No. 118.

On Peter’s denying his Lord.
Mark xiv. 32. And Peter said to him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee to prison, and to death, for thy sake.

Luke xxii. 61, 62. And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.

Everyone, who has read the New, or at least a tolerable degree of attention, must have observed the striking differences in the characters of the disciples of Jesus. There is no true uniformity of character among them, as if their religion had formed them down to the end in the fashion of invariable machines. They were placed in a new extraordinary situation, and brought out of their ordinary employments, to perform extraordinary powers. Men never display themselves so truly, as when they are under the influence of an emotion sufficiently.
strong to make them forget all of self. On such an
occasion the discipline of 

were learned and polished. Hence the
corrections of faults both stood forth prominently. No one
of the master was multiplied by more characteristic traits
than the of the melancholy fact recorded in the
text is related. Whereas it appears in the course of
the history, he is distinguished by keenness, that can
not be mistaken. It is always the same kind of fear
but often such a shrill man: eager in pursuit, but
sometimes easily turned from his purpose, he was too en-
foldent of a strength which was frequently wasted in
resentment of transient existences. If he was one of the
clear and easy to arouse, engaged, but with difficulty
held, swayed by any current fortune, which receive the in-
fluence, action of the strongest appetites and constantly
bore to a state of feverish feelings.

With such a character, one who is more emancipated of oneself, the acts, and moments of cooler thought were deliberation
away from them till the most palpable tears of relenting.
Cote seems to have been incapable of doing anything with
any thing with indifference. He end with it.

In that, if he did, none left his reason alone. Nor
when such a man with such a mind came to be a fol-

low of Jesus, it is easy to suppose that his charac-
ter would have been displayed in a strong light. As the
it was. On almost all occasions he was vehement, ful-

courageous; the most forward of in the

little band of disciples, quick in becoming someth-
ing in execution. His character was like that of

child in that incident. He was never able to execute.
He was in the last stage of being here, that the divine

of the earnest protestations of fidelity, described as the

(Cote was not going to to that tribunal, that the

even was to be avoided him by all men probably in

of reformation of you). But it seems to have passed

of the fault of his ancient follies, as when in excommunication
with his children, he locked himself in the south

of suffering and was pressing on nearest means, de-

sired to him, "Praise be to Thee, Lord, that they have

that the faith fail not. This was an ap-

of fortuitous column meaning to stand gelded with the der.
fear of the coming temptation. Peter answered
by the suggestion, with his accustomed wantonness and
pride, "I am ready to go with thee both into prison and
death." Doubtless this declaration was sincere, for the moment
he felt that spirit, he would have made him a
triumphant martyr. But his Master knew him bet
ter than he knew himself, casting his glance through
all the springs of his character, he assured him, that
before the cock should crow, he should twice deny
him. It is not recorded that Peter pretended any
contrition to this foreboding; but we may suppose that
he winked on the confidence of his seed, to reap such
a retribution. I deemed this Master perhaps to be indulgent; But Jesus was about to say:
that it should be the cross, and that he should bear
all his tribulations in the cause of his kingdom. The
resignation of his enemies was not exercise, never more
truly.tributes the mockery of a trial only to sustain
the cross, for it was about to happen. There was such
an evident sublimity in the account of these closing
events. The Messias of God, he on whom rested all the full
diversity of a heavenly mission, became a man of defence
for man, human help, there was none. It was not
face to face to meet false, unrelenting, foreboding accusers.
It was at this time, when darkness gathered around him
as God seemed to have withdrawn his arm, it even appeared
to the power of those who could torture, that, instead of lay
ing on the sword, it was then that you would expect the
his disciples crowding around him with distraught exclu
sions, yet their dear companions could not come his life
going with him to death, sharing his last frame and his
humiliation. But no; it is their own accounts, that they
all praised him: "Surely, the true Saviour, and without reproach,
taught in communion of feeling from a single hour in the
very presence of the eye of malice but indestructible
time. Yet Peter, aware of though he was, with his heart,
shuddering, exulted in the multitude to follow Caesar.
He doubted thus, helped to escape相通; but
the disciples of Jesus had ten years watchful care
to remain unknown. Peter was soon discovered; be
to have known them were accusation? Who ever this shall say, when he has once began to quit the path of truth and fidelity, how far he shall go? If everyone will not be reclaimed as was the disciple. He was not lost to the cause of faith of God; he had still the degree of perseverance enough left to open the springs of confidence in his heart, though he had showed a high hand; it was not with cool, but with their de.

