No. 84.

On being ashamed of the Gospel.
Romans I, 16. "For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ."

No one, who had read only the early history of Saul of Tarsus, would expect from him a declaration such as this. He would not expect from the persecutor of Israel this fearless, unyielding profession of the Gospel. Who is not tempted to ask—‘is this the language of a man, who once made havoc of the church; who, we may suppose, had sworn to exterminate the name—who solicited the aid of authority that he might fix the fangs of oppression with a deeper, more merciless grasp on the followers of Jesus;—who had gone forth in the triumphant exultation of malice with desolation and death for the disciples of the Lord?’ Yes, it is this haughty, relentless, unsparing persecutor..."
who now says "I am not ashamed of the gospel," it is this man of furious passions, headlong wrath, who now declares himself the champion of the cause of Jesus. The page of heaven has passed over him; and Paul the man is no longer what Saul of Tarsus was. The voice which said to him, "Saul, Saul, whom thou persecutest," has offered him, this proud, fierce spirit to the submission and docility of a child, the breast and once hallowed with rage at the name of Jesus of Nazareth, is now by Jesus himself filled with that calm, confiding courage which could look on danger without flinching, with gladness, if it were to swell the living stream of the gospel. The light and sudden flash from heaven went to the recesses of this man's heart, of the sinner, wronged object of malignity, nay, blessed there, fled before it, as the black gloomy forms of woe flee in horror before the ascending sun. He, who was consenting unto the death of the first martyr, could now readily seize the crown of martyrdom himself. He knew not a transformation of character so deep, radical, astonishing as that presented in the history of St. Paul: there is not one miracle of subtlety in that page, not turned the energies of such a mind into a course of piety to that in which they had long so faithfully glanced. But there was another sacrifice which Paul must have made before he could have pronounced that he was not an apostle of the cause of Christ. He was not only a zealous, but an humble Jew. The treasures of a clinical lore, the artifices of cabalistic ingenuity were doubtless familiar to his mind, and the other Jews; he was dullest friend of them. It was not in vain that he had been in the schools of Jewish learning: he had studied the forms of exposition, had lay with such a numbous and oppressive weight on the mind, and a numbous oppressive weight on the mind. Now it was no trifling sacrifice to put by with an unsparing hand these distinctions of feeling, apparently so satisfactory, to be broken through all these associations to deeply rooted, and deeply cherished, to receive the Gospel in all its simplicity and purity. It certainly was no easy thing for one who had been taught what the feet of Gamaliel, to go to, and at the feet of Jesus learn of
him who was meek of heart. The servants with his education, his passion growing in the mind of this man were indeed high, strong, but they were not once, because God had marked him for his service, leveled him to the abode of the weary. It is a most sel-
imy interesting lesson in our savior, when we see Sisal's own breathing out threatenings, his arrows against the disciples. The next, trembling astonished saying, 'What shall we do,' before a dying in the declaration, 'I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ.'

He has now the same energy as he had before, but it is expressed by a wintry object; the same powerful eloquence, but it is consecrated by a better cause; the same fearlessness, undaunted mind, but its might is spent on a higher, holier service. The word of power, the fire of the Lord, that fell on the anointing of Elijah, consumed the wood, the stones, the dust, but caught his heart; consecrated, it is heaven.

The words of the text, 'fearless,' present us with a noble declaration of firmness, courage in the cause of the

...coming from such a man, does it not come fraught with instruction? When we read this declaration, are we not ashamed to think of our cold,

...cowardly profession of the gospel? Are we not ashamed to think for small is the tribute of zeal's effort which we have given to God? Yet we are not required, as mere the Apollos to sacrifice lives to the cause of the gospel. But the more valiant lives, the sadder is the cause of the gospel. Yet, the more valiant lives, the cause of the gospel. Yet, the more valiant lives, the sadder is the cause of the gospel.

1. We manifest that we are ashamed of the gospel, when we are afraid to take a stand against fashionable men, fashionable fashions. It is something worse than hypocrisy to wear the badge of our profession, yet give our hearts to the yielding, clinging spirit of the world, to seem the disciples of Christ, to be the victims of pleasure or of interest.

There are many who are willing to show their selves daft, to be the slaves of sacrifice, the sacrifices of their religion, sometimes demands of them, yet ashamed of the my

...toils and labors, think the may be occasionally slight. We know that there have been times almost the pride of learning, all the tyranny of force, all the bigotry of superstition were brought into existence.
against straight and then it was disgraceful somehow to
be a strong man when the religion was in its death's
hour. Has described it, a small seed in the earth, as
when it was left despised and neglected, to ensure only to
be assailed by man, though He who gave it to the
world still watched over its growth, and sheltered it from
the storms and marred by threatening fury around it.
But now, when it ranks among its progress a heart
breaking in its canopies of splendor when it has ascended thrones &
instituted itself with the institutions of a consid-
erate part of the world — now there is doubtless
more fear, more shame among men, with respect to
a sedulous & unbending maintenance of their faith
than there was in these early days of terror or con-
tempt. Plans are more easily satisfied with an in-
definite character, as if it were possible for men
to be half a part of half a servant of the world. Hail
suffer the claims of religion & the claims of interest
to all pleasure to commingle & mutually entertain
themselves around their hearts. Tell they themselves
find it almost impossible to unravel the chain
of their motives & principles & tell how far the
religious feelings of how far their ambition of heart
of that faith have had the sway of their hearts.

