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cumstances narrated of Modin. In that town, the Maccabees lived and were buried, and there Simon erected a lofty monument, with pyramids, to their memory.<sup>1</sup> Modin lay adjacent to the great plain, and the monument was visible to all who sailed along the sea.<sup>2</sup> Eusebius and Jerome likewise testify, that Modin was not far from Lydda, and that the sepulchres remained in their day.<sup>3</sup> The writers of the times of the crusades speak indefinitely of Modin, as somewhere in this vicinity,<sup>4</sup> while Brocardus already seems to fix it at Sôba.<sup>5</sup> To all the circumstances thus enumerated, the elevated and isolated Tell of el-Lâtrôn well corresponds.<sup>6</sup>

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## ARTICLE VII.

### THE LAW OF REMORSE AND THE LAW OF REPENTANCE: OR THE PASSAGE FROM NATURAL TO REVEALED RELIGION.

By George B. Cheever, D. D., New York.

IN previous Numbers of this Journal, we have devoted several Articles (the last being on the Law of Conscience) to the constitution of the human mind with reference to the judgment. We now resume the subject. The examination of the human constitution under the law of right and wrong, and the expectation of an eternal retribution, throws an indescribable weight and solemnity of meaning on that word *fearfully*, in the exclamation: "I am fearfully and wonderfully made."

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Macc. 2: 1, 15. 13: 25-30. Jos. Antt. 13. 6. 5.      <sup>2</sup> 1 Macc. 16: 4, 5. 13: 29.

<sup>3</sup> Onomast. art. *Modim*: "Vicus juxta Diospolin, unde fuerant Machabæi, quorum hodieque ibidem sepulchra monstrantur."

<sup>4</sup> Will. Tyr. 8. 1. Jac. de Vit. 63. p. 1081.

<sup>5</sup> Brocardus, c. 10. p. 186. On the absurdity of connecting Modin with Sôba, see Bibl. Res. II. p. 328 seq.—Quaresmius and some earlier travellers speak of the remains of a church once dedicated to the Maccabees, a stone's throw from Lâtrôn, on the north of the road; Quaresm. II. p. 12. Zuallart, l. c. p. 16. Cotovicus, p. 143. We noticed nothing of the kind, nor do I find it mentioned in later travellers.

<sup>6</sup> See also Ritter, Erdk. XVI. p. 546.

A man shall be, ostensibly, in a calm and quiet relation with the whole universe about him, and shall have, to all appearance, the *mens sana in corpore sano*, and as to the body, shall enjoy the perfection of health, and all things that can minister to his gratification; and yet, if we look into the recesses of his mind, and see what is going on there, we may find such a state of uproar and anguish, that all the external invitations and opportunities of enjoyment are only a dreadful exasperation of the torment. We find the phenomenon of inward suffering, acute, intense, and sometimes *so* intense, that external pain is almost a foil and relief to it.

Who has done this? We find it to be the working of the mind upon itself, a self-consuming anxiety and anguish, in consequence of the sense of guilt, resulting from the violation of conscience. We find the supremacy of conscience in the moral being, as an ultimate fact in our nature. Bishop Butler has dissected and demonstrated this portion of our moral anatomy, briefly, but clearly, and Dr. Chalmers has commented with power and beauty on the demonstration. We find suffering as the consequence of violating this supremacy; we find a sense of guilt, and of deserved punishment, and a prediction of such punishment.

Now, a benevolent God is the author of this organization. And the final cause of it is not pain, but peace and happiness; not sin, and the misery resulting, but obedience, holiness, and the bliss resulting. As, according to Paley's observation, the teeth were made to eat, and not to ache, so the conscience was constituted in man's nature to regulate and bless, and not to cut, grate and sting. And as a man, if, of his own device, he should break his teeth upon gravel-stones, could not accuse the constitution of his teeth as a malevolent constitution, because they give him pain when he breaks them, so, if a man breaks the law of conscience, that is, outrages and resists the conscience itself, and experiences misery in consequence, he cannot accuse the conscience as set there for misery, nor the Creator of the conscience as wanting in benevolence, because of such pain. Nor can he say, nor does he ever feel, that Infinite Benevolence requires the Author of his being, the Architect of his moral constitution, to interpose and prevent the pain, whenever he chooses to outrage the conscience. He might as well say that, if a man were to go on wounding and hacking his physical frame, every day of his life, benevolence would require that God should daily interpose to restore the frame, and prevent pain in that case, or in any form of voluntary outrage upon one's self.

§ 1. *Development of Remorse under the Law of Conscience.*

It is manifest that there are agencies and elements of retribution within ourselves, as efficient for the purposes of punishment, as if they had been contrived and set in operation for no other object. That action of the mind which we call REMORSE, is such an agency.

This solemn and awful experience of the guilty mind presents itself next after the phenomena of memory, under the law of conscience. Remembrance is an operation of the mind mainly under the law or principle of association; and associations of guilt are found to be among the strongest; by them the memory is painfully, obstinately tenacious. Remorse is an operation of the mind under the law of conscience; it follows remembrance, in a guilty mind, sooner or later, as an inevitable, indissoluble, self-condemning, self-chastising consciousness.

It is a dreadful word, a dreadful power, among the dynamics of the world to come, this word, this power, REMORSE. If its meaning occupied a dying man's mind, the blazing finger of a fiend could not trace a more significant and awful sentence. In the last hour of John Randolph, this experience came up, was projected, as it were, into a blaze of light, not without hope, and therefore the more remarkable. Randolph's religious experience was a remorseful conflict, hope and despair, faith and remorse, wrestling together.

The incident is too illustrative to be dismissed with a mere reference. We shall give it in the language of Randolph's recent biographer, Mr. Garland.

"Randolph had commanded his physician, Dr. Parish, to stay by him till he died. By his will, he had manumitted his slaves, and made provision for them. Dr. Parish had proposed to leave the room for a short time, to attend to another patient, but Randolph would not suffer it, and made his man John lock the door, and put the key in his pocket. He then said to the Doctor: 'Our laws are extremely particular on the subject of slaves; a will may manumit them, but provision for their subsequent support requires that a declaration be made in the presence of a white witness; and it is requisite that the witness, after hearing the declaration, should continue with the party, and never lose sight of him, until he is gone or dead. You are a good witness for John. You see the propriety and importance of your remaining with me; your patients must make allowance for your situation. John told me this morning, "Master, you

are dying.” The Doctor spoke with entire candor, and replied that it was rather a matter of surprise that he had lasted so long.”

“He now made his preparations to die. He directed John to bring him his father’s breast-button; he then directed him to place it in the bosom of his shirt. It was an old-fashioned, large-sized gold stud. John placed it in the button-hole of the shirt-bosom, but to fix it completely required a hole on the opposite side. Get a knife, said he, and cut one. A napkin was also called for, and placed by John over his breast. For a short time he lay perfectly quiet, with his eyes closed. Then he suddenly roused up, and exclaimed, Remorse! Remorse! This was thrice repeated, the last time at the top of his voice, with great agitation. He cried out, ‘Let me see the word; get a dictionary; let me see the word.’ ‘There is none in the room, sir.’ ‘Write it down then, let me see the word.’ The Doctor picked up one of his cards, Randolph of Roanoke, and asked, ‘Shall I write it on this card?’ ‘Yes, nothing more proper.’ The word *Remorse* was then written in pencil. He took the card in a hurried manner, and fastened his eyes on it with great intensity. ‘Write it on the back,’ he exclaimed. It was so done, and handed him again. He was extremely agitated. ‘Remorse! you have no idea what it is; you can form no idea of it whatever; it has contributed to bring me to my present situation, but I have looked to the Lord Jesus Christ, and hope I have obtained pardon. Now let John take your pencil, and draw a line under the word.’ This was accordingly done. ‘What am I to do with the card?’ inquired the Doctor. ‘Put it in your pocket, take care of it, and when I am dead, look at it.’”

When I am dead! Morbid anatomy makes no such revelations, but the living death of trespasses and sins does. It is a phenomenon of intensest interest and significance; an experience for the mental philosopher to ponder and investigate; an experience of guilty human nature. All our moral science, previous to regeneration, is morbid anatomy.

Remorse refers to the conscience; it is an operation of the conscience, or an effect from activity of conscience, awakened, enlightened, and at work. But it refers solely to evil, for it is a painful operation, and no man ever feels remorse for what is good. Had there never been sin, there could never have been remorse, for remorse is connected with sin; it is a consequence of the mind’s judgment in regard to sin.

