty God has ordained whatever happens to him, and that all which he ordains is wise, and in the end, will prove benevolent. These pious sentiments beguile the hours of pain, and smooth the bed of sickness. As virtue cannot shield any one from death, nor excellence afford a refuge from the grave; the pious youth is sometimes seen falling the early victim of some fatal disease, and prematurely retiring from the scene in which he seemed destined to move with honour and with usefulness. Behold him in that solemn hour: with perfect composure he receives the awful summons to resign the being bestowed upon him, with unruffled calmness, he reflects upon the past; with joyful hope, he looks to what is to come: Had Providence seen fit to prolong his life, he hopes it would have
been honourably and usefully spent, and recommended him still more to his Maker's favourable acceptance. But how severe might have been his trials! how hazardous the contest with the temptations of the world! Assured, therefore, that God will abundantly reward the attainments he has already made, and place him in a scene more favourable to an unlimited progress in virtue and piety, he commends his spirit, with unfeigned gratitude and submission, to him who gave it; and who, in his wisdom, thus early requires it again. Amidst the unavoidable tears of his friends, and the regrets of all who knew him, he sinks to rest, before the labour of life is well begun; and in God's due time, joins the society of just men made perfect, in another and a better world.

Such, my young friends, are the characters between which you are to choose. I may safely leave it to you to determine which shall be yours. May Almighty God direct your choice, and prosper all your virtuous resolutions!
My young friends cannot read, without pleasure, nor, if they be wise, without much profit, the following eloquent passage, selected from the last of the admirable Discourses on Providence, by the late Rev. Newcome Cappe.

"Devotion is a delicate and tender plant; as much as it is our duty and our interest to be possessed of it, it is not easily acquired, neither can it be carelessly maintained. It must be long tended, diligently cultivated, and affectionately cherished, before it will have struck its roots so deep as to grow up and flourish in our hearts; and all along till it attains to its perfect vigour and maturity in heaven, it needs to be defended from the adverse influences of things seen and temporal, of a vain imagination and an earthly mind.

"The best season for acquiring the spirit of devotion is in early life; it is then attained with the greatest facility; and at that season there are peculiar motives for the cultivation of it. Would you make sure of giving unto God his right, and of rendering to the great Creator and Governor of the world the glory due unto his name, begin to do it soon: before the glittering vanities of life have dazzled and enslaved your imagination, before the sordid interests of this world have gotten possession
INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS.

of your soul, before the habits of ambition or of avarice, or of voluptuousness, or of dissipation, have enthralled you; while your minds are yet free, and your hearts yet tender, present them to God. It will be a sacrifice superlatively acceptable unto him, and not less advantageous unto you. Beseech him that he will awaken in you every sentiment of piety; beseech him that he will direct and prosper your endeavours, to acquire, to keep alive, and to improve the genuine spirit of devotion. Entreat him that he will give you to behold himself in whatever else you see, and to discern his providence in all the events that you observe, or that you experience. Put your hearts into his hands, and importune him (if importunity it may be called) to lay them open unto all the blessed influences of the discoveries he has made of himself and of his will, in his works, or in his ways, or in his word. Implore him to give you and to preserve to you, the liveliest sensibility to all things spiritual and divine; and while thus you ask it, seek for it, in the conscientious use of the appointed means of grace, and by every method that intelligence, and prudence, and experience, recommend to you. Let it be a perpetual object with you every day, to be improving in this heavenly temper. The spirit of devotion will be very hard to kindle in the frozen bosom of old age, and not
very easy to introduce through the giddy heads into the busy hearts of manhood, or advanced youth.—If you wish, then, to reach that better world, where devotion, pure and ardent, is one of the most striking characters of its inhabitants, and, at the same time, one of the most essential ingredients in the happiness that they enjoy, you cannot be too early, and you cannot be too constant in your endeavours to acquire and maintain the spirit of devotion. It is an acquisition well worth all that it can cost you to attain it; for if the genuine spirit of devotion occupies your heart, it will preserve you from the corruptions that are in the world, it will give you courage to be singular, when to do your duty it will be necessary to be singular; it will make all your duties easy, and most of them it will make pleasant to you; it will shed the sweetest light upon the pleasing scenes and incidents of life, and will diffuse its cheering rays even over the darkest and most gloomy.

"The pleasures that you may take, will be infinitely more enjoyed by you, if God, the author of them, has possession of your hearts; and the pains you cannot shun, will be far less grievous to you, if God, who maketh darkness and createth evil, be regarded by you as the wise and kind dispenser of your lot. 'Remember,' then, while you are yet entering upon life, 'remember your Creator
in the days of your youth, before the evil day comes, and the years draw nigh, in which ye shall say, I have no pleasure in them." Those will be bad days to acquire and cultivate the spirit of devotion: but the spirit of devotion, acquired, and cultivated, and confirmed before, will convert those bad days into good ones. If you would be happy when you die, be pious while you live. If you would be cheerful when you are old, be religious while you are young. These objects you will acknowledge are well worthy your pursuit; and to your own convictions I appeal, that there are no other means by which you can attain these objects.

"Do not fear to admit the sentiments, and to cultivate the spirit of devotion; there is nothing tedious, dull, or irksome in it. It is pleasant even as pleasure's self. Though I am about to adopt the language of a poet, it is not the language of imagination merely that I speak; what has been said of liberty, with some degree of truth, may, with the most perfect truth, be said of the genuine spirit of devotion—it alleviates trouble, and enhances pleasure,

"It makes the gloomy face of nature gay,
Gives beauty to the sun, and pleasure to the day."
DEVOTIONAL EXERCISES.

SUNDAY MORNING.

Reflections.

Under the protection and blessing of that Almighty Power, to which I at first owed my being, I have lain down and slept in peace, and have arisen in health and safety. It is right, therefore, that my gracious and unceasing Protector should have my first thoughts, and my ardent gratitude. He alone it is who preserves me in life, and from his bounty I derive all the advantages and comforts I enjoy. Parents, and friends, and instructors; all the powers of my body and all the faculties of my mind, are bestowed by God, continued by him, and depend entirely upon his will. To him, therefore, be given my most grateful praise.

One blessing which I receive from him, is this day most forcibly brought to my mind; and for this I cannot be sufficiently thankful. I have the power of knowing, loving, and serving Him who c 2
created, and who preserves me. He has "taught me more than the beasts of the earth, and made me wiser than the fowls of heaven." They owe their existence, and all their enjoyments, to the same Almighty Power and boundless goodness; but they know not the hand that formed them, and are incapable of the sentiments of religious gratitude, and of the expression of religious praise. But to the children of men it is given to trace their Creator in his works; and to be still more fully instructed concerning Him, by his revealed word. Young as I am, I am not ignorant of the existence and the perfections of God; I know that he made me; that he takes care of me now, and will never lose sight of me even in the grave. I can love and fear, I can praise and obey him; and for my own present and everlasting benefit, he requires from me the homage of my heart and the obedience of my life. Religion constitutes one of the most important privileges that God has conferred upon human nature: it is a most decisive mark of the superiority of man to all the other orders of beings in this world; and it Qualifies him to seek after, and to obtain a heavenly and immortal inheritance. Never may I be insensible of the value of this privilege, or neglect to use and to improve it. Whatever may be my future lot in life, religion will enable me to sustain it with a becoming temper; and
to render it conducive to my eternal welfare. Acknowledging God in all my ways, and desiring above all things to stand approved in his sight, I shall pass through every scene with propriety and comfort. And so far from casting a gloom over the morning of my days, it will add much to its brightness, by enabling me to look up continually to the great Creator and Ruler of the universe, as to my Almighty Parent and my best friend, and by guarding me from all those youthful follies, which are ever attended with pain, disquietude, and disgrace. The ways of wisdom are "ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." The more assiduously I cultivate a love of religion now, the more steadily shall I adhere to the practice of it, when engaged in the more active concerns of the world; the fewer and the weaker will be the temptations to sinful conduct, with which I shall be assailed; and the more easily and the more comfortably shall I proceed through life, to the attainment of its great end, a world of ever-growing virtue and happiness. Whatever others do, therefore, let it be my firm resolution, now, in my younger days, to serve the Lord; to live under a constant sense of his presence with me; to avoid whatever he has forbidden; to do whatever he has commanded; and in every thought, word, and deed, to seek to please him. And since the religious services of this day
are designed to aid my improvement in the knowledge and the practice of whatever is holy and good, let me endeavour so to engage in them, that this design may be accomplished. Let me join in the worship of God, so that I may be more devoted to his fear; and listen to the instructions that shall be imparted, so that they may be impressed deeply upon my mind, and their beneficial influence be visible in my future conduct. Thus shall I be better prepared for either life or death; for the discharge of those duties to which the Providence of God may call me; or the recompense which he has graciously promised, and will faithfully bestow on those who have sincerely sought to know and to do his will.

PRAYER.

O ALMIGHTY GOD, the great Creator, Governor, and Supporter of all men; thankful for the existence which thou hast given me, and which by thy care has been preserved from the dangers of the past night, I humbly and gratefully bow myself before thee. Young and weak as I am, thou wilt not disdain my praises. Great and powerful as
thou art, the prayers of the meanest of thy creatures may, with acceptance, ascend to thy throne.

Heavenly Father, all I have is thine; thou hast made me, and thy providence has supported me in life to the present moment; and there is not one of all the blessings I enjoy, which thy goodness did not bestow. To thy kindness I owe parents and friends, and all the means of knowledge and happiness: and while others less advanced in life than myself, have been called to an early tomb, and cut off in childhood from all the objects of the present scene, I am still preserved, and surrounded with sources of the purest enjoyment. For these blessings, my heart adores thee; and may all my conduct prove the sincerity of my gratitude. To thee would I devote my youthful powers: in thy service would I spend these, and all my days. Carefully avoiding the follies and vices to which I may be exposed, I would make it my most earnest endeavour to be blameless in thy sight. Help me, O merciful Father, to form those habits of virtue, and to cherish those pious dispositions, which will best prepare me for the proper discharge of the important duties of advancing years, and fit me for a happy immortality, whenever thou shalt see fit to call me out of this life. Not presuming upon length of days, because I am now in health and vigour; but aware from the many proofs which are daily
exhibited, that no age is secure from death, may I spend my life in thy fear, and by constantly endeavouring to do that which is right in thy sight, keep myself in readiness for every appointment of thy providence.

May the lessons of wisdom I shall hear this day be deeply impressed upon my mind, and their good effects appear in my conduct.

Bless my relations, friends, and instructors. May I be ever ready to repay their kindness by gratitude and affection, and suffer none of their counsels to be imparted to me in vain.

And now, O most holy and merciful God, I commend myself to thy care and protection; guard me from danger, and preserve me from all evil, and at length bring me to thy heavenly kingdom. To thee be all honour and praise for ever. Amen.
SUNDAY EVENING.

Reflections.

Am I then that highly-favoured creature, which I have been this day taught to regard myself; Am I, when my present existence closes, destined to live again? Is this the infancy of my being, and is my existence to be renewed, prolonged, and perfected in a state beyond the grave? When I descend into the silent tomb, will it be only that I may pass from this world to another? Yes! such are my views of the termination of human life and its consequences, exhibited in the services of Christian worship; and to these great truths my thoughts have been this day directed. Death must be the portion of myself and of all men: but we die to live again.

In that future world, will there be no distinction made? Will all who live together now, live together there? Will the good and the wicked be regarded with equal favour, and treated with equal kindness? or will virtue there meet with its reward, and vice receive its punishment? The virtuous and the vicious are even here generally separated: though, in consequence of the mutual dependence
of human beings, they must necessarily have much converse with each other, yet their tastes are different, and their pursuits are by no means the same. Their pleasures are not derived from the same source, nor are their affections directed to similar objects. If, as I have been this day taught in the services of religion, the happiness of a future state will consist chiefly in the enlarged capacity of the human mind; in an uninterrupted progress in virtue and holiness, and a more perfect service of Almighty God, the man who now pursues a vicious course cannot be made happy. He only who loves God now, and practises the great duties which he has enjoined, can be a partaker of those joys which are at the right-hand of God. Is not this a serious consideration? Does it not most forcibly shew me the wisdom of being virtuous, and the folly of leading a vicious life? Is it not madness to risk the inconceivable enjoyments of a future world, in the pursuit of those pleasures which are only momentary, and incapable of yielding satisfaction? The question is short, and easily resolved: Shall I be virtuous now, and happy beyond the grave; or vicious now, and miserable in the future part of my existence? I cannot hesitate in this plain and momentous matter. By the practice of goodness—the only source of the true enjoyment of the present life—I will endea-
DEVO TIONAL EX ER CISES.

vour to render myself not unworthy of the mercy
of God, and prepare for a peaceful departure from
this life, and an inheritance amongst the spirits of
just men made perfect.

PRAYER.

Great and everlasting God, Maker of all things,
and Judge of all men, deeply grateful for all the
goodness thou hast displayed towards me, but es-
pecially for the revelation of a future life, I would
now bow down before thee, Lord, what am I that
thou shouldst thus unceasingly provide for my
happiness, or what shall I render unto thee, O
God, for all thy unmerited kindness? Thou hast
given me life, placed me in the midst of a beauti-
ful creation, and endowed me with all those powers
and affections, which render my existence so plea-
sing. To thy goodness I owe every comfort of
my life; by thy care I have been preserved from
danger and from death, and conducted through
numerous perils to the present moment. Every
thing I have enjoyed, every thing I yet look for,
cometh down from thee, the Father of all, who
DEVOTIONAL EXERCISES.

liberally suppliest the wants of all thy creatures.

Above all, I thank thee for the great truths of religion, which have been this day particularly brought to my mind. Born to die, surrounded with dangers, liable every moment to the assaults of disease, exposed to death in numberless forms, I praise thee, O merciful Father, that thou hast assured me and all mankind, that they who have lived virtuously, shall renew their existence beyond the grave, in a state of complete and endless happiness. As Jesus our Lord lives, his followers shall live also; as he could not be holden by death, neither shall they be the eternal prisoners of the tomb; they shall be raised to the same immortal joys, and gradually changed into his image, from one degree of glory to another. Such, O Almighty God, are the glorious hopes of those who do thy will! such are the exalted privileges, which belong to those who live soberly, righteously, and piously in the present world! such the happy state to which my heart would aspire! Oh, may the remembrance of these everlasting rewards of well-doing, be ever present to my mind, and preserve me from the dangerous snares of temptation! May the principles of that holy religion, which has been recommended to my serious regards this day, be so deeply impressed upon my heart, that their influence may appear in my whole conduct.
Under their guidance may I avoid all evil sentiments and practices; pass through the hazardous season of youth with my innocence unsullied, and my conduct irreproachable; and live through every future scene of life, in which thy providence may place me, usefully to others, comfortably and honourably to myself, and so as to secure thy approbation. Then shall I meet death with composure, and pass from this imperfect state to thy presence, where is fulness of joy; and to thy right-hand, where are pleasures for ever more.

Accept my sincere thanks, O God, for the various mercies of the past day; take me under thy protection during this night. Refreshed by sleep, may I arise in the morning in health and safety, and prepared to fulfil with diligence the various duties of my station.

Shew thy favour to my relations and friends; preserve them this night from danger; bestow upon them every blessing; and of thine infinite mercy grant that at length we may be united in that better world, reserved for all the truly wise and good. Amen.
MONDAY MORNING.

Reflections.

With what an infinite variety of living creatures has Almighty God filled the world! how diversified their forms! how different their powers! Some surprise us by their magnitude; others astonish us by their strength! Some excite pleasure by their beauty; and others raise our admiration by the exquisite contrivance of their almost invisible frame! But how infinitely does man excel them all! he envies them none of their powers; he desires neither their magnitude nor their strength; neither the nicety nor the beauty of their structure. One faculty with which the Almighty Creator has furnished him, gives him dominion over all the other animals, and enables him to render the qualities they possess, subservient to his use and enjoyment. Reason, capable of almost unlimited improvement, raises him to the most exalted rank, and constitutes him lord of the world below! The nearest approach to reason amongst the brutes, falls very far short of the excellence of this faculty in the human kind. Their reason is the effect of instinct alone; and their knowledge incapable of advancement. The parent is not wiser than its offspring;
nor the animals now existing, than those of the earliest age of the world. Not so with man: his powers seem almost incapable of being bounded; and his knowledge can reach to the remotest and most magnificent objects. It has been advancing since the first period of time; and no one can venture to say how far it shall hereafter go, nor what shall stay its progress.

How surprising is it, then, that any should be insensible of their important privilege! how much to be lamented that rational creatures should, by their indulging in gratifications which are brutish, prevent their minds from attaining any degree of exaltation! What object more deserving of pity, than the man who neglects the cultivation of his mind, despises knowledge, and seeks for pleasure in pursuits which must end in misery and ruin!

I am now in that period of my life, which ought to be devoted to the improvement of my mind, and the acquisition of the rudiments of valuable knowledge. I am in that period in which it is justly expected, that I acquire such a degree of information upon useful subjects, as will accord with my station in life, and prove beneficial to me in future. I am surrounded, through the kindness of Providence, with all the means necessary to this important end; and I am taught to expect, that "to whomsoever much is given, of him much will
be required;” and that for all the talents I possess, I shall hereafter be accountable to God. What more becoming or necessary in me, therefore, than diligence in laying a foundation for future usefulness and comfort.

The wise man has said, “for the soul to be without knowledge it is not good;” and the little experience I have had in the world is sufficient to prove to me, that knowledge and virtue are very nearly allied. The more enlarged my acquaintance with the useful branches of knowledge, the more constantly and pleasantly will my mind be occupied; the more shall I be withdrawn from scenes of temptation; and the more extensive will be the good I shall be enabled to do. If it should please Almighty God to make me prosperous in the world, knowledge will guide me to a right use of the good things I enjoy, and render me, in numberless instances, serviceable to those whose minds are less informed. If adversity befall me, and I be reduced to a meaner rank in life, I shall be in less danger of falling a prey to low vices, and of sacrificing my integrity and honour. Every consideration demonstrates that knowledge is excellent: it not only adds a great degree of respectability to the character, but it also exerts a valuable moral influence; and, while it adorns our present existence, renders us more secure of that which is to
come. Of religious knowledge this is eminently true; whatever, therefore, relates to the existence and perfections of God, the dispensations of religion, and the duties he has required me to perform, is of chief importance, and demands my unwearied diligence.

In a very short time I shall be engaged in more active scenes; my time will be occupied, and my thoughts will be employed upon the necessary concerns of life; and the leisure I now enjoy for useful attainments, I shall enjoy no longer. If I thoughtlessly neglect the advantages now afforded me, they will never return; and the ignorance I now prefer, will be my portion through life. Habits of indolence gained in this early period, will distinguish my conduct in the important concerns of the world. The want of knowledge will expose me to be the prey of the designing; prevent my being useful to others, and perhaps lead me into scenes, in which my virtue will fall a sacrifice, and my peace be for ever destroyed. I will obey, therefore, the voice of Wisdom: "Receive my instructions rather than silver, and knowledge rather than choice gold: for wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired, are not to be compared to it."
PRAYER.

O thou great Fountain of light, and source of all good! graciously accept my most sincere thanks, for the existence with which thou hast favoured me; and for all the powers by which I am distinguished. To thee am I indebted for all those sources of pleasing and useful knowledge by which I am surrounded; and by thy providence I enjoy the inestimable blessing of wise and benevolent instructors. Oh, Almighty God! may I not be insensible of this thy goodness, nor unmindful of the duties which thou hast called me to perform! May I ever preserve upon my mind a deep sense of the value and importance of knowledge, and the danger of neglecting to employ these faculties which thou hast bestowed upon me, for my own comfort and the benefit of my fellow-creatures. While I continue in a state of preparation for advancing years, may I carefully lay up instruction, and receive with grateful attention every assistance afforded me in the improvement of my mind. Aware of the dangers to which the ignorant are exposed, and mindful of the account which thou wilt hereafter call me to give of the talents entrusted to my care, may I duly reflect upon the rapidity with
which the advantages I now enjoy are passing away, and be incited to the most diligent use of that time which yet remains, before I enter upon the busier scenes of life.

Especially, O thou God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! may I deeply impress upon my mind the religious instruction I shall receive, and set a high value upon that knowledge which will make me wise unto salvation. May I diligently learn the principles of that holy religion, which must be my guide and support in the future part of my life, and carefully lay up all those maxims, which will direct me in the important relations I shall soon be called to sustain. May I be daily learning more of self-government, acquiring the habit of subduing every improper inclination, and of acting solely from a regard to thy will. While I am endeavouring to gain that instruction, which will prepare me for usefulness in the station in which thy providence shall place me, may I be learning the fear of the Lord, and laying a sure foundation for hope, when the present scene shall be drawing to a close. Thus may my youth be pleasing in thy sight, my future years useful and happy, and a world of ever-growing knowledge and virtue my eternal portion.

Grateful unto thee, O thou Preserver of men, for the repose of the past night, I commit myself
to thy care for the day on which I have entered. Guard me from all improper conduct, and aid me to fulfil all my virtuous resolutions.

Bless all who are united to me by the ties of blood or friendship; granting unto them all needful good; and finally, unite us to that heavenly society, which no man can number, surrounding the throne of thy glory, for ever and ever.

Amen.
MONDAY EVENING.

Reflections.

The happiness of youth cannot, surely, consist in thoughtlessness; the proper enjoyment of early life cannot depend upon the careful avoiding of all serious reflection. I am often told by those who seem to have an interest in my welfare, that this period of my being is, of all others, the most important, since every principle I now adopt, and every habit I now acquire, will greatly affect my conduct in future, and lay the foundation of that character which I shall maintain most probably through life. Are there no virtues then becoming my years? Are there no duties which the young are particularly called to fulfil? It cannot be that I am freed from all moral obligations: it is not possible that there should be no virtues which it will be my duty to cultivate.

It requires no greater knowledge of the world, and of the human character, than I am capable of possessing, in order to see the importance and necessity of modesty to one in this season of life; there cannot be any virtue in youth more requisite, becoming, or useful; every consideration urges me to cherish this grace. To be assuming and confident belongs to no age, nor to any attainments;
the oldest and the wisest of our species are not entitled to the privilege of being always right; and their behaviour is unseemly, when it appears to proceed from a conviction that they cannot err. I am young and inexperienced; I have neither years nor acquirements to boast of, or to produce as a plea for want of humility and diffidence. How often is my judgment erroneous; how often are my decisions faulty; how liable am I to error in sentiment and practice! The more my mind expands, the more shall I perceive my own insignificance; the wider the field of knowledge is opened to my view, the greater will my ignorance appear; and the more confined and limited my faculties. Of the imperfection which attends all human beings, how much must belong to one so little experienced as I am, whose season is not yet matured, and whose mind is not yet stored with useful principles. Is it desirable to enjoy the esteem of the wise? this cannot be acquired, if modesty be wanting; no attainments will compensate with them the absence of so becoming a virtue: or is it desirable that when I shall come to look back upon my present conduct, I should feel satisfaction? I must be diffident and humble. Confidence and boldness will cause me much pain upon recollection, when my mind shall become more enlarged, and my knowledge more extensive. By the blessing of
God, therefore, I will endeavour to cultivate a high regard for modesty; I will carefully guard against pride and self-conceit, avoid every expression that would betray a want of diffidence, and listen with attention and respect, when age and experience condescend to give me counsels of wisdom.

With this disposition I shall possess docility, another virtue highly important and necessary in the young. If I encourage not a higher opinion of myself than I ought, I shall observe so much in my conduct that is defective, and feel myself comparatively so ignorant, that I shall receive with gratitude the instructions of the prudent. To be always learning, is the character of the wise man: how becoming a part of my character, who know so little! If I enter upon life without that portion of knowledge I have now the power of acquiring, I shall soon have occasion to lament the want of a teachable disposition in my youth. Ignorance, folly, and perverseness will soon render me disagreeable to others, and miserable to myself.

Slight as my experience of the world has been, I have seen in some the bad effects of a temper not marked by ingenuousness and sincerity: May these prove a warning to myself. No respect will be shewn to that young person whose disposition is close and deceitful: my admiration is excited, and my affections are drawn forth, by those who
are open and sincere; and others, no doubt, will be affected in a similar manner towards myself. To practise this virtue; to be always frank and ingenuous, it is only necessary that I keep my conscience void of offence. If there be nothing in my conduct of which I have cause to be ashamed, I shall have no reason to fear the inspection of the world: if my behaviour be virtuous and uniformly agreeable to the commands of God, I can have no purpose to serve by prevarication and deceit.

How much to my disreput and to my injury, also, will it prove, to adhere with confidence to my own opinions, and to despise those of others, from a false notion that this discovers independence of mind, and manliness of character. Let me carefully guard against being imposed upon by names. It will be my duty and my honour early to cultivate a spirit which will spurn at oppression, and incite me to maintain an honest, upright, and supreme regard for truth and conscience: but in this period of my life, my duty clearly is to distrust myself, and to treat the opinions of others with respect. It is more likely that I should be wrong, if I differ from them, than they whose judgment is more matured. It is better that I should think with reverence of the sentiments which have been early instilled into my tender mind, than throw off all regard to them, from a grossly erroneous and de-
structive principle—that greatness of mind and manliness of conduct, are shewn by a contempt for all the early and kind labours of my pious friends.