My faith, these things ought not to be. This is
truly being ashamed of. "We call one master Our
Pâr." He says well, for as many you
give to do as I have done to you." And why call
should we as I have done to you?" And why call
you me Lord, Lord? Do not things in My way. Let
every one who is ashamed of a master, if he can, to answer
this question of his master, let him prepare to give
an account to his Lord, why he has chosen the sacred
name before the great and powerful. This pleasure
Samuel testifies that his by the friendship of society, yet
in the world bas submitted to the dominion
of folly, all around him manifests the most he-
less of folly, all around him manifests the most he-
less of folly, of folly, of folly, of folly, of folly, of folly,
when the lower gates of his
soul are open, the calmest look on & see the
less preening away the remnants of what was once
help in the fabric of society, without making a
single struggle to gain from inaction a lot of
sanctuary of the master of the soul of his faith, he
can name, see his religion trampled upon in
as though we had no difficulties, no trials to over

tain. This time, we are not unbrokendown with circum

dances, as we were in former days. The first dis

ciples of Jesus had need of a spirit not could bear sufferings, sustain patience, endure torture, and triumph over death. Their time was a time of con

teption of trials, of all the enemies of their faith ever

Before the church, for many succeeding ages, is

little else than the history of the sufferings of those who espoused her cause. As we look back on

the track of ages, we find the path of our faith,

impaired, deeply stained, with the blood of its adherents, as the crown of martyrdom was the

only honor for those received from the world. The

followers of our Lord struggled long and valiantly

with all the difficulties and trials they could

throw in their way, and endured all that mankind

revenge could inflict. To sufferings like these

indeed are not called—gentle and persecutors

like theirs were not called to meat. But if, when

we expose the cause of Jesus, we flatter ourselves

that we have no sacrifices to make, no difficult
tries to encounter, no desire to restrain, or scandal to abridge, we have very much mistaken the spirit of the service in which we have entered. Our trials may not be the same as in severity as those of the apostles. Saner times endured but still we have our trials, and our behavior under them will decide whether or not we are ashamed of the Gos. of t. Our religion, if it be any thing better than a name, will require of us many a blister, but painful sacrifice to principle, many an unmeet ed, but glorious effort, many a private fast, no one but ourselves can measure the extent. It is time, by the blessing of God, we have fallen in better days than the church has known in some former periods; but so long as man shall remain what he is, faithful and true will have much suffering to end their much to endure. We cannot be fascinated, but we may be calumniated for our religion; we cannot be threatened, but we may be ridiculed for that integrity which knows not how to be duped in every purpose of interest. The world has many ways of attack, beside those of open violence and secret assault; many secret, perhaps unseen, as
to give up the confidence & esteem of many with whom we have been connected. Nor if we should firmly believe them to be the truths of the Bi-
ble, &c. If we esteems God, the bos. &c. If we shall show to them with devotion of soul & press them to our hearts the closer & more e.

that is made to wrench them from us. We may be mistaken in some, as incautious, as adopting opinions merely because we wish them to be true, & having vainly ourselves set confidence, resting satisfied with the flattering consciousness that we are wiser & better than our neighbors. All this sagacious & perhaps more, we must be prepared to endure without a murmur, unless we would be held forth as deserters of the truth in the day of our trial. In that state, if ever the world turns in w. we can look up, without trembling, it is in the cause of God, we can face dangers of trial without dismay, if we can only see some of our finest marks of peace & happiness vanishing away, because we cannot consent to be wicked in order to secure them, & if when we are deceived & what we believe to be truth / wr are can say with the firm confidence of Paul, &c. use to the congregations you that after the way we you.
find in the course of guilt one barrier after another
removed, - one death upon another removing away
after another, till he can go forward from crime
without remorse. It is true, these effects
are not seen in every instance, but this is a
habitual tendency of that false shame, which
makes us at a distance from our Lord - 'if we serve him
at all, makes our service heartless, timid, as if we
were afraid we should honour him too much.
Often it, let us be careful that we do not deceive
ourselves by pleading our unworthiness, often in
truth there are other reasons which keep us from
the ordinances of the Lord. Yet every man exam-
ines himself, says the Apostle - it is this rule
of self-examination which we are to prepare ourselves
for the holy ordinance of the Lord. Such implies
a devotion of our lives to the principles of the Lord.
When we enquire with regard to our faith, whether
it be sufficiently vigorous or powerful, whether
it habitually influences our conduct, restrains
passions, and moderates our desires, what is the
meaning of this duty in this, that if we fail
ourselves therein only in name, and we discern not the divine example of our Master has little effect on our lives. What God is at work in our thoughts, except in the solemn acts of stated worship, we must then endeavor to invigorate our faith, by returning frequently to meditate upon the objects of it, our creation, our redemption, the means of grace, the hope of glory, that by the assurance of God's love and the study of the Holy scripture, we may enlighten our understanding, and when our affections to a worthy preparation for the table of the Lord. Are you ashamed or afraid to institute this self-examination? Remember that this testimony is at least a weakness, a trouble when you think that it may grow into a crime. Remember too that in the great day of the Almighty's judgment, this false shame will not protect you from the forme of his displeasure. If you have despised him who died to save you, how will you bear to meet your Judge?

Such are some of the ways in which we manifest that
At home, Sept. 5th, 1819 - forenoon.
The introduction only at Frink's lecture. Feb. 25, 1829, at home.