“It is an incontestable fact,” remarks Cousin, “that when we have done right or wrong, when we have fulfilled the law of justice or have

broken it, we judge that we merit a reward or a punishment; and it is also a fact that we do receive reward or punishment, 1st, in the approval of conscience or the bitterness of remorse; 2nd, in the esteem or blame of our fellow-men, who, being also moral beings, judge as we do of good and evil, and punish us and reward us according to our acts, sometimes by the pain or the moral recompense of their blame or of their esteem, sometimes by the rewards or the physical pains which positive laws, the legitimate interpreters of natural law, hold ready for generous actions, or for derelictions and crimes; 3rd, finally, if we look beyond this world, if we conceive of God as we ought to conceive of him, not only as the author of the physical world, but as the Father of the moral world, as the substance itself of good and of the moral law, we cannot help conceiving that God holds in readiness rewards or punishments for those who have fulfilled or broken the law."<sup>1</sup>

In this passage, which opens an admirably pursued discussion, remorse is set down as punishment received in this life. Partially this definition may be accepted; but it is obvious that any retributive operation of remorse in this world is exceedingly limited and imperfect; and there is this objection against viewing it as a punishment in this life, that it is so readily evaded by means of insensibility of conscience in the case of hardened sinners. They who most deserve punishment, escape it by perseverance in sin. That conscience is not in this world retributive, is plain, for the reason that oftentimes the more guilty a man becomes, the less he is troubled by remorse. The conscience is seared as with a hot iron, and men are given over to a reprobate mind, feeling and fearing nothing. To say of a villain that he commits a crime *remorselessly*, is to say that he is more thoroughly a villain than you can ordinarily find.

If remorse be punishment, he escapes it by sinning with a high hand. If remorse be punishment, the best men sometimes endure the most of it, or more of it, to say the least, than very bad men. A man of a very delicate and sensitive conscience, a careful, upright, watchful Christian, may possibly suffer more, in consequence of the omission of duty in a single instance, the neglect of prayer, for example, more remorse now, than a hardened assassin for the guilt of twenty murders. This is conclusive against the idea that sin is punished in this world, in the mind, as the sinner goes along. If this were true, then it is true that the worse a man becomes, the less he suffers. Let this law go on in the eternal world, and the conclusion

<sup>1</sup> Cousin, *History of Modern Philosophy*, Vol. II. Lecture 20.

is inevitable, that the more perfectly devilish the nature of a man became, the less would he be punished. In other words, the deeper a man plunges into the hell of sin, the more secure he will be against the pains of hell.

But Cousin recognizes future punishment, prepared and inflicted by a just God, and the main power of remorse in this world seems to be its prediction of a just retribution in another. Remorse is impossible except the conscience be alive, and then it is powerful, first from the sense of guilt, second from the intuitive apprehension, or rather certainty, of future punishment. The sense of guilt alone, and by itself, if there be sorrow for it, is not remorse. True contrition, ingenuous sorrow for sin, excludes remorse; a holy hatred of sin rises above remorse; the hope of forgiveness removes remorse; remorse, indeed, is only a condition of despair, a movement of our natural theology. As such, it is prophetic; or rather, conscience is prophetic, and remorse follows. Conscience declares our guilt, and assures us of retribution; remorse is the sense of guilt along with that assurance, the sense of guilt without forgiveness, the sense of guilt and condemnation. Remove the condemnation, communicate the sense of forgiveness, and the remorse is gone, even though the sense of sin may be deeper than ever, keener than ever. Remorse is essentially an attribute of despair.

There is an infinite difference between *regret* and remorse, though often the two experiences run into one another. We may regret a thousand things without any mixture of remorse. Calamity of any kind, not directly traceable to sin, may be the subject of regret, and so may failures in judgment. What language more common than this? "It was an ill-judged thing, and I regret it deeply." Such regret cannot be wholly unmingled with something very like remorse; for how do you know but that your want of right judgment may be traceable directly to moral obliquity or imperfection?

What, then, is the indication in this experience of remorse as to the future? It is a recalcitrating, remordent operation, from the present to the past, an operation *upon* the present being, with reference *to* the past, in accusation *for* the past. Is it also a prophetic operation? We answer unhesitatingly that in a world of probation, this is its main power. It is owing to the mercy of a Saviour, to that plan of redemption by which the consequences and punishment of sin are kept back, held in abeyance, while the sinner, if he will, may escape, that the instrumentality of remorse is not wholly executive, retributive. By the mercy of a Saviour, what would otherwise

be retribution, is turned into prophecy and warning. We said, at the outset, that it is manifest that there are agencies and elements of retribution within ourselves, as efficient for the purposes of punishment, as if they had been contrived and set in operation for no other object. They are not *used* for punishment now, and yet, every man is in such degree subjected to them, as to be made to know by experience that he has within himself what might and must, if unrestrained and perfected, grow into a retributive hell. The work of retribution not being accomplished in this world, the possibility of it and preparation for it must be regarded as the provision for another. The very escape from retribution in this world compels the mind to expect it in another; thus far our natural theology can and does go; the soul demands as instinctively, of a just and righteous God, a retribution for wrong-doing, as a reward for well-doing. The one is as necessary a deduction of reason, nay, an intuition of reason, as the other.

Remorse is a power of retribution; and under a scheme of redemption we are admitted, as sinners, to the experience of that power within us, before its operation becomes eternal, while it may be avoided, and on purpose *that* it may. The doors of an eternal hell are not opened upon us, and its angry fire and smoke belched out, but we are instructed in a more significant and clear revelation within. A power is revealed for future exercise, a native element, an inward agency disclosed, for a future purpose, an operation pointing beyond the apprehended day of judgment. The effect of the operation now, local, partial, may be to impel the wounded writhing soul to the outcry for mercy, the application to Christ; the operation is made local and partial, for this very purpose; it is restricted, that the soul may be warned by it, and may flee from it. The soul is made to see that remorse is not a barometer to warn *against* crime, but a scorpion to retaliate; not a monitor before-hand, but an executor of vengeance; not a forerunner of consequences, but itself a consequence, a result; not an intuitive terror, previous, but a pain reflective. Its purpose and its effect now, is not so much to make the soul avoid future sin, as to impel it to a Saviour from the past; a Saviour both from past and present sin, and future retribution.

In a prose article, one of the most solemn, sublime and terrible pieces of composition in our language, the Poet Young once recorded, from his own painful observation of the death-bed of a profligate young nobleman, perhaps the most graphic picture of remorse ever drawn. It was a reality. The article need only be changed into



blank verse, to constitute a Book of the Night Thoughts not inferior in sublimity and power to any part of that grand Poem. No person was present at the scene save Dr. Young, and the physician, with an intimate, whom the dying nobleman had loved and had ruined. To this friend he exclaimed, in reference to his assumed and argued infidelity: "How madly have I talked! How madly hast thou listened, and believed! But look on my present state, as a full answer to thee and to myself. This body is all weakness and pain; but my soul, as if strung up by torment to greater strength and spirit, is full powerful to reason, full mighty to suffer. And that which thus triumphs within the jaws of mortality is doubtless immortal. And as for a Deity, nothing less than an Almighty could inflict what I feel."

Dr. Young would have congratulated this passive involuntary confessor, on his asserting thus two of the prime articles of a Christian creed, extorted by the rack of nature from the soul, namely, the being of a God and the immortality of the soul, but he passionately continued:

"No, no, let me speak on, I have not long to speak. Remorse for the past throws my thoughts on the future. Worse dread of the future strikes it back on the past. I turn and turn, and find no way. Didst thou feel half the mountain that is on me, thou wouldst struggle with the martyr for his stake, and bless heaven for the flames. That is not an everlasting flame; that is not an unquenchable fire."

From this tremendous scene, Dr. Young drew two lessons. "First: He that, in this his minority, his school of discipline, this field of conflict, instead of grasping the weapons of his warfare, is forever gathering flowers, and catching at butterflies with his unarmed hand, ever making idle pleasures his pursuit, must pay for it his vast reversion; and on opening his final account (of which a death-bed breaks the seal), shall find himself a beggar, a beggar past beggary, and shall passionately wish that his very being were added to the rest of his loss. Second: He shall find that truth, Divine Truth, however through life injured, wounded, suppressed, is insuppressible, victorious, immortal; that, though with mountains overwhelmed, it will one day burst out like the fires of Etna, visible, bright, and tormenting as the most raging flame."

We have quoted more from this article than was needful for our purpose; indeed, we only wished to advert to the graphic and correct description of the operation of remorse, which is two-fold. *Remorse for the past throws my thoughts on the future; worse dread of the future strikes it back on the past.* It is prophetic; and in this consists,

now, no little of its power. It is retributive, or rather it will be retributive, when, through the obstinacy of the sinner in unbelief, what is now designed as warning, shall have become the unalterable and eternal experience of the soul.

If a man ignorant of the operation of a saw-mill, should examine the teeth of a circular saw, and have his hand slightly wounded by a blow against it, the pain of that wound could give him no adequate conception of the dreadful suffering and death, if the saw should pass through his whole nervous system, if it should slowly, from head to foot, lacerate and tear asunder his whole body. Just about in that proportion, in comparison with what must be the full experience of a soul in the eternal world, is the pain of what we know of remorse, this side of despair. Suppose that the man should take a strong anodyne, or intoxicating draught of liquor, and should lay himself down to sleep just beneath the revolving steel, in the path of its teeth, at the hour appointed for setting the saw in operation. That would be but a slight illustration of the madness of a sinful soul, exposing itself, without an interest in Jesus, to the action of remorse. When the flood-gates are lifted, and the water-wheel is set a going in the world of retribution, how terrible will be the ruin!