With the exactness of many's generosity and
very fond of a word, or instance of human frail-
yty. He is immortal. He was, as wise as honest, as
reasonable as constant, as durable. An honest, a
simple, a worthy, a holy, a pure, a
very wise and a very good man. Was it not even
that you had seen upon Master Harris, so angry
a passion, before a trial, to the condemnation
been? Was it not even that you, as well as they
had deserved him in this kind of soul of

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with being one of the followers of the Apostle James,
assigned as an ambassador. Had you then suspected this
confident of warning, desire to have met this charge?
Would you not suppose that he would not confess in it? that he would proclaim with a firm voice, with
heart. This adherence to his Master? Ahi; he had been
besieged, jealously and firmly standing where he
was. 

The man, after but a few hours before, had declared
that he was ready to go to prison of the most death
for the cause of his Lord, now drawn level, affords as
knows into the mouth, and I know not what this
was. Where in the secrecy of men's generosity and
very fond of a word, or instance of human frail-
yty. He is immortal. He was, as wise as honest, as
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they than the most severe reprobates must have in dreadful arms against them all the bitter resentments of divine wrath iniquity and conscience.

Peter remember the words of the Lord that have had said to him, before the cock crow, thou shalt disown me three times. And he went out and wept bitterly. But there were very happy tears, they were the springs of the broken heart. He whom a servant had touched into the denial of his Lord, became an instrument to the success of his Lord's gospel.

From this sad fall of an eminent servant of the Church, it is evident that all the human heart, several valuable objects of instruction may be drawn. It is a useful example, that stands like a beacon in the moral history of man, to warn us to direct.

We learn from this incident in the life of Peter the folly of presuming too much in the strength of conscience. All mankind have南省 the experience of many who should have anticipated that possible his attachment to his Master might be shaken by the shock of adversity. That to promise was easier than to pass through the fire trial. He had that fond delight of self-esteem, which made him feel as if his fidelity, courage, and integrity, and every charm, might be exposed. He did not see at the prospect of danger in the distance, but also the aid before it, like an uncertain when it was approaching, and though a case equally striking is nowhere else to be found, cause no one since has been thrown amidst so important circumstances, as was Peter, yet enduring pressure then leading on the end to bitter humility, is a most common thing. There is an archive of temptations, which looks directly at the object, without looking at the means by which the object is to be accomplished, so when this temptation arises to moral and religious conduct, it makes men confide too proudly in their own strength and forget the difficulties that must be overcome. This is well said by an old writer, that we see the things we aim at, as they else do among the holy countries; we judge them at the eye's end, because we see not the walk that leads to the enterprise; This is been half time of the man who presumers to accomplish the work of this enterprise. In imagination he leaps over all difficulties.
in this, considering himself as already a conqueror with
the face of the bond with his enemies. He means no
imploring age to Heaven for eminence's guidance, breathes
not the frame, with the feeling of submission present in
the spirit of fixedness. His mind has
never been censured and by the discipline of
humility, in which he goes in such thinking of success.

forgetting that perseverance on the path of
triumph requires quite as much of patient endurance, as success among of the common things
of life. Such an one should look at the acts of the
prophets, and see there a terrible note proclaming,

