No. 158. —

On the satisfaction of the good man.
Galat. iii. 2... But let every man honor his own work, if then shall he have rejoicing in himself, not in another.

Prov. xxv. 14... "A good man shall be satisfied from himself."

And this, sir, is the best source from which satisfaction can be drawn. Mankind pursue happiness in various false and vicious ways. Yet one of the most remarkable facts in the character of these "frequented means" of felicity, that they all tend to make men into a state of subjection and slavery. It is the good man only, who is independent and free, in the moral sense of those words. They, who build their happiness on this or that, on any thing but the testimony of a good conscience and the strength of an upright heart, have no pledge for its continuance, no security against the ravages of time and circumstances. To be convinced of this, we need but examine some of the foundations on which many rest their expectations of true enjoyment. There is no uncommon thing, for instance, to see people trusting their happiness to the possession of health.
This undoubtly is one of the best of entangled histories, but if we have not a source of clarity, an
envelops of pain cannot mar or destroy that security
have we against accidents, even for a moment. We
are at the mercy of every breath of wind, of every
intestines, of every disease, of every feeling, of every
reason. Your own observations will tell you, that it is one
of the direst of all operations to convert the whole
feeling of the public, on such aspect of the
proceeding decay, the firm and stable state of strength into
the seething movement of decay. Don't let this
who trusts to health for happiness, among dependant
being? - And what shall we say of those, who think
happiness to be found only in health? are called the
good things of life, in the means of ease, in banqueting
establishments, in rich purses for gratification. Men
by the mutt forget, that whatever pleasure these confine
falls by frequent repetition, that the passion of them
is frequently the last man to whom they afford
rest. Besides no one can say, that they are his in
a strict sense, for such is the resolution of middle
things, that tomorrow may see him stripped of these
means of enjoyment left bare, like a tree where
its branches by a storm... And is it not he who trusts to
such a foundation, truly dependent? - Again there
are some deluded enough to fancy that facility
may be found in the pursuit of guilt indulgences,
to pleasure, as well might they attempt happiness
in the artificial thirst of a burning fever, achieved
perhaps only by the hand of death, even the savings
of insanity in our exhausting wearying their victims.
who hopes for enjoyment there is surely a dependant
slave... Once more. some

threaded individuals, among whom he is thrown, I
contend these instances of false sources of happiness, in
order to show upon that those who resort to them are in
evitably brought into a state of dependance; they sell
their moral freedom; instead of standing up in theấu
of their own rights, are compelled to lean on others, and
are every moment becoming more and more under them. Nor it is
impossible for all this, Sages, to say, that the principle
inculcated in the text, comes forth, a “good man shall
be satisfied from himself;” he shall respect to no foreign
and no extrinsic support; the approbation of God
of his own conscience are enough for him. They form
for him a secure endowment, a light that, when with
sitting on the mind, can enter in to alleviate, palliate or
change. He is willing to use, he uses with gratitude,
all the outward blessings of life; but does not ask
of them the whole of their happiness, he can see them
taken away with the firmness of conscience, still feel that
his best blessings are left. Such is he who draws satisfac-
tion from himself; the peaceful satisfaction of
the satisfaction in a time of death have no tears
ah smiles upon the good man here; it gives triumph to
the saint in glory!

It may be made a question, whether the happiness of any
other of the creatures of sense, can be absolutely independent of
circumstances. It is not to be imagined, that the good
man as placed in that state of perfect indifference, where
pain will seem to him to be no evil, he will receive
with equal satisfaction the event of the bitter patterns of life. Eve pears himself in the hour of his distressful
now. It is not to be possible, but this crop pass from me; of
his mate he was to tell in the language of his distressful
eyes, yet this not from one, but from several
he must come, followers in ages have from some
the trials of life had a remedying power, the drawn from
them the same finger, yet this not from me, nor heats of
adulment, nor cases on senses on stock. It is the power
of virtue to conquer, not insusceptibility to the evils of
the world, but superiority over them, not to suffer to
feel, but to place our feelings under the tutelage of
religion. In the good, as well as in the bad man, such
new things that from anguish and from the trial to
him she is satisfied from himself, as well as to others, the
failure of the outward means of engagement into the
and to innocence. Their joy is here, he too, as well as those less
proposed for it, feels the grasp of the hand of death, when it comes, to be something or tears answer some of the dearest tears, with his heart knows. Man cannot have himself beyond the reach of these drawbacks on happiness. If he can, if he could be perfectly free from painful unconcern, he might be entirely contented with earth, I never aspire after the powers over his habitual ties of heaven. When, therefore, we maintain that the good man shall be satisfied of himself, we do not mean, that his enjoyment is wholly beyond the influence of circumstances; but we mean he is independent of them in the sense of the word, that for they have done this work, he has a resource, use they cannot take from him, that they merely affect his outward, his citadel, they cannot touch. They are as clouds, as dust, the light of the morning for a moment is then pass off...

It will be well for us to consider some of the sources of that self-satisfaction, in the good man finds in himself.