Remorse is self-reproach; it is the indignation of the mind against itself. The etymology of the word teaches a great deal. *REMORDEO*. What a terrible significance in the operation, mentally applied; that of biting back, biting again, gnawing in bitter retaliation! It is self-revenge, the revenge of conscience, the mind executing upon itself the sentence of condemnation, which conscience passes. Thus, evil thoughts, words, deeds, recoil upon the soul. They are indulged, spoken, acted, heedlessly, or under the influence of passion; no man thinks, at the moment, of feeling or seeing them again; but after a while they strike back upon the soul as serpents. They are sometimes thrown off from the soul as serpents upon others; they are sure to recoil and fasten with their fangs upon the author of them; and this is remorse. In this way every evil thought, every evil action, takes its revenge. Every act of unkindness towards others, every instance of ingratitude towards God, every one of God's wasted and abused mercies, has a time for its revenge. And what a crowd of such sins, what an infinite multitude of such instances of evil, are, in regard to most men, awaiting the time, when the soul shall pass judgment on itself! How many enemies are the men, who pass their lives in the neglect of God, and without prayer, arming against themselves, to do, by and by, the work of *REMORSE* upon them!

We call it remorse of conscience. The *judgment* of conscience is one thing; the *remorse* another. The judgment of conscience sometimes may be very plain, very clear, and yet but little remorse may follow. An accustomed thief, or dishonest tradesman, may have a plain testimonial of conscience against his course, with every act of theft or fraudulence committed; but the remorse may not, as yet, accompany or follow that testimonial. And so with smaller crimes. Conscience may act, while remorse is hidden. This is the case in a thousand instances. It is the case almost universally with men's sins of omission. A careless, impenitent, unconverted man almost never prays. He cannot help knowing that such an irreligious, atheistic course, so contemptuous towards God, so regardless of God's claims, so ungrateful for God's goodness, so selfish and heedless, is wrong, and conscience sometimes tells him of it. But he feels, as yet, little or no remorse. This guilt of prayerlessness is one of the last sins a man is convicted of. And very many men continue in a state of profound insensibility, which they acknowledge to be wrong, but yet do not feel it. Indeed, there is no confession more common than this: my conscience tells me that I am a sinner, but yet I do not feel it. So there may be the *reproaches* of conscience without the *remorse*, that is, for a season.

But the remorse is as inevitable as the conscience. Let not a man think, because he does not experience the remorse now, that therefore he shall always escape, that it shall be a strange unknown element to him. It is to come, sometime or another; and so far from being less terrible by delay, it will be more so. The longer it is kept at a distance, the more dreadful will be its power, when once it takes hold upon the soul. Conscience utters her voice sometimes, when the soul is in such haste, such impetuosity of sin, that there is not time to recall and lay before the soul the reasons for that voice, the great realities out of which it issues. And so the sinner passes on, in spite of conscience, and without remorse. But when the hurry is over, when the serene, uninterrupted hour of reflection and of judgment comes, then comes the revelation of guilt, then opens the vast array of truth out of which conscience spake, and then remorse is inevitable. \* Conscience cries out, Stop! even amidst the whirl, and revelry, and impetuosity of sin; conscience, as from the recesses of an eternal shrine, as a voice from the future, as a voice from God. Sometimes the sinner listens for a moment, but looks not at the rising realities, to which conscience would direct his attention, and presses on. But those realities all appear, when the shadows and

vanities of time are gone, when the distractions of business and pleasure no more occupy the soul. And when the veil shall be removed, when the insulted majesty and holiness of God, and the idea of eternity, and the value of the soul come to view; when the mercy of God, abused and trampled on, meets the soul in perfect recognition; when the cross of Christ uprises into clear light, with its sublime and awful demonstrations of the evil of sin, and the aggravation of sinning in despite of the Spirit of grace, and in contempt of the blood of the covenant, and over the body of the Son of God; then will come, *must* come, not conscience merely, but overwhelming remorse.

Now the power of such remorse depends on the degree of clearness with which a man apprehends his sin. He must see the nature, the relations, the circumstances of his iniquities. He must see God and his glorious attributes, the holiness, justice and goodness of his law, something of the infinitude of his moral government, and the infinitude of interest and of love sinned against. Remorse will be active with reference to negative as well as positive guilt. To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not; to *be* good, and *becometh* it not; to him it is sin. Conscience will act, and remorse will follow, not only for what a man *is*, but for what he is *not*; not only for what a man *does*, but for what he does *not*. Remorse will act likewise, and even in this world often does act, powerfully with regard to consequences.

### § 2. *The Law or Power of Consequences in awaking Remorse.*

In this world our estimate of the nature of sin is affected greatly by its consequences; we do not view crime in itself, nor in its aspect towards God, so much as we do in its results. This habit we may carry into our views of eternity, and we measure the sinfulness of sin too exclusively by the evil it produces there. This is an error of our theology to estimate the excellence of holiness by the good it produces, and the evil of sin by the misery it produces. But in proportion as a man truly grows in grace, in proportion as a Christian becomes more like God, he will measure both by his regard to God rather than by consequences. Consequences are not so much the measure as the evidence of the nature of evil; consequences, even though involving eternal perdition, could never make a being who does not know and love the character of God, sensible of the hatefulness of sin, nor of the enormity of its sinfulness as committed against God. A sight of the character and attributes of God, such

as all men will have in eternity, will reveal the nature of sin in such a light as they never dreamed of before, and will set every individual's own personal sins in a manifestation which mere consequences could never have effected. This sight and knowledge of God and his attributes is not possible here as we shall have it in eternity, though enough is possible, and enough is revealed to us, and urged upon us, even here, if we would attend to it, to go beyond all the demonstration of the evil of sin by consequences.

We neglect both God and consequences to a fearful degree naturally, and we take, at best, but a very contracted view both of consequences and of the Divine attributes; we do not look at either as we ought, but we look at consequences more than we do at God. We do not look at consequences too much, we do not look at them enough, but too exclusively. Naturally we look at them solely; for men rarely regard God or his will in their conduct, and in an unregenerate state they do not regard him at all, but regard consequences only. A wicked man hesitates in the commission of crime, not because God abhors it, or God's will is against it, but because its results may be evil to himself. An impenitent man thinks of repentance, not because repentance is what God loves to see, or what God's will requires, but what God has made necessary to salvation.

So in our estimate of sin we all naturally look at consequences only; we have formed this habit. Men's ideas of the turpitude of crime are very much affected by the nature of the penalty annexed to it; they look at the penalty as the consequence, and judge of the crime accordingly. So if murder were punishable only with a fine, the taking away of life would be regarded but as a small sin; and yet the sin would be just as great in the sight of God as it ever was, and the consequences as evil in his sight as ever. Although we look at consequences only, we do not look at consequences enough, for we can see only a small part of them, and ordinarily in looking at consequences, it is almost exclusively for this world, eternity being left out of view in men's judgments and estimates of sin. There is also this great evil, that we are affected by consequences only as we experience them, or principally as we experience them. We may commit sin, but if no evil follow it, conscience does not ordinarily make a great outcry, and may easily be lulled to sleep, and that sin will not seem a great sin. Now we commit innumerable sins, that are not followed by the experience of any direct evil; and innumerable other sins, of which we see not the consequences at all, or do not think of them, or are able to trace them only a very little way.

The habit of measuring sin by its consequences becomes a habit of dreadful insensibility to sin in its nature, and conceals an immense multitude of sins, an immense amount of iniquity, entirely from our view. This may be the case even with great crimes. A man might commit the crime of forgery, but so long as the crime remains undiscovered, and he feels secure that it always will remain undiscovered, he will see little, he will think little, of the evil of it. His conscience may remain asleep, and he may enjoy the fruits of his crime for a season with very little disturbance. And so it may be even with the crime of murder. It is impossible to measure the amazing power which the belief of security or the assurance of concealment exerts in neutralizing or warding off the sense of sin. A man shall commit forgery or murder, and in the doing of the act, whether absorbed in the desire of wealth, or carried away by violent passion, he shall feel very little compunction, he shall dwell very little on the enormity of the crime; and in the remembrance of the act, so long as it be effectually concealed, so long as the fatal secret is in his own soul, and he does not experience its evil consequences, and hopes that he shall not experience them, remorse of conscience shall trouble him but little. But now let a voice whisper to him in the midst of his fancied security, Your guilt is discovered, and even now the officers of justice are in pursuit of you, and instantly with the approach of consequences there will commence the process of judgment in his soul, and he will not only fear punishment, but he will feel his guilt, and remorse will enter into his prison and keep company with him, when in the open air she never went nigh him.

So it is that we measure guilt by consequences, and not only so, but for the most part, in reference to ourselves, by consequences so far only as they are felt, and not as they are simply declared, predicted, or as we are warned of them. But by far the greater portion of our sins are not followed now with any perceptible consequences to ourselves, or any consequences that we connect clearly with the causes; by far the greater portion of our sins will be visited with their consequences not in this life, but in eternity, and consequently by far the greater portion of our sins are unnoticed or undiscovered by ourselves. This is one inevitable result of the habit of viewing and measuring sin exclusively by its consequences. And another result is this, that by far the greater part of the sins which we do notice, are what we are accustomed to call little sins; they are what come to the mind in a shape of slight importance. If we viewed it in reference to God, no sin could ever seem to us unimportant, and

no sin could ever be viewed as a slight sin, or a light evil. And so, if we always felt its consequences, no sin could ever be regarded as a little one. But this habit of neglecting God, and of measuring sin by its consequences only, inasmuch as but a small part of its consequences are now experienced, and sometimes for a season none at all, hardens and lulls the conscience in regard to all sin, and, in regard to minor offences, leaves men in the habit of committing them, almost without the consciousness that there is anything sinful in them. Sin thus becomes the very life of most persons, who live without God in the world, the very atmosphere and element of their existence, and yet they are not at all conscious of it. They are perpetually committing evils, as well as neglecting duties, which, if these things should be visited by their consequences, would fill the soul with remorse and misery, but which now they do not notice, and to the evil of which they are at present utterly insensible.