Who of us, mighty, can promise himself that he
will be able to vanquish the face of temptation? And at
his best in times of change not their triumphing? And
she that, then, has a right, beautifully to promise
like Peter, that he will go with his Lord to prison
to death? that he will submit to all the trials?
given all the contests with the service of Christ?
ne may demand, without waging? I would much
more confide in the final success of that humble,
defendants, broken in heart, that carries the bent to
the throne of grace for strength and victory, than if they
self-sustaining mind, and always promises additional
satisfaction. For man, forward without fear. The best of
men have sometimes been betrayed into acts to achieve
shades their whole lives with importance, yet as acts
defensible to bright entertainments in the bright character
of saints, where lives in general have been models of
holiness. What then can communications with common
attainment, expect? Can they think and be was
pring to confide arrogantly in their own strength, as if
it were deplorable to be low down in humble fidelity
since before you? Or shall it, of one hope to be strong,
we must feel that we are faulty; yet this is the feeling
that will carry us to the fountain of almighty
It is true we should never expect that we will
de everything in any way, for we are brace enough
to do for ourselves. He has given us faculties; and give
that faculty, the height is half, but in the use and
we are not to act as if we were independent of God
as if we had forgotten Him. The aim of the Almighty.
must be implored; for when the hour of temptation comes, it becomes the soul to go with her prayers, to God, to this ally herself to the faith of infinite purity; it carries her to the scene where present objects of fear oppress; in the tranquility of faith in God, she exercises the field of contending trials on her heart for the fight. It is here that she acquires the strength to seek and receive, not on the mercy of her own weakness, but on such with thankful token of the entrance of the morning moon, with beams on it.

2. We have thus far in the history of Christ the changes of the prevailing spirit of persecution, and decided. We have thus far seen the desire to still that agitation, where his controversy had led him to denounce his Lord. After he had deserted Jesus at the moment when he was about to be led to trial and death, there was a feeling of reluctance to be told him that he was doing wrong, and a peremptory order not to undertake this errand. But this feeling was not strong enough to make him return to his Master and confess his defection, or his friend. Yet his heart was still the dread of persecution was still the sentiment of his heart, preserved from the feelings of fluctuation, he did not dare to be bathed in the love of his fellowmen, nor permitted them to turn in his broken heart, among others who were trembling on them. But as the middle course had all the disadvantages of both, without the advantages of either, he threw himself among the crowd, as if at a distance, doubtingly seeking to satisfy his anxiety about Jesus, to escape detection. Consequently, the ridicule of persecution. But this was exactly the path that was more or less brought him into danger. If he had adhered to say with a name and taken by the haunts of the people, he might have given the detection of the course of fidelity, of having seen the crown of martyrdom—of, on the other hand, after deserting him, he had at once another the scene, greatly to his sentence had come. And yet,
this heart, he would have been saved from that shameful scene where he uttered the ungrateful lie. I knew him well. But by this inconstant conduct, he incurred all the dangers and contempt of being a follower of a

orthodox. The credit of being faithful to his cause of the infamous denying his Master was not at all shared even by the multitude's temporary gratification of being unnamed in this occasion of rejoicing. This was no, pray, most strikingly, that there is no tampering with duty. The man who compromises himself, takes a little that is right, a little that is wrong, done that is neither right nor wrong, to make up his account, will almost certainly fall of genuine any valuable object, of the character at the same time he lost his innocence. The case he well conceals with his