All these virtues will become and adorn my character; I shall be rendered by them happy myself, and gain the esteem and affection of those with whom I am connected. This is an important consideration, and ought to have due weight upon my mind; but I should at the same time carefully remember, that I am to act from higher motives. The will of God requires that I should cultivate these virtues; and a supreme regard to that, should be a leading principle in the regulation of my conduct. The reward he has to bestow, is the only suitable reward of virtue, and his approbation is the greatest good I can enjoy. The favour of good men, will increase my happiness here: the favour of God, will constitute my happiness to endless ages.

PRAYER.

Great and ever blessed God, in humble adoration of thy power, and with sentiments of the most ardent gratitude for thy goodness, I would now bow before thee. How great is thy loving-kindness to the children of men? Thy mercies are new every morning; they are repeated every evening. In the hours of darkness and repose,
thy watchful providence preserves me from danger; and in the busier scenes of day, protects me from evil. What shall I render unto thee, O Lord, for all thy goodness! How shall I sufficiently praise thee, for the many mercies with which my life is distinguished. May I honour thee by a virtuous conduct, and manifest my gratitude by a constant obedience to thy commands!

Thy eyes are ever over me; thou compasst my path, and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways: there is not a thought in my heart, O Lord, but thou knowest it altogether. If in the past day thou hast seen any thing amiss in my conduct; if I have betrayed any impropriety in my temper, or in any respect done what I ought not to have done; or left undone that which it was my duty to perform; merciful Father, forgive me! and grant that for the future I may be more watchful and circumspect.

May I properly consider the importance of that period of life in which I am; and carefully perform all the duties belonging to it. May I be clothed with humility, and put on the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. May I not think of myself more highly than I ought to think; but learn to refer all I have and am, to thee, as the great Author of all my powers, and the Being upon whom I constantly depend. May I be ever ready to listen to instruc-
tion, and to respect the counsels of age and experience. May I keep my conscience void of offence, and abstain from every action which I should wish to conceal, and which would produce a habit of insincerity. May I set a high value upon the lessons of piety, which have been early impressed upon my mind, and cherish all the important truths of religion, which by the kindness of my friends have been inculcated.

In the unguarded hours of this night, may I repose in safety; and, preserved by thy Providence, may I awake in health, prepared and resolved, by thy assistance, to perform all the duties incumbent upon me.

I pray for these and all other blessings which thou shalt think fit to bestow upon me, as the disciple of Jesus Christ, thy Son; and by him, ascribe unto thee all honour and praise for ever.

Amen.
TUESDAY MORNING.

Reflections.

"I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man wanting understanding, and lo! it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down. Then I saw and considered it well; I looked upon it and received instruction. Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep. So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man." What a striking picture has the king of Israel here drawn! How powerful a warning does it contain against indolence! how strong a motive to industry! May I also look upon it, and receive instruction.

Do I bear any resemblance to the character here depicted? am I fond of indulging in any indolent habits? does sleep consume a greater portion of my time than the wants of nature require? in the necessary occupations of the day, am I listless and inactive? Let me be wise betimes, and correct so bad and so dangerous a propensity; and, before my character is confirmed, gain a habit of industry.
DEVOTIONAL EXERCISES.

What can be more becoming! From the emotions which the indolent man, thus described by Solomon, raises in my mind, I may conceive the pity, or perhaps the disgust, which the wise and good will feel towards me, if in that part of my life which ought to be distinguished by activity, I fall into a slothful disposition.

But industry is not only a becoming ornament, but a necessary duty. Much lies before me, which I shall never accomplish, if industry be wanting. How extensive a range is the human mind capable of taking! How numerous and important the objects which claim its regard! Of the excellence of knowledge, and the duty of obtaining it, I am fully convinced; and it requires only a slight view of its extent, to excite me to diligence. How numerous the branches of science, with which the comfort and enjoyment of life are connected! How endless the works of God, which by their magnificence, their beauty, or their utility, demand the attention of man! How worthy, yet how arduous the employment, to learn the attributes of God, the great truths of religion, the nature of the human mind, and the duties of the various relations I shall be called to sustain! What industry will it require to gain even a moderate acquaintance with these things! Am I of an age in which the rudiments of such invaluable knowledge are best ac-
quired? has the providence of God furnished me with instructors, who are kindly desirous of my improvement; and shall I be slothful, and refuse the benefits which are offered? How unwise, how unpardonable would be such conduct! If I be without much assistance; if my situation in life be such as to afford me but few aids in the improvement of my mind, the more powerful the call to industry. I have greater obstacles to surmount than others, and must therefore use proportionably more exertion.

Is it possible that the powers I possess, should have been given me for no purpose? Is it possible, that for talents so various and important, I shall not be required to render an account? Religion assures me that I shall, and thus renders industry an important duty. I am not allowed to choose whether I will be industrious or indolent; superior wisdom has made the choice for me, and ordained in this, as in every other instance, that the path of duty should also be the path of safety and of peace. How miserable the existence which the indolent drag on! How many vain and absurd expedients do they employ, to shorten time, and to shake off the oppressive weariness of sloth. The active and industrious are free from all these evils; they know not the unhappiness of having time hang heavily upon them; constant exertion strengthens and im-
proves their faculties; and preserves their minds in a healthful and happy state. How easily do the indolent fall a prey to folly and to vice! The mind cannot be wholly unoccupied; if good thoughts be not encouraged, those which are evil will assuredly take possession of it; if virtuous dispositions be not cultivated, those which are vicious will inevitably be formed; if active and wise pursuits be not followed, the character will soon be corrupted, and society injured.

Industry now must be manifested chiefly in the improvement of my mind; but the time is fast advancing when other objects will claim my regard, and I shall be called to employ my powers in more active scenes. How important will habits of industry be then! new relations, and new duties will open before me, and I shall perhaps have to provide for my subsistence by the diligent use of my bodily and mental powers; or if industry be not necessary to my immediate subsistence, how many duties will be before me! What a constant and important task, to check evil propensities, to form virtuous habits, to regulate my conduct by the principles of reason and religion, to relieve the necessitous, to instruct the ignorant, and to promote the cause of truth and virtue. I cannot plead ignorance of my great Master's will: if I be too indolent to perform it, what will prevent the awful
sentence being passed upon me? "Cast ye this unprofitable servant into the outer darkness, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

PRAYER.

ALMIGHTY God and most merciful Father, the Creator and the Preserver of all men! accept my sincere and ardent thanks, for the protection which thy Providence has afforded me during the past night. Thy care is always extended over the creatures thou hast formed: but I would especially bless thee for the moral government thou exercisest over thy rational offspring, for the many incentives which are offered to an upright, virtuous conduct, and for the blessed hopes which the rising of our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, has inspired into the minds of frail and perishable men. May I never be unmindful of thy goodness, nor cease to express my gratitude by an unwearied obedience to all thy will.

In this important period of my life, may I consider the things which belong unto my future and eternal peace, before the privileges I now enjoy
shall be mine no longer. May I be preserved from all those follies which the thoughtless pursue, and escape all the dangers into which they run, who hate knowledge, and do not choose the fear of the Lord. Warned by the many fatal instances of the evil effects of indolence, may I use the utmost diligence in improving my mind, and regulating my conduct. Whatever my hand findeth to do, may I do it with all my might, knowing that I must be accountable to thee for all the powers thou hast bestowed upon me, and that the time of my probation is passing hastily away. May I never devote to idleness and folly, the few but important moments of mortal existence. May I duly consider the great work which lies before me, and unremittingly endeavour to perform the task allotted to me. By gaining habits of industry, and by treasuring up with care and diligence those maxims which ought to regulate my future conduct, may I be preparing to act my part in life, with honour to myself, with usefulness to others, and so as to promote thy glory. Thus having zealously performed thy will, and carefully followed the example of my blessed Master, who went about continually doing good, may I be thought worthy of that reward which he has promised, in thy name, to all his faithful followers.

To the guidance and to the care of thy provi-
Devotional Exercises.

dence I now commit myself for the day upon which I have entered; preserve me from all evil, impress upon my mind a constant sense of thy universal presence, and grant that at the close of it, I may be able to look back upon my conduct with satisfaction and pleasure.

May all my friends be approved and blessed by thee: and may we all so pass through the present state, as to be blessings to each other; and prepared for that perfect and enduring happiness, which thou hast prepared for those who love thee. Amen.
TUESDAY EVENING.

Reflections.

It has been said of Wisdom, that "all her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." It has been said by one upon whose testimony I may rely, by one who had tried every means usually resorted to by men, to procure happiness; and who after the most laborious search, pronounced of every thing—but religion, that it was "vanity and vexation of spirit." A still higher authority has declared, that, "there is no peace to the wicked." These declarations of Scripture are no other than the dictates of the soundest reason. Those peaceful reflections, that constant satisfaction which the virtuous enjoy, must be the highest felicity: that consciousness of guilt, that fear of futurity, which the vicious feel, must be a source of unspeakable pain. Every thing on the part of religion, is pleasant and inviting; all that vice presents is, when clearly seen, gloomy and terrific. If pleasure be better than pain, if peace of mind be more desirable than self-reproach, if the favour and approbation of God be preferable to his displeasure, then the virtuous are those who choose the ways of pleasantness, and walk in the paths of...
peace. How fatal is the delusion, therefore, under which some labour, who consider religion as gloomy, and who devote themselves to the unrestrained guidance of their passions: they relinquish what is substantial, in order to grasp at a shadow; and too late, perhaps, will find that their pursuit of pleasure will conduct them to remediless ruin. Am I without experience of the fatal tendency of what is wrong? Have I not sometimes yielded to the suggestions of evil, fallen a prey to temptation, betrayed some irregularities of temper and behaviour? and what have been the consequences, pleasurable, or painful? such as are to be desired, or such as are to be avoided? Have my reflections been peaceful, or has not self-reproach warned me to go and sin no more, lest a worse evil come upon me? From the small deviations I have already made from the path of uprightness, let me dread the departing from it more widely.

Nothing can more clearly demonstrate the absurdity of vice than this, that they who engage with the greatest ardour in the pursuit of it, not only resign all the real good they can enjoy, but hope at some future time to repent: they persist in doing what they expect will cause them shame; and devote themselves to those pleasures which they know must be succeeded by grief and remorse. And shall I be of this number? Shall I be so far
DEVOITIONAL EXERCISES.

Devoid of reason, as to act thus absurdly? Shall I "laugh now, that I may hereafter mourn and weep." Shall I spend my youth in gaiety, that my old age may be clouded with sorrow? To the infirmities which years may produce, shall I add the inexpressible pain of a mind bowed down by the consciousness of guilt? God forbid! When virtue offers such real satisfaction, such a pleasing prospect of unceasing happiness, I will resign to the inconsiderate, and to those who are devoid of understanding, the vain, deceitful joys of folly and of vice.

How much is the danger of evil conduct enhanced by this reflection, that its consequences cannot be confined to the individual who adopts it, but must affect others, and perhaps to a very alarming degree. How extensively may bad example operate! how many may be injured by the want of virtue in another! how many that would have run well in the way of goodness, may be hindered by the pernicious influence of the evil conduct of their associates! But how seldom do the vicious content themselves with merely exhibiting a bad example! how generally is it to be observed, that they are active in drawing others into the same snares, and in-enticing them into the same deviations from rectitude. How many are there, "who sleep not except they have done mischief, and whose
sleep is taken away unless they have caused some to fall." Some crimes cannot be committed by an individual alone: many vices must have sharers in the guilt they produce; and can repentance remove the criminality of having been instrumental to the destruction of others? Can any tears on our part wash away the stains we have impressed upon the character of those whom our vices have ruined? Repentance cannot extend beyond the individual: it may bring me to a right way of thinking, and recover me to a conscientious adherence to virtue; but can repentance give perfect ease to a mind which is conscious of having diverted others from the path of virtue, into that of sin; and enticed them into that evil conduct, in the midst of which, perhaps, they have been arrested by death; or in which they continue to proceed without any apparent hope of reformation? If our influence have been very extensive, our sorrow will be proportionably more severe when we come to reflection; and may, perhaps, accompany us into the other world, and interrupt our enjoyment there. If we retain the remembrance of what we have been and done here, we must be grieved, even in the presence of God, that, through our means, some are excluded from those happy regions, and lamenting their connexion with us in the scenes of darkness and despair! The happiness of a future state, may perhaps
he complete only to those who have been uniformly virtuous, who from their youth up, have lived in the fear and service of God. What a powerful motive does this hold out to me to contract no evil habits, to keep myself unspotted from the world, to encourage only virtuous affections in myself and others. In the presence of God, then, may this be my steady resolution, to "enter not into the path of the wicked, to go not into the way of evil men; to avoid it, to pass not by it, to turn from it, and pass away."

---

**PRAYER.**

Most holy and righteous God, with the deepest veneration of thy greatness, the most sincere gratitude for thy mercies, and with humble, though firm resolutions to live in a constant fear and love of thee, would I now present unto thee my evening sacrifice of prayer and praise. Thanks be unto thee, O God! for the abundant provision thou hast made for the supply of all my wants, and the attainment of true and lasting happiness.—From the dangers which surround me both by night and by day, thou dost kindly preserve me; and while thou art granting me every thing which is neces-
sary to render my life happy, by the various mo-
tives afforded me to act virtuously, thou art con-
ducting me to a state of more perfect enjoyment.
Oh let not thy grace be imparted to me in vain:
May the engaging nature, and the glorious rewards
of virtue, excite me to walk in all the command-
ments of the Lord blameless. May the present
misery and the future awful punishment denounced
against vice, deter me from the very appearance of
evil. May I carefully avoid all irregular indul-
gences, and guard against every sentiment and
action, which would tend to lessen my reverence
for goodness, lest my heart become so hardened
and impenitent, that I proceed in treasuring up
unto myself wrath against the day of wrath, and
revelation of thy righteous judgment, who wilt
render unto every man according to his deeds; but
may I by patient continuance in well doing, from
my youth up, seek for glory, honour, and incor-
rup tion; and finally obtain everlasting life. In
my intercourse with others, may I be neither sedu-
ced by evil example, nor become the instrument of
temptation to others: from the errors of those
around me, may I learn wisdom; from their ex-
cellencies, may I derive encouragement and zeal to
proceed in the way of virtue; and by the constant
uprightness of my own conduct, may I endeavour
to let my light so shine before others, that they
DEVOTIONAL EXERCISES.

seeing my good works, may glorify thee, my Father in heaven.

Grateful for the care thou hast exercised over me during the past day, I cheerfully commit myself to thy protection during the succeeding hours of darkness. The darkness and the light are both alike to thee. As I cannot be concealed from thy notice, neither can I be placed beyond the reach of thy power. May these common mercies of thy providence never be lightly esteemed, but urge me to a more constant and grateful regard to thy will.

I pray for the welfare of the whole human race, especially of those to whom I am more nearly related. Be pleased, O Lord, to grant them every needful blessing, both now and evermore. To thee be all honour, thanksgiving, and praise, through Jesus Christ, for ever. Amen.
WEDNESDAY MORNING.

Reflections.

That God is good, is the plain and unanswerable dictate of nature and experience.—All the works of God, and all the ordinances of his Providence declare his loving-kindness, and shew forth his praise; and all the events of my life unite to confirm this glorious truth. How kindly are all my wants supplied! with how much benevolence are all the circumstances of my being arranged! how good the hand that is leading me from youth to manhood, and preserving me from the numberless dangers by which I am surrounded!

But not in this alone is the goodness of God to be discerned; a brighter and a more inestimable display of it is to be seen in the Christian revelation. That divine institution does indeed proclaim him good, that affords the fullest proof, that his mercy endureth for ever. Resting upon the most solid foundations, supported by the most convincing evidence, conveying the most welcome information, it challenges my belief, and demands my warmest praise. It is proper that I should seriously consider the benefits which I derive from
this divine institution, that I may be truly sensible of the gratitude I owe to God, and better disposed to improve the advantages I enjoy.

What, then, does the Christian revelation teach? what conduct does it require? what hopes does it raise? The knowledge it conveys is most important and interesting; the conduct it requires most conducive of my happiness; the hopes it excites and confirms, the most animating and glorious.

The religion of Jesus teaches me that God is my Father. How delightful this doctrine! Does that great Being, who rules the universe, whose greatness exceeds the utmost stretch of human thought, condescend to hold to me so endearing a relation? does he invite me to approach him with humble confidence, to regard myself as his child? are all the events of my life brought about by paternal care and kindness; and in all which conduce to my welfare, does Almighty God take a kind concern? Yes. This is the dictate of the Christian revelation; and I will bind the Gospel to my heart, and thankfully adore the Goodness from which it is derived. It is not for me to contemplate at an awful distance the glories of Divine Power: it is not for me to tremble to draw nigh to the throne of the Supreme Majesty of heaven and earth: it is not for me to fear that I shall not be heard and accepted. God is my father, and all
the affection which a wise and tender parent feels for his children, does God much more strongly possess towards them who love him. Though I be the creature of a day, with very limited powers, of uncertain duration, crushed as soon as the moth, yet am I emboldened, by the revelation of Jesus Christ, to call the Almighty my parent, and to confide in his paternal care. With all humility, I will use this glorious privilege; and with all the affection so justly due to him, I will be obedient to his will. In his service I will spend my days; and the love of him shall guide my principles and my conduct.

Desirous of my happiness, and willing to ensure it, God has declared himself my moral Governor and Judge. He has taught me to consider him as everywhere present, observing the actions of all his creatures, in order that he may give unto every one according to his deeds. He has kindly furnished me with plain and important precepts to regulate my conduct, and mercifully promised to reward me according to my works. How important this truth! how powerful a motive to goodness, and how animating in the practice of virtue! Wherever I am, God sees me: whatever I do, he observes it: he notices with pleasure every attempt to serve and glorify him, and will finally reward and honour it. What zeal should this
inspire into my mind! what constant attention to upright conduct! God is my witness; I am performing my duty in his sight; and he will faithfully recompense all my labours.

How glorious is this expectation! how inestimable the hope which the resurrection of Jesus from the grave confirms! Nature awakens in the human breast a desire after immortality; but Nature cannot promise that this desire shall be satisfied. The Christian revelation alone affords to weak and perishable man, an assurance of renewed existence beyond the grave, in a more perfect state. The religion of Jesus alone contains complete and satisfactory evidence, that the power of death is destroyed, and that man shall not be the eternal prisoner of the tomb.

Who now shall persuade me that religion will make me gloomy? who now shall tell me that it is not suited to the period of youth? Will the knowledge of God as my Father, the belief that he sees all my conduct, and will reward me if I act virtuously; the full confidence that he has prepared, for all who love him, a state of never-ending and inconceivable felicity, impress my mind with melancholy sensations, or be unsuitable to my season of life? Assuredly not. To the vicious, indeed, these truths can possess no attractions; they care not to have God for their Father, they
dread his notice, they fear his righteous displeasure: but to the virtuous, to those who endeavour to serve and honour God, the discoveries which the Christian religion opens, are sources of the most pure and lasting joy. Thanks be unto God, therefore, for his unspeakable love by Jesus Christ, our Lord!

PRAYER.

PRAISE be unto thee, O thou most gracious and merciful God, for all the instances of thy loving-kindness, which thou art continually manifesting to thy creatures; and for all the numberless evidences we have, that thou art love, and dwellest in love. How shall my tongue utter the grateful praise which thy goodness claims, and which my heart desires to express? Lord, thou canst read it there, and it is my constant and earnest wish, that it may be seen in the whole of my temper and conduct. Not a moment of my life is passed, that has not been marked by thy benevolence. Of all the invaluable blessings with which I am favoured, there is not one which thou didst not bestow. Thy bounty supplies all my wants, and provides me with every thing needful for the safety and comfort of my existence.
DEVO TIONAL EXERCISES.  

I would especially thank thee, O Almighty and ever-blessed God, for the revelation of thy will by Jesus Christ, by which I am encouraged to rejoice in thee as my father, incited to do those things only, which are well pleasing in thy sight, and animated to the practice of all goodness, by the hope of thy favour unto eternal life. May the principles of the Gospel be deeply impressed upon my mind, and produce a constant and powerful influence upon my temper and behaviour. May I value nothing so much as thy approbation; may I fear above all things to incur thy displeasure, and to endanger my future acceptance with thee. Under all the temptations which may assail me, may I remember the exalted destination of my future being; and suffer none of the pleasures of sin, which abide for so short a season, to disqualify me for those eternal pleasures, which are at the right-hand of God. May it be my constant care to render all my thoughts, my words, and my actions, agreeable to the dictates of thy will; and so to pass through all the scenes of this temporal state, that I may not finally be excluded from those which shall never end.

May the influence of these glorious principles of the Christian revelation, be daily more and more extended; may all error, both in sentiment and practice, be speedily removed from mankind:
may all false religion and idolatry cease; and may all the nations of the earth be blessed by the light of the everlasting Gospel.

Knowing not what a day or an hour may bring forth, it is the ground of my happiness that thou who knowest all things, art my unceasing guide and protector. Guard me, I pray thee, from danger: and especially from all those temptations which would prove too strong for my virtue, and destroy the tranquillity of my mind; so that at the close of this day I may enjoy the inestimable blessing of a conscience void of offence. To thee, the God of all love and mercy, be ascried by all thy creatures, through Jesus Christ, honour, thanksgiving, and praise, for ever. Amen.
How many grand and delightful objects continually surround me! how striking the scenes which nature, on all sides, presents! My heart cannot be unaffected by them. The sun rising in pleasing majesty, diffusing, in his daily course, light and heat to the world, and setting in splendour and magnificence: the silent moon travelling, with less dignity indeed, but not with less beauty, the same path, and with her borrowed rays cheering the hours of night: the planets moving in uninterrupted order, and in regular periods round the common source of day; together with those countless stars that blaze through the wide expanse of heaven, all these exhibit to me a scene which raises sensations I cannot express. On the earth on which I move, the wonders and the beauties of creation are inexhaustible. How striking the effects of the regular vicissitudes of the seasons! how wonderful the periodical decay and renovation of nature! How pleasing the springing of flowers, herbs, and trees, and the
advancement of the fruits of the earth to maturity! how curious the formation of the tenderest blade of grass, of the minutest form of animal life, of the treasures which the earth contains within itself! And shall I wander in the midst of these displays of grandeur, or of beauty, without casting one thought towards that great Being to whom all things owe their existence? Do the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament shew forth his handy-work, and shall I be regardless of his existence and perfections? Are the fowls of the air, and the beasts of the field formed and supported by Almighty Power, and shall I be as unmindful of the Supreme Cause as they are? Are the flowers of the field adorned by his wisdom, and shall they excite in me no admiration of his nature? Let me not so misuse the powers of my mind, and bear such a resemblance to the brutes, who are incapable of knowing the hand which has placed them in this fair scene. Not one of the works of nature is without the most exquisite wonders, and the most admirable properties. In the contemplation of these I would humbly adore the Supreme Being, and revere the perfections of his nature which are here displayed.

Wherever I turn my eyes, how many and how convincing the proofs I receive of the power
of God! I take up a blade of grass; how wise its structure! how admirable the contrivance it displays! I view with attention the minutest insect; how curious its frame! how wonderful its instincts! how wisely adapted to the place it holds in the system of nature! With all the powers of which man boasts, he is unequal to the production of the minutest plant that vegetates, or the smallest insect that creeps upon the face of the earth. We tread them under foot, indeed, but we cannot restore them to life, nor supply the vacancy we have made in the great system. I contemplate the stars which shed their brilliant light in the vast expanse above me. These I am taught to consider as suns, round which planets, invisible to us, perform their unceasing movements. I transport myself in thought to the farthest of these suns which my eyes can behold; and thence I look forwards, and, in imagination, view a similar spectacle of wonder! But why these suns to illuminate other worlds, if those worlds be not inhabited by beings who can enjoy that light? My mind, therefore, is overwhelmed with the thought of countless myriads of living creatures, all brought into existence; all supported in their existence; all guided and directed by the Great Ruler of the universe. How, then, can I conceive of him,
who, uncaused himself, is the first and sole cause of all that exists! What adequate conceptions can I form of the power of that Being, "who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with a span, "and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, "and the hills in a balance! who sitteth upon "the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants "thereof are as grasshoppers; who stretcheth "out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth "them out as a tent to dwell in!" In the contemplation of such power, my mind is lost, my faculties are unequal to the full conception of its greatness.

The wisdom of God in the works of nature, is no less evident than his power. Throughout his boundless creation there is no irregularity or confusion. So wisely are all the parts of the immense system of the universe adjusted; so wisely are all their complicated movements directed, so admirably suited are all the properties of inanimate nature, and all the instincts of living creatures, to the situation they are destined to fill, that all is harmony, beauty, and order. Do I admire the skilful contrivances of my fellow-creatures? am I astonished at the movements of the curious machines which human ingenuity
devises? What shall I think of that Wisdom which planned the various arrangements that take place in nature, and provided for their uninterrupted course?