Of the power which the sight and experience of consequences must exert in producing a sense of sin, we might call up many illustrations. When a child plays truant from school, if the delinquency be not discovered, there will be little remorse of conscience, but if it be, there will be a great burden of remorse. Just so, take those instances of neglect in various situations, which we call carelessness, and observe the operation of the same principle. We speak of a criminal carelessness; but there are innumerable instances of such carelessness, in which no evil consequences happen to follow, and therefore no condemnation, when, if some dreadful accident had occurred in consequence, there would be very great condemnation. A nurse, charged with the care of a little child, leaves it by the fire-side to run away on some errand of pleasure, and she may do this many times without experiencing any inward condemnation for her neglect; but one day while she is gone for a few moments, the little one is burned so terribly as to cause its death. Now this consequence of her neglect will make her feel its guilt most bitterly; but her guilt was just as great in every one of those instances, in which, because no accident happened, she did not think of it. Again, an apothecary's boy is strictly charged to label every poisonous article he sells with the name of poison, in order that fatal accidents may be prevented; but he has fallen into the habit of often neglecting this precaution, without any sense of guilt attending it. Now suppose a human being to be poisoned through this carelessness, and such a consequence will at once fill the mind of the neglectful boy with the anguish of remorse. But every one of the instances in

which he was thus careless, had the same guilt, though no evil consequence resulted from it. Again, a man charges a friend with getting his policy of insurance renewed on a certain day, and he promises to do it, but neglects it till the day or the week after, and perhaps, inasmuch as no evil consequences follow, experiences no particular uneasiness on account of this neglect. Another year he has the same duty intrusted to him, and neglecting it for one day, his friend's house is that very day consumed by fire. Now in this latter case, there would be a keen sense of guilt produced by the calamity which his carelessness has occasioned, which was not felt in the former case, and could not be felt, except the calamity had happened. And yet the guilt of the carelessness was just as great without the calamity, as with it. Again, a man at sea sleeps upon his watch, and he does it repeatedly perhaps, without any sense of guilt whatever; but at length, one dark night the ship runs down a fishing smack at anchor, and every soul perishes, and among them, as he afterwards discovers, one of his own sons. This consequence of this man's carelessness will fill his soul with a dreadful consciousness of guilt, and it will be the keener and the clearer the nearer the calamity comes to himself. But I might multiply such instances indefinitely; and they all go to show, not only how much our sense of sin depends upon consequences, but how great a portion of the sin of a man's life may be made up of things, in regard to which, there being no immediate evil resulting, there is no consciousness of sin whatever. We can trace consequences but a very little way, and sometimes not at all, evil deeds being like counterfeit money, which we may easily set in circulation, but cannot trace it, or stop its course afterwards. And a very little sin, or what we call such, may draw after it a train of consequences more dreadful than language can describe, just as a very little act of duty may be followed with consequences of blessedness equally immeasurable, as, for example, a leaf of a tract given to a sailor may be the means of the conversion of hundreds. It may seem a very little thing to a Christian, if very much hurried, to neglect a season of devotion, but through that very neglect, a temptation coming, which finds him less prepared than usual, he may fall into a course of sin, which shall draw after it a train of consequences disastrous to his peace and usefulness, and well-nigh fatal to his salvation. It may seem a very little thing to an unconverted mother, yielding to the persuasions of her child, if she permits her to go to the theatre to behold a favorite dancer; but if the theatre should take fire, and her daughter be consumed in the flames, this would be likely to rouse remorse of con-



science, even in a bosom that may never have felt it before. It may seem a very little thing to give utterance to an unkind word, or a fit of angry or impatient feeling; and yet such a train of consequences may hang upon this, as would, if known, fill the mind with a sense of guilt well-nigh intolerable. This is such a world, that consequences may sleep a great while, and not be dreamed of, till they break out suddenly and unexpectedly, with dreadful power. You would hardly expect such a thing as the destruction of a man's life occasioned by a habit of false spelling of a single word, contracted in childhood; and yet we have seen how the bad spelling of the word *few*, in a remarkable trial for forgery, helped to convict the prisoner; and in certain cases, if this had been in England, this habit of false spelling, itself contracted in all probability by a criminal indolence and neglect in early life, might have occasioned the death of the criminal. Just suppose, to make this clearer, that when that man's life is reviewed in eternity, it is found that one day in childhood he was playing truant and engaged in some sinful sport instead of study, and that on that day, while he was absent, the boys of his class at school had that word *few* in their spelling lesson, and that one of them, having spelled it *feu*, had gone to the foot of his class in consequence. This would simply bring causes and consequences together; it would point out an instance, in which, if the boy had been at school instead of playing truant, the man would have been prevented from the habit of misspelling that word, the false spelling of which convicts him of forgery. This supposition is of an instance in which the sins of the child are visited upon the man, as indeed we often see them. And a strong argument from analogy might be thus drawn in regard to a future retribution. We see that what men call the little sins of the child, sometimes make the man miserable through his whole life; and why should not what we are pleased to call the little sins of the man in like manner, if not repented of and renounced, make the accountable creature miserable through eternity?

But again, to resume the line of our illustrations, we may take the case of the overseer of a steam-engine neglecting the safety-valve so often without any evil result, that he almost forgets that watchfulness in that point is a part of his duty; but if an explosion takes place, by which the lives of many passengers are sacrificed, then the criminality of his neglect is at once seen and known to be fearful. But was it not just as great in every instance previous, in which, nevertheless, there was no evil consequence?

In the case of appalling calamities produced by the infamous prac-

tice of racing with steamboats, or by gross carelessness in the conduct of railroads, the temporary energy of the public conscience, awakened, produces a terrible illustration of the manner in which consequences reveal sin, and make men feel it. The whole community cry out, and most justly, that the guilt of murder attaches to such wanton gambling on the interests and life of human beings, and there is a universal demand for a rigorous trial and a just punishment. And, indeed, if it be not awarded, the whole community is guilty. Men deserve to suffer, if they will permit such outrages to go on unpunished. But previous to the occurrence of such terrible events, who saw or felt the sin, the crime, of such recklessness, as it is afterwards seen and felt universally? And just so in regard to the revelation of sin in eternity, sin as committed against God, but which, as yet, remains wholly secret, or unrevealed by consequences; what an overwhelming manifestation and conviction there must be, when consequences bring it out, when what it is in nature and in guilt, is demonstrated and developed by what it has done! Who can understand his errors? No man, till God and eternity reveal them.

Once more; let us suppose that a man breaking the Sabbath persuades a circle of youthful companions to go with him on a party of pleasure, a sailing excursion, for example; and that, by some frightful accident, several of the man's companions lose their lives, while he himself escapes in safety. Remorse of conscience would certainly visit that man for the death of those victims, as the consequence of his and their sin in breaking the Sabbath. The effect of such consequences is often to turn the conscience of the spectators or of the public to the evil of certain courses, in regard to which the individuals engaged in them are perhaps hardened. If, for example, the cars of a Sabbath-breaking railroad, which, by a most wanton and unnecessary violation of the sacredness of God's day, are run upon the Sabbath, should be thrown from the track, and the greater part of the passengers killed, by some fatality traced distinctly to the circumstance of starting on that day, a multitude of minds would have their attention irresistibly turned to the guilt of thus despising God's law. Consequences often open men's eyes, and make men think of the evil of sin, even in this world.

If we could look at consequences thoroughly, if we could see them from the beginning to the end as God sees them, then the habit of judging of sin by its consequences would not lead us far astray; we should have a tolerably correct estimate; at least we should, if we *felt* those consequences. But in a world of probation, we cannot pos-

sibly do this, and therefore consequences are a most incorrect rule of estimation. The guilt of sinful feelings, words, and courses of conduct, *ought* to appear as plain to us, although in no case we saw any evil consequences follow; but it does not; on the contrary, the consciences of most men, at least in ordinary things, are almost entirely determined by results.