stains, not, had he been bold in the straight forward

doctrine, would never have crossed his path of stood up

against him; he will be sure as the turtle is to gather

up a plentiful harvest of pearls, and the barren

of the great compensate for them. You might as well

effect to see a forest bristle, monthly, to float over the

waters, while she is beaten by opposite waves in every direc-
from to stifle his heart or cause it to overflow. "He went out swept by the winds." There was no need of stripping judgments to awaken him; the relapse of his degeneracy was enough to make him into a godly sovran. This is a striking illustration of the truth, that where there exist serious sense of justice & religion, sin can never be kept from men long. For no sense does pass to any soul of compassion to begin to raise the heart, even if it be but in a gentle manner, than the heart is subdued by contriving things itself out in substitute. There is a great difference in the heart of the good man, and though it may be stirred for a moment, cannot be endured by his soul, when it is raised, awakens like a giant, in hustling stream and chains the acts of his enemies. But it is not so with the naked of hardened sinners. There is but little reason to hope that he will have any feeling enough depth to make him from the lethargy of the sleep of death. There is a state of senselessness, an awful stupor, as if he were in the silence of the grave, so that nothing can penetrate for on that can claim. Had Peter been such an one, he would not have gone out broken hearted, of sentiments of the death, but would have fallen on his face, as ineffectually as the moonlight descends on the hardest rock. Here there is a most powerful motive to endure the whole weight of the powers of sin. It is not merely the angle that can endure, as we are to consider. It is rather the influence of the habit of such acts may have on the whole life of the whole moral condition. When you surrender yourself to mean indulgences, it becomes the slave of sin, you not only transgress the laws of your own happiness, but you consistently proceed on the strength of that moral sensibility which brings you back to the ways of virtue; for it becomes every day less honor to that you will wish to return, you will have the dangers of sinking into that state, where all the common means of religious improvement will be an enemy. Your situation will be like that of the man who overcomes a stupifying sense of death lethargy will spread over the soul, where the sleep of death overtakes the body, paralyzing the strength, destroying all help of reanimation. But so long as you preserve the sense of God of duty, fresh hope...
in your hands, I maintain the tenderness of conscience unmarred, though you may be surprised at my artless evidence of my own  contemplation of my wretched exaltation operating in the weakness of nature. There will yet be room to hope, that there is a grace left, for repentance, that like Peter you will be restored to him, return stronger in his virtue than before.

These, truly, are a few of the truths of instruction, that may be drawn from this astonishing event, to the face of Peter. Now, to the Church, a deep stain on the brightness of his character, of which we remind us, that even great, a good man as he is, the fuller of fire, where we to the apostles, sometimes turn our eyes toward the spectacle! One whom we ought not to omit. The fact that the sources historians have recorded so minutely, an incident so disgraceful to one of the most distinguished of the disciples, affords strong evidence of their fairness impartially, excludes them from the charge of being the preaching of their own cause. The import is not easily observed to relate what will not fit his credit, w ill rather sublimate him; and, the sin of this side. While, therefore, our confidence in the sincerity of the apostles is increased by the honesty with which they relate this sad fall of Peter, let us draw useful instructions from it, to know that God gives us strength for our duty and victory through in all our temptations.

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Let us remember that we by our lives may show our love plainly as the girdle by words. Behold here: let them be lashed by being disgrace in the name of cause of their Master by conduct, and we have with the spirit of the Christian. Those who have professed their faith in him, then love to turn to him: to call themselves truly among his followers, should pray to God for strength of spirit, that they may never say by their lives, as the Ap. 2:25, "I acknowledge the man!" And those who believe in the divine authority of the, would do well to consider whether they do not do him, when they refuse to observe the ordinances he has instituted, from time to time turn their backs on the solemn memorial of his dying love.
Other who act of infinite purity, holiness & wisdom, enable us to study they void in the spirit of obedience. From the characters, oh me their fears, many are learn valuable of impressive lessons, take instruction for the guidance of unseen thoughts & virtues. When we see, that the best of parents may be overwhelmed & swallowed by temptation, may fall into the sway of sin, may we learn to be humble & feel our dependence on thy grace of assistance. Enable us, we entreat thee, ever to be faithful to the service of our Saviour, to follow closely in his steps, so as not to be ashamed of this cause. May we be steadfast & immovable.

Give us one treat the strength against all our sensual enemies, of may the weapons of our warfare be our calm, but effective.

At home, Sept. 20, 1824, forenoon.
At Waltham, March 9, 1829, afternoon.
At Cambridge Port, March 17 1822, afternoon.
At East Andover, April 12, 1822, forenoon.
At home, Aug. 24th, 1825, forenoon.