But the works of nature display an attribute of the Supreme Being, yet more interesting to his rational and accountable creatures; they declare him to be good; they manifest a constant attention to the happiness of all the beings he has formed. I cannot go where the goodness of God is not to be seen. I cannot look upon that object, which does not shew this amiable perfection. His sun cheers me with its beams, and refreshes me with its agreeable warmth. He clothes the fields in the beauty which delights my senses. He causes the various tribes of animals to administer to the comfort of each other and of man. All that proceeds from God is good; all his works proclaim his benevolence.

Thus should the works of nature impress my mind, and thus direct my thoughts to Him who made and governs them. Of these works, I will not be regardless; and while I receive from them instruction and delight, I will offer my praise to Him from whom alone they proceed.
PRAYER.

INCONCEIVABLY great and glorious Lord God, who madest the heavens and the earth, and all things which we behold, mercifully accept the praise my heart desires to offer for all these various manifestations of thy supreme perfections. Great art thou, O God, and greatly to be praised; thy greatness is unsearchable; thy power is unlimited; thy dominion has been from everlasting, and shall abide for evermore. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting thou art God! Thou spakest, and the universe came into being; and upon thy powerful influence it depends for its continuance. These things which my eyes now behold shall perish, but thou shalt endure; all these shall grow old, as does a garment, as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed; but thou wilt ever be the same, and to thy years there shall be no end. Adored be that goodness which has promised to all who love and serve thee, a state of immortal happiness; where all their powers shall be unceasingly and eternally employed, in progressively advancing in the knowledge, and love, and resemblance of God.
Placed in the midst of thy wonderful works, may I contemplate them with pleasure and admiration, and look through them to thee their Divine Author. Never may I forget thee in the glorious scene in which I am placed; nor cease to derive all the moral instruction thy works convey. May I fear thy displeasure as the worst of evils, and aspire after thy favour as my chief good! In all the pleasing circumstances of my life, may I gratefully adore thy goodness; and in all that is adverse, may I trust in thy mercy and wisdom. In every scene and in every event of life, may I so conduct myself, that when I am removed from the present world, I may be qualified, through thine infinite mercy, for the more blessed inheritance of a future state.

Though the shades of night conceal from me the face of nature, from thee, O Lord, nothing is hidden. To thee, therefore, I commit myself with humble confidence, that if it be agreeable to thy will, I shall be guarded from all evil, and again behold the return of day.

To thee be all honour and praise for ever. Amen.
THURSDAY MORNING.

Reflections.

Among the many inducements which are offered to me to love that great Being, to whom I owe all I enjoy, this assuredly is not the least, that he has not only made my true happiness to consist in virtue, but has also furnished me with the most powerful motives to resist every allurement to evil; and to follow, with unabating perseverance, whatever is good and praise-worthy. In a world, where temptations abound, where, no doubt, for the wisest reasons, the creatures whom God has made accountable, are exposed to the influence of many pressing solicitations to what is wrong, it affords a pleasing proof of the divine benevolence, that the strongest incentives to goodness also exist; and the most important maxims of virtuous conduct are to be deduced.

Some of these apply, with peculiar force, to those of my age. All the rational offspring of God are called to virtue and honour; but the young have motives presented to them of peculiar moment.
These I would diligently impress upon my mind, that I may be prepared at all times to resist temptation, and to subdue every evil propensity.

What is there to urge me more irresistibly to devote my youth to virtuous pursuits; to shun with extreme caution every path into which sin would entice me, than the powerful effect of habit? I am old enough to observe the consequences of early habit in others, and capable of reasoning, from what passes in my own conduct. How does it happen that so many around me, to whom the practice of evil must prove as fatal as it does to others, take no warning, neglect all admonition, and are inattentive to the voice of conscience? To what is it owing, that in the midst of the same temptations and allurements, and equally exposed to the influence of present feeling or self-interest, there are many whom no evil solicitations can persuade to violate the obligations to duty, no incitements can draw aside from the way of virtue and integrity? Is not the effect of habit to be seen in both these instances? He who has been trained to evil, perseveres in the practice of it; he whose youthful mind was tainted by corrupt principles and maxims, adheres to them, even in opposition to his better judgment: whereas, he who by the pious care of parents or instructors, was early taught to
love and reverence, piety and moral excellence; upon whose heart virtuous impressions were made, while it was yet tender, cannot, as he advances in life, depart from the conduct he has been taught to follow. All the difficulty which the one feels to become virtuous, prevents the other from becoming vicious; and while the former proceeds from one degree of impurity to another, until he reach the appointed scene of righteous retribution, the latter advances in the knowledge and the practice of every thing good, and enters upon the reward of approved virtue, in the blissful presence of Almighty God. Must one of these be my destiny? Will the conduct I pursue in life, exert so powerful an influence upon my state after death? Let me be wise, and form in my youthful breast an ardent love of God and goodness, and accustom myself to the observance of those laws, which are sanctioned by never-fading honours to the obedient. I see where my duty and my interest lies; I know the conduct which wisdom recommends; my mind is not left without moral and religious instruction; I am not suffered to wander without one friendly hand to direct my feet into the path of virtue. Never will it be in my power to plead, that I was not taught in my youth to fear and honour God, or encouraged to form a habit
of acting well. The goodness of God has provided me with every necessary aid now, to gain the rudiments of that character, which will be honourable in future life, and qualify me, through his infinite mercy, for the happiness of another world. Let me not insure my condemnation by neglecting to acquire an habitual regard for goodness.

There are some, indeed, who, after a long course of evil conduct, are recovered to a right mind; who, awakened by some sudden calamity, or some alarming dispensations of Providence, relinquish the habits they had formed, and during the remainder of their lives steadily adhere to the practice of virtue. But shall this encourage me to form habits of vice or folly? shall this induce me to neglect the cultivation of virtuous dispositions in my youth? Assuredly not. There are few who thus turn from the evil of their ways, and how can I hope to be one of this small number. Perhaps no calamity, no motive by which others are awakened from their fatal delusion, may be granted to me; or if it be, it may not have the same power over my mind. Long accustomed to evil, I may not be able, however I may wish it, to remove from the scene of temptation, or to resist the solicitations to vice; or the time of repentance may never
come to me: death may unexpectedly remove me from the present scene, and place me where no knowledge nor device is found! What madness would it be in me, were I to spend these important years of my life in indolence, because some who have done so, have, in maturer age, made considerable advances in knowledge, and gained an intimate acquaintance with science, usually acquired only in youth. The folly would be surely greater, in proportion as its tendency is more fatal, to indulge in vicious gratifications, and to neglect to acquire the love and practice of what is virtuous, in the expectation of coming at length to a better mind, and of adopting a wiser conduct. The safest way is the way of duty, and by the blessing of Almighty God, this shall be my steady resolution, that “whatever others do, as for me, I will fear the Lord;” so that the practice of virtue may be easy and pleasant to me through life, and the last hour undisturbed by any bitter reflections.

PRAYER.

SUPREMELY great and glorious God! the former and the friend of all creatures, with humble adoration of thy glorious perfections, would I present my morning tribute of prayer and praise! Pre-
served by thy watchful care from day to day, and
favoured with many sources of happiness, I owe
unto thee all the gratitude my heart can feel, and
all the obedience it is in my power to manifest.
At the beginning of another day, to which thy
goodness has brought me, I desire to impress upon
my mind those sentiments of love and veneration,
which shall preserve me from evil, and incite me to
the practice of what is pleasing in thy sight. Oh
may I never willingly offend that good Being, who
unceasingly displayst the kindest regard for my
welfare and comfort, and by all the works of na-
ture, and all the dispensations of his providence,
designs to make me happy! May thy will, O Lord,
be the constant law of all my behaviour; and may
every thought of my heart, every word of my
mouth, and every action of my life, be regulated
by an unceasing desire to glorify thy holy name.

May none of the important motives by which
thou dost urge me and all thy creatures to the
practice of what is holy and good, fail of exerting
their proper influence. May I duly reflect upon
the alarming consequences, which may attend every
deviation from uprightness, in the present period
of my life. May I stand in awe and sin not, lest a
love of evil be formed in my heart, and I proceed
from one sinful action to another, till I be harden-
ed in guilt, and incapable of repentance; but
by perseverance in well doing, may I be forming, during this most important season of my existence, those virtuous habits, which, through thy grace, shall regulate all my future conduct; effectually secure me from violating thy righteous precepts; and prepare me for the society of the wise and good, in a future blessed world.

Sensible of the many frailties to which I am subject, and of the numerous errors into which I am liable to fall, I humbly implore thy forgiveness of whatever thy pure eyes have beheld amiss in me. Before thee all hearts are open; from thee no action can be hidden: may my whole temper and behaviour be subject to the influence of this important truth, so that in humility and uprightness, I may walk before thee all the days of my life.

To thee be ascribed all honour and praise for ever. Amen.
THURSDAY EVENING.

Reflections.

When I learn how much the future character and conduct of men depend upon the principles adopted in the early part of life, and the habits which are then formed, I cannot fail of being convinced that however suitable and becoming innocent gaiety and cheerfulness may be, yet that a total want of reflection and fore-thought is highly improper and dangerous. To act well through life, is an object of supreme importance, regarded in its effects, either upon my present or my future existence; and the retirement of a few moments, during the many hours of activity which I enjoy, must not only be a duty, but must also tend to produce the most beneficial effects.

Apart, then, from the business and pleasures of the world, let me strengthen my obligations to perform the great duties of morality and religion, and raise my thoughts to that Being, in whose hand my breath is, and whose are all my ways.

Among the many important duties, which are prescribed by Almighty God, is that of paying a
strict regard to truth. In all my words and in
all my actions, I am to be sincere, and without
guile. No falsehood must ever pass my lips;
no deceitfulness ever mark my conduct. "Lying
lips," says the wise man, "are an abomination
to the Lord: but they who deal truly are his
delight." The judgment which men in general
form, differs not from this, and the violation of
truth is always followed by want of confidence
and esteem. And what more natural and proper?
what character more odious, than that of the man
upon whose word no reliance is to be placed,
and whose daily practice is at variance with his
professions? Suspicion mingles with all the
transactions in which his fellow-creatures are
engaged with him: no intercourse is maintained
with him, but such as is absolutely necessary;
and his most solemn asseverations are received
with mistrust. He injures society in the most
important manner; and society disclaims him in
return.
Falsehood may mark our conduct, as well as
our words; our actions may belie our professions,
as well as our words contradict the real senti-
ments of our hearts. What character more de-
testable than the hypocrite? who more to be
avoided than the false flatterer? who more
worthy of contempt than the man of empty and
unmeaning compliments? Sincerity may subject
me to some temporary inconveniences; a strict adherence to truth, may, in some cases, expose me to the sneers of the unthinking; but the consciousness of uprightness and integrity, will be an abundant recompense.

These are the principles upon which I would act: with an utter abhorrence of whatever is deceitful, either in word or deed, I would endeavour to pass through this and every season of my life. If at any time, owing to the frailty of my nature, or the want of due consideration, I should fall into error, far will I be from adding to my fault by prevarication, or deceit. Not despising those common forms of social life, which are universally adopted, I will studiously refrain from all those expressions, which would lead others into error, and awaken expectations which are not designed to be realized. Considering that Almighty God always sees my heart, I will endeavour to make all my words and actions agreeable to the sentiments which prevail there.

A deceiver is hateful in every period of life; but in that which is unpractised in the arts of the world, and which is little experienced in the evil manners which too much abound there, he is peculiarly deserving of detestation. A young person, guilty of falsehood, in the practice of deceit, is a character which must meet with the
severest condemnation. Openness and sincerity, and all freedom from guile, are justly esteemed the ornaments of youth; and he who in that season of life, so far departs from the conduct he is universally expected to preserve, as to lie and deceive, must be an object not only of pity, but of contempt. May no such stain be fixed upon my character. May no such reproof accompany me into life, and injure my reception with the wise and good! So hateful, so useless, so injurious a vice, shall never, by the blessing of God, wound the peace of my mind, or disqualify me for the confidence of my fellow-creatures, and the approbation of the righteous Lord, who loveth righteousness.

In this early age, I would check every propensity that would lead me to disregard truth, and carefully avoid every word and action that would lessen my abhorrence of falsehood; aware of the danger of proceeding from the slightest degree of criminality to one more fatal, and of being so seduced by the deceitfulness of sin, as finally to lose all reverence of integrity, and to disregard the most awful violations of truth and principle. And in all the concerns in which I am now engaged, I would endeavour to form those habits of uprightness and sincerity, which shall distinguish the more important transactions of future life, and secure to me the approbation of my own mind, the esteem of
DEVOTIONAL EXERCISES.

others, and the favour of God. "The lip of truth," I am well assured,—for the son of wisdom hath spoken it, "shall be established for ever; but a lying tongue is but for a moment."

PRAYER.

Ever blessed and most glorious God! supreme in power, wisdom, and goodness! I offer unto thee my sincere and ardent praise, that these and all thy perfections are exercised for the good of thy creatures; and that thou art, by various means, leading them to virtue and happiness. Grant, I pray thee, that I may ever be obedient to thy will; and concur with all thy designs, to form me to the constant practice of what is good. May a regard to thy commands, regulate all my principles and conduct, and preserve me from evil, and the misery which inseparably attends it. May all my words, and all my actions, be agreeable to truth and uprightness; and in the whole of my intercourse, may I be sincere and without offence. May my character never be debased by falsehood. May I never abuse the confidence that is placed in me. May I never degrade myself in my own eyes, nor
expose myself to thy righteous displeasure, by a disregard to honesty and candour. May I ever remember, in the hour of temptation, that however I may deceive myself or others, I cannot escape thy notice, since thou canst not only hear the words I speak, or observe the actions I perform, but discern even the thoughts of the heart. To thee, O God of truth, I would earnestly endeavour to approve all my conduct, so that I may ever enjoy the approbation of my own mind, and the pleasing hope of renewed existence, in a future and more glorious state!

The daily bounties of thy providence, which I have again experienced, fill my heart with devout gratitude, and incite me to thy praise. Thy sun has cheered me with its rays; thy air has supported me in existence; and by thy goodness, I have been fed with convenient food. And now, O Lord, in grateful and humble confidence, I will lay me down in peace; assured that if it be agreeable to thy will, I shall sleep in safety, and rise in the morning with renewed health and vigour. Pardon whatever has been amiss in my conduct through the past day; and may every succeeding hour witness my improvement in knowledge, piet, and virtue. Hear me, I pray thee, as the disciple of Jesus Christ thy son, through whom, be ascribed unto thee endless praises. Amen.
FRIDAY MORNING.

Reflections.

At the beginning of another day, to which the kind providence of Almighty God has prolonged my existence, I would seriously reflect upon some of those important duties which lie before me, and endeavour to confirm the virtuous resolutions, which, I trust, my heart has formed. From the exercise of some virtues, no age or situation can be exempt; and although I have not yet entered upon the more extensive and important relations of maturer years, I am called to occupy a certain station in life, with which some important duties are connected. I have to maintain daily intercourse with other young persons, and to support towards them a certain character; and upon the propriety of my conduct in this relation, the happiness of myself, and of them, in a great degree depends. Let me, then, duly consider how I should act, so as to acquit myself with most honour, secure our mutual comfort and advantage, and approve myself to my ever present and impartial Judge.

CIVILITY and GOOD NATURE, although they may not rank among the higher virtues of the human character, are nevertheless of great importance
in the relations which I bear, and should always distinguish my behaviour towards my companions. Not that mistaken civility, that dangerous desire of pleasing, which would lead me to resign my own will, where it is not of right demanded; which would render me subservient to the purposes of the crafty or the vicious; which, in after-life, would degenerate into a mean and time-serving disposition; but that which, from a sincere desire of promoting good-will and mutual happiness, rejoices in every opportunity of diffusing pleasure; refrains from every word and every action which would cause unnecessary pain; views every word and every action of others in the most favourable light; and thinks no sacrifice too great which is not unlawful, to the peace and enjoyment of others. I am not bound to form an intimate friendship, indeed, with all the young persons with whom I converse: the habits and the dispositions of all, will not unite with mine; but I can and ought to be affable, civil, and good-tempered, and to endeavour to render our intercourse pleasurable and advantageous.

It must happen among creatures so frail, whose judgment also is so little matured, that occasional sources of uneasiness will arise. Anger may, for a moment, take possession of our breasts, and impel us to actions, of which the slightest reflection will
cause us to be ashamed. The virtue of forbearance, therefore, will be highly incumbent upon me. The young person who has so little self-command, if he have any ingenuousness, when he returns to a right mind, will be affected with sorrow: why should I irritate him more, and so ensure an aggravation of his sufferings? he claims my forbearance and forgiveness. To return evil for evil will not remove the inconvenience I may suffer from such intemperance; but, on the contrary, subject me to the same merited censure, and the same succeeding sorrow. How often have I need of the same forbearance from others? How many things must God see in my conduct, which, if he should not forgive, will render me miserable? and how can I expect that pardon from my fellow-creatures, or from him, which I am not disposed to grant? "If ye forgive not men their trespasses," these are the words of Christ himself, "neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." And knowing the inconveniences to which an ungovernable temper exposes others, as well as the unhappy youth whose breast it defiles, I should carefully guard against such conduct, remembering the beautiful maxim of the wise king of Israel: "He that is slow to anger, is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit, than he who taketh a city."
In my intercourse with those of the same age with myself, I must carefully abstain from every thing selfish, and encourage a generous disposition. Are there any peculiar sources of happiness opened to me? I should invite others to participate of them. Have I enjoyments above the common lot? I should rejoice to extend them beyond myself. Selfishness is hateful, and I cannot look for esteem and kindness, if it mark my conduct. It is a vice which carries with it its own punishment; and which, while it lessens general happiness, prevents the individual who degrades himself by the practice of it, from securing the enjoyment he is unwilling to extend to others. May my character be never marked with a disposition, which, if indulged, will lead me, in maturer life, into the most disgraceful behaviour, ensure neglect and contempt, terminate in confirmed covetousness, and deprive me of the most valuable blessings the world has to bestow! I would encourage the growth of generosity and disinterestedness; begin in early life to consult the happiness of others, in preference to my own individual enjoyment, and study to acquire those principles, which will lead me to the unwearied practice of active benevolence, in all the important relations of advancing years.

The intercourse I now maintain with other
youth persons, arises chiefly from the want we all experience of that information, which will be necessary to the proper discharge of our respective duties in the succeeding part of life. It must, therefore, constitute an essential part of my duty at present, to communicate to others the knowledge I may have gained, to afford them all the assistance in my power towards their improvement, and both by my words and my example, to encourage activity, and to repress indolence. The talents of some of my companions are superior to my own, and their knowledge greater; let me not yield to the malignant passion of envy, but rejoice that there are others more likely to serve mankind than myself. Others possess talents inferior to mine, and their knowledge is more confined; let not this be a subject of pride and ostentation: for who hath made us to differ? To endeavour to excel in all useful science, will be highly praise-worthy; but let me carefully unite to these endeavours, a humble and unassuming temper. Knowledge is excellent; but if the attainment of it injure my disposition, and produce a bad effect upon my mind, it will be as injurious as ignorance. In all my intercourse with the companions of my youth, let me remember, that we are met together for the furtherance of our mental and our moral improvement; and that the great
object which lies before us all, is a world of increasing virtue and felicity, where nothing we now acquire shall accompany us, but what is excellent.

PRAYER.

O thou who hearest prayer, unto thee do I lift up my soul! In the defenceless hours of repose, when my powers were lost in forgetfulness, and all the strength I possess unable to guard me from the dangers by which I am surrounded, thou didst behold me and protect me from evil! Thus guarded, I pass all my days: under this protection, I am safe through every succeeding period of darkness. O may I not be insensible to the goodness of thee, my God, in whom I live, and move, and have my being! but may I praise thee, not only by the words of my mouth, but by the actions of my life. Through this and all my future days, may I live in thy fear, and order all my conversation as in thy sight. In all the relations I bear to my fellow-creatures, may I be guided by a constant regard to thy will; especially may my intercourse with those into whose society thy
providence has conducted me, be regulated by wisdom, and a desire of thy approbation. May I seriously consider the duties I am required to perform, and suffer nothing to divert me from the way in which I should walk. In my own temper and behaviour, may I display those virtues, which will become and adorn my character; and may I encourage whatever is excellent and praise-worthy in others. May I be meek, humble, and patient: may all irregular passions be subdued within me; and may it be my chief concern to promote in myself and others, those useful and virtuous acquirements, which shall conduce to our own happiness, and render us useful to the world.

I pray not for myself alone, but for all mankind, and especially for those with whom I am now more intimately connected. May all the companions of my youth be amiable and virtuous: may they learn the fear of thee, which is the beginning of wisdom; and depart from evil, which is understanding. Striving to excel in useful attainments, may we also emulate each other in good works, and aspire after thy favour, which is better than life itself, and all the joys by which life is distinguished.

May the day upon which I have now entered, be diligently spent. May my mind be enlarged, my
temper improved; and as the close of it will find me advanced nearer to the termination of my existence here, so may it find me better prepared for the proper discharge of the important duties which yet lie before me; and for the great end of my present being, a future happy world.

I would affectionately remember before thee all my friends, relations, and instructers; thou knowest their wants, supply them from the stores of thy bounty, and preserve them and myself to thy heavenly kingdom, for thy mercy's sake.

To thee, who art supreme over all, be ascribed, through Jesus Christ, glory and praise for ever.

Amen.
FRIDAY EVENING.

Reflections.

The maxim is certainly not more common than it is true, that example is more efficacious than precept. Moral maxims, and rules for the conduct of life, are of great utility; and the more of these I treasure up in my mind, and the more I accustom myself to act upon them, the better will my actions be regulated. In aid of these, however, I shall certainly act wisely, if I form an acquaintance with the characters of eminent persons who have in their lives exemplified the most important lessons of moral duty; and in circumstances similar to those in which I am placed, have resolutely opposed temptation, and formed themselves to that excellence, with which alone the true happiness of life is consistent.

The Scriptures of the New Testament, therefore, are of peculiar value; not only as they contain the foundation of my hopes, but as they exhibit a character, distinguished by the most exalted virtues, and which is held out as the fit object of my imitation; a character which none but the vicious and the unfeeling can fail to con-
template with inexpressible interest and delight. How strong are the arguments which enforce a constant attention to the duties I owe to God, and to my fellow-creatures, and to an assiduous cultivation of all the personal virtues! The principles of reason and of religion urge me to the practice of whatever is excellent, useful, and praiseworthy; and enforce a life of holiness and virtue, by the most powerful and impressive sanctions; but the example of Jesus creates a love of goodness, and irresistibly wins me to the performance of the great duties of life; in him I behold the beauty of holiness, and my heart earnestly desires to resemble the object it so ardently loves.

Who ever displayed such piety, as he who was so justly called the Son of God? He made no attempt to conceal it, yet no one can doubt of its sincerity: it was ever lively, yet ever rational: it accompanied him in all the circumstances of his life, yet was it totally free from ostentation: it was in him a constant and active principle, and consecrated every thought he conceived, every word he uttered, and every action he performed. Separate from the idea of God, he beheld nothing; uninfluenced by a regard to his will, he spent not a single moment of his life. Did God command, he cheerfully obeyed; did God afflict, he willingly submitted. He
tells us, and we may surely believe him, for his conduct confirms his words, that it was his meat and his drink to do the will of the Father, who sent him into the world. In sufferings, how eminently did his piety appear! The birds of the air, and the beasts of the field, as he himself acknowledged, had comforts, of which he was sometimes deprived; he wandered like an outcast from society, dependent upon the kindness of others, exposed to the most unfeeling insults, and the most malignant passions of his bigoted enemies; and yet not a murmur escaped his lips, not a wish did he ever breathe that his condition were different: and when, after having long endeavoured in vain to change the hearts of his relentless persecutors, he was delivered into their power by a wretched disciple, deserted by his friends in the hour of danger and distress, buffeted, scourged, and loaded with insults, the bare recital of which is sufficient to melt the hardest heart to compassion; and at last nailed to an ignominious instrument of inconceivable torture; still for himself his only prayer was, "Father, not my will, but thine be done:" and for others—for those who were treating him with such unmerited cruelty; "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they are doing."

Throughout his life, indeed, as far as his faith-
ful historians relate it, he was distinguished by benevolence. He went about doing good, teaching men the most important truths, and exerting the astonishing powers which God had bestowed upon him, to relieve them from their pains. The lepers he cleansed; the lame he made to walk; to the blind he restored their sight; the ears of the deaf he opened; and loosened the tongue of the dumb. To the mourning parents he presents again the child they had lost; for the disconsolate widow he raises from the bier, the son upon whose affections her hopes had relied; and deeply affected by the sorrow of the family at Bethany, he calls from the tomb the brother and the friend, and repairs the breach which death had made in the domestic circle. And is it possible that any could despise and insult him! did that human heart ever beat, that could contain one malignant sentiment towards so much goodness? Alas! such is the power of interest and bigotry, that even the benevolent Jesus sunk beneath it, and all his virtues were unable to ward it off.