Results sometimes, seen at the moment, set what are called little sins most powerfully into the light. We remember being much struck with this, in reading the account of an ascent of Mont Blanc, in which three of the guides were lost in an avalanche. They were lost through the utterance of one passionate word of reproach thrown at them by the person who had hired them. Ignorant of the dangers of the mountain, this person, Dr. Hamel, insisted on continuing the journey in unfavorable weather. The guides told him that to proceed even two leagues, after the warnings the earth had received from the sky, would be to defy Providence and tempt God. In reply, Dr. Hamel passionately stamped his foot, and turning to his companion, sneeringly whispered the word *cowards*. The courageous guides, unable to remain quiet under this injurious imputation, silently arose and recommenced their journey; but the roaring noise of the avalanche was soon heard above them, and in its perilous fall three of the guides perished. But the selfish individual, whose unjust reproach of cowardice was the cause of their destruction, escaped alive. Now here was one word uttered impatiently, which was the cause of all this. It was passionate, selfish, injurious; and it revealed a state of mind and heart most assuredly opposed to the law of God, and the spirit of love in the Gospel. But it would have passed for a little sin, or rather, it would not have been noticed as a sin at all, if they had ascended the mountain and come back in safety. Nevertheless, if they had, this would have made no difference as to the sinfulness of that contemptuous and selfish reproach. God would have judged it apart from its consequences, according to its actual guilt. He would see no more guilt in it because three men lost their lives by it, than if no evil had resulted from it at all, except the injury to their feelings by an unjust reproach. We judge very differently. We do not, indeed, judge that in this case the lives lost constituted the guilt of the injurious word spoken; but the lives of three brave men sacrificed by a cruel, ignorant, selfish sarcasm, make us feel and notice the wickedness of that expression, as we should not otherwise have done.

It is somewhat singular that consequences should have a power to awaken remorse which conscience has not. In one view, it would

seem as if, when punishment begins, remorse would diminish; as if there might be in punishment itself a sort of self-expiation or satisfaction to allay remorse. But it is not so. Remorse is aroused and kindled into angry flames, just in proportion as punishment is known to be approaching, and when punishment comes, when it is really endured, then remorse is redoubled, not only in view of sin developed, but of punishment as a consequence. If there were not the fear of punishment, there would not be, in this world, this power of remorse. Remorse acts thus powerfully, in part, because the punishment, viewed as the consequence of crime, is a demonstration of its guilt. Sometimes, indeed, in this world, remorse itself impels to self-inflicted punishment; a man will torture himself on account of his guilt; but it is on the same principle on which a superstitious Romanist endures penance, for the sake of absolution, from the hope of averting punishment. Sometimes, though in very rare cases, remorse has led to self-inflicted tortures, from a sense of justice, not for the purpose of pardon. The instructive case of Archbishop Cranmer's remorse must be regarded as such an instance, more solemn and instructive, because it was remorse abiding for a season even in company with genuine repentance. Perhaps, also, it may have been a remnant of the Romish superstition of penance and self-expiation still cleaving to his soul. "This hand! this hand! it hath offended!" It seemed a satisfaction to the agonized sufferer, to execute upon himself some punishment for his act of recantation; a relief, to hold steadily in the flames when he came to the stake, that right hand, with which he had signed the document of his apostasy. His repentance and faith seem to have been genuine; but what must have been the inward conflict and torture of remorse in his soul, which could thus almost neutralize the pain of burning to his body, and make it even a satisfaction to the conscience!

The case of the brethren of Joseph, in Gen. 42: 21, 22, is an instance of the power of apprehended detection and punishment to awaken remorse. It is a singularly interesting and solemn passage. It is a miniature drama of what is taking place the wide world over, in every generation. There is here displayed the conviction of guilt, the voice of conscience, the anguish of remorse, all wrought into an intensity of action by the providence of God, by a situation of distress, by the probability of detection and punishment. The part which Reuben plays might be taken for a personification of conscience, acting through remembrance of the past, and the assurance of coming retribution. We are verily guilty concerning our brother, says

the voice of remorse, and therefore this distress has come upon us. Spake I not unto you, answers again the voice of conscience, and ye would not hear? Said I not unto you, Do not sin against the child? yea, ye would not hear, and therefore his blood is required.

Reuben remembered, and conscience remembered, and the guilty brethren well knew, the statute of God: Whosoever sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed. At the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. Perhaps that declaration had often come, with awful power, like sudden thunder to their consciences. It was twenty years since the fearful crime had been committed, but we may rest assured those years were not years of happiness. And yet, except within the breast, those twenty years had gone on thus far very securely, although these guilty brethren must have often looked upon each other, not so much like brethren, as companions in crime, and witnesses against each other. And Reuben, especially, they must have watched with fearful jealousy. It is almost a wonder, indeed, that they had not disposed of him also; but God prevented it. We cannot think that as yet they had been penitent, for if so, they would have confessed their guilt to Jacob, and sought his forgiveness. But God was now beginning to set, as in a solemn day, his terrors round about them. Twenty years had passed away, and the remembrance of Joseph had neither faded from the father's mind, nor from theirs. The father held it in the power of love; the sons held it, or rather it held them, in the strength of conscience. Twenty years! and not one of the circumstances had faded from their souls. God strikes the memory with the rod of a providential infliction, and the doors of its caves burst open, and the fixtures of the past scene of guilt come trooping out, and again they are with their youthful brother, despising his anguish and selling him for gold. It is all fresh, as if but yesterday.

How vividly the occurrences, the words, the entreaties, the countenances of that day come up! The despairing eye of the injured boy is upon them, his last look of sorrow is engraven on their souls. They hear again his words of weeping, passionate supplication, O leave me not to perish! O carry me back to my father! They feel now the anguish of the child, which then they despised. They see again the last trace of the departing Ishmaelites on the horizon. They wonder now that they could have been so hard-hearted, for they behold anew the anguish of his soul, and now the voice of their brother's blood cries to them, evoked by the judgments of God upon them. They have long been expecting those judgments, and now

they have come. For, whatever evil comes upon a guilty soul in such circumstances, whether it have any visible connection or not with the career of crime, is attributed to the crime. And let the circumstance be marked that now most of all arrests and harrows up the conscience; it is the anguish of Joseph's soul, when he besought them and they would not hear. Their own anguish now recalls it. There is nothing more terrible than the memory of wounded feeling, of unkindness, of harshness, of disregarded tenderness and love, of abused confidence, of cruelty, hard-heartedness, unforgiveness, from man to man, from brother to brother.

But could not the man, so insensible to the agony of a brother, be proof against any sensibility in its remembrance? No, they could not. It was theirs before, to command it as they pleased; but now it belongs to God and the universe; the crime is a thing done, and stands against *them*, and now they have no power against *it*. No! they might steel themselves against the feeling of compassion, but they were not proof against the terrors of remorse; the sensibilities of the heart they might coolly crush and trample on, and it might be thought that the men who could do that, could do anything; but here they are, themselves agonized, trembling, powerless, beneath the sensibilities of an awakened conscience, which they can neither deaden, nor evade, nor stifle. Here they are, the men who cared nothing for the anguish of a brother's soul, the victims of the elements of revenge in their own being, into which elements the guilty insensibility of our nature always passes.

And if this was the effect of remorse for an injury against a brother and a fellow-man, what must it have been, had God let them go on in impenitence and insensibility, to meet the injury against God? There was no experience, as yet, of *that* remorse, and it could not have been endured by them; and God in mercy began with this, as their first retributive experience, in order that, brought by this to repentance, that other and eternal experience might be avoided. Whose situation was the worst, on that day of shame, and crime, and insensibility, when they sold their brother into bondage, and steeled themselves against his cries, and whose position was to be dreaded? Who was most to be pitied? the innocent boy, under God's protection, the victim of their cruelty, or themselves, treasuring up unto themselves such a weight of vengeance, introducing into their own being the inseparable elements of an anguish ten thousand fold more bitter than the anguish of the injured child; yea, beyond all possibility of a comparison with it; for his was but the temporary suffer-

ing of a guileless soul, while theirs, if they were not brought to repentance, was the anguish of remorse, guilty and eternal! O let this be remembered, ye that suffer from the injuries or the insults of others against you! Whosoever ye are, and in whatever of your dearest interests you are made to suffer, be not anxious to return the insult, or avenge the injury, but weep and pray over its authors, for it is they who are injured by themselves, and not you; for vengeance is inevitable, is eternal; it belongs to God and the sinner and the universe. And if you should study the art of torture for ages, with all the powers of a universe of pain at your control, you could not contrive any thing so dreadful as the crime itself of your own enemies, an established, an eternal reality in their being. They have injured themselves, beyond all reparation; the injury to you is as nothing in comparison. Nay, the injury to you, if you forgive it, and pray for those who have insulted and persecuted you, will be to you a priceless blessing, the jewel of all jewels in your crown of glory. It will liken you to your Redeemer in those very qualities in which fallen man is most unlike his God and Saviour. But if you let the memory of injury and insult rankle in your bosom, with pride and the demand of reparation, before you can forgive, then you are preparing, unless you repent, to reap the same misery and shame in yourself, that the authors of your injury, unless they repent, shall suffer forever.

There was nothing in which Joseph's character came out more beautifully, and nothing in which his piety was more demonstrable, than the gentle, tender, forgiving, and even pitying and consoling love, in which he received and embraced his sinful brethren, and loaded them again with benefits. He demanded no acknowledgments, required not one of them to ask his pardon, but freely forgave them all! The happiness and glory of such a course is Godlike. Suffering so endured, so forgiven, has the blessing of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if when ye do well and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. Aye! but this is poor-spiritedness and meanness in the eye of a proud, fiery, revenging, murdering world. Yea, and let it be so! Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>1</sup> And now let us look at an instance of the power of remorse for crime which grows out of the admired opposite of this poverty and gentleness of a forgiving spirit, out of the spirit of pride and revenge.

