

1806

Horrid Massacre !! : Sketches of the Life of Captain James Purrinton, who on the Night of the Eighth of July, 1806, Murdered his Wife, Six Children, and Himself : with a Particular Account of that Shocking Catastrophe : to Which are Subjoined, Remarks on the Fatal Tendency of Erroneous Principles, and Motives for Receiving and Obeying the Pure and Salutary Precepts of the Gospel

Peter Edes

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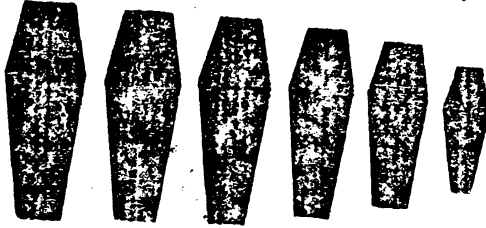
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Recommended Citation

Edes, Peter, "Horrid Massacre !! : Sketches of the Life of Captain James Purrinton, who on the Night of the Eighth of July, 1806, Murdered his Wife, Six Children, and Himself : with a Particular Account of that Shocking Catastrophe : to Which are Subjoined, Remarks on the Fatal Tendency of Erroneous Principles, and Motives for Receiving and Obeying the Pure and Salutary Precepts of the Gospel" (1806). *Maine Bicentennial*. 86.

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Horrid Massacre !!



SKETCHES OF

THE LIFE

CAPTAIN JAMES PURRINTON,

ON THE NIGHT OF THE EIGHTH OF JULY, 1806, MURDERED BY HIS WIFE, SIX CHILDREN, AND HIMSELF,

A particular account of a shocking catastrophe, with a full description of the various circumstances for receiving and observing the various provisions of the government, and

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AUGUSTA, (KENNEBEC)

PRINTED AND SOLD BY PETER EDES.

1806.



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THE
L I F E

OF CAPTAIN JAMES PURRINTON.



JAMES PURRINTON was born in the town of Bowdoinham, on Kennebec river, in the year seventeen hundred and sixty. His father, David Purrinton, was a native of Cape-Cod, and his mother, whose name was Mary Scales, was originally of North-Yarmouth.—When he was twenty years old, he married Betsy Clifford, of Bath, an amiable young woman, and daughter of Benjamin and Anna Clifford, of that place.—He lived by cultivating the soil, and by a long course of industry and frugality, with a handsome patrimony from his father, at the time of his death he was a rich and independent farmer. His habits were steady and correct, and so truly domestic, that no trait worthy of remark is found in his character, during his residence in the town of Bowdoinham.—He had the confidence of his townsmen, and for several years commanded the company of militia in that town. He there had twelve

children, four of them died in infancy, and the remaining eight were doomed to feel the vengeance of a deluded father. (a) Purrinton was of the middle size, rather dark complexion, grave countenance, and reserved in company; it has also been remarked of him, that he never looked the person in the face he was addressing. He was obstinately tenacious of his opinion, and it was very difficult to convince him he was in an error.—He has frequently, however, voluntarily changed his religious sentiments; and he died a firm and decided believer in the doctrine of universal salvation. When surrounded by his family, he has been often heard to express his fond anticipations of the moment when they would all be happy; and has sometimes added, how greatly it would enhance his happiness if they could all die at once. His attachment to his wife and children was uniformly tender and affectionate; and he was an obliging neighbor. It is said by those who knew him best, that he was easily elated or depressed, as his affairs were prosperous or adverse. He was also not a little avaricious, and therefore a diminution of his property or prospects, was a disappointment he seemed to want fortitude to support. In August, 1805, he removed with his family to Augusta, and settled on a new farm about one mile and an half above the village. By his unremitting attention and industry, he was rapidly improving his estate, and was apparently contented and happy, until within a few weeks before his death. The uncommon drought seemed greatly to depress him, and often in conversation with his neighbors, he expressed his apprehensions, that his family would suffer for want of bread—that his crops would be cut off—that his cattle would starve—and that he dreaded the consequences. Such

(a) See Note 1.

is the history of this singular man, and the foregoing is all that can be collected concerning him, until the fatal night in which he murdered his wife, six children, and himself.