If I examine his personal character; if I contemplate him in the various relations he sustained in social life, how excellent, how perfect does he appear! Distinguished as he was, how humble was the whole of his deportment! though he called himself the Son of God, he
more frequently assumed the lowly title of the Son of Man; and from the works which he performed, he took no credit to himself, but referred all his power, and all the glory, to his heavenly Father. Universally benevolent, he felt the warmest affection towards those whom nature or friendship had united to him; and though he loved all men, he ardently desired the good of his own country, and earnestly strove to promote it. He never expressed any anger, except against the hypocrisy, and the vices of his enemies; and of revenge he was utterly incapable. He did no violence, neither was guile found in his mouth: sincerity marked all his conduct, and meekness gave a peculiar lustre to all his other virtues. His wisdom excited the admiration of his enemies, and his behaviour, in the whole of the last trying scene, approved by the testimony of the most extraordinary events, compelled a heathen to acknowledge, that he was certainly "a righteous man."

Well might Peter be grieved at the repeated inquiry, whether he loved his master. Insensible must that heart indeed be, which feels not the most ardent attachment to this excellent person: to him, who under God, was the author of the glorious hopes I enjoy. Let my love be manifested by something more than mere admi-
ration, let it appear in my temper and conduct; let me copy into my own character, as far as I am able, the excellencies which distinguished his; and while I shew, in the manner in which he has directed, the warmth of my affection, prepare myself for that blessed state, which he has promised shall be the eternal inheritance of all those who love him in sincerity.

PRAYER.

At the close of another day, O thou Preserver of men! I would render thee my sincere and humble thanks for all the mercies of thy Providence, by which my life is supported and rendered happy, and all the means of virtue which thy benevolence has provided. Especially would I thank thee for the many examples of wise and good men, who have approved themselves thy servants, and exhibited, for the encouragement and assistance of others, a life of tried integrity and uprightness, amidst the temptations of the world. Above all, I would offer unto thee my grateful praise, for the powerful incitement to do thy will, which the character of our Lord Jesus Christ affords. May I diligently study the excellencies which he displayed, and strive to gain the resemblance of his virtues. May the
spirit which was in him be in me also; the same piety to thee; the same benevolence towards all mankind; the same devotedness to thy will, in every action of my life! Rejoicing in his doctrine, may I do honour to it, by the purity of my conduct, and approve myself his faithful and affectionate follower, by a constant obedience to his commands. Keeping his great example ever in view, may I pass through all my succeeding days with honour, comfort, and usefulness; and at length, when it shall please thee to remove me from the present state, may I be united to the spirits of the just made perfect, and partake of the inconceivable happiness of the wise and good, in that world where sin and sorrow shall be unknown.

Incline the hearts of all men, I humbly pray thee, to the love and admiration of that great pattern of excellence. May the character of Jesus be universally known and revered; and may his doctrine destroy every principle and practice, unfavourable to human virtue and happiness.

Bless all my relations and friends, supply all their wants, confer upon them every needful blessing, protect them and me from the dangers of this night, and grant that all the repeated mercies with which we are favoured, may produce in us the fruits of goodness, to the glory of thy holy name. Amen.
SATURDAY MORNING.

Reflections.

History informs me that an eminent painter, upon being asked, why he bestowed so much pains upon the subjects of his pencil, replied, "I paint for eternity." How much more justly may I say, I am living for eternity! and how much more necessary is an unwearied attention to my temper and my conduct. I engage in no pursuit, even in this early age, which will not, in all probability, have a very powerful effect upon my character in maturer years; and the habits I maintain in advancing life, will determine my future happiness or misery. How momentous is this truth! How awakening this reflection! It surely becomes me to suffer none of my present actions, especially such as are of a serious nature, to pass without the most attentive consideration, and the most earnest endeavours to render them subservient to my final welfare. Among these, the least reflection will convince me, that the forming of the pleasing relation of friendship, holds a principal rank. Upon the choice I make of those in whom my confidence shall be placed,
much depends with regard both to the present life, and that which is to come. According to this choice, my love of virtue may be confirmed and increased, my knowledge may be enlarged, my character gradually improved, and prepared for higher advancement; or vice may become familiar and pleasing, my mind may be weakened, my conduct thoroughly depraved, and my heart rendered unfit for the purer pleasures which are at the right hand of God. It cannot, therefore, be the part of wisdom needlessly to contract friendships; it cannot be unimportant duly to consider, what are the qualities which a friend should possess, and what are the duties which a friend should perform.

It will surely prove the height of folly to choose for my friends and companions, those who are not virtuous. My experience, confined as it is, plainly proves to me, that we are prone to resemble those whom we love, and that frequent intercourse imparts a similarity of sentiment and conduct; and the consequences of vice are too awful both now and in a future retributory scene, to make it indifferent to me whether I be virtuous or vicious. My delight shall be with the upright of the earth; my friends shall be the friends of goodness; my frequent companions shall be those from whose excellent example I may derive assistance in the formation of virtuous habits, and encouragement
to withstand the temptations of the world. They whom I will choose to be the sharers of my joys, and to afford me their counsel, shall be those from whom death will not finally separate me; but with whom I may hope to be reunited in a world, where friendship shall flourish in immortal vigour. And as frequent interruptions of friendship must produce a very unpleasant and unfavourable effect, it will be wise to select those whose temper is, in general, mild and benevolent. "Make no friendship," said the wise king of Israel, "with an angry man." To be exposed to continual irregularities; to be subject to the capricious humours of one who has no self-command, if it destroy not friendship, must weaken the attachment that should be formed, and prevent all the important and useful consequences of that relation. To occasional deviations from what we approve, it is human to be liable, and such it will be our wisdom mutually to bear and to forgive; but habitual heat and intemperance, must present an insurmountable bar to all permanent affection, and beneficial intercourse. As far as it falls within my power, it will also be proper to select those who to virtuous affections and mildness of temper, unite a love of useful knowledge. The friendships I now form, will most probably have an influence beyond the present period of my life; they will extend to more active scenes. Now they are designed to yield
me pleasure, and according to my years, improvement. As I advance in life, I shall assuredly be brought into circumstances, in which the counsels of friendship will be most desirable and important. In such circumstances, to have a friend, who has neither knowledge nor discernment, who can afford me no advice in difficulties, no consolation in distress, will be highly mortifying, and add to my perplexity and sorrow. The aphorism of Solomon, therefore, is certainly deserving of the most serious attention: "He that walketh with wise men, shall be wise; but a companion of fools shall be destroyed."

These important reflections, will lead me to discern the duties of friendship. Among the most necessary of these, must be that of mutually promoting our moral and religious improvement. All the arrangements of Providence have one design,—the furtherance of virtue; and he who has bestowed upon us the affections that lead us to the cultivation of friendship, must have designed that this pleasing intercourse should produce something more than mere enjoyment. Friends have it greatly in their power to animate each other to goodness, and to afford mutual encouragement and assistance, to rise above all solicitations to evil. Where no such consequence results from this connexion, where the usual conversation and pursuits
are frivolous, tending rather to weaken and corrupt, than to strengthen and improve the mind, all consideration of duty must be disregarded, and the only valuable end of friendship lost. In promoting the great purpose of moral improvement, it will be sometimes a necessary part of the duties belonging to friendship, to give and to receive admonition. Liable as we are to error, occasions must arise in which real affection will be manifested, by kind expostulation or gentle rebuke. The duty may be painful, whether we have to administer, or to bear the reproof; yet I must not expect to reap from friendship, either its real pleasures, or its most valuable benefits, if I shrink from the duty. "Faithful," says Solomon, "are the wounds of a friend; and open rebuke is better than secret love." Is my friend in an error, with tenderness and sincerity, with a manifest regard to his welfare, and carefully abstaining from any thing that might irritate, let me warn him of his faults. Is there anything in my temper and conduct improper, let me bear with patience and gratitude the reproof I have merited. But I must also remember, that frequency of reproof will prove destructive of affection, and that innocent failings, or little peculiarities with which morality is not connected, should pass without repeated rebuke, and generally without notice. If, in this pleasing relation, my temper and
conducted be thus regulated by wisdom, I may justly hope for the most important effects; and look forwards with confidence and joy, to the renewal of our affectionate intercourse in that world, where all that is imperfect in us here, where all the little uneasinesses that occasionally arise between the most cordial friends, shall be for ever unknown.

PRAYER.

O thou, who art the Father and the friend of all thy creatures, accept, I pray thee, my humble and ardent thanks, for all those affections which thou hast implanted in my breast, conducing to the comfort and welfare of my being! May my mind be deeply impressed by the conviction of their importance, and the necessity of constant and serious care in the due regulation of them; so that while they administer to my present enjoyment, they may promote my future and my best interests. May I be led to make a wise choice of those with whom I enter into the pleasing intercourse of friendship. May I have discretion to select those who love and practise goodness, by whose example I may be incited to
pursue with steadiness the way of well-doing, and by whose counsels I may be preserved from all the dangerous snares of temptation. And may no conduct of mine ever prove a hinderance to their virtuous attainments, and render the relation, we mutually sustain, unproductive of its true and beneficial effects. I would be careful to keep my temper under due management, and while I am anxious not to offend, I would bear with patience and mildness, all the little irregularities which may arise in the breasts of my friends. And may all our intercourse be so constantly under the influence of reason and religion, that we may be prepared to renew it after death, in a world, where all the imperfections which distinguish our conduct here, shall be unknown.

May the prospect of that eternal state of being produce a lasting and powerful effect upon the whole of my behaviour. Sensible that the habits I now form, and the principles I now adopt, will extend their influence beyond the present state, and determine my future condition, may I abstain from every sentiment and practice which is contrary to thy will, and which would render me unfit for that future scene, which thou hast promised to reveal to all the virtuous. May my whole deportment be under the influence of that wisdom which is from above, which is pure, peace.
able, gentle, and easy to be entreated; full of mercy, and of good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

Through this and all my future days, may it be my chief endeavour to approve myself unto thee in well doing, and thus to manifest my gratitude for all the repeated instances of thy goodness. I am thine, O Lord, and thee I am bound to serve with a perfect heart and a willing mind.

To thy care I would commend, with affectionate concern, all my relations and friends. Guard them from every evil, and bestow upon them every needful blessing.

To thee, through Jesus Christ, be ascribed all honour, thanksgiving, and praise for ever. Amen.
SATURDAY EVENING.

Reflections.

Another week is now come to a close; through all its dangers, an invisible arm has guided me in safety; and all its comforts have been derived from a Being of never-failing goodness! In all its succeeding periods of day and night, what power had I to avert evil, and to provide for my preservation and my enjoyment? Had it depended upon myself alone, how should I have avoided the danger I could not foresee? how should I have prevented the movements of this curious frame of my body from stopping? how should I have obtained from the various objects around me, none of which are subject to my will, all the comfort and benefit they have afforded me? God has been my guardian, and therefore I have been in safety; he has been my shepherd, and therefore have I wanted no good thing; with unceasing care, and the tenderest kindness, he has nourished, guided, and protected me; and to his great name, I will ascribe all the honour and the praise.

The mercies of my heavenly Father, even during this short period through which I have just
DEVOTIONAL EXERCISES.

passed, have been more than I can recount; it were as easy to reckon the sand upon the sea-shore, or to number the drops of the rain. He has not deserted me for a moment! his air I have breathed; by him I have been fed; and by his power I have been continually sustained. All the delights of life must be ascribed to God; and from him, also, have been derived the means of moral and intellectual improvement. I have been favoured with many opportunities of learning my duty to my Maker, of gaining some acquaintance with his works, and of forming habits of piety and virtue. I have been instructed in the duties I owe to others, and the nature of that character which I ought to acquire, and the motives by which I should be induced to love and practise what is excellent. According to my station in life, my mind has been opened, and my powers improved, and I have been conducted further in the way of wisdom, and prepared yet more for the important scene on which I shall be soon placed:—and can my heart be ungrateful? Shall God thus constantly manifest his goodness, and my mind be unaffected by it? No: he has a right to my warmest affections, and by his grace they shall be devoted to him.

Such have been the mercies by which the past week has been distinguished; what has been my
conduct during that period? Can I look back upon it with satisfaction? Has it been uniformly regulated by a regard to God? Have I feared to offend him? Have I been studious to please him? Have I improved all the advantages with which I have been favoured? And do I now find my mind better furnished with useful knowledge, my temper and all my conduct more under the control of reason and religion? Is my conscience free from the burden of any guilt? Do I feel no self-reproach? To frailties, indeed, I must be liable; but has it been my constant care to avoid every known evil, and to banish from my mind all sinful thoughts? Where my conscience approves, let me take comfort; where it condemns, let me be careful to do so no more.

A few more weeks passing thus rapidly away, will bring upon me the more important concerns of active life; and place me where my duties will be more numerous, and often more difficult. Looking forward to that period, let me not pass my present days in thoughtlessness or indolence; but as I wish to conduct myself with credit and honour, let me now acquire those principles, and lay the foundations of that character, which I shall wish to be mine, when engaged in the more hazardous and momentous scenes of the world. With respect to that world, of which I now know so little, I
must not deceive myself. Happy as I now am, my happiness is not unmixed; much less will it prove so in any future part of my life. If temptation assail me now, much more shall I be exposed to it in the world; if sorrow cloud these early days, I cannot expect that the years which are to come, will feel the constant sunshine of joy. Life is a chequered scene. The natural evils which God for wise and benevolent reasons suffers to exist; the evil conduct, and malignant passions of wicked men, from the effects of which it may not be possible wholly to escape, and my own necessary imperfections, will effectually prevent the world through which I have to pass, from being a state of unmixed happiness. Of this only I can be assured, that if I love God, all things will finally conduce to my good; that if I forsake not him, he will never forsake me; and that a good conscience, and the hope of future recompense, will lessen every sorrow, and administer that peace which the world can neither give nor take away. Let this, therefore, be my constant endeavour, in the present important period of my life, to gain a love of virtue, and an abhorrence of vice; and to form those habits, which will, in future, be so necessary to my comfort.

The period through which I have now passed, should also remind me of the termination of my
existence in the present world. That larger period, threescore and ten of which compose a long life, is formed of a few of these shorter divisions, which are completed so soon after they begin. Let this thought quicken my diligence in the attainment of what is excellent; and excite me to that constant obedience to the will of God, that at whatever time my present existence shall terminate, I may be prepared for a more glorious state; and receive the renewal of my being, with all its affections purified, and all its powers exalted, in that world, where "there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying, nor pain."

PRAYER.

O thou high and lofty One, who inhabitest eternity, in whose sight a thousand years are but as one day, with unfeigned humility and reverence, I would bow before thee, and offer unto thee the homage of a heart deeply impressed with the sense of thy adorable perfections!—Lord! what is man, that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man, that thou dost visit him with thy favour! Weak as we are, of short and uncertain duration, and often rendering ourselves unworthy of thy goodness, thou dost nevertheless condescend
to make our happiness thy care, and to crown our
days with thy loving-kindness and tender mercy.

At the close of another day, and another week,
I would reflect upon the many mercies which
thou hast bestowed upon me, and call upon my
soul, and all that is within me, to bless thy holy
name! From innumerable dangers, which I could
not have prevented, thy Almighty arm has pro-
tected me; with numberless comforts, which I
could not have procured for myself, thy goodness
has supplied me; and while others, in the morn-
ing of their days, have been called from the duties
and delights of the present scene, I am spared a
monument of thy mercy, and favoured with con-
tinued opportunities of intellectual and moral im-
provement. O may all thy mercies produce in me
sentiments of ardent gratitude, and excite me to
an unwearying obedience of thy holy will.

Sensible of the many errors and follies to
which, through the frailty of human nature, I
am subject, I humbly implore thy pardon of
whatever has been wrong during the past week,
or any former period of my life, in my temper
and conduct. And grant that the constant re-
membrance of thy goodness, and the hope of
thy future approbation, may urge me to be more
careful and circumspect, and to endeavour to
walk in all thy commandments blameless. May
every succeeding day witness my improvement in every thing useful and praiseworthy. May I be daily learning the important lesson of self-government, and imbibing those principles, and forming those habits, which shall not only become me in future life, but make me of service to others, and qualify me for thy favour. Not placing my affections too warmly upon the scene which will soon be more fully opened before me, but preparing to receive with thankfulness whatever thy bounty shall impart, and cheerfully to submit to whatever thou shalt appoint; may I enter upon the world and pass through it, so as to do honour to the nature thou hast given me, and the name I profess to bear: and having served thee on earth, may I at length be received into mansions of unfading glory.

Keep in thy fear, and reward with thy favour, all who are dear to me by kindred or friendship and grant, that when the earthly ties of affection are dissolved, we may be again united in an eternal and unchangeable state. I humbly ask all, as the disciple of Jesus Christ, through whom be ascribed, unto thee, all honour and praise for ever. Amen.

END OF THE FIRST WEEK.
DEVOTIONAL EXERCISES.

SECOND WEEK.

SUNDAY MORNING.

Reflections.

Through the favour of that great and good Being, in whose hands my breath is, and whose are all my ways, I have been preserved amidst the dangers of the past week, and am brought to the beginning of another day; a day consecrated to the offices of piety, and wisely and kindly designed to afford me the means of religious and moral improvement. My usual occupations, and my usual amusements are suspended, and my attention is directed to subjects and employments of a sacred nature, intimately connected with my everlasting interests. By gaining a more extensive and perfect knowledge of God, and of his will; and by strengthening my resolution to acquit myself of the
discharge of various important obligations under which I am placed, I shall be better qualified to enter upon a life of duty and of trial, should it please the giver and preserver of life to spare me to see future years; or if he shall otherwise determine, I shall be more fully prepared for that unseen and eternal world, for which I am created.

I am this day to join in acts of public worship. It becomes me to remember, when thus employed, that I am more immediately in the presence of the great and ever-living God; who, though he be invisible to me, sees all I do, hears all I say, and knows all I think. In the presence of so holy and venerable a Being, shall I not be deeply serious and devout; careful to exclude from my mind every unhallowed, every trifling thought? Let me call upon my soul most reverently to attend to the solemn service! Let me honour God, whom I profess to worship, not in word only, but in every sentiment of my heart! Let me not draw nigh to him with my lips only, when my heart is far from him; nor impiously “mock Him with a solemn sound, upon a thoughtless tongue!”

I am this day to be favoured with the means of religious instruction. I am to listen to the public reading of the word of God, I am to hear some religious or moral truths explained or enforced. Some of the great duties of life will this day be
faithfully set before me, and the principles, the promises, and the threatenings of that holy doctrine, which, as a disciple of Jesus Christ, I profess to receive, will be urged, to confirm my love of God and goodness, to encourage me to persevere in the way of well doing, and to deter me from the practice of what is evil. Shall these means of virtue and of happiness be neglected by me, or misemployed? Shall I suffer my attention to be diverted, and my thoughts to be roving to the ends of the earth, after every vanity that may entice them? Shall I leave the house of God with my heart unimpressed, and my mind and temper unimproved by the holy counsel which shall have been imparted there? Shall I enter again upon the world, no better prepared, no more firmly resolved to do all that the Lord my God requires of me? So it ought not to be; and so, by the blessing of God, it shall not be. I will reverently hear the word of God; I will treasure up in my heart the lessons of heavenly wisdom; I will endeavour to fix deeply in my memory those momentous truths, that may guide me amidst the snares of the world, preserve me from the power of temptation, aid me in the performance of my duty, keep me now in the way of virtue, honour, and peace; and, at length conduct me to a world of perfect holiness and joy.

The leisure of this day will afford me opportuni-
ties for serious reading and reflection; and various means of spiritual improvement, beside those of public worship and instruction. Of all these, I would carefully avail myself. I will think of God, when I walk abroad amidst his works; looking through nature up to the great Author and Ruler of nature. I will think of God, while I enjoy the delightful intercourse of my friends, and offer to him my aspirations of silent, grateful praise for all the rich blessings I receive in the kindness of those I love. I will endeavour truly to sanctify this day, by making it, as far as I can, subservient to my improvement in rational, cheerful piety, in religious knowledge, and in all virtuous dispositions and habits.

A day of sacred rest thus spent, will not be a day of gloom and mortification, but a source of present and of permanent satisfaction. As it is passing, it will afford that calm, holy, and pure delight, to which the indolent, the careless, and the frivolous are perfect strangers; when it is past, it will be a subject of pleasing reflection; and by its powerful and happy influence on my temper and conduct, it will enhance the enjoyment of my future days. Whatever others may do, therefore, I will this day serve the Lord.
PRAYER.

ALMIGHTY God, and most merciful Father, accept, I beseech thee, my most humble and devout thanksgivings for the continued protection of thy providence amidst all the unseen dangers to which I have been exposed, during the past week. Thou hast been with me in my going out, and in my coming in, to guard me in all my ways. Thou dost now graciously permit me to see the light of another day, set apart for the solemn yet delightful services of religion, and designed to afford to thy rational and accountable creatures the best means of attaining religious and moral instruction. Every day, O Lord, is thine, and should be spent in thy fear; every day proclaims thy goodness, no less than thy power, in causing thy sun to revisit the earth, for the comfort and benefit of thy creatures, and should awaken in their breasts sentiments of holy joy and gratitude. But this is, in a peculiar manner, the day which thou, the Lord, hast made, and it becomes the sons of men to celebrate its return with devout and ardent praise. Most thankfully would I hail the arrival of another season of sacred rest; and most carefully would I employ it, so as to render it subservient to my spiritual and everlasting welfare. While en-
gaged in the services of thy house, may the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in thy sight. May my thoughts be composed; my attention steadily fixed on the solemn objects there presented to me, and may I worship thee, who art a Spirit, in spirit and in truth. May I dread to draw nigh to thee with my mouth and to honour thee with my lips only, while my heart is far from thee. May I hear thy word with reverence, and never forget thy precepts. Write thy law upon my tender heart, that it may direct me in all my ways, and preserve me from every unholy thought, and from every act that is offensive in thy sight. May the instructions I hear be received with a willing and an obedient mind; may the impression be deep and lasting; may their fruit appear in the whole of my temper and deportment.

Reminded as I am this day, of the inestimable blessings derived from the holy life, the painful death, and the glorious resurrection of Jesus Christ; may it be my earnest desire and steady resolution to walk worthy of the privileges I enjoy. May his precepts be the rule of my conduct; his example may it be my ambition to follow; and encouraged by his promises, may I, by perseverance in well-doing, seek for glory, honour, and immortality. Never may I presumptuously neglect the means of virtue and of real happiness which thou
hast graciously provided; but may I devote my earliest days to thy service; and, amidst all the delights and all the snares of youth, walk circumspectly in thy fear. So that if my life be prolonged, it may be pleasing to thee, useful to others, honourable and happy to myself; but that if it be thy will that I should not see many days on earth, I may be qualified for the society of all the wise and good in a world of never-ending joy.

Hear my supplications, O God, in heaven thy dwelling-place; and when thou hearest, forgive; and to thy great name, be ascribed all glory and praise for ever. Amen.
SUNDAY EVENING.

Reflections.

The voice of Wisdom exhorts me to remember my Creator in the days of my youth; and to that voice it becomes me to lend a willing and an obedient ear. I am thus called to the exercise of an invaluable privilege, as well as to the discharge of an important duty; and directed to the attainment of true and lasting happiness. For this remembrance of my Creator implies an habitual conviction, that I owe my being, with all the powers both of my body and my mind to God, the maker of heaven and earth, and of all things that I behold; and that to him, therefore, I am indebted for all the rich enjoyment I derive from the wonderful faculties conferred upon me. And since he made me, and the gift of life is his, my condition in life must be according to his appointment. He caused me to be the happy child of pious and virtuous parents; he put it into their hearts and the hearts of those who instructed me, to do me good, to lead me to the knowledge of God and of his will, and to train me up in the
safe, and pleasant, and honourable way in which God would have me walk.

The remembrance of my Creator comprehends further, an habitual trust in him, as my constant preserver. Having graciously condescended to bestow upon me the gift of life, I may be assured he has not abandoned me to chance or fate. Having made me, he and he alone supports me. In him I live, and move, and have my being. That I continue in life, is owing to no power that either I or they who love me can possess; he only who gave life can sustain it. His providential care supplies my daily wants, guards me from disease, and accident, and death, and maketh me to dwell in safety. But if he gave me being, and has hitherto continually upholden it, he can also, when he pleases, recall his gift, and withdraw his supporting hand. He that gave can also take away: he, from whom I derive all my comforts, can, at his pleasure, deprive me of them, or of any portion of them. Young as I am, I am not too young to die; healthy and vigorous as I may now be, I am not too strong to be the prey of sickness and death. Here, neither I, nor my best and most beloved friends are immortal. I may soon and unexpectedly be removed from this cheerful scene, and hurried into an early grave; or, they who are now my companions, my friends, and my...
guides, with whom I now enjoy life, and by whose counsel I am aided and directed to secure its important end, may not long be spared to me. Whatever may happen, either to them or to myself, if I remember my Creator, I shall be satisfied is under his wise direction, and according to his benevolent will, and to his appointments I shall be prepared humbly and contentedly to submit.

