

its pander and slave; but conscience always stands erect and unsubdued, ready to lift her voice in defence of the right, and to rebuke the wrong. Her mouth may, indeed, for a time, be forcibly closed, and her sensibilities blunted, by the hot, searing iron of iniquity; but her internal vitality remains unaffected; and when, at length, her liberty and vigor are restored, her retributions will be terrible.

Now, it is an interesting fact that unperverted conscience is a stern advocate for evangelical religion. Tell an unconverted man that his heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, and his pride and self-sufficiency will resent the charge; but his conscience knows it to be true. Tell him that with such a heart he could not be happy in heaven, and that therefore he must be created anew in Christ Jesus, and his corrupt inclinations will muster a stout defiance against the mortifying truth; yet the faithful inward monitor often compels him to acknowledge its reality. Hence you will often see the strange anomaly of a man confessing his utterly lost condition by nature, and his entire unfitness for heaven without a new heart, and yet so bolstered up by pride and self-sufficiency, that he feels little anxiety, and makes no efficient efforts to change his condition.

Again, in spite of all the struggles of perverted reason, conscience often compels men to acknowledge the justice of the penalty annexed to sin. Sophistry may enable them to make out a very clear demonstration of the inconsistency between divine benevolence and eternal punishment. But conscience compels them to acknowledge that they deserve it. They know that, with such wicked hearts, they could never experience any thing else but punishment; and they are conscious of having done nothing to lay God under obligation to give them a better heart; so that, without his