Between the hours of two and three, on the morning of the ninth of July, Mr. Dean Wyman, a near neighbor of Capt. Purrinton, was awakened by James Purrinton, the eldest son, who in an alarming and incoherent manner, related the horrid scene from which he had fled; they immediately called on Mr. Jonathan Ballard, another neighbor, and with him instantly repaired to the fatal spot, and here, after having lighted a candle, a scene was presented which defies the power of language, and beggars all description.—In the outer room lay prostrate on his face and weltering in his gore, the perpetrator of the dreadful deed; his throat cut in the most shocking manner, and the bloody razor lying on a table by his side—In an adjoining bed-room lay Mrs. Purrinton* in her bed, her head almost severed from her body; and near her on the floor, a little daughter about ten years old, who probably hearing the cries of distress, alarmed and terrified, ran to her mother for relief, and was murdered by her bedside.—In another apartment was found in one bed, the two oldest and youngest daughters; the first most dreadfully butchered; the second desperately wounded, and reclining her head on the body of the dead infant, and in a state of indelible horror and almost total insensibility—In the room with the father, lay in bed with their throats cut, the two youngest sons—And in another room was found on the hearth, most dreadfully mangled, the second son; he had fallen with his trowsers under one arm, with which he had at-

* It is said she was pregnant.

tempted to escape—On the breastwork over the fireplace, was the distinct impression of a bloody hand, where the unhappy victim had probably supported himself before he fell. The whole house seemed covered with blood, and near the body of the murderer lay the deadly axe. From the appearance of the wounds generally, it seems to have been the design of Purrinton to dismember the heads from the bodies, excepting the two youngest sons and the infant, whose throats, it is supposed, were cut with a razor. The oldest daughter and second son received many wounds in various parts of the body, which were probably caused by their resistance. The son who escaped says, he was awakened by the distressing and piercing cries of his mother, and involuntarily shrieking himself, leapt from his bed and ran towards the door of his apartment; here he was met by his father with an axe in his hand, (the moon shone bright) who struck him, but he was so near him, that the axe passed over his shoulder, and one corner of it entered his back, making a slight wound; his father then struck at him once or twice and missed him; at this moment the younger brother, who slept in the same bed with him, jumped from it, and attempted to get out at the door; to prevent this, the father immediately attacked him, and the eldest then escaped thro' a back door. During this dreadful conflict not a word was uttered. The whole conduct of Purrinton during the last and bloody scene of his life, seems marked with coolness and deliberation.—Towards the close of the day preceding his death, he ground the fatal axe, and when the family retired to bed, he was left reading the Bible. (b) The surviving daughter, whose wounds were desperate, and whose recovery is yet doubtful, furnishes

(b) See Note 2.

the following facts—That she was awakened by the blows on her sister, which extremely terrified her, and she instantly endeavored to shield her head with the bed clothes, and immediately after received a blow on the side of her head ; winding up herself still more in the bed clothes, and turning her head, she received another blow on the back of it, which was followed by a third on the arm.* Her father then left her, though at this time she did not know, or suspect who it was. She remembers laying her head over the edge of the bed, and hearing (to use her own expression) the blood run like a brook upon the floor—that she felt the blood from her sister's wounds, and was convinced she was dead ; and that she scarcely dare breathe for fear that she should be killed. She recollects nothing more, till she heard the voices of Messrs. Ballard and Wyman ; these she recognized, and on Mr. Ballard's approaching her, exclaimed, " Glory to God !" and added, " Do kill me again."

On the Sunday before the murder, while Mrs. Purrinton and the eldest daughter were gone to meeting, the surviving daughter observed her father writing a letter (c) and perceiving he had been overlooked, he endeavored to conceal it ; she asked him what he was writing, he replied nothing, and immediately asked for his butcher knife, and said he wanted to sharpen it ; it was procured for him, and after having made it very sharp, he stood before the looking glass, and with his left hand seemed to be preparing his throat for the knife : his daughter, extremely terrified, cried out, " Dada what are you doing?" He calmly replied, nothing, and then laid

* On examining the bed clothes, they are found cut through in many places, so as perfectly to corroborate this account.