To remember my Creator, is to be continually in his fear. He not only made me, and supports me, but he is my ruler, and will be my judge. He has made me capable of learning what he requires me to be and to do: he has given me in the rational powers I possess, in the principle of conscience, and especially in his holy word, a law by which I am to regulate all my actions. He has disposed and enabled my parents and friends to instruct me in this holy law; I cannot plead ignorance, if I offend. Every motive by which obedience can be enforced, has also been proposed to me; peace of mind; the esteem of the wise and good; the approbation of God himself; and never-ending happiness in a future state of existence. While, on the other hand, with disobedience and impenitence, are inseparably connected self-condemnation, a consciousness of the divine displeasure, a fearful looking-for of judgment in a future retributory
scene, in which God has solemnly declared that every one shall receive according to the deeds done in the body. Under a serious conviction of these important truths, I cannot fail to be in the fear of God all the day long; and so to regulate my whole temper and deportment, as in no instance wilfully to offend against his holy law, and incur his just displeasure.

Am I not bound thus to remember my Creator in the days of my youth? Would it not be an act of unpardonable ingratitude, were I even to neglect to think of that great and good Being, to whom I am indebted for life and all that I possess; who is never unmindful of me, but watches over me at all times, and in all places, that he may do me good? Should I not be chargeable with the most deplorable folly, were I to forget Him, on whom I continually depend, in whose favour is life, and whose loving-kindness is better than life itself; whose eye is ever upon me, that he may hereafter recompense me according to my deeds? When I lie down, and when I arise, I will think of God: and no hurry of business, no enchantments of pleasure, shall cause me to be unmindful of my Creator, my Preserver, and my Judge.
PRAYER.

Almighty God and most merciful Father, to whom I owe my being and all the noble and useful powers of my frame, from whom are derived all the means of improvement, and all the sources of comfort and of happiness that I enjoy, before thee would I this evening bow with reverence and gratitude. Most thankfully would I acknowledge and adore thy goodness in conferring upon me the gift of life, in making me wiser than the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heavens; in forming me with a capacity of knowing, loving, and serving thee here, and of preparing for the nobler employments, and the more perfect felicity of a future world. In the days of my youth, may I remember thee, my Creator, and open my heart to all the happy influence, which an habitual regard to thee is adapted to shed on my desires and affections; on the conduct and enjoyment of life. Lord, I am thine. Thou madest me; thou supportest me in being; whatever befals me, is ordained by thee; and at thy command alone, I must die, and return to the dust. All I am, and all I have, and all I hope for, depends upon thee. Every moment sustained by thy power, and blessed by thy goodness, I would never be un-
mindful of thee, nor cease to praise thy name. Not knowing what is best for me, I would cheerfully refer all my interests to thee, and in all things submit to thy will. Accountable to thee for the temper I form, and the conduct I pursue, for the words of my mouth, and even for the thoughts of my heart, I would set thee, O Lord, ever before me; and by a steady, uniform obedience to thy will, seek thy approbation and favour, as my chief good. Grant me wisdom to discern what is acceptable in thy sight, and resolution to pursue it, amidst the most trying temptations, and the most ensnaring allurements to which I may be exposed. Ever mindful of the importance of true holiness, and of the dangers by which I am surrounded, may I walk circumspectly, take heed to my ways, and keep my heart with all diligence. May this be at all times my character, that I love thee, O God, above every other object, and study nothing so much as to please thee.

May the religious services in which I have this day engaged, produce a salutary and a lasting influence on my heart and life. How great is thy condescension, O God, in listening to the prayers and the praises of creatures so frail and unworthy! May every act of devotion I perform, enliven my piety, and aid me in the discharge of every other duty. And may I not be a hearer only of the word
of thy truth, but may I take it for my counsellor and my guide in every scene and circumstance of my life. Having again publicly professed myself to be a disciple of Christ, may I verify my profession, by living according to his precepts, by following his perfect example, and by opening my heart to all the sacred influences of the promises of his everlasting Gospel.

Pardon, I humbly beseech thee, whatever has been wrong in my past temper and conduct; and give thy blessing to all my sincere endeavours to attain to more perfect and uniform obedience. In the hope of thy pardoning mercy, and with earnest desires to shew myself worthy of it, in all my future conduct, I would now lie down on my bed of rest. Guard me, O thou Preserver of men, from all evil, and raise me, if it be thy will, to renewed activity and enjoyment. I ask all in the name of Jesus Christ, my Lord; through whom be ascribed unto thee, all praise and glory for ever. Amen.
MONDAY MORNING.

Reflections.

Entering upon the occupations and the pleasures of another week, in the midst of which I must be unavoidably exposed to various temptations, can I do more wisely, than deeply to fix upon my mind this important truth, that God, the holy and the righteous judge of man, is everywhere present, and knoweth all things? Wonderful is every thing that relates to God! far beyond the comprehension, not only of my mind, but of the mind of every created being! Nothing is more incomprehensible than his universal presence and knowledge. Limited to so narrow a space as that in which I move, perceiving so little even of what is passing immediately about me, altogether uncertain of what an hour may bring forth, and unable to know the thoughts and purposes of my friends, unless they declare them to me, how can I conceive of that perfection of the Supreme Being, by which he is present, at one and the same moment, in every part of the boundless universe, and perfectly acquainted with every event, with
the actions and the thoughts of the meanest of his creatures. Yet though I comprehend it not, this perfection belongs to him. "If I ascend up into heaven, God is there; if I make my bed in the grave, behold he is there; if I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there his hand will lead me, and his right hand will hold me. If I say, 'surely the darkness will cover me;' even the night will be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from him; but the night shineth as the day; the darkness and the light are both alike to God."—"His eyes are in every place, beholding the evil and the good. He looketh to the ends of the earth, and seeth under the whole heaven. His eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings. There is no creature that is not manifest in his sight; all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.—He knoweth my sitting down and my rising up; and understandeth my thoughts afar off. He compasseth my path, and my lying down, and is acquainted with all my ways. There is not a word in my tongue, but he knoweth it altogether."

Such is the language of the oracles of divine truth, confirming the declarations of reason. Wherever I am then, is God there? In whatever I am engaged, does he see me? Then I can do
nothing that escapes his notice. I can say nothing, but he hears it. I cannot even think, or purpose any thing, but it is fully known to him! How wonderful is such knowledge! How solemn and impressive is this most awful truth! That such a frail and imperfect being as I am, should be constantly in the presence of the invisible God, who is infinitely holy and unerringly righteous, is a truth that may well inspire and keep in constant exercise the most serious and awakening thoughts. In such a presence, how guarded ought all my conduct to be! how strict "a watch" ought I to place "at the door of my lips, that I offend not with my tongue!" How carefully should I regulate all my thoughts, that there may be nothing in them displeasing to a Being of such transcendent purity! Let me ever live under the salutary impression of these great truths! and since I cannot go where God is not, since there is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves; since God is no unconcerned spectator of my conduct, but will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, never let me do what I know will not bear his inspection; never let me yield to temptation, or suffer myself to be seduced into any action, or any purpose, that will be offensive in his sight.
That I am ever in the presence of God, is a thought well adapted, not only to deter me from evil, but also to animate and encourage me in the discharge of my duty. If God continually seeth me, he is witness to every attempt I make to do what he has commanded, and to improve in all goodness; and beholds every struggle I maintain with temptation. If he is acquainted with all my thoughts, he perceives every desire I form to obtain his friendship, and every purpose of my heart to do what he requires. If he hears all my words, he knows when I direct my prayers to him, and listens to any humble, earnest entreaties for his blessing and his aid. And he who now seeth in secret, will reward me openly. He will prosper my virtuous endeavours; he will bless me with the approbation of my own mind, and the esteem of the wise and good; and when I appear at his awful tribunal, he will mercifully accept me, and admit me to the everlasting joys of his presence.

---

PRAYER.

Great and glorious Lord God! Who by searching, can find thee out? Who can find out thee, the Almighty, to perfection? Thou art
great, and we know thee not; thou doest great things and unsearchable. Thou seest not as man seeth; man looketh on the outward appearance; but thou, O Lord, lookest on the heart. Thy eye penetrates into the inmost recesses of the soul; thou searchest the heart and triest the reins of thy worshippers. All things are naked and open before thee. Unseen by every creature, thou hast formed, with all thy creatures thou art perpetually present. Though I perceive thee not, thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. Every action I perform is noticed by thee. Not a word upon my tongue, but thou hearest it; not a thought stirs within me, but thou knowest it altogether. No night is there so dark, no shades of death so deep, as to conceal me from thy view. Whither can I go from thy spirit, or whither can I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I lie down in the lowermost parts of the earth, thou art there; if I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there thy hand will lead me, and thy right hand will hold me. Oh! may I at all times live mindful of thy universal presence and perpetual inspection. May I set thee, O Lord, ever before me, and in all the business, in all the pleasures, and in every circumstance of life, con-
sider thee as at my right hand, that by this consideration I may be kept from every wicked way, and animated in the discharge of every duty. Since the heavens are not clean in thy sight, and thy angels thou chargest with folly, may I use the utmost vigilance and caution to avoid whatever in thought, word, or deed, may be offensive to the eye of a pure and holy God. Since thou canst not now look with pleasure upon iniquity, and wilt hereafter recompense me according to my deeds, which are all known to thee, may I carefully govern my temper, keep all my appetites and passions under due control, and resolutely abstain from every thing that would incur thy righteous condemnation. May I strive to perfect holiness in thy fear. Amidst all the temptations to which I may be exposed, and all the difficulties I may meet with in the discharge of my duty, may the remembrance of thy continual presence cheer and strengthen me, and keep me steadfast and immoveable in the ways of piety and virtue; being confident that my labour to do what thou requirest will not be vain, nor fail to receive an abundant reward.

Forgive me, gracious God, if I have been unmindful of thy presence, unconcerned about thy approbation, and disobedient to thy commands. Young as I am, it becomes me to confess that I
have abused thy goodness, rebelled against thy authority, and forfeited thy favour. Be merciful to thy penitent creature, and bless all my sincere endeavours to know, and love, and fear thee more, and to serve thee better. May I be, above all things, anxious to avoid what is evil, and ever solicitous to pursue what is right and good. May I dread nothing so much as thy displeasure; and may I esteem thy favour as better than life itself.

Guard me, and all who are dear to me, amidst all the evils to which we may this day be exposed. And may the close of this, and every future day allotted to us on earth, find us better prepared for death, and judgment, and eternity. I supplicate every blessing in the name of Jesus Christ, and through him, ascribe unto thee, O God, all glory and praise for ever. Amen.
MONDAY EVENING.

Reflections.

Many are the curious and important faculties which my wise and kind Creator has bestowed upon me; and for the gift of which I am bound to render to Him my most ardent thanks. All of them are excellent; all of them are designed and adapted to minister to my happiness, and improvement, and to promote the glory of Him from whom they are derived. Few of these are more wonderful or more important than that of memory, by means of which I can store up in my mind the treasures of knowledge, and recollect events that have passed. Time itself moves on, and cannot be recalled; the day that has ended, returns no more: but the remembrance of what has been done or said may recur, and continue long; I can call to mind what have been in many past days my thoughts, my purposes, and my actions. I can sit in judgment on the temper I have displayed. I can review the conduct I have pursued and the motives by which I have been influenced. And having the
power of doing this; being endowed with such a faculty, it must be the intention of the great Author of my frame, that I should exert this power, and employ this faculty to a good purpose. What purpose can be better than that of my own moral improvement? To this the habit of frequently reflecting on my temper and deportment must be eminently conducive. It cannot but prove highly beneficial, if from time to time, I pause and consider what have been the prevailing dispositions of my heart, and the general character of my life; if I inquire to what particular passions I have been most subject; by what affections I am usually governed; by what temptations I have been seduced, or over what enemies to my virtue I have gained the victory.

I am not too young to engage in such exercises of serious reflection and of self-examination; nor are such exercises unsuitable to my years. I am old enough to know what ought to be done, and what ought to be avoided: I have wisdom and discernment enough to show me when, and in what respects, I violate the law of God. Through the goodness of Him who dispenses to every one his lot, and through the kindness and wisdom of those to whose care He has entrusted me, I am no stranger to what the Lord my God requires of me, nor to the rebukes or the applause of conscience.
that inward monitor that warns me to shun what is remembered with painful emotions, and to pursue what I reflect upon with pleasure. The very constitution of my nature points out that to be a duty, which, at the same time, I cannot doubt, will contribute most essentially to my happiness.

What then, let me now carefully inquire, has been my conduct this day? What is the habitual temper of my mind? What is the distinguishing character of my life? Do I remember my Creator, my governor, and my judge? Do I preserve a just sense of my dependence upon him; of his unceasing and unmerited goodness; and of the duties which I owe to him? Do I fear to do what he has forbidden; and am I desirous of doing all that he has commanded? Am I ever mindful of his presence and inspection, and above all things solicitous to stand approved in his sight? Can I resist the temptations which daily surround me, resolutely avoid what I know to be evil, and steadily pursue what is right and good? Do I indulge a cheerful heart, without giving way to folly? Am I gay without being guilty? Do I guard against indolence, and diligently pursue the occupations that are prescribed to me, "as ever in my great task-master's eye," anxious to employ and improve all my powers as so many talents, of which I am hereafter to give an account? Am I uniformly obedient and respect-
ful to those to whom obedience and respect are due? and to those with whom I associate am I kind and courteous, attentive to their wants, considerate of their feelings, desirous of promoting their happiness? Am I free from guile and insincerity, from peevishness, obstinacy, perverseness, self-conceit, vanity, pride, envy, and every other evil disposition? Do I keep my heart with all diligence; not only excluding thence every affection and every thought that reason and religion condemn, but assiduously cherishing those holy, virtuous, and benevolent affections, which are suitable to my nature and my destination, which are essential to the conduct which God requires me to pursue, and to the happiness of which he has made me capable? While I enjoy the present moment, do I frequently look to the years that are approaching; solicitous to prepare for the proper discharge of the duties that will hereafter be incumbent upon me; resolved not to waste the precious hours of youth in idleness or frivolity, but to lay a good foundation for future usefulness and honour? Or, aware of the precariousness of life, and not knowing but that an early tomb may await me, do I abstain from whatever may wound my peace, and obscure my hope, and embitter the hour of sickness and of death?

If, in thus reviewing my temper and conduct, I am conscious that I have endeavoured to walk in
the commandments of the Lord blamelessly, I may esteem myself happy. Let the satisfaction, which accompanies this consciousness, encourage me to proceed with continued circumspection and increasing alacrity, in the good way on which I have entered!—But if my heart condemns me, if, in any instance my temper is blameable, and my conduct inconsistent with my obligations, injurious to others, dishonourable to myself, and, consequently, displeasing to God, let me be wise in time, and forsake every evil way, before such habits are formed as no discipline of the present life may be sufficient to destroy; or which I may be unable to conquer without many a heart-rending struggle, and many a bitter tear.

PRAYER.

O thou, who art of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, in whose sight the heavens are not clean, and who chargest thy angels with folly, it becomes me, thy frail and erring creature, now and at all times, to approach thee with deep and unfeigned humility, under the conviction of my numerous frailties and transgressions of thy law. How often do I offend! How many things in my temper and conduct must be displeasing to thee, a Being of
infinite and unsotted holiness! Extend thy mercy to me, O thou compassionate Father of the human race, and forgive all my follies and my sins. Sensible of my weakness, and of my proneness to error, may I keep my heart with all diligence; may I watch, with unceasing care, over every thought and purpose of my mind; in all my ways may I seek to please and honour thee, and do thou direct my paths. Grant me wisdom to choose the way that is right, and resolution to continue in it, and to pursue it, by whatever allurements or temptations I may be assailed. Establish all my virtuous purposes; and strengthen every motive to sincere and universal obedience. What I know not, O God, graciously teach me. Root out whatever there is of evil in me, and implant and cherish within me every holy and good affection. Animated by the hope of thy approbation; guided by the precepts, and encouraged by the example of Him in whom thou wast always well pleased, and who was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners, may I steadily and faithfully discharge every duty, and by a patient continuance in all well-doing, secure my real happiness in this life, and finally obtain the everlasting felicity of that life which is to come. For the hope of future and immortal blessedness, which thou hast, through thy infinite goodness, set before me in the Gospel of Christ, I would most fervently
bless thy holy name. Under the influence of this hope, may I regulate my whole temper and deportment, and earnestly strive to be pure, as Christ is pure. May I continually be in subjection to his authority, and in all things conformed to his image. May I live as a disciple of Christ ought to live, that when I die, I may enjoy that peace and triumph which such a life alone can inspire.

To thy ever-watchful care, I commit myself, and all who are dear to me, during the hours of darkness and repose. Defend us, I pray thee, from every evil. Sleeping or waking, we are indebted to thy almighty power and thy unceasing goodness, for all our safety and all our comforts. While I confide in thy protection, may I study to recommend myself to thy favour, and for all the instances of thy loving-kindness, render to thee not only the acknowledgment of my lips, but the offering of a truly grateful heart and of an obedient life.

Hear this my prayer, O God, which I offer, in the name of Jesus Christ my Lord; and unto thee be ascribed all glory and praise for ever. Amen.
TUESDAY MORNING.

Reflections.

An ancient heathen emperor, who was accustomed to commune much with his own heart, and whose private meditations have been handed down to our times, with all the ardour of the devoutest gratitude, offers up his acknowledgments to heaven, for the unspeakable benefit of virtuous progenitors and pious friends. Few subjects, more deserving of thankfulness, can be found. Considering the world into which we are introduced, the circumstances in which we enter it, the end to be obtained by passing through it; observing how widely the field of life extends, how difficult, and, often, how dubious the road, how ignorant we are, how important the determination of our choice, a wise and faithful friend, ready to receive us at our entrance upon life, to point out to us the road we should take, and to fit us for our important, but hazardous journey, must be pronounced to be one of the most valuable gifts of God. Such are experienced and virtuous parents; who have trodden much of the path of life before us, and learnt
its difficulties and its dangers; who are able to direct their offspring into the ways of true honour and substantial felicity; into ways which lead to the regions of immortal blessedness. Many other blessings, which we highly and justly prize, are the blessings of a day; their influence reaches not beyond the grave; but the blessing of pious parents extends through eternity! Is this blessing conferred upon me? Then let the gratitude of my heart bear some proportion to its value! Let me daily and fervently thank God, to whom I owe it, and manifest the sincerity of my gratitude, by a constant endeavour to avail myself of the benefits of which he has thus made me a partaker, to profit by the lessons of wisdom I receive, and to keep the way of the Lord, in which I have been instructed to walk.

How many are there around me, to whom this blessing is denied! who drew their first breath amidst all the pollutions of vice, who are rising into youth and manhood, with no one to teach them the knowledge of the Almighty, and to shew them how profitable it is to serve Him! How many are there, to whom vice is made familiar from the very dawn of reason, by the example of their parents, and who are prepared by their manners and conversation to pass not merely a useless, but an injurious life; to be wretched both
in this world, and in that which is to come! How many are there, who, if they are preserved by their station from low and degrading profligacy, have not the blessing of pious parents to watch over their tender minds, to give a right direction to their passions, to guard them from wrong conceptions of the nature and end of human existence, and to urge them to aspire after, and obtain glory, honour, and immortality!

How different are the circumstances of my youth! How can I be excused, if I neglect my duty! How can I escape the severest condemnation, if I attain not to holiness and virtue, and excel not in all that is good and praiseworthy! If knowledge can render the practice of my duty easy; if example can animate, and exhortations encourage in the way of well-doing; if seasonable and affectionate reproofs can restrain from folly, and judicious admonition can urge to the attainment of excellence, the instructions, the example, the reproofs, and the admonitions of my parents must all appear as witnesses against me, if I walk not with holy perseverance in the way in which I have been trained. They who have had none to shew them the path of truth, to guard them against error, and to call them from their wanderings; whose evil inclinations have not been checked, till repeated
indulgences have formed them into habits of vice; over whom no parental vigilance has been exercised, to cultivate their rising excellencies, and to guard them from the infection of evil counsels and evil examples, are deserving of pity, and may urge much in extenuation of their guilt: but if I suffer myself to be led away by the error of the wicked, or the seductions of lawless passion; if I check not every evil inclination, if I advance not continually in the ways of wisdom, if I fail to discharge the various obligations I owe to God and man, I shall be without excuse. In my own conscience, and in the judgment of all around me, I must stand condemned; and awful, indeed, must be my doom at the tribunal of my righteous and omniscient Judge.

Being the child of virtuous and religious parents, the world which esteems and honours them, will naturally expect to see me walking in their steps, and exhibiting the happy influence of their pious instructions, and their encouraging example. It excites no surprise if a bad tree produces not good fruit; but if the fruit of a good tree be bad, the notice and the curiosity of the world are attracted. That the child of a virtuous house should prove disobedient to the gentle yoke of virtue, is as astonishing as it is unhappy. For such the world feels no sympathy, they are justly the objects of censure, condemnation, and abhorrence. Far from me be
such impious and unnatural conduct. Let me not thus requite the tender cares and the unceasing anxieties of parental love; and render fruitless the unwearied labours of parental wisdom! Let me not thus weigh down with sorrow those hearts which possess the kindest affections towards me. My privileges are great, let me shew how greatly I value them, and how wisely I improve them. Let me not be content with ordinary goodness; but by my zeal to excel in whatever is virtuous and praiseworthy, let me secure my own peace, reflect honour on those to whom my honour is so dear, console and cheer them amidst the infirmities of age and the decays of nature, and following them here in the way of duty, prepare for a blessed re-union in a world of perfect felicity.

PRAYER.

Ever-blessed and most gracious God; with devout joy and gratitude would I now approach thy throne, to offer to thee my morning tribute of adoration and of praise. How great is thy loving-kindness towards me! How inestimable the blessings, which through thy unceasing goodness I enjoy. Thine is the gift of life, with all its comforts and delights. To thee I owe the admirable frame
of my body, and the more wonderful powers of my mind. By thy energy I am continually preserved; and from thee proceeds whatever ministers to my happiness, and promotes my improvement. And such has been thy love to the human race, that thou sparedst not thy beloved Son, in whom thou wert always well pleased, but gavest him up to death, that we might be redeemed from all iniquity, assisted and encouraged in the discharge of every duty, and supported amidst all the trials of our virtue, and all the vicissitudes and sorrows of life, by the everlasting consolation of Christian hope. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.

Thou, O God, settlest the bounds of our habitation, and appointest to every one his lot in life. It is to thy superintending providence, therefore, that I am indebted for the unspeakable blessing of having been born of pious parents, and made the child of a virtuous house. Thanks be unto thy name, O God, that I have not been cast upon those, who are ignorant or unmindful of thee, and of their duty; from whose lips no lessons of heavenly wisdom could have flowed; and by whose pernicious example I might have been early led into the paths of vice, estranged from all true peace, and prepared for future condemnation and woe. How shall I sufficiently praise thee, for having called me into
being, in the midst of those who are devoted to thy fear; for having committed me to the parental care of those, who from the earliest dawn of reason in my breast, have anxiously fostered within me a love of God and of goodness; guarded me from the pollution of evil inclinations and lawless passions, and directed my feet into the way of holiness, virtue, and peace. May I be deeply sensible of the privileges which I thus enjoy through thy goodness, and wisely use and improve them. May I ever be disposed to manifest my devout gratitude to thee, by whom this blessing has been bestowed. May I cherish the purest filial reverence and love towards those by whom I have been so tenderly nourished, and so carefully trained in the way in which I should go. May I receive their counsels with a willing and a thankful heart; may I listen to their reproofs with a meek and teachable spirit; and may I walk with care, and steadiness, and alacrity, in those paths of holiness and virtue, of peace and joy, into which they have directed my youthful steps. To me much has been given, and, therefore, much will be justly required from me, by thee, my supreme and righteous judge. by my friends, and by the world. Oh may I not, by any negligence or evil conduct, expose myself to the condemnation of my fellow-creatures, and to thy righteous displeasure: but may I duly improve the advantages.
with which I have been favoured; may I strive to excel in every good disposition and in all good conduct; and as I advance in age, may I grow in wisdom, and increase in favour with God and man. Strengthen thou, O God, all my virtuous resolutions, prosper all my virtuous undertakings, and amidst the snares and temptations of life, graciously uphold me and keep me from falling, till I be presented faultless before the presence of thy glory, with exceeding and unutterable joy.

Be with me, I beseech thee, through this day, to guard me from all evil, to lead me in the way which thou approvest, and to grant me every needful good. And to thee, through Jesus Christ, be ascribed the praise which is due to thy great name, for ever. Amen.
TUESDAY EVENING.

Reflections.

The apostle Paul, writing to Timothy, congratulates him on having from a child, known the Holy Scriptures, since they were able to make him wise to salvation: happy, therefore, may I esteem myself, who have also, from a child, known not only those Scriptures in which Timothy was instructed, but the writings of that new and better covenant to which belongs the promise of life and immortality. I have advantages to which Timothy, in his childhood and youth, was a stranger. I have means of improvement and of comfort, much greater than the law and the prophets alone were able to afford. It becomes me to acknowledge them with gratitude, and to employ them with diligence and care.

