

this power. In expelling from the heart its corrupt affections, it leaves it not an open prey to still baser appetites, but fills it with its first and noblest occupants: and thus restores the moral man to his Maker's image and his Maker's favour. It is thus that the religion of Christ does not oppose, but lends support, to all those high faculties that give its only true elevation to the character of man: in proof of which (were there any doubt of what I am stating), we need only cast our eyes over Christendom, and contrast its glories with the intellectual darkness of every land whereon the light of the Gospel hath not yet shone*.

Finally, to bring this home to ourselves: we are no true children of our Lord and Master—we are no part of his flock—if we honor him not by the outward forms of allegiance he has himself enjoined; if we seek him not by the way he has himself appointed—by acts of public devotion—by the earnest petitions of private prayer, lifted up to him, not only as the giver of all good, but as the giver of that power by which alone we can root out our corrupt affections, and bring into full life the better principles of our nature. Let, then, prayer be the beginning and the end of our studies; and so they will be consecrated to God. In this way, by his blessing, may we persevere unto the end; treading in the steps before trodden by the great and good men, whose names are the precious inheritance of this house.

Feelings of Christian devotion, unlike ordinary movements of the soul, lose not their strength by repetition: and habits of devotion, like all other habits, gain strength by frequent exercise. But if

* See note (F) at the end.