(c) See Note 3.

the knife away.—This extraordinary conduct was reported to the mother on her return, and gave her the most alarming apprehensions. She searched for the letter, and found it among his papers on Monday; and on perusing it, she was convinced some rash act was in contemplation; its contents were truly alarming—and she became inconsolable. At the usual hour of dinner she was missing; after some enquiry, her husband found her in the barn, sitting and weeping.—She disclosed to him the cause of her grief, and acquainted him with the discovery she had made.—He endeavored to console her, with the most positive assurances that he had no intention of committing suicide; but at the same time told her he had a presentiment, that his death was near—Still she was inconsolable! she was wretched! and it is highly probable, that from this moment, he changed his original plan. After having written the letter and prepared his knife, it is conjectured he intended committing suicide; but the expression of terror and alarm from his daughter, disarmed him. Finding himself discovered, and his intentions suspected by his wife and family, and seeing their distress, and anticipating how poignant it would be on his death, he no doubt determined to take them all with himself; believing they would thus lose their sorrows, suffer but a momentary pang, and be with him eternally happy.—

“ Destruction full of transport! Lo, I come,
 “ Swift on the wing, to meet my certain doom,
 “ I plunge triumphant my devoted head,
 “ And doat on death, as a luxurious bed.”

A jury of inquest was summoned, who brought him in guilty of murder on his wife and six children, and that he feloniously killed himself. (*d*) After the

(*d*) See Note 4.

jury had retired, the selectmen took the charge of the bodies, and in the evening they were conveyed to the meeting-house. Mrs. Purrinton and her children were placed in the body of the house; Capt. Purrinton in the porch—On the day following, their funeral rites were performed, attended by an immense concourse of people. The procession was very numerous and respectable. The corpse of Mrs. Purrinton and her children, supported by bearers, and attended by pall-holders, was preceded by the Coroner and Inquest, and followed by the surviving son and other relations, with various classes of citizens, properly arranged—a cart, bearing the body of Capt. Purrinton, with the bloody axe and razor on the coffin, closed the procession. The bodies of Mrs. Purrinton and children, were interred in the common burying ground; Capt. Purrinton in the highway adjoining the same—and with him were also buried the instruments of his cruelty—the fatal axe and razor.

NOTES.

NOTE 1.

Mrs. Purrinton,	45 years old,	killed.
Polly Purrinton,	19	killed.
James Purrinton,	17	escaped with a slight wound.
Martha Purrinton,	15	desperately wounded.
Benjamin Purrinton,	12	killed.
Anna Purrinton,	10	killed.
Nathaniel Purrinton,	8	killed.
Nathan Purrinton,	6	killed.
Louifa Purrinton,	18 months,	killed.

NOTE 2.

The Bible was found open on the table, at the ninth chapter of Ezekiel. By recurring to this chapter, it will be seen how

strangely its true meaning must have been perverted, to influence the conduct of Purrinton.

NOTE 3.

LETTER FROM CAPT. PURRINTON TO HIS BROTHER.

Augusta, July, 1806.

DEAR BROTHER,

These lines is to let you know that I am going a long journey, and I would have you sell what I have, and put it out to interest, and put out my boys to trades, or send them to sea.

I cannot see the distress of my family—God only knows my distress.—I would have you put Nathaniel to uncle Purrinton, to a tanner's trade—I want James to go to school, until sufficient to attend in a store—Benjamin to a blacksmith's trade, or to what you think best—But to be sure to give them learning, if it takes all—Divide what is left, for I am no more.

Copr.

JAMES PURRINTON.

NOTE 4.