Such instances of the manner and power of remorse are exceedingly solemn and striking. Remorse for guilt against God is not so often witnessed in this world, at least not until a dying bed, as for guilt against man. And remorse is of different degrees, as connected with different crimes. The crime of murder is waited on by a remorse so terrible, that all the images of power have been exhausted in describing it, and art and poetry have made it a favorite, because so terrible, a subject.

He told how murderers walked the earth  
Beneath the curse of Cain,  
With crimson clouds before their eyes  
And flames about their brain;  
For blood had left upon their souls  
Its everlasting stain.

Let us look at an instance of the power of remorse in the soul of that species of murderer called the duellist, who is, ordinarily, a murderer, because he is proud, revengeful, or ashamed to be known to have been insulted without revenge. This, by the way, makes murder by duelling sometimes worse than any other kind of murder; for a man who commits murder under raging passion, or for great gain, or for escape from punishment, has a direct and powerful motive, however devilish. But a man who will shoot a fellow-man, merely because he is ashamed to have it thought by his fellow-worms that he can pass an insult without reparation or revenge, deserves the wrath of God without mixture; his crime calls for all the thunders of God's universe to crush him, for he is a murderer, because he is a coward; and there is no coward in the universe so despicable as the duellist.

Some years since, Dr. Beecher recorded his impressions from a scene encountered when he visited the Philadelphia Asylum for the Insane. In returning from the apartments, he saw a man standing fixed, immovable, like a pillar. "I asked who that was, so fixed, the image of despair. It was the son of Dr. Rush, and in the dreadful hour of revenge and pride he had killed a fellow man in a duel. There he stood like a pillar. Sometimes he would apparently wake up to recollection; he would pace off the distance, and give the word Fire! Then he would cry out: He is dead! he is dead! This was the power of conscience, of REMORSE. It had unsettled reason, and left the man in the grasp of his crime, as an eternal, ghastly reality of his being."



Now we have, in this sad and terrible case, an instance of remorse illustrating more than one of the general laws of mind, on which we have been dwelling. It shows the power of consequences to break up all the floodgates of remorse in a man's being; for had he not shot the man dead, his remorse for the crime might have been, as yet, comparatively trifling. It shows, likewise, how the mind may be stayed, for an indefinite period, in one and the same attitude of crime and conviction; carried back in the career of remembrance, and set down, by the power of association, amidst the encircling atmosphere and scenery of a past evil deed, not one element missing, and there made to abide, although in the position of insanity, yet in unceasing and consuming anguish. An instance like this seems, indeed, one of the most dread and powerfully impressive warnings in the whole history of crime and retribution. It conveys an image a thousand times more terrific than that of Lot's wife, pillared in salt, in the attitude of gazing wistfully towards the flames of Sodom. There is nothing more fearful in this world, than the sight of such a petrified man of despair.

Remorse is immeasurably increased by the judgment of others. Our individual conscience is a light inwardly shining upon our being. Now whenever the sin, on which that light falls, comes to the notice of others, we then see that sin *reflected from their minds*, illustrated by their consciences. It is like being in a vast hall, surrounded by a thousand concave mirrors. From every side there is one interminable, multitudinous reflection of self. So with the images of sin. As our crimes approach the knowledge of others, we begin to feel the reverberation of the light of their condemnation upon our own consciences. And when the crime is fully out, completely discovered, then the power of that light of condemnation is often so great in awakening remorse, that the guilty man, unable to stand in the light reflected from the surrounding mirrors of other minds, in order to escape from it, hurries out of the world. But he goes only from light to light; yea, the light of condemnation into which he rushes is so overwhelming, that the light of this world is as darkness in the comparison. For he goes from the notice of poor sinful man, to find the full meaning of that passage: Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance.

It is the same consciousness of guilt, which makes the apprehension of discovery and of retribution so powerful in awakening remorse, that gives such terror to circumstances of affliction, of danger, of distress, as in the case of the brethren of Joseph. A guilty con-

science may be awakened into a tempest in a storm of thunder and lightning, in a storm at sea. How often do men resolve, in such seasons, if life is only spared, to lead a new life, to become the servants of God! Under the power of such remorse, in a superstitious age, or in a false and blinding system of religion, how many have resolved to build churches, to go on pilgrimages, to execute upon themselves the most painful scourgings and penances! Men's characters at such times are, as it were, brought to the fire, and the secret inscriptions flame out. The remorse is sometimes uncontrollable and unconcealable.

The power of the knowledge or dread of the discovery of one's crimes, in awakening remorse, is partly owing to the reverberation of the judgment of one's own conscience, which, at first and by itself alone, seemed so low and still a voice, from the consciousness of others. When the echo of that voice comes back upon the soul from the multitude of our observant and judging fellow-beings, it is overwhelming. But how much more overwhelming will be the echoes of evil thoughts and deeds from the bosom of eternity, from the throne of God and the condemnation of the universe. Every idle word may awaken the solemn power of echo there, as, in some positions, a single pistol, when shot, may be reverberated from mountain to mountain, in ten thousand thunders.

### § 3. *Remorse as the Pioneer of Repentance.*

The passage from remorse to repentance is possible only in a world of probation, a state of hope. If there were no possibility of mercy, there would be nothing but despair. Sorrow for having sinned against God, and the determination to sin no more, would never spring up in a soul assured and certain of having destroyed itself forever. Therefore, if remorse be deferred to the eternal world, no repentance will ever follow after it there. In this view, the operation of remorse in this world, painful though it be, must be regarded as a result of God's mercy, because it is evidently intended to lead the soul to repentance, in a world where repentance is possible and available. By the death of Christ, ours is such a world. And in such a world the operation of a guilty mind, following, as we have seen, inevitably on remembrance, in remorse, is an operation though severe, yet salutary, the result of the Divine Goodness, seeking to bring men to repentance. In this world it is an operation of warning, not of retribution.

It is designed to make us stop sinning, rather than as a punishment

for sinning. It is just like the operation and manifest design of pain in our bodies, warning the physical system of the presence of evil, and constituting the greatest safeguard against evil, against destruction. Suppose, for example, that the application of fire to the body were not followed with an immediate and powerful impression of pain. The distinctive effect of fire in causing death, would be discovered, in multitudes of instances, too late. A burnt child would not dread the fire, but would return to play with it, and the element would, in a thousand cases, produce death, for want of the herald pain, warning the system against it. Now remorse may properly be regarded as acting for the protection of the soul, just as pain does for the preservation of the body. Our impressions of pain warn us instantly when we are violating the laws necessary for the preservation of our physical existence; just so, our impressions of remorse, the operations of conscience, warn us when we have violated those moral laws, by which God has regulated the existence and well-being of our souls. They warn us against the continuance of such violation, and also impel us to seek a remedy for the mischief and misery already occasioned. In this world, remorse has the remedy in view, but in the eternal world, it has gone beyond it. In this world, God's goodness makes use of remorse to urge the soul to repentance; in the eternal world, God's justice makes use of remorse as an element of retribution. Remorse in this world is partial retribution, giving the sinner a warning of what he must expect in the eternal world, if he goes on in that course of sin which produces remorse. Remorse sometimes takes the soul to the very gates of hell, and, as it were, opens them before it, and makes the soul gaze down within them, at all the fiery elements and experiences of everlasting wo.

Now this operation of the soul does as instinctively turn it towards the consideration of a remedy, as the torture inflicted on the physical frame by the application of fire impels the sufferer to cry out for relief. A man bitten by a rattle-snake, and assured by his mortal agony that death is near, unless a remedy be discovered, will hardly look with deeper anxiety for such a remedy, than that with which a soul suffering beneath the terrors of remorse, the stings of an angry conscience, cries out for deliverance. And beyond all question, this is the kind and gracious purpose of the Spirit of God, in this world, in producing conviction, in making the soul sensible how evil and bitter a thing it is to have sinned against God, and in giving it over; for a season, to the horrors of remorse. What our blessed Lord did with the Jews, and does to all, in his description of the riah man suf-

faring in hell, God does by his Spirit to individual consciences, not in description merely, but in partial experience beforehand, to warn the sinner against the wrath to come.

