

SUNDAY READING.

FORGIVENESS. How beautifully falls From human lips that blessed word forgive!

A CHILD'S PRAYER.—The following sweet and simple expression of early piety is from the pen of Isaac Pray, Jr., of Boston:

Death-bed Repentance a Delusion.—By JOHN A. KEENE, M. D.

The idea that "death-bed repentance," so called, is a delusion, is not new. However startling it may seem at first, reflection will soon convince any one acquainted with the human system and its sympathies, that very little reliance is to be placed upon a confession of reformation under such circumstances.

And although these tests of our temporal attachment are selfish in the abstract, they are both necessary and useful, as well as to our own happiness, as the happiness of those around us.

Try the question! We have been grateful, but not penitent! Or whence this secret dread, and inward horror Of falling into naught? Why do we bleed? Back on herself, and starts at destruction!

Sickness attacks our system, and fierce disease commences its ravages in the midst of our most blissful enjoyments, in the height of our gratification of appetite; and how soon do we turn with disgust from the very object which in a state of health, gave us pleasure!

THE merciless arrow of death wounds its way into our dwelling, and strikes down gentle lamb of our love, and where then is the sunshine of life! Where the fragrant flowers and fragrant flowers of earth! Their verdure has faded. The sweet scented flowers has lost its perfume.

The beloved object which sweetened every enjoyment is buried under the cold folds of the valley, and cheerfulness, which was the companion of the cherished one in life, is changed to sorrow and sadness. Now he is dead; and all the charms of existence have vanished with him! Is this repentance?

Is this change in our physical condition, this temporary distaste for accustomed gratifications, this want of appetite for carnal indulgences, repentance? Are our hearts nearer God? Our souls benefited? Our virtues improved? What are the evidences? The healthy functions of our organs have been suspended by disease, and we have no present desire for the things of earth! Is this repentance? It is a delusion! A fatal, dangerous delusion!

The sick and dying lose their vigor, and are in a state of physical and mental inertia—neither positively good, nor positively evil, but very far from that condition of spirit which constitutes true repentance.

We feel subdued and penitent, and in our helplessness, throw our poor prostrate bodies, our yielding intellect, on the mercies of Heaven. This is not repentance, but a delusion of fearful magnitude.

Remember, that debility of mind and body, the prostration of vital energy, the absence of the desire for evil, are only involuntary causes, and have nothing to do with the subject of repentance. If we neglect daily to make our reconciliation with God, to apply our moral and intellectual strength to his honor and glory, depend upon it, we cannot, ought not to look for acceptance, merely because, in the hour of sickness, we feel a disinclination for those indulgences which religion and virtue condemn.

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