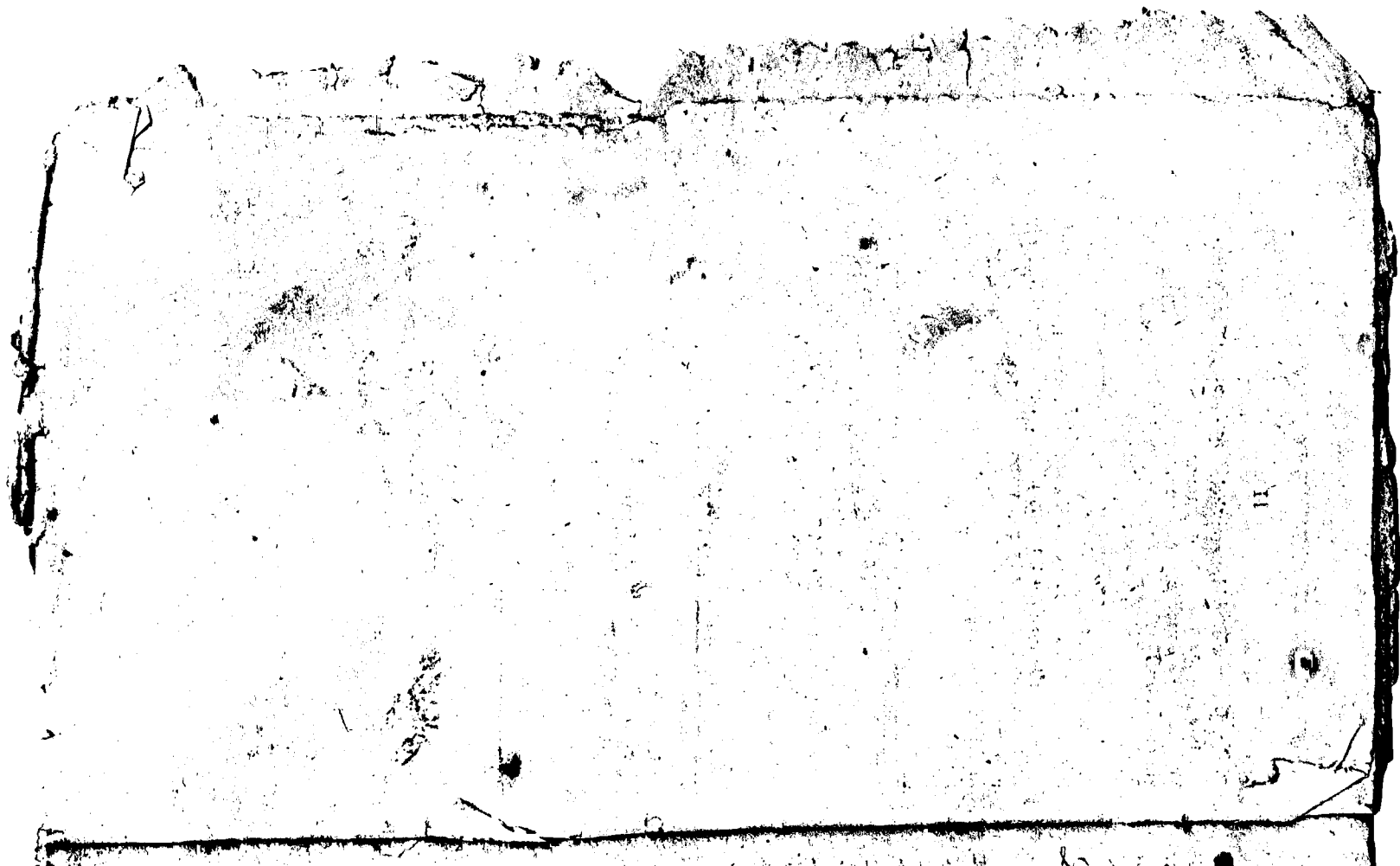
THE VERDICT OF THE JURY OF INQUEST.

Kennebec, ff. An Inquisition taken at Augusta, within the said county of Kennebec, the ninth day of July, in the year of our Lord 1806: Before Elias Craig, gentleman, one of the coroners of the said county of Kennebec, upon the view of the bodies of James Purrinton, Betsy Purrinton, Polly Purrinton, Benjamin Purrinton, Anna Purrinton, Nathaniel Purrinton, Nathan Purrinton and Louisa Purrinton, there lying dead; by the oaths of John Eveleth, merchant; Ezekiel Page, yeoman; Theophilus Hamlen, merchant; James Child, yeoman; Kendal Nichols, inn-keeper; Shubael Pitts, merchant; Caleb Heath, merchant; Frederic Wingate, watch-maker; Jonathan Perkins, merchant; Oliver Pollard, inn-keeper; Samuel Bond, merchant; and Ephraim Ballard, jun. houghwright; good and lawful men; who being charged and sworn to enquire for the commonwealth, when, how, and by what means the said James, Betsy, Polly, Benjamin, Anna, Nathaniel, Nathan and Louisa, came to their death; upon their oaths do say, that the said James Purrinton, with an axe, the heads, necks, and various parts of the bodies of the said Betsy, Polly, Benjamin, Anna, and Nathaniel, did strike, cut, and inflict many grievous and mortal wounds, by means whereof they all died. And the jurors aforesaid on their oaths aforesaid, do further say, that the said James Purrinton, with an axe or razor, with which to the jurors unknown, the necks of the said Nathan and Louisa, did strike, cut, and mortally wound, by means whereof they also died.—And