This is the awakening process. If men were not thus mercifully awakened and terrified, they would go on in their sins, in their neglect of God, in their pursuit of their schemes of self-indulgence, without any regard to the consequences, or any heed of a Saviour, till they were ruined beyond all possibility of salvation. Their insensibility to sin would increase with their indulgence in it, and they would continue, under this insensibility, inflicting injury after injury on their spiritual constitution, all the while heedless what they were doing, till they had destroyed themselves past all recovery. This is just what men are doing in multitudes. And this insensibility to sin acts in regard to the spiritual system like those agents in use for destroying the susceptibility to pain in our nervous system, some of which are so powerful, that, while under their influence, an arm may be cut off, or any of the most terrible operations in surgery be performed; without the least knowledge of them arising from any sense of injury or pain, at the moment. These narcotic agents may be so powerful, that, perhaps, if live coals were laid upon the skin, the pain, the exquisite torture, that otherwise would warn the sufferer of being in danger of mortal injury, would not be perceived; so that under the influence of such narcotism the nervous texture of the system might be fatally destroyed without any present pain, to such a degree that the patient could never be recovered from the injury, but must die beneath it. Such is the influence of sin, such the consequence of our spiritual insensibility. And there are a thousand forms of such anodynes which Satan and our own passions are administering to our souls, to produce and maintain this insensibility to sin, and to the injury inflicted by it, till the soul is destroyed by it past all recovery. And then, when the soul wakes out of this torpor, this dream, this delusion of sinful pleasure, it wakes only to perceive its ruin, only to find itself perhaps in the world of despair, perhaps on the confines of that world, destroyed past all remedy. Just so, a person upon whom coals of fire had been placed, while under the influence of chloroform, or upon whose system a fatal injury in some other way had been inflicted, would find out too late, when the effect of the anodyne had passed away, that the effect of the fire, or of the wound, or of the injury, in whatever shape, remains, and is mortal. This is the effect of sin, which men little perceive, if at all, in their customary insensibility in regard to all considerations drawn from the world to come;

but when the soul wakes up to it, when this insensibility has passed away, it is found to be fatal, ending in eternal death. That insensibility must and will pass away, utterly and forever, with the passing of the soul from the body, if not before; for there is no agent in the power of man or Satan to produce a sleep beyond the grave; no spiritual anodyne, no oblivious ether, that can lull the soul amidst the experience of retribution, or render it insensible beneath the fires of the second death. But if that insensibility pass not away before the death of the body, then there is no remedy against the death of the soul. Under that insensibility, no man will seek that remedy till it be too late. And this is just the condition, now, of thousands on thousands, and millions on millions of our race. All the ordinary efforts of God's providence, and all the reiterated displays of his truth, fail to awaken them. They do not see and feel the mortal injury they have inflicted, because they are insensible to sin; and they will not seek a remedy, because, as yet, they feel no injury; and they feel, as yet, no injury, no pain, because they are quaffing the anodynes of Satan. Worldly business is an anodyne; worldly pleasure is an anodyne; anything that turns away the mind from Divine truth, is an anodyne; the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, the desires and the occupancies of other things, are drugs, by which the god of this world blinds the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the Gospel should shine upon them.

Now then, remorse is a blessing; anything is a blessing, that will waken the soul from this dangerous sleep and stupor, before its destruction has been accomplished. Remorse is as the hand of God laid upon the soul in infinite compassion. Remorse is as the midnight cry of breakers! by the watch on board ship, before the ship has dashed to her destruction. Remorse is as the cry of Fire! Fire! when the house is beginning to be involved in flames, while the inmates are sleeping. It is a merciful cry, an alarm of infinite goodness. Men would not thank the watch on board ship, because, from an idiotic or pretended regard to the comfort of the sailors, he would not rouse them from their berths, thinking that possibly the ship might not strike, or possibly his eyes might have deceived him, or possibly after all, there might be no such thing as breakers in the ocean, or that, if the ship should strike, there was an indestructible life-boat of universal salvation. You would not thank the watchman who would let your house burn on without alarming you, because he did not wish to break your slumbers. No! you would thank him who made the most noise, and no thunder of alarm would seem to

you too terrific. Let us thank God, then, for remorse. Let us thank God that he sends remorse in this world, in order that the soul may not be a prey to the horrors of eternal remorse in the eternal world. Let us thank God, that he has made remorse in a sinful soul inevitable upon remembrance, an indestructible, unavoidable operation of a guilty conscience, if not past feeling, or seared as with a hot iron. And let us thank God that by his Word, his providence, his grace, he breaks up the habit of insensibility, that remorse may work in the soul before it be too late, that remorse may begin her work, while repentance is possible; that the soul may feel the scorpion lash of conscience in time to escape from it, by fleeing for the remedy.

We have already considered the fact that remorse oftentimes does not begin in the soul, till consequences begin. When the vengeance due to crime begins to show its rising and advancing form, then remorse rises to meet it. When the robber and the murderer see the slow but sure discovery of their guilt developing, and the officers of justice beginning to stir in pursuit upon the track of their iniquity, then the soul itself, *till* then perhaps unshaken, begins to be stirred with the terrors of remorse. This was the case to a remarkable degree with the brethren of Joseph. It is always so, let the sin committed be greater or smaller in enormity.<sup>1</sup> Discovery and conse-

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<sup>1</sup> There are very solemn instances of the withering power of unexpected conclusive evidence produced against the criminal. The case of the murderer, Richard Crowninshield, may be cited. Beneath the glare of his guilt, he hanged himself; but so long as he thought the evidence of his crime was concealed, he was cheerful and confident, even in the prison. He was a very desperate, hardened, strong-minded, remorseless villain. He was the leader of a knot of infidels, who jeered at all sacred things, and taught young men in habits of abandoned wickedness. There were accessories to his crime, not one of whom, as he thought, was suspected; and he knew that, so long as that was the case, not a link of condemning evidence could be obtained against him. At length a letter, intercepted in the post-office, led to the arrest of one of those accomplices. That arrested man was carried into the jail at midnight; but so profound was the sleep of the hardened murderer, that all the clanging of the bolts and bars of the prison, at that unusual hour, did not wake him. The next morning the sheriff came into his cell, and entered into familiar conversation with him. He was standing calmly at the foot of his truckle-bed. "Well," said the sheriff, "did you hear the noise last night?" "Noise? no; what noise? I slept well." "Why, did you not know that they had arrested Frank Knapp, and brought him here last night, at midnight?" The strong, guilty man put his hand up to the wall to steady himself, but, unable to conceal his feelings, or to recover from the shock, fell back senseless on the bed. The recoil, the scorpion sting, had reached him at last; his sin had found him out; the sword had pierced through the rocky casement around the conscience of the desperate criminal, and was grinding in

quences are sure to wake up remorse. We send our sins, as it were, away from ourselves, to dwell at a distance from us, unseen, unnoticed; and we pass on in our career. By and by they awake out of slumber, and begin their travels back towards the soul, at first, it may be, scarcely visible, and slow of step, but at length looming up and nearing with great swiftness and dreadful power. We may, meanwhile, have gone on very far in life, from the point when we dismissed those sinful developments of our being; that makes no difference; they close in with us, they come upon us like a strong man armed; and when God's providence surrounds us with consequences, our sins rush upon us with them. They do this often, whether the consequences be the direct result of particular courses of sin or not. Calamity makes men remember and feel that they are guilty. When sickness and death enter a household, when a man's worldly prospects are blasted, when a merchant is brought trembling upon the verge of bankruptcy, when any severe pressure of calamity comes upon a man, the providence tends towards conviction of guilt in the soul. Martin Luther had a dear friend struck dead by his side with lightning. The death of that friend was not a consequence of his own guilt; nevertheless it powerfully aroused Luther's soul to a sense of guilt, and set him upon renewed efforts after mercy.

And therefore it is, that God begins his own work of awakening and conviction in the soul, by the presentation of consequences. God's Word is simply an array of consequences to come. God's Word shows to us the great fiery deep of consequences burning in the eternal world, into which deep, men in their sins are advancing; and the calamities met with in this life are but some light flashes of that fire wafted by the wind of man's guilt and God's providence, and let fall upon the soul to awaken it. All evils, all calamities here, are messengers to warn us of eternal calamities to come, that we may escape from them. Remorse roused up by calamity, predicts greater calamity. A sense of sin predicts a judgment to come, and a sense of the judgment to come produces a sense of sin; and therefore one of the outstanding, overawing, magnificent revelations of God's Word

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his soul. What passed that night, none can tell, nor how long the man endured the terrible conflict with conscience and despair. But when the sheriff entered his cell the next morning, he was hanging dead, self-murdered. Such is the power of sudden, overwhelming evidence, bringing the sense as well as the proof of guilt into the soul. Men would flee from it, if they could, at the last day. If there were still a third world, into which souls could plunge out of the eternal world, by a second self-murder, they would do it.

is a judgment to come, the preaching of which makes kings upon their thrones as well as peasants in the cottage, tremble.

In accordance with this, Bunyan has presented his Pilgrim, at first setting out from the City of Destruction, as terrified at finding from that Divine Book in his hand, that his native city was to be burned up, and he himself to be brought to judgment. The warning sentence presented to him by Evangelist, and the sound ringing in his ears, was this: Flee from the wrath to come! But why this fear? Why is the soul afraid? Because it is guilty. Because it has sinned against God. The burden of guilt is on the soul, threatening to smite it into everlasting ruin. Sometimes the sense of guilt comes first, and the dread of consequences afterwards; but the sight or the approach of consequences necessarily increases the sense of the burden, throws the soul upon a clearer view of its own guilt, a consideration of what it deserves. And in proportion as guilt is seen rising up, coming out of the darkness, remorse inevitably follows. "I perceive, cries out the burdened Pilgrim, that I am condemned to die, and after that to come to judgment; and I find that I am not willing to do the first, nor able to do the second." And thus, by the working of God's Word, which is the searching sword of God's Spirit, beneath the presentation of a judgment to come, and the knowledge and experience of guilt, the process of conviction goes on, as God, who would redeem the soul, intends that it should. It is like the beating of a gong or the firing of cannon among the mountains, this answer from the recesses of the soul to the report of God's Word. The sound reverberates like rolling thunders.