The volume of the sacred Writings possesses many excellencies to recommend it to my daily, serious attention. If I be desirous merely to please my imagination, or to gratify my taste, to what sources can I more successfully apply? By what interesting and delightful simplicity is the sacred
information upon subjects most interesting to a reasonable creature, and absolutely essential to his virtue and his happiness: information no where else to be obtained, but without which I could not possess any steady excellence of character, any true peace of mind, any present abiding comfort, any hope of better things to come.

Do I wish to learn my duty? The Scriptures are a perfect and unerring guide; and if I trust myself to them, will conduct me safely and honourably through the most intricate and difficult paths of life. In whatever condition I may be placed; whatever relations I may sustain; whatever obligations I may be called to discharge, the maxims of heavenly wisdom with which these abound, will be my ablest and most faithful counsellors. Having the short, but comprehensive precepts which every page of these contains, deeply imprinted upon my mind, and habitually regulating my conduct by their authority, I shall be enabled to resist the sudden attacks of temptation; I shall be fortified against every assault of appetite and passion; I shall be able at once to discern my duty, and most powerfully incited and assisted to perform it. Assured that God is the constant witness, even of my most secret actions and my most transient thoughts; that he will render to me hereafter according to my deeds; and that, in the
mean time, he is willing to bless and to prosper all sincere endeavours to do his will, how strongly and irresistibly am I urged to turn from every evil way, to pursue that way which is right and good; and with unwavering steadiness and unwavering resolution, to do what God commands, and to abstain from what he prohibits. But it is not by precept alone, that the Scriptures teach me my duty. They exhibit a variety of the most interesting and impressive characters; well adapted both to direct and animate me in all well-doing, and to warn me of the danger, and preserve me from the misery of yielding, in any instance, to temptation. They shew me how great and how stable is the peace of those who love the law of God, and do his will; and how surely disquietude and dishonour are the portion of those who fear not God, nor regard man, nor exercise dominion over their own spirits.

And shall God thus condescend to speak to me, and shall I refuse to hear? Shall he put his law into my hands, and shall I presume to put it from me? Shall it be the impious language of my conduct, if not of my lips, "Depart from me, I desire not the knowledge of thy ways." Will not God punish me for this? Let me not make the awful experiment! Let me not slight the riches of his grace! "Thy word, O God, is pure, therefore
thy servant will love it. Thy testimonies I will take as a heritage for ever. I will delight in thy statutes, I will not forget thy word."

PRAYER.

It is a good thing to give thanks unto thee, O Lord, and to celebrate thy praise, O thou most High; to shew forth thy loving-kindness every morning, and thy faithfulness every night. Thou art my God, early will I seek thee; thou hast been the God of my fathers, and I will bless thy name. My life was originally thy gift, and every mercy with which the successive moments of my being have been loaded, has come down from thee, the father of lights, with whom is no variableness, or shadow of turning. Thou, O God, art love, the father and the friend of man. Thou delightest in the happiness of thy creatures; for this they are wonderfully formed, and for this they are graciously preserved; and if thou afflictest them, it is not for thy pleasure, but for their profit. O may I ever esteem thy favour as my life, and thy loving-kindness as better than life. In every instance may it be my supreme desire to render to thee the
glory due to thy name. May I habitually stand in awe of thee, and sin not. And may I love thee with all my heart, and soul, and mind, and strength.

Most gratefully would I acknowledge thy goodness, in so ordering the circumstances of my life, that from the dawn of reason, I have known the Scriptures, which are able to make me wise to salvation. Thy law, O Lord, is perfect, and thy statutes are right; thy commandments are pure, and thy precepts righteous: more to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold. By them is thy servant warned, and in keeping them there is great reward. For ever blessed be thy name that I am not left in ignorance of that almighty power, by which I was brought into being, and of that all-gracious providence, by which I have been ever guarded and preserved, and abundantly supplied with every thing needful for life and godliness. The heavens declare thy glory, and the firmament sheweth forth thy handy-work. All nature speaks to me of thy glorious perfections, and invites me to thy praise; but in the revelation of thy will, thou hast more plainly revealed thyself, and done all that can be done to encourage our confidence, to awaken our love, to form within us those sentiments of filial reverence, which lead to duty, and peace, and joy. In the
volume of thy word, thou hast given us a law to be our guide through the dangers and difficulties of this present world, to the land of everlasting righteousness, and of inconceivable felicity. May I take thy word to be a light to my feet, and a lamp unto my path. Knowing that they who sin against thee, sin against their own souls; and that all who refuse to hearken to thy precepts, choose the road that leadeth to destruction; may I take thy statutes as a heritage for ever, and make it my daily delight to learn and to obey thy will. Suffer me not to wander from thy commandments. Keep me in the hour of temptation, and support me in the evil day. In every circumstance of life, may I be enabled to maintain a conversation that becometh the Gospel of Christ; and in every trial of my virtue, may I come off more than conqueror, through him who hath loved me. Thou requirest nothing which my own best interest does not recommend to me; nothing but what leads to my comfort and my dignity, and is necessary to my present peace, and my everlasting happiness. Thy commandments are not grievous; may I, therefore, observe them always even to the end. May I be a follower of those, who, in well-doing, have sought for glory, honour, and immortality, that with them I may obtain eternal life. Especially, may the example of Him whose name I bear, be ever
before me; and imitating his piety, his benevolence, and his purity, may I grow up completely into his image, that at length I may be with him, in that better world, to which he directs my steps.

Accept my grateful thanks, O thou preserver of man, for the safety and the comfort of the past day. Take me, and all who are dear to me, under the protection of thy providence during this night. May we arise in the morning rejoicing in thy favour, prepared and disposed to do and to suffer all thy will. Amen.
WEDNESDAY MORNING.

Reflections.

It was one, among many evil characters, by which they were distinguished, among whom our Lord appeared, that "they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God;" and their wickedness and obstinacy in rejecting him, he attributes, in a great measure, to this, that "they received honour one of another, and sought not the honour which cometh from God only." Am I hence to conclude, that all desire of human honour and of human praise is criminal; and that it is a mark of true piety and virtue to be indifferent to the approbation or the censure of those with whom I live? This cannot, surely, be the doctrine of Christ. If it were, my best and most judicious friends would not have rewarded me, when doing well, with their praise; nor encouraged me to persevere in the course they marked out for me, by the hope of their commendation; nor would they have deterred me from indolence and folly, and every evil practice which they wished me to
avoid, by the dread of their displeasure. They would not have implanted or fostered in my youthful breast, any principle which Christianity condemns, nor would they have encouraged the growth of any affection, which it would be necessary for me, in advancing life, to stifle and destroy.

It is not possible, it is not desirable, that I should be unaffected by the praise or censure of mankind. The love I naturally bear to myself, forcibly inclines me to wish for the esteem and approbation of others; and to avoid their dislike and censure. Young as I am, I cannot but know that this principle, which I feel powerfully operating within me, has been of great benefit to society. It has induced many to despise the most threatening dangers, and to hazard their lives for the public good. It has roused in many breasts a spirit of virtuous emulation, and supplied a prevailing motive to good conduct, where the influence of other motives might have been weak. And, on the other hand, the fear of contempt and disgrace has restrained many from base and dishonest actions, when no other consideration seemed to be sufficient. And how lost to virtue might I be, if this principle were extinguished within me! If I were not desirous of praise, should I stand in awe of blame? If I despised honour, should I fear disgrace? If a good name possessed no charms for
me, should I be ashamed of a bad one? If the approbation of the wise and virtuous, among my fellow-creatures, were not an object of desire; if their aversion and contempt were not an object of dread, should I not be in danger of despising the approbation and the displeasure even of my Maker and my Judge? With such insensibility of heart, could I perceive and admire the beauty of holiness and virtue? Could I clearly discern and steadily pursue, amidst numberless temptations and dangers, the thing that is right?

It is also one of the maxims of Solomon, that "a good name is to be chosen rather than riches, and loving-favour rather than silver and gold." An apostle exhorts his converts to think of those things that are lovely, of good report, and the subjects of praise. Our Lord himself commended the grateful and affectionate woman who anointed him for his burial, and declared that her name should be had in perpetual and universal remembrance: he encouraged his hearers to profess their faith in him without fear, by declaring that he would acknowledge them to be his disciples, in the presence of God and of his holy angels; and he urged his followers to the performance of the most sacred duties of piety, by assuring them that what they should thus do in secret, his heavenly Father would openly reward. God himself condescends
to accept and to demand the praise of his creatures; and those who honour him, he has solemnly declared he will honour.

The love of praise, then, is not, in itself, unlawful; it is a natural principle which I am not required to root out of my breast. But I am bound to keep it under due control, to give it a right direction, and to take care that it usurp not the place and the authority of any purer and nobler motives of action. I must be constantly upon my guard, lest it become immoderate; lest it prove an occasion of pride or vanity; or induce me to violate the dictates of conscience, and to comply with any of the maxims and manners of the world, that I know to be wrong. The desire of praise, and the fear of blame, may prove a snare to my integrity. Things, in themselves not praise-worthy, sometimes obtain the approbation of men, while those which are deserving of esteem, meet with their condemnation. I should, therefore, learn to distinguish things that differ, to discern and to approve that only which is right; and to pursue it, regardless of all immediate consequences. Natural endowments, worldly possessions, and worldly honours, however they may attract admiration, cannot constitute my supreme good, or of themselves recommend me to the favour of my Maker. They are his gifts, and important talents intrusted
to my care. They demand my gratitude to Him who gave them; they call upon me for care and diligence to improve them; but they confer upon me no merit. Shining accomplishments may give me the power of pleasing, but they do not constitute excellence of character; and if for these I seek to be commended, I shall be in great danger of becoming frivolous and vain. Even high attainments in knowledge are not necessarily connected with real worth, and will entitle me to esteem and respect only so far as I make them subservient to the attainment of the great end of my existence, and the benefit of my fellow-creatures. True honour, present peace, and future blessedness are connected with piety and virtue, with well-ordered affections, and a useful life; and the praise that is truly valuable, is that which these procure. My first inquiry, then, should be, not how I may obtain the praise of men, but how I may deserve it? not how I may escape their censure, but how I may shun whatever is worthy of blame? And as I cannot expect, and ought not to desire the praise of all men, that which is bestowed by the wise and the good, should alone be sought by me. Such men are the best judges of what is truly worthy of esteem; their approbation, grounded upon the principles of reason and religion, is, in itself, honourable; well adapted to
DEVOTIONAL EXERCISES.

give me confidence, and to excite my zeal in the attainment of what is truly excellent. But valuable as the praise of these may be, the obtaining of it ought not to be the motive that should urge me to the performance of my duty. God is my righteous governor; he has prescribed the laws I am to observe, and by him I am to be judged. Let it, therefore, be the first desire of my heart to know what he requires, and to stand approved in his sight. His knowledge is perfect, his judgment unerring, his decision impartial. To him my real character is known, and his favour is life eternal. Above all things, then, let me strive to please him; and whether I obtain the praise of men or no, let me seek the praise and the honour which cometh from God.

---

PRAYER.

HEAVENLY FATHER! Author and preserver of my being, and the kind and bountiful giver of all that I enjoy! accept, I beseech thee, my ardent thanks for having made me capable of discerning the hand by which I have been formed, protected,
and blessed, and of offering some suitable return of love and obedience. Adored be thy goodness for those intellectual, moral, and spiritual powers which qualify me for the exercises of piety, and the practice of virtue; which are the source of true dignity, of ever increasing satisfaction and joy, and by the cultivation of which, I may become fit for future and immortal happiness. Thanks be to thy name that thou hast "taught me more than the beasts of the earth, and made me wiser than the fowls of heaven," and placed me among those of thy creatures whom thou hast made little lower than the angels, and crownest with glory and honour. O may I never forget my exalted origin, or be unmindful of the true dignity to which thou dost encourage me to aspire. May I remember that I am the child of God, and the heir of an incorruptible inheritance in heaven; and may I from my heart renounce every evil thought, and every wicked way, and devote myself to thy service and thy fear! Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and any praise, may I think on these things. What I know not, O God, do thou teach me. Direct my feet into the way which thou approvest, and grant that I may have wisdom and resolution to continue in it all the days of my life.
How great is thy goodness to them who fear thee! Thou beholdest them with complacency: thou satisfiest them with thy favour; and thou hast laid up for them a crown of unfading glory. Thou lovest them who love thee, and those who honour thee, thou wilt honour. May I seek that honour above all things, and may thy approbation and thy praise be the objects of my most earnest desire. Whatever else I lose, may I never forfeit thy favour. May I guard against that undue love of human approbation, and that unreasonable fear of human censure, which may prove a snare to my integrity, and induce me either to transgress, or to turn aside from my duty. May thy will be the rule, and thy favour the end of all my conduct. May I carefully inquire what, in all circumstances, and at all times thou wouldst have me to do, and suffer not any earthly consideration to damp my zeal, and to impair my exertions in thy service. May it be my first concern to obey and to please thee, to be pure in heart, to be holy in all manner of conversation, and to keep a conscience void of offence both towards God and man; and in so doing, may I be satisfied in securing the approbation of my own heart, and the hope of thy favour to eternal life. If the esteem of the wise and good be any part of my present reward, may I not be foolishly elated: but may I be lowly and circum-
spect; may it lead me most sedulously to guard the virtues I may have acquired, and to strive after yet higher attainments, in whatever is excellent and praise-worthy.

Accept, most gracious God, my morning tribute of praise and thanksgiving, for thy goodness in preserving me from the dangers of the past night. Protect and bless me, and all who are dear to me, through this day. May this and every day thou grantest to me, witness my successful endeavours to resist temptation, to grow in grace, and to become better fitted for that solemn hour which shall introduce me to a scene of righteous retribution.

To thee, the father of all, be ascribed, through Jesus Christ, all blessing and praise for ever. Amen.
WEDNESDAY EVENING.

Reflections.

How often have I heard it remarked that the youthful mind, in which virtue has not been confirmed by habit, is easily unsettled and led astray; liable to be seduced by false appearances, and prone to yield to evil solicitations, even against its convictions; and to sacrifice what are known to be its true interests to the dread of singularity! The justice of this remark, even my own observation, if not my own experience, too fully confirms. Yet virtue is the most precious treasure I can possess, most necessary to my peace of mind, to my usefulness and credit in the world, and, of all things, most important to me both for this present transitory scene, and for that eternal state into which I must finally, and, perhaps, speedily, pass. What, then, constituted as I am, and exposed to such a trial of my integrity, does a regard to consistency and to my best interests require.

It is plainly my duty to be very cautious as to the company I keep, and to decline all familiarity with such as are of a worthless or dubious charac-
ter. We naturally adopt the sentiments and dispositions, and imperceptibly copy the manners of those with whom we love to associate; evil company will, therefore, inevitably induce evil habits. Let me not, then, sit in the seat of the scorner, nor stand in the way of the wicked, nor walk in the counsel of the ungodly; lest my horror of sin should abate, by becoming familiar with it, and from being a witness of the transgressions of others, I become first an irresolute, and then a hardened transgressor myself. When I see a bad youth, wisdom warns me to avoid him, so far as may be possible; to go not near him; to turn from him, and pass away. Whatever may be his talents or attainments, however fascinating his manners, however pleasing his conversation, he cannot be a worthy friend or a safe companion. The “companion of fools,” says the wise king of Israel, “shall be destroyed.” On the other hand, the companion of “the wise increases wisdom.” Let me, then, according to the counsel of the psalmist, be “a companion of them who fear God and who keep his precepts.” For, as the society of the wicked gives countenance to vice, so the society of the good encourages virtue, invigorates good resolutions, and raises and dignifies the sentiments and affections. In the company of the wise and good, with their example before my eyes, and conversing with them, vice is hateful to me;
my, virtuous purposes are ardent; my resolution to pursue that only which is right, is strong. I am ready to every good word and work. In communion with such, having them for partners in my labours or my pleasures, and companions of my social hours, my heart will be preserved from all dislike of duty, a spirit of generous emulation will keep me from indolence and languor in the pursuit of what is good; I shall have continually before me a serious but pleasing admonition concerning what I ought to be; I shall be continually growing up into confirmed virtue, and an unconquerable detestation of whatever is displeasing in the sight of God.

If I would maintain the principles which my heart approves, and keep the road I have chosen, I must ever be upon my guard, and summon to my aid the most strenuous resolution; and, in order to give stability and vigour to my resolution, I must arm myself with such serious and important thoughts, as in the time of trial, may rise up to assist me, and carry me safely through the dangers which I cannot shun. I must remember that God is everywhere, and at all times about me; that while I am acting, my holy and impartial Judge regards my conduct; and that at his tribunal I must answer for what I imagine as well as for what I do. I must deeply impress
Devotional Exercises.

Upon my mind this awful and awakening truth, that one false step prepares for another, and may seem to make another necessary; so that, having once entered on the evil way, I may never be able to forsake it, and return to the safe and pleasant path which I was before pursuing. The counsels of virtue and religion once slighted, will be regarded with increasing dislike, and my heart, before I am well aware of my dreadful condition, may become hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. My first sinful compliance I may mean to be my last; but how dare I trust to to-morrow's repentance, of what I am tempted to commit to day? Shall I deliberately do wrong at present, with the intention, hereafter, to correct my error and to expiate my guilt? Can I boast myself of to-morrow? Can I be sure that I shall see it, or if I see it, that my purposes of repentance and amendment may not be lost amidst renewed solicitations to do evil? It is the height of folly and presumption to trifle with sin. The pleasures of sin are but for a season, but the pleasures of uncorrupted virtue are everlasting. That is not true good-nature which would lead me to comply with the solicitations of others, to my own ruin, nor is that true modesty, which is ashamed of doing right. Will it confer any honour upon me to conform with others, when singularity is virtue, or will it bring upon me any disgrace to
be singular, when conformity would be criminal? Will it be any mark of wisdom to quit the paths of holiness and virtue, because they who know not how pleasant and how peaceful they are, laugh at me. Will not the consciousness of integrity, the applause of the wise and good, the approbation of the Almighty, and the prospect of immortal glory, help me to sustain the undeserved contempt of the thoughtless and the unwise? In order to escape the sarcasms of the votaries of folly and of vice, shall I incur the censures of my own heart, and the displeasure of the living God?

By frequently dwelling upon such considerations as these, let me arm myself against the attacks of temptation, and prevent the natural diffidence and timidity of youth from leading me into sinful compliances; and let me acquire that firmness of mind, that steadiness of resolution in every thing, which is right and good, that may support me in the practice of my duty, and bear me out against that fear of men which bringeth a snare, and from the guilt and danger of those who are ashamed of Christ and his words.
PRAYER.

O thou Father of light, and fountain of all good! To thee I lift up my heart, devoutly adoring the glorious perfections of thy nature, and earnestly entreating thy direction and blessing. Ignorant, weak, and frail as I am, to whom should I go but to thee, who canst instruct, support, and strengthen me; who canst impart that wisdom which is from above, give energy to my good resolutions, and success to all my faithful endeavours to do thy will? Sincerely desirous, I trust, to forsake and to avoid every wicked way, and to live in thy fear, and in the practice of all righteousness, I humbly beseech thee, to grant me every needful aid, to keep me from temptation, or to carry me safely through every trial of my virtue, and to enable me to attain to that holiness of heart and life, without which I cannot hereafter see thee. Ever may it may be deeply impressed upon my mind, that "the ways of wisdom are ways of pleasantness, and her paths, paths of peace; that she is a tree of life to those who lay hold on her, and that they, and they only, are happy, who find her." In the ways of wisdom may I walk, and not be weary;
may I run therein and not faint. Esteeming thy favour as my life, and preferring thy loving-kindness and thy approbation to every thing that can come into competition with it, may I hold fast my integrity, and persevere in well-doing, by whatever temptations I may be exercised and proved.

May I carefully shun the scenes, the occasions, and connexions that might betray me into evil. May I keep far from the assembly of the profane and the thoughtless, and be a companion of those who fear thee. If sinners entice, may I have wisdom and resolution not to consent. May I not enter into the path of the wicked, nor go into the way of evil men. May I avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away. May I choose the path of the just, which is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. Knowing that the pleasures of sin are but for a season; that every transgression of thy law leads to pain, and disgrace, and misery, and that, though hand join hand, the wicked shall not go unpunished, may I hold no fellowship with the workers of iniquity; may I not dread any reproach they may cast upon me, so much as the rebukes of my own mind, nor desire that favour from them, which can be obtained only by forfeiting thy approbation. Thou only art to be feared, for who can stand in thy sight when thou rebukest? Thy
favour is, above all things, to be desired, for when thou givest peace, who can make trouble? May my mind be habitually filled with the profoundest reverence of thee, and may I so stand in awe, as never to sin against thee.

Mercifully pardon, O God, all the errors and transgressions, of which, in time past, I have been guilty; and grant, that for the future, I may exercise greater prudence, humility, and vigilance. May I stand fast in all my holy and virtuous resolutions; and may thy grace strengthen and establish me in the discharge of every duty. In every time of temptation, may I remember that thou, God seest me; and wilt hereafter reward me according to my deeds. May I be continually upon my guard against the deceitfulness of sin, and resolutely resist the first assaults of temptation, knowing that one transgression prepares the way for another; and that, through the power of habit, one transgression may prove the cause of my ruin. May I, therefore, fall into no sin, nor run into any kind of danger; but walking before thee in holiness and righteousness all the days of my life, may I finally be presented faultless before the presence of thy glory, with exceeding joy.

For the mercies of the past day, I would offer to thee, O gracious God, my sincere and fervent thanks. Guard me, and all in whose welfare I
am most nearly concerned, from every kind of evil during the ensuing night. May our sleep be pleasant and refreshing, and may we arise in the morning, fitted and disposed to discharge our various duties with diligence and fidelity.

To thee, who alone art wise and good, be ascribed all glory and praise for ever. Amen.
"He that loveth pleasure," says Solomon, "shall be a poor man." But can I refrain from loving pleasure? Is not this a natural principle, formed within me by the great and good Author of my frame? Am I not irresistibly led to avoid pain, and all the occasions of it, and to desire and pursue the means of pleasure? But passions, in themselves innocent and useful, may become unlawful and pernicious: affections implanted in me by my all-wise Maker, may be perverted, by being indulged to excess, or directed to improper objects. May I not love pleasure too ardently, and seek after it with too much eagerness? May I not make that which was intended to be the sweetener of life, its chief or sole pursuit? and, instead of employing it to recruit my spirits, when exhausted by serious toil, and to new-brace the arm of industry, may I not suffer it to weaken or destroy my best powers, and to render me frivolous and indolent? Even the little experience I have had of the world, and the comparatively few observations
that I have been able to make of what is passing
there, must be sufficient to convince me, that
pleasure is one of the most dangerous enemies of
youth. They who are overcome and led captives
by her at her will, daily grow less worthy, less
amiable, and less promising. There is an end of
their own improvement, and of the hopes which
they who love them, and are interested in their
credit, and their welfare, may have indulged.
Their morning of life is spent, not in a diligent
preparation for the duties and the events of the
approaching day, but in a thoughtless disregard
of every thing which ministers not to the gratifi-
cation of the passing hour; in depraving, not in
improving, the mind; in weakening and contract-
ing, not in strengthening and extending their
capacity of usefulness; and thus in providing for
themselves shame and sorrow. From such ex-
amples let me take timely warning. I cannot be
indifferent to pleasure, nor am I required to reject
all the innocent delights which nature and society
afford. They are provided by Him who made
me, to exercise the natural gaiety of a youthful
heart, to make me think well of life, and to refresh
me amidst my serious pursuits. If I use them for
these purposes, if I attach to them no greater
importance than they deserve, if I suffer them not
to take too firm a hold on my affections, nor to
occupy too large a portion of my attention and my time, I shall have no cause to reproach myself for having perverted the gifts of God, for having opposed his will, and misemployed the important season from which my future life cannot fail to take its character. There is no cause to fear that I shall lose this happy season, if I make not pleasure my study, as I am passing through it. True enjoyment is not obtained by those who are most sedulously employed in searching for amusement, but by those whose first concern it is to perform their duty, and to render the pleasures of life subservient to the great end for which life was given. If pleasure be made my business, it will soon become the bane of my happiness. Selfishness, frivolity, and insignificance, will mark and debase my character. The natural powers of my mind will lie uncultivated, and unimproved; the affections of my heart will be corrupted; no good principle will be formed within me; no stores of useful knowledge will be accumulated; no sufficient preparation will be made for the station I am destined to occupy; and I shall be utterly unqualified to discharge the duties, to support the vicissitudes, and to secure the end of life. Thus I shall be poor indeed; destitute of those qualities and those attainments, which engage the esteem of the wise and good, are the source of self-satisfaction,
lay the foundation of a virtuous, useful, and honourable character; and without which, there can be no true enjoyment of this world, no hope of a better world to come.

