No. 124.

On the parable of the rich man.

10/7/1821

We may remark with regard to this parable, as well as many other instructions of Christ, how extremely appropriate it was to the occasion, and how naturally it flowed from the subject then before him. He was applied to by one of the heirs of an estate, to interfere in the division of the property. It was probably a custom among the Jews, in case of any dispute of this kind, to refer it to the decision of some man, in whose wisdom and impartiality unqualified confidence might be placed. The person, he made the application to one of his acquaintance, who, at this time, undoubtedly either knew him or had heard much of his fame. He was probably an avaricious, grasping man; for this cogent
to have another speak to his brother to divide the
inheritance with him", argues nothing in his favor.
But our Saviour totally refused to interfere in the affair.
I answered him, "serve him not in the midst of the
man, to make me a judge or divide over you?" His business on earth
was not to adjust, settle the untangling claims of
mutual interest, but to call men to higher and
more enduring treasures, to proclaim the great truth
that it pleased God to reveal to man. And there was an
opportunity for instruction, when our Saviour
would not let a man pass without improvement.
Absolutely minded man had made an application, who showed how entirely he
was absorbed in the love of gain; and when the
occasion thus offered, He admonished His followers to
take heed of excessive care to interest, for, says he, a man's
life is a man's, who finishe no interest, consisteth not in the
abundance of goods, "for he that, soareth". How beauti-
fully does he pass into a fine train of moral consider-
ation, in the parable which I have just read to you. It
is one of the most impressive and powerful of the many
admirable parables of our Lord. With man, who, in a
to him to restrict this interference in the division
of the estate, must have gone in confusion, ashamed
of his conduct and dishonesty, unless He may help that
the instructions of heart to his heart, it touched that
a strong and made him to the love of better riches
than those about which he was discussed so eagerly to
quarrel.

The parable of the rich man, whose estate consists
so abundantly, brings before us an important subject:
the value of the use of riches. The love of money
is the ruling passion of society. It pervades all clays
of respect; is there a breast that does not acknowledge
it? It makes among the highest patrons of children
ittle bundles of fire in the bosom of the young man, and
him faith to labor or to serve any enterprize, only
cherishes itself. To old age, when the stream of time has come
away all of these, this still hovers behind one
of the last feelings of the chilling hand of death on
linguishes. Now what is the fair estimate to be made
of this universal passion? By some it has been entirely
entirely condemned, if the love of mankind, of riches have
been possessed without any qualification. By others
wealth has been considered as the only good; the attainment of it recommended as the only true wisdom. I have treated the subject, as I thought it were a crime to think of earthly possessions; I was as if they thought it folly to do anything else... Both are undoubtedly in the wrong. Riches have their value; but there are other things which have a greater value. Let us attentive consider the parable before us, that we may form a proper judgment in the subject.

The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully. And he thought within himself, saying, what shall I do? because I have no room where to bestow my fruits. And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and there will I store up all my fruits and my goods. Thus far there seems to be nothing in his conduct deserving censure. All this exhibits him merely as an industrious, successful man; in this character there is nothing wrong. So one cannot easily blame him, because his ground brought forth plentifully, or because he built large storehouses to receive the produce of the soil. On the contrary, these circumstances indicate something praiseworthy in his character; they indicate that he has digested prudent in the use of the means God has appointed for the attainment of proper fruits of a prudently good. He had doubtless taken care to have his fields well cultivated, his vineyards well tended, his lands under his labors, his grounds yielding their accustomed fruit in rich harvests. And on for all unwise, if he had made a proper portion use of his possessions.