But thus far, there is no repentance. It is all mere remorse, and dread of consequences. By that, God would awaken the soul, and draw it into repentance; but remorse does not necessarily beget sorrow for sin against God. Remorse is not necessarily followed by repentance. Remorse is a *natural* process of our being, and inevitable. Repentance is a *gracious* process, but *not* inevitable. Remorse is of man, repentance is of God. Repentance it is in our power to refuse; remorse it is not in our power to refuse, or prevent; for its elements are within us; and as sure as when two thunderclouds driven together in a tempest flash forth the lightning, so sure, when those elements are agitated, when human guilt and God's law come together, and the thunder of the penalty rolls, remorse will dart through the soul and burn within it, a fire, than which, what can then be worse, even in the lowest hell? And were it not for Divine grace, remorse would be the last stage of inward experience man



would ever reach; they would stop then, even in this world, and from remorse would only fall into retribution. That was the repentance of Judas; that is the sorrow of the world that worketh death; and that would be the only sorrow men would ever experience, the agony of remorse and despair, were it not for God's grace, God's system of redemption, God's own design to bring men to repentance by showing them their guilt. Is there no mercy? cries out the soul, beneath the anguish of such conviction, such remorse. And if there were no mercy, then there would never be anything *but* remorse. But there is mercy for the soul, if, awakened by remorse, it will earnestly and in season apply for it. God's gracious attitude in his Word, is that of forgiving mercy; this is the very object, the grand peculiarity of revelation. Even under the anguish of remorse, therefore, the soul is not shut up to despair, but is a prisoner of hope. Repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, can change remorse itself into redemption. And remorse itself may lead, and ought to lead the soul, directly to God with strong cryings for mercy. And, indeed, a soul under the anguish of remorse cannot *help* crying out for mercy.

But in all this, as yet, there may be no repentance. When and how does that blessed change commence in the soul? What is the passage from remorse to repentance? It is just the passage from nature to grace, from the heart of mere natural theology, into the very bosom of Divine, revealed theology. It is the passage from the point where natural theology leaves the soul in inevitable, everlasting despair, to the point where God takes up the soul into the bosom of a Saviour's love, and fills it with the experience of life and blessedness, and hides and redeems it from sin and from wrath forever. It is the passage from death to life, from the power of Satan unto God, from darkness to light, from hell to heaven. It is the passage of a gulf, over which God's grace alone could throw the bridge; a mighty arch, the cross of Christ supports it, by which the soul passes in sorrow and faith, from condemnation to forgiveness. On the part of God, the passage is all of grace; in the soul of man, it is humble sorrow, produced by grace, in which the soul passes from self to God. From selfish anguish, and the mere fear of consequences, and the horror of remorse, it passes to a deep sorrow for having sinned against God. And here commences the first dawning of repentance in the soul, here, in this sacred sorrow, drawn forth, by the Spirit of God, with the agencies of the great mystery of redemption, from the mere tempestuous elements of guilt and wo. From sorrow for the conse-

quences of guilt, the soul passes to a holy grief for guilt against God. The soul may not perhaps know at what point this wondrous change takes place, and where it makes the passage, where, from supreme regard to its own interests, it passes to a humble submission of all things to the will of God, and a humble sorrow for having sinned against him; but this is the quittance of remorse for repentance, this is just what God requires, this is the point whither grace, the law, providence, the word, the cross, are all impelling, inviting, urging, and pressing onward the soul.

Remorse, in a world of hope, leads to God for mercy. Then the soul, contemplating not only its own guilt and the coming judgment, but also God's glorious attributes, God's infinite goodness, holiness and love, begins to see and feel against whom, and with what infinite baseness and ingratitude it has sinned. The cross of Christ rises to the view. In the very act of coming to God for mercy, the soul meets the cross. It begins to come in reliance on the cross, begins, though ignorantly and blindly at first, to repeat the name of Christ, and the promises of God. In the midst of its confessions of sin, by God's goodness and the Saviour's dying love, it is melted into sorrow, and remorse is gone! It was nothing *but* remorse before, like a continent of ice, sharp and rugged in the soul, but now it melts into mourning and contrition, submissive, gentle, tender. The mere remorse is gone, and in its place a fountain of penitential feeling gushes through the heart, and sweet desires after holiness spring up, amidst which the thoughts of fear and the questionings of acceptance with God are lost sight of, and the soul for a season thinks only of Christ's loveliness, and God's infinite goodness, and is absorbed in sorrow for having sinned against such a God.

This is the first stage of genuine repentance. It is the beginning of a change in the whole being. It is the beginning, or rather the fountain of a reformation in the heart and life, thorough and lasting. It is the commencement of a change from sin to holiness, from selfishness to disinterested love, from the love of self to the love of God. Self begins to be forgotten, God begins to absorb the soul.

There is nothing that does not thus end in God, establishing an affectionate union between the soul and him, that can carry us out of the condemnation of nature, into the freedom and enjoyment of revealed religion; out of the condemnation and remorse of nature, into the deliverance and blissful experience of grace; out of the bondage and corruption of self, into spontaneous submission, obedience and love.

The end in view, God or self, makes the whole distinction between true and false repentance. A sorrow which ends on self, is the sorrow of the world that worketh death. A sorrow which ends on God, is the sorrow of Divine grace, working a repentance that needeth not to be repented of. This makes all the difference between genuine repentance and mere penance. Penance is for self, repentance is for God. Penance is selfish sorrow and a selfish expiation, wrought entirely out of fear. Repentance is heartfelt sorrow towards God, with a life of holiness out of love. Penance is the hatred and dread of consequences, and a labor to buy them off, to insure the soul against them. Repentance is hatred and dread of sin, and the pursuit of holiness, not now out of regard to consequences but to God, not now out of remorse and fear, but sorrow and love. Repentance is the way of the Gospel in revealed theology, penance is the way of superstition and a burdened conscience in natural theology. Without grace, let a man's speculative knowledge of the Gospel be what it may, he is still shut up in the prison of mere nature.

To illustrate further the difference between true and false repentance, let us suppose two young men, both setting out in courses of evil, for the accomplishment of some particular object, against the will of their parents. After some time a messenger meets them, and presenting before them the folly and guilt of their career, succeeds in drawing the attention of one of them so powerfully to the goodness, the tenderness, the loving self-sacrificing anxiety of his parents, and the ingratitude, baseness and cruelty of destroying their fondest cherished hopes, that he resolves to give up the guilty pursuit he has entered on, and to return. He is grieved at having wronged his parents, injured their feelings, blasted their fairest expectations; he is grieved, astonished, contrite, and from that moment determines to pursue a new life of the utmost assiduity, tenderness and love towards them.

But the other son goes on, till misfortune overtakes him, and he finds that, so far from accomplishing his desired end in his wanderings, he is in misery, perhaps in prison. Now, taught by experience, not prevailed upon by warnings or by love, he resolves to change his course, because he has been deeply disappointed, and fears a ruin to the uttermost. He does change his course, but not his heart. He changes his character of life, not out of grief, contrition, and love to his parents, but of mere regard to himself. There may not even be a single thought of his parents, and, though the change in his course may be one that his parents would be very glad of, whatever may

be his motives, perhaps he does not even care enough about his parents to let them know how differently he is conducting.

Now it is as plain as the day, that this is not repentance. It is repentance towards self, but not towards his parents. It is the dread of ruin, and the desire to avoid it, but not the love of holiness, nor the desire to possess it. Just so, there is one kind of repentance towards God, and another kind of repentance towards self. The repentance of the Gospel is repentance towards God; penance is repentance towards self, mere self-love.

But in returning to God, in the processes of awakening, of remorse, and of the soul's application for mercy, there is always, or most generally, a mixture of these two forms of development, as is evident from the instructive parable by our Blessed Lord. In that narrative we have the supposition of a third son, the prodigal, wandering from his father's house, and reduced at length to such utter poverty and distress, that for the sake of deliverance he will go back to his father, seeing that, if he stays where he is, he must perish with hunger. The first thought is that of deliverance from ruin and death; the second thought is that of the humble confession of his guilt, in returning to his father. Now here is repentance towards self, leading to repentance towards God; here is remorse for sin, roused up by the experience of consequences, resulting in heartfelt sorrow towards God. Just thus the soul in ruin looks round for relief. Under the office of mercy in the Gospel, it hastens back to God, and in the very act of going, and considering what to say, is penetrated with sorrow and shame; not merely with remorse and self-anguish, but with sorrow towards God; and thus tremblingly, weepingly returns and begs for pardon; the selfish sorrow of conviction and of ruin being more and more absorbed in sorrow for sin, longings after holiness, and contrition towards God. This is the work of God's Spirit, this the result of a humble application for God's mercy, in God's way.

The way that God takes with the sinful soul for its recovery and redemption, is as wonderful for its simplicity as for its mercy; and, in both these respects, it takes away from the soul all possibility of excuse for not now availing itself of the provisions of God's loving kindness in the Gospel. Repentance towards God, which is the practical entrance of the soul into the riches of revealed religion, is as simple as remorse itself, which is the natural action of the soul in natural religion.