By the moderation of my love of pleasure, then, let me shew that I am "wise in heart." In the scenes of pleasure, and in the hours of relaxation, let me be jealous of myself, and seriously attentive to my temper and conduct. Let me so pass through, and enjoy them, that I may be able to reflect upon them with satisfaction, when they are over. Never let me suffer them so to engross my time and my thoughts, so to seize upon my affections, as to detract from the dignity of my rational nature, and from the importance and usefulness of my future life. I am born for nobler ends than mere sensitive enjoyment. I have faculties which prove me to have been formed for far higher purposes than amusement and gaiety. The work of life is a serious work; and of its accomplishment I must hereafter give an account to God. Let this, then, be my chief concern. Let nothing divert my attention from it, nor interfere with my preparation to discharge it with fidelity and honour.

And, while I am cautious not to be seduced even by the most innocent pleasures, never let me, for a moment, indulge in those which reason and
religion forbid. "Forbidden pleasures are pains in disguise." If sensual delights should usurp the dominion of my heart, they will soon degrade me into infamy and wretchedness. Sensuality is the corrupter of every good principle in the human mind, the treacherous and most determined enemy to virtue and happiness. It hardens the heart; it weakens the understanding; it enfeebles the body; it wastes the means of subsistence; it leads to dishonesty or oppression; it embitters and shortens life; it sharpens the sting of death, and it disqualifies its unhappy victim for the presence of a pure and holy God. "The carnal mind is the grave of reason, of virtue, of devotion, of honour, of happiness, and of hope; it is the disgrace and the curse of men; it is both the enemy and the abhorrence of his Maker." Be it, then, my abhorrence: against it let it be my care to guard, with the utmost vigilance. Let me now live in the full conviction of this important truth, that a love of unlawful pleasure in youth, will entail, in some shape or other, perplexity and sorrow on all my future years, and unfit me for life, for death, and for eternity. The cup which sensual pleasure presents, is a poisoned cup. Her bowers may look gay, but beyond them, all is gloom and darkness; and the way that leads to them goeth down to the grave. Pleasures, then,
to which I cannot easily set bounds, or in which it would be criminal to indulge, let me resolutely decline: and from companions who would inflame my passion for them, let me firmly withdraw. Wherever I go, let me carry with me this serious consideration, that God is there: in whatever I engage, let me remember this solemn truth, that hereafter, and, perhaps soon, I shall be called into judgment. By this means, under the blessing of God, I shall retain my innocence, pass safely through the hour of temptation, grow up in confirmed piety and virtue, have hope myself, and give hope to all who love me, that I shall live in duty and die in peace.

PRAYER.

ALMIGHTY and eternal God, the fountain of being, perfection, and happiness! Thankful for the numberless bounties of thy providence, and sensible of my entire dependance upon thee, I would, at the opening of another day, commend myself with humble confidence to thy protection, and earnestly seek thy blessing upon all my sincere and zealous endeavours to be and to do what thou requirest.
Created in thy image, endowed with those exalted faculties, by which thou hast distinguished thy rational creation, and made capable of those pure and satisfying delights which result from the exercise and improvement of my intellectual, moral, and spiritual powers, may I be careful to act in a manner becoming the nature thou hast bestowed upon me, the station thou hast assigned me, and the glorious hope thou hast encouraged me to entertain. May I remember that I am formed not for this transitory life alone, but for an existence that shall never end; and that the most important business of time is to make preparation for eternity. And may a deep conviction of the danger to which I am exposed of not attaining the great purpose of my being, keep me constantly upon my guard against every enemy to my virtue and my final happiness, and incite me, with unwearied assiduity, to cultivate every holy affection and to pursue every good work.

Formed with the capacity of pleasure, prompted by the constitution of my nature to desire and to seek it, and surrounded by numberless sources of delight, may I beware, lest, by the want of wisdom and moderation, I sink into frivolity and insignificance, and entail disgrace and sorrow on all my future years. May I bear continually in mind the purposes for which I have been created, the
Devotional Exercises.

faculties with which I am endowed, and the account I must hereafter give to thee, the righteous Judge of men, of the use of the talents intrusted to my care. While I thankfully partake of those innocent enjoyments; which for the purpose of heightening my relish of life, and of recruiting my various powers, thou hast provided in the scenes of thy creation, in the abundant gifts of thy bounty, and in the society of my companions and friends, may I maintain that sobriety of mind, which becomes a rational and accountable creature; may I preserve a just sense of the importance of the part I have to act in life, and suffer no desire of present gratification to corrupt my heart, and prevent my future usefulness and honour. At all times, but especially in the hours of relaxation from serious concerns, may I be attentive to my temper and conduct. Wherever I go, but especially in scenes of pleasure, may I carry with me this serious consideration, that I am in the view of an all-seeing, and a holy God. Thus may my natural love of pleasure be moderated and controlled by the principles of reason and religion, that it may occasion no self-reproach and disquietude, nor disqualify me for the great work of life, or for those joys which will be perfect and immortal.

Keep me, I pray thee, from the path of forbidden and unlawful pleasures. Give me strength
THURSDAY EVENING.

Reflections.

The day has now closed; the curtains of darkness are drawn around me, and the great Father of mankind is giving to a large portion of his happy family, the repose they need. Wearied both in body and mind, by the various occupations in which I have been engaged, I am now about to sink into that state of temporary insensibility, which is designed to recruit my exhausted powers, and thus to enable me again to perform the duties, and to relish the enjoyments of life. And shall I suffer myself to pass into that state, without bestowing a moment's thought upon the wisdom and goodness, which this provision of my Creator displays: without inquiring concerning the instructions it conveys to me, and the obligations which may be connected with it? Would not such thoughtlessness degrade me to a level with the irrational animals, who cannot discern the hand that formed and sustains them; and be not only an evidence of folly, but expose me to the charge
and the condemnation of impiety? Let me act in a manner more becoming the reasonable nature I possess, and the noble faculties with which I am endowed!

Every thing in the frame and condition of man, if rightly considered, manifests the perfections of his Maker; and demands the offering of grateful praise. The arrangements which relate to our "taking rest in sleep," cannot fail to excite, in every considerate mind, the most exalted emotions of admiration and gratitude. How mighty is that power, how matchless is that skill, which "causeth the sun to know its going down; which maketh darkness, and it is night!" To what, but to the arm of Omnipotence, guiding the planets in their courses, am I indebted for that alternation of light and darkness, which has never been known to fail; and which is so admirably adapted to "animal existence, made up of action and of slumber." How wisely and how kindly, are seasons of light, and seasons of darkness, proportioned to the powers, the wants, and the convenience of man! recurring at such intervals as to afford sufficient time for the business of life, and the repose which the animal frame requires: and by their frequency, occasioning those interruptions of bodily and of mental labour, which, constituted as we are, essentially conduce to the good order,
both of the body and of the mind! How pleasant are the approaches of sleep! How gently and easily, so as to escape our observation, do we sink into insensibility! and what an evidence is this of the goodness of God: who might, if he had been so pleased, have caused sleep to be an object of dislike to us, and have accompanied its approach with such sensations, that we should have submitted to it with reluctance, and only that we might avoid some greater evil. But the tender mercies of God are over all his works, and his delights are with the sons of men.

How pleasing, also, and how salutary, are the effects of sleep. With what alacrity do I usually arise from the bed on which I lay down listless and languid! How wonderfully are all my powers invigorated, and with what cheerfulness and energy do I return to the performance of my duties. And when I consider, that rest from labour is not the privilege of any individuals, or any particular class of beings, but is extended over the whole earth, and, perhaps, far beyond it; and dispensed in such a measure, and at such seasons, as are most suitable to the respective natures, and best accommodated to the wants of all who breathe, how strikingly does the goodness of the Creator appear! When I further consider how many find in sleep, not merely refreshment after labour and
fatigue, but a temporary cessation of the grief by which their hearts had been pierced, or of the pains by which their frame had been tortured, I perceive still greater cause for gratitude to Him, who hath provided sleep for man. The anguish of a troubled mind and a dejected spirit, is not felt in the season of repose. The mourner bewails not the ravages of death; the tears of sorrow forbear to flow; the labouring breast is still; every sigh is hushed, and every care has fled. And, though toil and pain, and grief and anxiety, may be renewed with the returning day, yet the interruption is kind and salutary, and is a merciful alleviation of a burthen which must be borne. When, therefore, I am sinking to rest, let me not be unmindful of God! let me not withhold the tribute of a heart deeply impressed by the evidence of his power, wisdom, and goodness, which the season of rest affords. It is good and right to give thanks to God, and to offer praise to his name; to shew forth his loving-kindness in the morning, and his faithfulness every night.

But it becomes me, at the same time, to remember, that, pleasant and salutary as sleep is, its necessity arises out of the infirmities of my nature, and that it ought, therefore, to teach me humility. It is a blessing to me, constituted as I am; but it is a blessing, in which the meanest animal also
partakes. It is enjoyed most largely, even by the human race in its lowest state, in the period of infancy, when the moral and the intellectual powers are feeble. While in the ear of reason, night unto night declares the power of the Creator, it speaks as clearly of the feebleness of man, and admonishes him, that pride was not made for a being so imperfect and so frail.

And how greatly does sleep abridge the short and uncertain period of human existence! How many of the few and transient hours allotted to me, are passed in a state of insensibility! A third part at least, it is probable, of my little life, is consumed in slumber. Surely it is my duty not to suffer the season of repose to encroach too much upon that of activity; nor by slothfulness and self-indulgence, to convert that which was designed to be a blessing, into the means of present insignificance, and a criminal neglect of duty, and, consequently, of condemnation and woe.

How strong is the resemblance that sleep bears to death! During the hours of undisturbed repose, I was as insensible to all the wants of life, and as incapable of its duties, as I shall be in the grave. Let the one state, then, remind me of the other: when I lie down on my bed of rest, let me send forward my thoughts to the time, which may not be far distant, when I shall go down to the house
appointed for all the living. And let it be my constant care, so to improve and employ my waking hours, and all the other talents intrusted to me, that when that solemn hour shall arrive, I may be able, with cheerful confidence, to commit my spirit to Him who gave it, as into the hands of a merciful Creator; and when the night of death shall be past, I may arise with all my faculties renewed and enlarged, to a never-ending life of perfect holiness and uninterrupted joy.

PRAYER.

Father of mercies, and God of all grace! before thee it becomes all thy rational creatures to bow with profound reverence and sacred awe: for none in the heavens are like thee, O God, nor are there any works like thy works. Thou art great, and doest wondrous things; thou art God alone. Thou upholdest all things by the word of thy power, and by thee all things consist.

x 5
At the close of another day, I would most gratefully own and bless that goodness, which has conducted me safely through all its dangers, supplied every returning want, and favoured me with renewed opportunities of advancing in my preparation for future usefulness, satisfaction, and honour. It is of thy mercy, O God, that I am still amongst the living, to praise thee; through help obtained from thee, I continue to this moment. Life and all its blessings are thy gift; and at thy pleasure, and by thy permission I retain them. Wert thou to withdraw thy supporting hand, I must die, and return to the dust. May I never forget my absolute dependance upon thee, nor withhold that reverence and submission, that gratitude, trust, and obedience, which thou dost so justly require. Pardon, I beseech thee, O God, whatever during the past day, or any former period of my life, has been inconsistent with the privileges with which I am favoured, with the obligations under which I am placed, with the character I sustain as thy dependent creature, and the disciple of thy Son, and with the end for which I have been created! Remember not the sins of my youth; and grant me all needful aid to correct whatever is wrong, and to walk in all thy holy commands blameless.

The day is thine, the night also is thine; thou
causest the morning and the evening to praise thee. In great wisdom and kindness thou makest the sun to know its going down, that man and beast may cease from their labours, and that in darkness and in silence thy great family may rest. Thou knowest our frame, and with wonderful skill and tender compassion, orderest all the stupendous arrangements of thy universe, so as to suit our wants, and to minister to our comfort. In the allotment of our seasons of labour and of repose, in the agreeable sensations by which the approach of sleep is distinguished, in the various benefits derived from alternate toil and rest, I behold the display of thy perfections; and for these and all the instances of thy loving-kindness to the children of men, my heart would bless thee. O may thy never-failing goodness lead me to sincere obedience. Under a deep sense of my frailty and dependance, may I walk before thee with all humility of mind; and knowing that the sleep of death must soon overpower me, may I pass the time of my sojourning here in thy fear, that I may awaken from that sleep to everlasting life.

Thine eyes never slumber nor sleep. To thy care and protection, therefore, I commit myself, and all who are dear to me, during this night. May our rest be sweet and refreshing, and may

x 6
we arise prepared and resolved to labour with increasing diligence, in the work which thou givest us to do.

Accept and bless me as the disciple of thy beloved Son, and to thee be ascribed the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.
FRIDAY MORNING.

Reflections.

Rejoicing once more in the light of day, and with renewed vigour arising from my bed of rest, it becomes me, before I return to my usual occupations, to render thanks to God, who provideth sleep for man, and to strengthen those motives to obedience which flow from the uninterrupted benevolence of my Creator and Preserver, and from the important truths which the opening of every day is so well adapted to impress upon my mind.

How largely has the experience of another night increased my debt of gratitude to my almighty Benefactor. When, wearied by the labours and the amusements of the day, and no longer able to discharge the duties or to taste the enjoyments of life, He drew around me the curtains of darkness, I sunk gently into peaceful slumbers, and am now awakened with no sense of fatigue or languor remaining; ready and able to resume my usual pursuits, to make further advances in useful knowledge, and to enjoy those delights which nature and society present to me. What a wonderful change have a few short hours wrought in my
frame! How pleasurable are my sensations at this moment, contrasted with the listlessness and inactivity by which I was so lately over-powered! Such seasons of repose, and refreshment have been almost as numerous as my days; the interruptions they have suffered by disease or accident are scarcely perceptible: and can I be unmindful of Him who maketh darkness, and it is night; and who giveth to me the sleep that is so needful to my bodily and my mental powers?

That I am restored to the enjoyment of life is a just subject of astonishment and of gratitude. I know not how this restoration has been accomplished. I only know that it has, in no degree, depended upon my own will, or my own power. Insensible to every thing around me, and unconscious even of my existence, how has it happened that my perceptions and my consciousness have been restored? During some hours I have been in a state strongly resembling death; and it is owing to no exertions on my part, that the resemblance has not become reality. Not a night, it is probable, passes, but some, who lie down on their bed apparently in health, and with the full expectation of awakening to renewed activity and enjoyment, return to life no more, but are imperceptibly removed into that land of unbroken silence, "where there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor
Wisdom." Why have I not been of this number? I can ascribe it only to the providence of God, whose visitation has preserved my spirit, and who by his almighty energy, has restored animation to my bodily frame, and revived my mental powers.

If, during the hours of darkness and insensibility, I have slept securely; if disease has not interrupted my slumbers; if the midnight plunderer has not violated my repose; if no sad accident, no distressing calamity has come nigh my dwelling, to what am I indebted for this blessing, but to the guardian care of God; to the wakeful and the benignant notice of that eye, which never slumbers nor sleeps; and to the power of that mighty arm which no force of man can resist? My help cometh from the Lord, who made heaven and earth: he only causeth me to dwell in safety.

Has the blessing of quiet and invigorating repose, been granted to those also whom I tenderly love? Am I about to meet again those, on whom my happiness so greatly depends, in similar ease and enjoyment? What a strong additional claim upon my gratitude does this instance of the divine goodness present? As every night, and every hour is conveying from this mortal scene many of the accountable creatures of God to a scene of righteous retribution, numerous are the families in which, at this moment, the voice of joy and gladness is
changed into the voice of lamentation and weeping. The morning light beholds them, not congratulating each other on their renewed participation in the common bounties of Providence, but mingling their tears of mutual condolence, and looking in vain for the long-loved friend and relative, whose place in the domestic circle is unoccupied, and which will know him no more. If such a mournful event marks not my entrance upon another day, if I am permitted to embrace the objects of my purest affection, and to rejoice with them in each other's welfare, I have reason to bless Him to whom belong the issues of life and death, and without whose sustaining power, no living creature could subsist one moment.

It becomes me, at this season, not only to look back upon the hours of rest, and the blessings they have brought with them; but as I am entering again upon a scene of active duty and of trial, serious consideration and fore-thought will assist me in performing my duty, in resisting temptation, and in sustaining whatever burden of sorrow Providence may see fit to lay upon me. I am "going forth to my work, and to my labour until the evening," but in what circumstances will the evening find me? Will it find me amongst the living, or numbered with the dead? In the enjoyment of all the comforts that now surround me, or deprived of the objects.
of my tenderest love? in this short period, may not
disease invade me, or accident bring me down to
the gates of death? or, may not the same enemies
to human comfort prevail over those who are the
guides of my youth, or the friends of my bosom?
In this changing scene, I cannot reckon upon the
continued possession of any blessing even for a day:
all I enjoy depends upon the will of God. Let
me, then, be prepared to submit, with pious resig-
nation, to whatever he may appoint, in the full
conviction, that a Being of unerring wisdom and
boundless benevolence can do only that which is
right in itself, and most beneficial to his creatures.

I am entering upon another day, in which,
if I am permitted to live through it, and to live in
health, many opportunities will be afforded me of
improving my understanding, of gaining useful
knowledge, of becoming better qualified for the
station I may hereafter fill, of correcting what is
wrong in my temper and conduct, of confirming
my good resolutions, and of making some further
attainments in moral excellence. For the use of
such opportunities, let me carefully remember,
through the day, that I must give an account
to God, and let me suffer none of them to be lost.
I must expect to be assailed by temptation. In-
dolence, pleasure, unruly passions, inordinate ap-
petites, evil example, or evil solicitations may
endeavour to seduce me from the way in which I should go: amidst such dangers to which my virtue and my peace are exposed, it is necessary that I should be every moment upon my guard; and that I should remember in whose presence I am, whose laws I am bound to obey, and to what awful consequences disobedience and neglect will inevitably lead. How becoming, then, is it, in a creature so frail as I am, and placed in such circumstances of danger, at the opening of every day of trial and probation, to confirm my faith in my great Ruler and Judge, by the exercises of devotion, and to seek his guidance, support, and blessing? To him, then, let me every morning direct my prayer, and of him seek that wisdom, without which I can neither discern, nor choose, nor pursue the thing that is right.

PRAYER.

Great and glorious Lord God! the creator, preserver, and benefactor of mankind; with sentiments of pure devotion and of ardent gratitude, would I now approach thee, to render to thee the praise which thy goodness demands, to renew my
resolutions of obedience, and to seek thy blessing on my sincere and earnest endeavours to be and to do what thou requirest. Risen from that bed, which might have been my tomb; awakened from that sleep which might have been the sleep of death, and beholding, in ease and comfort, the light of returning day, it becomes me to consecrate my renewed life, and my recruited powers to thy service. While I have been reposing in peace and security, how many of my fellow-creatures, not more unworthy than I am, have been destitute of a habitation to shelter them, or oppressed with sickness, or tortured with pain, or the prey of accident or violence! While I have been refreshed by my slumbers, and spared to resume the duties, and to taste again of the enjoyments of life, how many have slept to awake no more in this world! That I am not of this number, is owing to thy good pleasure; and to thee, as the gracious preserver of my life, I would offer my most grateful praise. When wearied with labour, thou grantest me repose: while I sleep, insensible to every thing around me, and incapable either of perceiving or of averting the dangers to which I am exposed, thou watchest over me, and in due season, callest me to renewed wakefulness and activity. Never may I forget the kind and mighty hand by which I am thus protected; never may I be unmindful of the
unceasing goodness to which I owe the safety, the comfort, and the numberless blessings which crown both my sleeping and my waking hours! May I devote my life, so graciously given and so wonderfully preserved by thee, to thy service. May I spend every day and every hour in thy fear. May I live in all holy obedience to thy commands, in the exercise of all good affections towards my fellow-creatures, in the due improvement of my heart and mind, and in a constant care to obtain thy approbation, and to secure that everlasting life, which thou hast promised to bestow on all thy faithful servants.

Entering again upon another day, ignorant of the events by which any hour of it may be marked, I would humbly and cheerfully commit myself to thy guidance and protection. Thou alone knowest what is best for me, and for those I love. I would pray, that if it be agreeable to thy wise and gracious designs, thou wouldst keep us all from accident, disease, and death; and grant us that degree of health, and comfort, and enjoyment which we may reasonably desire. Nevertheless, not my will, O God, but thine be done! Whatever may befall me, or those who are dear to me, grant that we may be able, with pious submission, to bow to thy unerring wisdom; to acquiesce, without murmuring in thy appointments; and to make all that we may suf-
Devotional Exercises.

...fer, or all that we may enjoy, conducive to our present improvement and our everlasting felicity.

Entering upon another of these few and transient days that are allotted to me, that I may prepare for a useful and honourable life, a peaceful death, and a happy eternity, may I be solicitous to employ it to those great ends. May I be aware of the numerous temptations, in the midst of which my great work is to be done, and constantly upon my guard, that I be not in any instance overcome, or seduced from the path of duty. And do thou, O God, strengthen me for every conflict, and carry me through it in safety and in triumph. Confirm my faith in thee, and in things unseen and eternal. May the precepts of my blessed Master, Jesus Christ, direct me in all my difficulties; may his bright and perfect example be ever in my view, to guide and animate me in all well-doing; and at the close of the day, may I have comfort from the reflection, that I have not spent it in vain.

Pardon all my past offences. Preserve me from returning again to the follies I lament. Guide me by thy counsel through life, and finally receive me to thyself in glory everlasting. I ask all in the name of Jesus Christ, and as his disciple, ascribe to thee all glory and praise for ever. Amen.
FRIDAY EVENING.

Reflections.

When I read the interesting narrative in which the life and character of the illustrious Founder of Christianity are displayed, I cannot contemplate, without the highest admiration, his complete superiority to all selfish views; his entire disregard of personal convenience and advantage, and his disinterested devotedness to the service of mankind. He came into the world, as he himself declared, "not to do his own will, but the will of Him who sent him;" and, in no instance, did he seek to please himself. He came "not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many;" and, therefore, amongst his disciples he was "as one who served:" and, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, far from making their prejudices subservient to his own interest, he voluntarily submitted to all the inconveniences of poverty; he meekly endured contradiction, contempt, and insult from those to whom he daily laboured to do good; and suffered not the malice with which he was continually harassed, to cool the ardour, or to restrain the exercise of his benevolence.
Devotional Exercises.

Young as I am, I bear the name of Christ; I call myself his disciple; and I am therefore bound to follow his steps. I can discern the brightness of his example; I own the authority of his precepts; and these both concur with the express language of an apostle, to condemn those who are "lovers of themselves." Yet self-love is a strong and a natural principle, implanted in me by the wise and gracious Author of my frame: in itself, therefore, it cannot be evil, nor can I be required wholly to repress it. It must have been designed to answer some good purpose; and reason and religion demand that it be so directed and controlled, as that while it accomplishes the will of my Creator, it may not become the occasion of evil.

I am indeed fearfully and wonderfully made. In the constitution of my mind, as in the frame of my body, that which is intended to contribute to my well being, and to promote my comfort, may be perverted into a means of severe and lasting suffering. Self-love may not be only innocent, but useful: it naturally impels men to attend to the preservation of life, and to the sources of real enjoyment: it excites them to industry in their respective callings: it may prove a powerful and salutary check upon those inordinate appetites, the indulgence of which is inconsistent with peace and satisfaction, and thus it may afford an import-
ant aid in the pursuit and attainment of virtue. In the Scriptures, it is proposed as the rule and measure of the love which we are to cherish towards others; and it is on this affection that the foundation of the most benevolent and disinterested character must be laid. We are to love our neighbour as we love ourselves; and the purest and most extensive charity may be traced to the love of self. But self-love is a principle which operates very strongly, and is therefore liable to be indulged to excess; and no passion or affection can be excessive, without being pernicious. When suffered to become immoderate, self-love must be decidedly opposed to that humility of mind which is essential to true piety, and to that calm and ready acquiescence in the will of God, without which there can be no real enjoyment of life. That inordinate self-love which the Scriptures condemn, contracts and hardens the heart; begets pride and arrogance, fretfulness and envy. It renders us blind to our own faults, but very keen-sighted as to the faults of others; and therefore leads to self-conceit and censoriousness. It excites a perpetual, craving desire of personal gratifications; and is attended with a disinclination to forego any private advantage, in order to please or benefit those with whom we may be connected. The comfort, the rights, and even the virtue of
others will be altogether disregarded by him who is under the dominion of inordinate self-love, if they stand in the way of his apprehended interests; and, as his unreasonable and irregular desires must necessarily be resisted, he can hardly escape the torment of hatred, revenge, and many other malignant passions. He who indulges an undue love of self, cannot discharge his duty either to God or man. No zealous exertions for the public good, no generous labours to alleviate the sufferings of the afflicted, to check the prevalence of ignorance and vice, to diffuse the blessings of knowledge and virtue, will be undertaken by him. The man who, above all things, loves himself, will, as far as he can, live to himself; and such a life must be degrading, useless, and often wretched: displeasing to God, unhonoured by men, neither yielding present enjoyment, nor blessed by the hope of future felicity. But, on the other hand, he who makes the love of himself subordinate to the love of God, and of his neighbour; who thinks little of himself, and much of others; who is more solicitous to be good and to do good, than to obtain the highest delights of sense or imagination, will answer the end for which he was created, and experience that happiness which the selfish seek, but cannot find.