I have not here he could have been considered as having armed against the laws of religion, as having acted a part unworthy an immortal of accountable being. For it was not here; it lay in another part of the conduct. The acquisition of valuable possessions by正当 means of honorable means, is what religion prescribes kids. Indeed, it is sometimes the necessary result of these very duties, as religion prescribes; I mean the duties of industry and prudence. The hand of the diligent makes the rich,
wealth, then, is he, who is willing to submit to
restraints to undertake to engage in active exis-
tutions, who treats the reward of great possession.
Now, if industry be one of the duties prescribed by religion
of the attainment of a competent share of riches, it is
natural consequence of industri with the,
that the acquirement of a position of abroad
be in religion to provide the acquirement of abroad.
Like every other earthly good, they are a proper source
of desire; though it were the vainest of
dreams to suppose on them, that is the hope of happi-
ness. Their whole value, it is true, consists in this use;
but in order to be used, they must be obtained. God has
made man for existence of various kinds - that our
sensory faculties are put in motion in quest of
good, they may innocently strike into different paths.
The accumulation of worldly possessions is one of these objects
of enterprise; though the manner of it requires peculiar
care, it needs to be guarded, restrained, disciplined in
every way, still in itself it is innocent and commendable.
For the sake of the commonweal it is necessary, that
the ambition of men should be various. All cannot be
rich, though the competition is open to all...
must his mind be disciplined, that at one time he is compelled to go to work, yet another to stand still, while we are
must resolve ourselves, if our deliberations are to be
must avoid past errors, is the bane of fresh mistakes. This
it is the source of wealth that we must look for. The foun-
dation is subject to many institutions. How can he be
sings to society? Yet the fruits of property were interlocked,
what would become of all the thousand means of securing
the misery of promoting the happiness of mankind? Many
who are now enabled to provide against them comforts of
life. I say, would then be condemned to useless inactivity. It
hinds that are now active in offices of kindness would
then be nullifiers of society. Some of the brightest and
foremost men in life often depend on the acquisition of a fortune
from which they arise. Families are to be supported from the
children are to be educated to accustomed to the means of being
happily. If we are buried in the book of death, it is
later a conduct to reflect that by the blessings of God
men are so enriched to live to these, who come after us, something better than the remembrance of wealth
as the cold money of the world. And why should we live to
ours to show that the pursuit of happiness is such a degree
of wealth as may fall to us? The by-ways of honest means, are
not only innocent, but necessary and commendable? It is a prin-
ciple of everything in the very structure of society, it is that
on the same arm of interest: it carries the whole blood of society
from the centre to the extremities. The husbandman, the arti-
cer, the artist, the merchant, in short, every man in every sta-
tion feels its influence. Thus, its grand things, it is its
seen not only how society might collapse into a state
of hopeless stagnation. Such a principle so necessary to the well-
being of man in the world of perfection is not, cannot be
condemned by the laws of God. It is that moralist would
then himself be freely skilled in the defence unfortunate
who should endeavor to hinder it, thus preserve it, the four
oat of wealth as being in itself morally wrong.

This has we have found nothing to blame in the con-
duct of the rich man in the parable. By the blessing of
heaven he received the first fruits of his industry. What
like a prudent man prepared his storehouses to receive
them. But now we have to see a closer side of his char-
acter, in the wrong use of these his great possessions.
he was thus standing in the midst of His beauty, surrounded by His treasures like a child, what was the first sentiment of his heart? What the language that rose to his lips? Did he utter the expression of gratitude to have been selected to use in a wise, virtuous, beneficent manner the wealth conferred on him? Say from it. His very first thought is tainted with selfishness. He’ll buy to my soul, soul, then hast much good land of his own years; take thine ease, eat, drink, be merry.” This is the language of a man bent upon using his wealth solely for the selfish gratification of appetites; passion; hence his crime begins. Yet for the augmentation, not for the sake of his property was he to be blamed. He, upon whom the good things of this world have had no other effect than to harden his heart, did give him up to the call of sensual indulgence; thus how truly he deserves the famous Heaven has ordained upon him. There are but too many who imitate the rich man in the parable, who often their golden treasures mean to possess, and when their gold and silver are increased think only of losing in beauty, pampering their flesh, spoiling to their soul. take thine ease, eat, drink, be merry.