so the Jurors aforesaid, upon their oaths aforesaid do say, that the said James Purrinton, in manner and form aforesaid, then and there of his malice aforethought, them, the said Betfy Purrinton, Polly Purrinton, Benjamin Purrinton, Anna Purrinton, Nathaniel Purrinton, Nathan Purrinton, and Louisa Purrinton, did kill and murder, against the peace and dignity of this commonwealth, and the laws of the same. And the jurors aforesaid, upon their oaths aforesaid, do further say, that the said James Purrinton, with a razor, himself across the throat did strike, cut, and inflict a mortal wound, by reason whereof he also died:—And so the jurors aforesaid, thus upon their oaths aforesaid do say, that the said James Purrinton, in manner and form aforesaid, then and there voluntarily and feloniously, as a felon of himself, did kill and murder himself, against the peace of the commonwealth, and the dignity of the same.

In witness whereof, the said coroner and jurors to this inquisition have set their hands and seals, the day and year aforesaid.

ELIAS CRAIG, <i>Coroner.</i>	(L. S.)
JOHN EVELETH, <i>Foreman.</i>	(L. S.)
THEOPHILUS HAMLEN,	(L. S.)
JAMES CHILD,	(L. S.)
KENDAL NICHOLS,	(L. S.)
SHUBAEL PITTS,	(L. S.)
CALEB HEATH,	(L. S.)
FREDERIC WINGATE,	(L. S.)
JONATHAN PERKINS,	(L. S.)
OLIVER POLLARD,	(L. S.)
SAMUEL BOND,	(L. S.)
EZEKIEL PAGE,	(L. S.)
EPHRAIM BALLARD, jr.	(L. S.)



REMARKS.

By Cliphurst Gold

Stallwell

A RECURRENCE to the preceding Life, brings to one's mind Paul's request to the church at Thessalonica: "Pray for us, that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith." Unbelief in the superintending providence of God, and human accountability, is a principle which opens the door to every vice. It is an inlet to those evils which mar our happiness in the present life, and blast our hopes in the future. It breaks down every barrier, erected for our preservation and peace, and, like an overwhelming torrent, sweeps away, in its course, every vestige of religion and morality, and all the felicities of social life. The noble faculties of the soul are perverted, and man is reduced to a state of brutal degradation. With contemptuous indifference, he tramples on the laws of his God, and sets heaven at defiance; with cool calculation, or premeditated malice, he invades the rights of his fellowmen, oppresses or defrauds; and when passion or phrenzy dictate, lifts a remorseless hand against their lives, or his own.

Urge him to the practice of moral duties from the beauty of virtue or the fitness of things; attempt to dissuade him from vice by pointing out the deformity of its nature and tracing its evil effects;

B

warn him from the path of iniquity by a judgment to come, a day of awful retribution ;—He hears you with stoic insensibility, with affected pity for your credulity, or glories in his shame. He answers all your admonitions, like a true disciple of the grand deceiver ; “YE SHALL NOT SURELY DIE ; YE SHALL BE AS GODS.”

The nature of this principle is opposed to all salutary restraint. According to the divine economy, reason and revelation are given us for the government of our passions, and for the guide of our conduct in life. But this sentiment permits one to follow his inclinations, however absurd ; heedlessly to pursue the path of pleasure, without any feeling of present remorse, or fear of a future judgment. All denunciations of divine wrath in the scriptures, and all human regulations, designed for the suppression and punishment of vice, are considered as arbitrary abridgments of our liberty, as unwarrantable restrictions upon the conscience and conduct of men. It is, in one word, invading the divine prerogative—denying his right to interfere in the concerns of the world, in finally chastising the rebellious. Thus the divine government is prostrated, and our enjoyments, liberties and lives exposed to the ruthless invader.