1. The first and most obvious source is in the testimony of conscience. "This says an old man," is no evidence, that...
the faithful discharge of duty, in fulfilling up the measure of the station, is Providence has assigned to him, is using all the means of cherishing the spirit of the Gospel, in diffusing around him an influence for improving and strengthening the moral and welfare of society in serving God, in instating his Saviour, in after all the acts and employments, he performs or expresses it, you have to his conscience, that has conscience to God, it tells him of duties performed by the acknowledgment of God for the performance of them. If you do, if the operation of man is the smile of Heaven, for the good, it presents him with a bright and beautiful record of mercies, to deeds, of moral industry, of all the things worth God looks down with complacency; and more than all, it teaches him that this sentence of approbation, once given, is but the herb of fame.

important sentence of approbation is the brighter, upwards above: that the voice of conscience here, is but the preparation for the voice of the Judge hereafter, 'well done, good faithful servant,' enter them into the joy of their Lord.' Can you doubt, whether he...
hands of a being supremely wise & infinitely benevolent. It is well remarked by a discriminating friend, that “duties are ours, events are God’s.” What of pressive burden, says he, is taken off a man’s shoulders, by his privileges of hearing all consequence as well in the path of duty, as joy. He has done with the question—how shall we bear this trouble? how shall I remove this difficulty? how shall I get through this deep water?—but leaves himself in the hands of God. This is the privilege of the good man, the thing a privilege embrases to those, who measure everything by the standard of this own will doing, of narrow views, vain hopes. While the good man feels, that he is in the hands of a being, who knows what is best & will do what is best, the less he care for those things, in others consider to be evils & disfigurements, as nice, as just, or benevolent dispensations. He sees, that health & sickness, joy & sorrow, wealth & indigence, gain & loss, fortunate & unfortunate occurrences & trying disappointments, a succession of painful, of pleasant, of all circumstances, make up the lot of human beings. Yet he believes that this variety is ordained

with the most exquisite skill, the most judicious

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this, he expects that the government of the Heavens will have respect to the whole of the universe, to the whole of time. If he has what are commonly esteemed the means of happiness, plenty, clothes, a fair board, &c., he praise them, and may be justified in doing so; but he has another object of affection, &c., that he may not by prosperity be drawn away into forgetfulness of his finitude & dependence. If a dark cloud is hanging over him, he is compelled to take the position of sinner, if hopes are blasted, &c., &c., then he is compelled to cut down, in the midst of all these, he can still say, I know in whom I have believed, &c., &c., &c., that he is able to help and to bear confessing Christ among the Gentiles, to the great day. Where others see only a dark cloud, he sees a rainbow of peace & hope; for he has learned that his life & faith is equally good or wise in what he gives & what he takes away. That which we consider ends he means for good, & that as the gardener cuts off the branches & dead leaves of trees that they may be healthy & vigorous.

2. One other source of the internal satisfactions of the good man may be briefly mentioned. I mean that the man who regards this life, in whatever he prefers to believe, a future state of existence, &c., &c., practically thinks of it in too many cases, as if it were the whole of our
stone; and hence it is, that we make so much of the
events, not because we are regarding everything, only,
as it affects some advantages in this life. But the
good man has reasoned his mind to the habit of con-
dering one act, duration & condition here below, not as
a circumstance in the whole of our being; he regards
this life but as a parenthesis in the existence of man
as a lodging for the night, where we must abandon to
motions of progress on our journey. And though he en-
compasses it to be immensely important, as a state in the
character is to be formed; or preparation made for better
things; yet he cannot regard the various events with
as if life is chequered: as of any great consequence in
themselves; they will be important solely as they are the
mean of acquiring strength of character. From times
principal, of settling deeper the sense of religious
migrations; as they affect his internal condition; he
will regard them as light & transient; small remem
thought of. His happiness with them remains:
ity. Upon them; than the judicious traveller, who
is hastening to his journey's end, would suffer him
self to be troubled by the common accidents; not be
along the road. What is it to him, whether he be
not allowed to wear a smiling face, or compelled to
the tears of poverty, when he is going to that land of
perpetual joy? Shall a fair young shall flee away? What is it to him
whether this is so that accident happens to him to-day, or
this is that object of joy & comfort is struck away from his
side, when tomorrow or in a few days he is to be placed
one of the scenes of accidents & separations? Surely the
events, so far as he judges, dictates the mass of mankind.
On his estimation, the very height & things with all
he has to do. He regards this life but as the step to some
thing better: & while he is taking this step, he feels little the circumstances around him, except so far
as they aid or retard his ascent.

It may be sufficient, then, thus to have hinted at
some of the sources of that internal satisfaction
with which he affects to belong to the good man. You
see that it is something very different from the mere
confidence of the self-enamoured man, of that it doesn't
feel a moment of pain that we are not dependent
for all the sources of our happiness. It is nothing
else but this; satisfaction, not in his infinite
goodness has annexed to a due considerate, small values.
mind, with he has made all the pleasures of a heart impressed with religion & resigned to God. In this state of self-satisfaction, let us strive only to attain it; if there is no happiness comparable to this, no friend so unwavering, so supporting as this — it is not shaken by the vicissitudes of prosperity & adversity; it goes with us wherever we go, it abides with us, wherever we dwell; an attribute & companion, in society or seclusion. It adds fervor to our devotion, grace to our religious devotions; it enlivens the spirits & family intercourse in the contact of the moral habits, as firm as the earth, as immovable as heaven can be; it is founded in what we are, not on what we possess; i.e. seated in that part of us which can never die... And it is peculiarly a friend in time of need. When the hour of suffering is over, & the prospects of future joys do dawn, when the heart is ready to faint, as it nears the present & future, then the good man who has acquired the power of being satisfied from himself, shall find that they have a heaven of peace, where no ill can and no storms can rage... To be satisfied from himself is the description of the good man here; the state of the mind.