Can I, then, for a moment hesitate in determining to which of these characters my choice ought
to be directed? Shall self be the object of my supreme affection? Shall I live only or chiefly to promote my own narrow interests, to seek my own personal gratification? Or shall I extend my wishes and my cares as far beyond myself, as my station in society will allow, and employ the talents which God has given me, in promoting the general welfare? Shall I flutter through life, the mere insect of a day, intent on transient, unsubstantial pleasures, useless, if not injurious to those around me; or, shall I, in the spirit of Him who went about doing good, make the joys and the sorrows of others my own; and, imitating the benevolence, partake in the happiness of God himself? My decision must now be made. The rudiments of the character which I wish to maintain through life, must be acquired in my youth. The affections, which are to be the springs of my future conduct, must be cherished in my earliest years. Let me, then, in this most important period of my life, carefully check the growth of a selfish spirit; and sedulously cultivate every generous and disinterested disposition. Let me now learn to deny myself; to submit my will to the desires of those to whom I owe respect and obedience; to forego my own pleasure, if, by so doing, I can promote the pleasure or the advantage of my friends and companions. Let me be ever diffident and humble;
in honour preferring others to myself: not tenacious of my own opinion; not eager to gratify my own inclinations; nor suffering any purely selfish motive, in any instance, to direct my conduct. While engaged in storing my mind with knowledge, let me ever keep in view, as the end of all my attainments, the power of being hereafter extensively useful to others. In daily intercourse with my companions, by a ready compliance with their reasonable desires, and a steady endeavour to promote their happiness, let me lay the foundation of those habits of self-denial, and of that zeal to do good, which will be essential to my future credit and comfort. In every instance, let it be my first concern not to please or to benefit myself; but to consult the advantage and the happiness of all with whom I am connected: knowing that thus only I shall fulfil the designs of Him who made me; obey the precepts, and imitate the example of my Lord; secure the esteem and love of my brethren, and attain to the true enjoyment of life.
PRAYER.

Most great and glorious God, the gracious author of my being, and the source of all my blessings; with sacred awe and heart-felt gratitude I would this evening bow before thee. Through the hours of another day thy providential care has been kindly exercised over me, to keep me from every fatal evil, and to bestow upon me every needful good. On thee I continually depend for life, and health, and all things; and thou withholdest nothing that is necessary for my support and comfort. I cannot protect myself, but thou art my defence. I cannot uphold myself in life, nor command one blessing that I enjoy, but thy hand sustaineth me in the midst of unseen dangers, and crowneth me with loving-kindness and tender mercy. Of myself I am nothing, and I can do nothing. All my powers, both of action and enjoyment, proceed from thee, and depend upon thee for their continuance. Without thee, O God, I could not exist one moment. Wert thou to withdraw thy protection, I must die and return to the dust. Never may I be unmindful of thee, O God, the former of my body, the father of my spirit, the giver of every good and perfect gift!
May I be truly thankful for thy unceasing goodness, and manifest the fervour and the sincerity of my gratitude, by a constant and effectual endeavour in all things to do thy will.

For ever blessed be thy name, that thy loving-kindness is not confined to this present short and uncertain life, but that having awakened in my breast an earnest longing after immortality, thou hast, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and his exaltation to thy right-hand in heaven, encouraged me to expect with unwavering faith, a world in which righteousness, and peace, and joy shall reign without interruption, and without end. May the hope and prospect of this blessed state purify my affections, give firmness to my resolutions, raise me far above the influence of sinful allurements, and keep me active and persevering in the practice of duty.

As the disciple of him who brought life and immortality fully to light, may I reverently listen to his words, and uniformly observe them. May I be endowed with his spirit, follow his example, and in the whole of my temper and conduct, manifest the power of his doctrine to form me to all that is truly excellent. May I love thee, O God, with all my heart, and mind, and soul, and strength; may I love my neighbour as myself; and may that love which I cannot but bear to myself,
never rise within me into an excessive and hurtful affection. May I ever remember that I am born not for myself alone, but for others; for my friends, and for all with whom thy providence may in any way connect me. May I consider that the powers with which I am endowed, the state of dependence in which I am placed, the precepts of thy holy word, and the example of thy beloved Son, unite to urge me not to pursue my own gratification alone, but to look out of and beyond myself, and to practise the most enlarged and disinterested benevolence. May I, therefore, be ever willing to deny myself, and to promote the comfort of others. May I be disposed to rejoice with those who rejoice, to weep with those who weep; and to take a generous concern in the enjoyment and the welfare of all around me.

Amidst the pleasures by which I am now surrounded, and amidst the cares which may hereafter fall to my lot, may I habitually contemplate the future world to which I am passing; may I use the present world as though I used it not; may I be temperate in all things, and make it my chief concern to cherish a disposition for those pure and rational delights, which are to constitute my final blessedness. Pardon, I earnestly pray thee, O God, all my past negligence and folly; forgive every wilful transgression of thy most holy law. Make me
truly penitent and deeply humble, and keep me ever upon my guard, that I sin no more against thee.

Take me, and all who are connected with me in bonds of kindred or friendship, under the care of thy providence during this night. Be thou our God and our guide unto death; our support whenever thou shalt call us hence, and after death our everlasting portion. Amen.
SATURDAY MORNING.

Reflections.

That the uninterrupted enjoyment of any blessing has a tendency to render the mind inattentive to its value, and unthankful to God from whom it proceeds, I am not too young to perceive. But though such may be the usual, and even the natural effect of custom and habit, it is not therefore to be justified or approved. The value of a blessing does not really rise in proportion to its rarity; nor does that which contributes much to my comfort and my welfare, diminish in its worth and importance, by being seldom, if ever, withheld. The slightest reflection is sufficient to convince me, that those benefits which are continued to me day after day, with few intermissions, instead of being held in little or no esteem, ought to be very highly valued, the subjects of my daily thoughts, and my most fervent gratitude.

Health is one of the blessings which are commonly enjoyed, and as commonly overlooked; a blessing of inestimable importance, but seldom, if
Devotional Exercises.

Ever, sufficiently prized, till it is wholly withdrawn, or for a season suspended. The ordinary state of man appears to be that of health and vigour; it is that which generally marks the season of youth. Am I in that state; almost, if not altogether, a stranger to sickness and pain; and able, with ease, and cheerfulness, and alacrity, to pursue the business, and to partake of the innocent amusements of life? And do I enjoy this happiness with a careless spirit and an unthankful heart? I cannot doubt the value of this blessing. How easily and how pleasantly the days of those, who are in health, pass on, I know by delightful experience; and if hitherto no other days have been appointed to me, I cannot but observe in the case of others, how heavily the hours move, that are spent in the chamber of sickness, or on the bed of pain. In health, every object affords gratification and delight; exertion is pleasant, and duty easy; and the exercise of every faculty, both of body and mind, is attended with exquisite enjoyment. How sadly is the scene changed by sickness! The light of life is gone! the accustomed sources of pleasure send forth only streams of bitterness; many duties cannot be performed at all; the pursuits that were once followed with eagerness, become difficult; and services, once performed with ease, insufferably irksome.

1 5
What a blessing, then, is health! how delightful
the influence it sheds on the pleasures and the
duties of life! how essential to its usefulness and
happiness! What gratitude do I not owe to God,
who so constituted my frame, that its natural con-
dition should be that of health and enjoyment;
and who so ordered all the objects of nature with
which I am so intimately connected, as to cause
them, in their ordinary state, to promote my com-
fort! What a wonderful, what a delicate machine
is the human body! How numerous, and how
apparently complicated and intricate are its move-
ments! "How many things must go right, for me to
be an hour at ease! how many more, to be vigorous
and active!" What inconveniences and pain might
I suffer from the defect or disorder of the minutest
particle within me! How trivial an accident might
at any moment deprive me of the power of receiv-
ing pleasure from any thing around me, and render
me a burden to myself and others! Can I, then,
spend one hour in ease and comfort, in vigour and
activity, and not present the offering of a grateful
heart to Him, in whom I live, and move, and have
my being? If health be so great a blessing, and at
the same time so precarious, liable to be interrupt-
ed or destroyed by so many and such trivial causes,
and yet so commonly imparted, and so long conti-
nued, shall I not frequently and devoutly offer up
my warmest praise to Him, by whom I have been so fearfully and so wonderfully made, and by whom I am so graciously preserved?

And since a healthful state is not only necessary to the full enjoyment of my present existence, but essential to the proper discharge of many important duties, and to my due preparation for the services to which I may hereafter be called, it must be incumbent upon me, to guard this blessing with all needful vigilance. To be careless of that, for the support of which God so wisely and so kindly provides, which is necessary to the true relish of the other bounties of Providence, to my comfort and my usefulness, would be to treat with contempt the gift that my benevolent Creator condescends to impart, to do injury to myself, and to act unjustly to those whose interests I may have it in my power to promote. Too anxious, indeed, to preserve health, it would be both impious and foolish to be. Life is not to be consumed in studying how to preserve it; and unreasonable solicitude will generally be found to defeat its own purposes. He who is too anxious to prolong life, and to live in health, must be exposed to the most distressing apprehensions, and spend his days in continual fear; his duty will often be neglected; the calls of sympathy and benevolence will be disregarded; and a cold, unfeeling selfishness will take the place of social and friendly affections. It cannot, however, be consist-
ent with what I owe to God, to my fellow-creatures, or to myself, to overpower my strength, or to impair my vigour by excessive labour, either bodily or mental, or by any carelessness and imprudence, to contract the sphere, or to shorten the term of my utility, and to prepare for myself an early grave. When duty calls, health and even life must be made of no account: but in every action and in every pursuit, zeal should be guided by wisdom, and exertions of the most virtuous and laudable nature, so tempered, as not needlessly to expose to hazard a blessing so precarious, and to diminish the sum both of enjoyment and usefulness. But what must be thought of those who sacrifice their health to folly, to the pernicious customs of fashion, to the gratification of licentious passions, or insatiable appetite, intemperance, and vice? Can such know any thing of true enjoyment; can they escape condemnation and punishment? Health is the gift of God; and cannot be thus abused, with impunity. It is an important talent, and ought to be wisely preserved and diligently improved. It may, and most probably will be recalled, before the day of life is closed. Let it be my constant concern, therefore, to employ it for the purposes for which it was given and is continued; and with such wisdom and prudence let me cherish it; that when I enjoy it no longer, the languor or the pains
of sickness may not be aggravated by the reflection that they are the natural consequences of my own perverseness and folly.

But insensibility and ingratitude, unreasonable anxiety or thoughtless neglect, are not the only errors in respect of this blessing into which I am liable to fall. In the full possession of health and vigour, I may become unmindful of my dependence upon God; I may neglect my duty and the due control of my affections, and give myself up to the pursuit or enjoyment of pleasure. I may be tempted to "walk in the ways of my heart, and in the sight of my eyes," and to forget that God will call me into judgment. But what ground have I for such fatal security and presumption? Are childhood and youth necessarily exempt from disease and accident? Have none of the companions of my early days languished on the bed of sickness, or sunk prematurely into the grave? Do I not perceive that in every period of life, health is precarious, and easily invaded or destroyed? If then, this valuable blessing be granted to me, let me not pervert it into an occasion of evil. It is given to enable me not only to enjoy the other bounties of Providence, but to be active and useful; diligent in the cultivation of my mind, in the discipline of my thoughts and affections, and in the formation of pious and virtuous habits; and, as far as my influ-
ence and power extend, to be serviceable to my fellow-creatures. Let me not, by indolence or folly, defeat the purposes of my beneficent Creator, but let me employ this and all his mercies, to his glory, that whether they be continued or withdrawn, I may have the comfort of a good conscience, and the hope of his favour.

PRAYER.

Worthy art thou, O Lord, to receive blessing, and honour, and glory, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are, and were created. Thou hast made the heavens and the earth, and all that they contain. The heavens declare thy glory; the earth is full of the riches of thy wisdom and thy goodness. Thou upholdest all things by the word of thy power, and by thee all things consist.

I would humbly and thankfully adore thee, O Lord, as the Creator and Preserver of mankind. Thou art the former of our bodies, which are so fearfully and so wonderfully made; thou art the father of our spirits, and, by thy inspiration, hast given us understanding! Of one blood hast thou made all nations of men to dwell upon all the face of the earth; their times are in thy hands, and the
bounds of their habitations thou dost determine. In the countless multitude of thy creatures, not one is forgotten, not one is unnoticed by thee. Weak and insignificant as I am, thou art my Father and my God; thou continually sustainest me by thy power; and every day and every moment thou art with me to do me good. Life, with all its enjoyments and all its hopes, I have derived from thee. Thy word called me into being; thy watchful eye hath ever been attentive to me; thy almighty arm hath ever been extended over me, to guard me from every fatal danger; and to thee alone I look for the supply of all my future wants. What am I, that thou shouldst thus be mindful of me! What am I that thou shouldst thus visit me with thy favour! Less than the least of all thy mercies, I am unworthy of the kindness which is so largely and so constantly bestowed upon me. My heart reproaches me with ingratitude; my conscience bears witness against me. How unmindful have I been of thee, my God, my guardian, and my guide? How many blessings have I received, without offering to Him from whom they came, a suitable acknowledgment of grateful praise! How have my affections been estranged from thee and goodness, and fixed on vanity and folly! With what irregularities of temper have I been too often chargeable; and how readily have I been drawn
aside from the way of thy commandments! Grant unto me true and effectual repentance. Forgive whatever thou hast hitherto seen amiss in me, according to thy gracious promise in the Gospel of Christ, and assist me for the time to come, to love thee more, to serve thee better, and to seek thy approbation as my chief good.

If to the gift of life, and the numberless other benefits by which it is attended, thou hast graciously added the blessing of health, for this may my heart be unfeignedly thankful. May not the constancy of the blessing render me insensible to its value, or ungrateful to thee from whom it proceeds; but, as it sheds so pleasing an influence on every hour I spend in the enjoyment of it, may it direct my thoughts to the Giver of every good and perfect gift, and lead me to glorify thee with my body and my spirit, which are thine. Keep me from all unreasonable solicitude as to its continuance. Suffer me not, through any fear of inconvenience or danger, to neglect my duty either to thee or to mankind. Life and health are at thy disposal, and nothing can invade or destroy my comfort, but by thy permission, and at thy command. Trusting in thy providence, and relying upon thy fatherly care, may it be my only concern to employ with wisdom and fidelity, every talent thou bestowest upon me. Knowing how
much the health of my body conduces to the enjoyment and the usefulness of my life, may I not endanger or destroy it by imprudence or by folly; may I guard it with a vigilance and caution, suited to its high value, and consecrate it to thy glory, to the service of my fellow-creatures, and to my own advancement in every excellence. And knowing the precariousness of health and life, may I remember thee my Creator in the days of my youth, devote my best powers to thy service, and be at all times prepared for whatever thou shalt appoint.

Accept, O Lord, my sincere and fervent praise for the protection of thy providence during the past night. Be with me to preserve me from every danger during this day. But in all that concerns me, I pray that thy will may be done. If I live, may I live to thee. If I die, to thee may I die. In life, in death, and to eternity, may I be thine. Amen.
SATURDAY EVENING.

Reflections.

The conclusion of another week, at which, through the good providence of God, I am arrived, reminds me very forcibly of the rapid flight of time, and naturally carries forward my thoughts to the period, which is at no great distance, when I shall be required to take my part in the more active concerns of life. How ought the prospect of that period to affect me? What influence should its approach be suffered or encouraged to exert on my present temper and conduct? Shall I anticipate its arrival with eager and impatient delight, as the period in which I am to be set free from restraint, and have liberty to follow the guidance of my own inclinations and desires? Shall I trust to the visions of a youthful imagination, and contemplate the scene which is soon to open more fully before me, as ever light and joyous, overcast by no clouds, and infested by no dangers? So I am not instructed to regard it by those who have long been moving in it, and have tried it. They tell me, and
by what I observe even at a distance, their words are fully justified, that the scene of active life is by no means a scene of pure and unmingled delight, but one of suffering as well as of enjoyment; and that if I expect to meet with good at any time, or in any circumstances unmingled with evil, I shall be greatly disappointed. And what else does my observation even of what is passing around me declare? I am not too young to notice the general course of events, or to be unaffected by the occurrences of life. Do I not perceive that the state of man is imperfect and unstable; one while, easy and prosperous; at another, perplexed and calamitous! Are not the ravages of death daily changing the house of gladness, into the house of mourning; blasting the fairest prospects, and the brightest hopes; and filling many a heart with bitterness and grief? Is virtue always triumphant, and vice always infamous? Are the labours of honest industry at all times successful; and do the arts of fraud, or the open attacks of villainy, meet with the recompense they deserve? Are the prayers of the pious parent in every instance answered; and his grey hairs never brought down in sorrow to the grave, by the profligacy of the child, whose opening years had been blessed with the unremitted attention of parental love? Are there no snares in the world through which I am passing, by which incau-
tious virtue may be injured, if not destroyed; no temptations, by which the firmest resolutions may be shaken and overpowered? Even in the quiet scenes of youth, have I no trials to endure; no sorrows to prove my faith and patience; no evil principles stirring within me to resist and to subdue; no solicitations of unlawful appetite to withstand; no seductions of evil company and of bad example to avoid? Alas, my young heart is not wholly a stranger to grief; nor am I altogether inexperienced in the conflicts of passion and reason. If I know the delights of virtue, I also know something of the misery of guilt. And from what I have seen and felt in the days that have thus far been allotted to me, may I not form some good estimate of the years that are in prospect? Can I, then, look forwards, and see nothing in the view, but what is gay and cheering? Can I ardently long to go forth to meet such trials; to encounter such dangers, as must await me? Is the world a scene, in which it will be well for me to be removed from the affectionate vigilance of the parental eye, and the kind admonitions of parental wisdom?

But in such a scene I must move; thither, he who hath given me life, and endowed me with the faculties I possess, will shortly call me. That call I must obey. While in the prospect of the world that lies before me, I carefully avoid all false con-
ceptions of its nature, and repress all childish impatience to enter upon it, wisdom warns me so to anticipate the more active period of life to which I am advancing, that I may not be disappointed in my expectations, nor unprepared for the discipline by which I must be exercised, and the duties which I shall be required to fulfil.

Nature prompts me to search for happiness; and the God of nature aids me in the pursuit. But if I would be successful, I must carry with me into the world just views of happiness, and of the means by which it is to be obtained. I must not seek it where God himself has declared it never can be found, in the paths of folly or vice, in frivolity, intemperance, and sensuality; in honours, riches, or any mere worldly advantages and possessions; but in the diligent improvement and the wise employment of the talents bestowed upon me; in the faithful discharge of every social obligation, and in the habitual practice of piety and virtue. Though no good comes to man, unalloyed with evil, yet he has no reason to be dissatisfied with his lot. There is evidently much enjoyment in the world; and the benevolent Creator has provided for his rational creatures, that measure of happiness which is consistent with their nature and condition, with their final perfection and their everlasting welfare: but the happiness that depends upon objects un-
worthy of our regard, or of short and uncertain duration, must be as imperfect, as precarious, and as fleeting as the objects themselves. Let it be my care to expect no more from the world, than observation and experience may now convince me it has to bestow; let me moderate my attachment of all earthly things; let me place my warmest affections on those which are beyond the reach of time and accident, and be more solicitous for the improvement than the enjoyment of life. Pursuing steadily the path of duty, whatever my external circumstances may be, I shall have that peace of mind, and that lively hope, without which there can be no true and lasting happiness: departing from that path, I may find pleasure, but happy I cannot be.

Since the world which I shall soon enter, is a scene of trial, and I shall have to struggle with many powerful temptations, let me now prepare, as far as I am able, to maintain the arduous contest, and to ensure the victory. Let me firmly resolve to make it the first concern of my life, to keep a conscience void of offence: let it be my fixed determination not to yield to any evil solicitations. And let me now impress so deeply upon my heart the conviction of the supreme importance of purity of mind, and rectitude of conduct; and so accustom my passions to submit to the control of reason and religion, that when assailed by temptation, I
may escape all its polluting influence, and by every trial, be confirmed in the love and practice of goodness.

Since natural, as well as moral evil is in the world, and in my progress through life I must experience some portion of suffering and sorrow, it will be the part of wisdom to acquire just notions of the character and government of the world's great Ruler; and a steady, immovable persuasion, that all events are under his sole direction; wisely adapted, as they are graciously designed, to prepare the children of mortality for a future world of unchangeable felicity. Let me learn to think rightly of the perfections of God, and of the discipline of life; let me cherish a spirit of habitual devotion, and of resignation to the divine will, so that all I suffer, as well as all I enjoy, may be received with pious gratitude, and minister to my everlasting welfare.

And, as the fashion of the world is continually passing away, and health and youth are not secure from the attacks of sickness and death; as my term of trial may be short, and my sun may go down long before the noon-tide of my days, let me be ever ready for this great change. Let me begin to live as one who knows that at length he must die, and may die soon. Let the morning of my life be sacred to virtue and to God, that the evening, if
240

DEVOtIONAL EXERCISES.

I reach it, may be peaceful and serene; or if at any earlier period I be summoned hence, I may be able to look back without regret, and forward without fear.


PRAYER.

O Lord God Almighty, who wast, and art, and art to come; the king eternal, immortal, invisible; the only wise God! Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hast formed the earth and the world, from eternity to eternity thou wast God! A thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday, when it is past, and as a watch in the night; but the children of men are carried away as by a flood; they are as a sleep: in the morning they are as grass which groweth up: in the morning it flourisheth and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down and withered. 'Even the heavens shall perish, but thou shalt endure; thou art for ever the same, and thy years shall have no end. Thou, therefore, art the only proper object of the trust and confidence of thy frail, dependent, and mortal creatures. Our days are as a hand's-breadth, and our age is as nothing before thee; yet thou
regardest us with the kindness of a father, and rejoicest over us to do us good. Very precious are thy thoughts unto us, O God, and the sum of thy mercies cannot be reckoned up. Thou hast never left thyself without witness of thy kind and watchful providence towards the creatures thou hast formed by doing good continually, and giving rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with food and gladness. Let one generation, therefore, praise thy works to another, and declare thy mighty acts: let them abundantly utter the memory of thy great goodness, and celebrate thy righteousness.

Through help obtained from thee, most gracious God, my life, with all its important blessings, has been prolonged to the close of another week; and on this, and every preceding period, I desire to look back with ardent and unfeigned gratitude. If, in the midst of numberless unseen dangers, I have been kept in safety and in comfort, to thy care, and to thy power alone am I indebted; or if any measure of affliction and sorrow has been appointed to me, I would adore thy wisdom, and submit to thy appointment, as to the correction of a merciful and a tender parent, who chastens not for his pleasure, but for my profit. May enjoyment and suffering alike direct my thoughts to thee, and be gratefully owned as the proofs of thy
wisdom and thy love. And, O thou most holy and most gracious God, if in the past week, thy kindness towards me has, in any instance, been received with thoughtlessness and ingratitude; if it has not excited my zeal to serve and to please thee, if it has not corrected what was evil, or improved what was good in me, give me godly sorrow and true repentance, and for thy mercy's sake, as manifested by Jesus Christ, grant to me thy forgiveness.

If it shall be thy good pleasure still further to prolong the life thou hast given and preserved, and, at length, to call me into the more busy and dangerous scenes of the world, may thy presence and thy blessing accompany me. Give me a wise and an understanding heart. I ask not for long life, nor for riches, nor for any earthly good; thou alone knowest what is best for me in this world, and what will most effectually conduce to my everlasting welfare: I humbly ask for that wisdom which is from above, that I may discern between good and evil, and have resolution to walk in thy ways, and to keep thy statutes, and thy commandments always, even to the end. May I have just and rational views of the nature and the end of life; and be prepared so to pass through things seen and temporal, that I may not finally lose those which are eternal. May I contemplate the scene
which lies before me, not as one of pleasure, but of
duty; not as a place of rest and security, but of
activity and danger; where much is to be done to
work out my salvation, and much to be endured
to fit me for heaven; where all my interests will
be at stake, and carelessness and folly will be my
ruin. With every temptation make a way for my
escape. Order my steps according to thy word,
and let no iniquity have dominion over me. As I
grow in years, may I grow in grace, and in the know-
ledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; guided by his
precepts, animated by his example, and sustained
by his promises. By whatever circumstances, whe-
ther of prosperity or adversity, my path through
life may be distinguished, may it be the path of the
just, and as the shining light, shining more and
more to the perfect day.

And now, O Lord, I commit myself to thy pro-
tection during the night on which I am entering.
Graciously preserve me from evil, grant me safe
and refreshing sleep, and raise me in the morning,
if it be thy will, prepared for the important duties
of thy house. To thee, through Jesus Christ, be
glory and praise for ever. Amen.

THE END.