This principle, which from its nature, is a war with a superintending providence, and undermining the foundation of human virtue and safety, is, in its influence, very extensive. It does not simply embrace one course of gross wickedness, but its name is “ Legion.” It is the source of a thousand errors in sentiment and practice, which, in various ways, hasten the period, and accumulate the load of human miseries.

Except total derangement of mind, there are but three sources, it is conceived, from which, conduct,

like that recorded in the preceding pages, could proceed.

Religious fanaticism,
Violence of passion, and
Systematic calculation upon erroneous principles.

Religious fanaticism has sometimes hurried the subjects of it to deeds of horror. Leaving the word of God, as a rule of life, or fixing upon and misapplying some detached passages, they are actuated by the impulse of the moment, and become dangerous to themselves and to others. Heated in their affections, their views are wild and incoherent, and their course of life marked always with folly, and sometimes with blood. We call this *religious* fanaticism, not because it partakes of the nature, or is necessarily connected with true religion, but because, in this situation, there are often high pretensions, much warmth of imagination, and blind zeal.

Religion is not accountable for the perversions of it; though from this consideration, many, opposed to the purity of its precepts, have endeavored to bring it into contempt. They have laid to its charge all the wild projects that have been conceived, and all the atrocious deeds that have been perpetrated, under cover of its name. They would therefore discard it, as a nuisance. The best objects could not stand the test of this exterminating principle. The life of the world depends upon the cheering and invigorating rays of the sun. Must it be put out, because some weak heads and disordered eyes are affected by its shining? "Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun." Religion is like the pillar of a cloud in the wilderness; which was light to the Israelites, and darkness to the Egyptians. *Improved*, it is the favor of life

unto life ; *perverted*, the favor of death unto death. The importance of its nature requires that it be studied with sincerity and diligence, and its instructions applied with wisdom and judgment. It will then prove an enlargement to the mind, be a source of benevolence in the heart, and display itself in the regularity and usefulness of life.

Violence of passion also, whether of envy, malice, or revenge, has not unfrequently issued in scenes derogatory to our rational nature, and destructive to the fairest parts of God's creation. In this tempest of the soul, the voice of reason is not heard. Impetuously driven, man is no longer the subject of reflection ; and possessing a thirst, which nothing but blood can satiate, he takes an inhuman delight in the devastations of his iniquitous course. Though three individual sources of outrage and iniquity have been mentioned, yet it is not to be understood that they are always distinct in their nature, or disconnected in their operation and influence. Streams from different sources may form a confluence ; and thereby increase their power and accelerate their progress. Much of the violence of passion is often mixed with fanaticism, which makes it more tremendous in its nature and more fatal in its effects. And a tincture of both these frequently displays itself in deeds of horror, which are the result of systematic calculation upon erroneous principles.

Many have contended that it is of little importance what a man believes. What have speculative opinions to do with the practical duties of life ? Paul judged very differently. " Shun profane and vain babblings, for they will increase unto more ungodliness ; and their word will eat as doth a canker." Destructive errors cannot flow from a pure source. Every sentiment which has a tendency to lead one to cast off fear and to restrain prayer before

God, which covers or palliates human guilt, and which fosters the sensual passions, and relaxes the morals of mankind, originates in our apostasy. The natural heart is a soil in which errors flourish. Mankind "being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their hearts," are open to delusion. They are induced to adopt errors in self-defence. Unable to vindicate their conduct, they must deny their accountability. Unprepared for a future judgment, they must disbelieve it.

The sinner, while his principles are correct, is like a lion chained, comparatively harmless: but when his principles are perverted, he commits iniquity, not only without remorse, but "with greediness." Where there is a disbelief of a judgment to come, or a denial of a retribution, where the impenitent shall receive the due reward of his deeds, there is no motive left sufficient to restrain the wicked from the grossest enormities. Will conscience interpose? Take away a future judgment, and it is silenced. Believe that God makes no distinction between the righteous and the wicked, and conscience will no longer do it. Will a natural desire for happiness, and the feelings of humanity, insure uniformity of life? Alas! Happiness is often sought by very delusive means. And erroneous principles prevail against the tenderest feelings of nature. They steel the heart and nerve the arm for actions almost too great for malice and revenge.