Not but that those who have labored to acquire possessions are fairly entitled to all the enjoyment they can afford. He who has earned the good things of life by the sweat of his brow, by the exertion of his skill, who has received them by good fortune, has surely the best claim to whatever degree of happiness may be found in the use of them. But there is a great difference between enjoyment of personality between the man who parts with gratitude and the man of the selfish kind. He who is not content with the good bestowed upon him, the man who sits on the throne of God, and spurns at his passions. And it is to this last sort of pleasure, this selfish enjoyment, that the wealthy are strongly tempted to devote themselves. We are but too often called to observe that these possessors act as an extinguisher in the beneficial affections, that they shut off the heart, and forbid it to go out of itself, that they...
The man in the parable is not advised to avoid the scent of his treasures, but what is quite as bad, to spend them solely in the greatest indulgence of selfish passions. It is not the licentious miser alone who desires to be called avaricious. One man is as greedy to acquire with the view of dispersion, as another with the view of hoarding; consequently the licentious prodigal may be as greedy for money as a miser. We have a model of insatiable avarice, as he who builds golden chains to fasten himself by the conveniences and sciences of life to ease expense. The prodigal at the prodigal, it is true, generally obtains more favor among men, than that of the miser, because it has a certain air of selfishness of spirit that is very captivating, but of a man resolutes not to take methods of falsehood, fraud, or stealth, in order to gain wealth, or if he refuses to discharge obligations, to achieve the indulgent, to support them who depend upon him, or to contribute his share to public services, what difference does it make, whether it be for the sake of expending or accumulating; whether it be that he may live over his treasures, hidden when his coffers, or may them expose to bear him on in the long career of guilty pleasure or profligate dissipation? The is surely quite as much crime in the diligent as in the prodigal. The influence on the individual is quite as bad. The rich man, who said to himself, soul, take thou eat, drink, wear, and enjoy thyself, was very wise as selfish, as if he had said, soul, be happy.
places amid his breast, the triple steel of indifference, to the exult in glory of man, of the story of great destinies that awaits him for belief, reaches him, it falls like the stones upon the sand, do good fruit of kindness, his life stands there. "We talk of human life as a journey; but how casually is that journey performed? There are none who come with gift of death, determined to walk on velvet haunds of smooth terraces, where every gate is closed, and every vein of love, there are others, who walk on the rough, dread path of life, against soaring waves of stormy waters, where shock affections, because fade, shrivel in the journey, - are austen. That here sisot satisfied with knowing that many exists, but he has a burthenful feeling of its weight, up from the comfits of shame, elements of meekness, of goes through the daily, a disappointmant to save a human being from shame, distress, destruction. But the spirit of endurance you can regale, expect from the mariner, who songs to his solt, "eat, drink, be merry", who drinks of satisfiy, faces these drearful feelings in these selfish, enticing pleasures, with the possession of wealth gives him the power to obtain...
things be, whether best provided. Mr. How dreadful must have been the sumnners to this son of guilty pleasure. Be one who should, the might in any way or dreams, & under pugnally on his spirit, he find himself in the seeming or the mind's edge of an awful prelude, so must that disaster be a terror. It must be a terror. The mind must have started trembled with the message as many his funeral bell. He'd him hastened away from his. Final mansion to the house of destruction, leaving behind him the instruments of the means of all his pleasures. The man was his greatest proffessor, his largest storehouse, yet the phantom of his selfishness? To him it mattered not since they are gone, or who has saved them. He can spare his purple robe, earn that raiment covered him in his winding sheet, and the head may rest on a yellow, low of dawn, view that his own is laid in the grass.

All has gone, where his possessions, his pride of holding, cannot follow him. If when she stands at the bed of God, I thank not that he will tremble to the hear, because he once had great possession a earth. In person, being most extravagantly, so is the love, less, and the bower, to himself, is not rich toward God." We may truly, that it shall be with every one, who takes the gifts of God's bounty, it turns them into the instruments of guilty indulgence, who stands in the midst of this abundance of days to morn, neat, death, if the man. He may rest, dwell. In the holy, has heart may shrieve to the sound of the timbrel, the step of joy may mantle in his cup at the ground feet. Let all shall say to him, "Thou fool, this might shall form be acquired of thee." A voice so may shaly out enthrone on his lord and great, pleasures. You are now perhaps for casting in several gratifications, yearning but remember encroared from God, can dismiss the poverty of earth. To day, you are clothed in fine linen, your strength, but in a few days, perhaps, they shall burn upon a temple of marble, if the morning art fire of the womb. An image of one rising up to heaven, shall relate in golden, it will the story of your human. O stone! I have in vain child of dust. He that shall, by the sea rise for the lack of a moral of read. God teach him as well. He liveth the yeat, at the gates of heaven. I from the time, angels, then shall teach, that a man's life cannot set in the abundance of things, we be possesseth, if that he do
A: Then she givest us all things richly to enjoy.

C. Strive all brentoses hand descends, every good profes-
syon gift, enable us to estimate as we ought the very
goods of God, where before us in life. May we ever
thus avoid as not abusing it, knowing that the fear
of God is being passeth away. While we seek with temerity
of humility to avail ourselves of the means of good, and
then, best part, into our hands, may we seek not to
all things the kingdom of God 30. In the midst of our
sins don't let us never cry to the soul, take things easier, but
may we always be like those who watch, knowing that at
time when we are not aware it may be soiled. This
ought shall they seek be acquired of thee. May each
one be impressed with a due sense of the worth of the
goods the we desire so to become entwined, that we
always be not as we would wish to be. V. B. Allen

In da.
selfish course, you may be summoned to descend to the place where they shall gather upon the bones of eagle fathers, where you will mingle your dust with that of thousands who have made their bed there before you. Remember all of that the small portion of the riches towards God will be of more value than all the Splendid treasures with the great ones of the earth have ever aspired for themselves.

Sept. 1821.

At home, Oct. 7th, 1820, forenoon.