From which of the three sources mentioned, the preceding catastrophe originated, will hardly admit of doubt. *Religious enthusiasm* was not a prominent trait in his character. There appeared no tincture of it, except what may always be supposed to attach itself to infidelity. And he was apparently free

from the *violence of passion*. In a plan, the prosecution of which seemed to demand the combined force of phrenzy and vengeance, there are marks of the utmost coolness and deliberation. It was projected, entered upon, and executed, with undeviating perseverance: *a systematic calculation from erroneous principles.*

It admonishes us against the first departure from the truth. Renouncing the *peculiar doctrines* of the gospel naturally leads to the disbelief of future punishment. This paves the way for the renunciation of human accountability; from which the descent is easy to Fatalism, to the mortality of the soul, and even to the denial of the being of a God.* And we need not think strange, if the vices of the life keep pace with the encroachments of error upon the mind. The gradual and increasing dominion of infidelity, threatens more lasting evils than the occasional outrages of passion, the momentary effusions of unbridled anger. In the latter case there is hope, when one has time to come to himself. But in the former case, he is like a slave bound to his task. Time, instead of remedying the evil, only makes fast his fetters and rivets his chains. Etna, in its eruptions, is not so much to be dreaded from the first tremendous explosion, as from the long sterility to which the soil is condemned, where its lava is spread.

There is no security, but in a firm and unshaken belief of the precepts of the gospel, which are pure

* The following quotation is an extract of a letter from a respectable gentleman in Bowdoinham. "About twenty years ago, he (Capt. P.) joined the [Calvanistic] Baptist Church in Bowdoinham, and continued in their fellowship several years; till he imbibed the sentiments of the Freewill Baptists; for which he was cut off from the church. He was not a Universalist till some years since. I have conversed with several of his former neighbors, who unanimously testify that he was a Fatalist."

in their nature, and salutary in their effects. To reject the Bible, stifle the whispers of conscience and "grieve the Holy Spirit," exposes one to the judicial blindness, mentioned by an apostle. "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned, who believed not the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

The Bible has sufficient excellence to demand and fix your attention. It enjoins all those duties which render life comfortable, society peaceful, and eternity glorious. It inculcates a reverential fear of God, and due benevolence to men. It tranquilizes the mind. It leads one to "seek those things which make for peace;" and where its precepts are universally obeyed, universal harmony will prevail. It is irreligion that has raised the voice of war, and rolled garments in blood—caused the widow's tears and made children fatherless. Establishing infidelity threatens the destruction of social enjoyment. It hastens the dying moments of practical virtue. It lays the axe at the root of that tree, upon which grow all our present joys, and which promises to flourish in eternal verdure. It buries all human hopes. Hope cannot be built upon things beneath the sun, or if built, cannot stand. Let loose the reins, and suffer passion to run herself out of breath in chase of sensual delight, possess the fearless impiety of a Paine and the unrestrained licentiousness of a Godwin, and your career would terminate in the fallacious glory of a Cæsar. What Brutus said falsely of virtue might with awful pertinency be applied to infidelity—"Thou art but an empty name."

To enjoy the benefit of the scriptures you must be "rooted and grounded in the truth." Not "driven about by every wind of doctrine," but, like the oak of the forest, firm and unshaken, amidst the

storms and tempests. How were the primitive christians fortified by such a principle, to withstand and overcome the most forcible and the most formidable opposition. The bigotry of the Jews, the sword of the Gentiles, the learning of the wise, the persuasion of the eloquent and the force of the powerful, were alike exerted, and alike ineffectual, in crushing them. Religious principle also gives energy and enterprize to a character. What feats of magnanimity and virtue are recorded of the disciples and followers of our Lord! But to what records shall we appeal for the traits of moral greatness, exhibited by unbelievers? Not that they are to be accused of inactivity. They sometimes perform exploits that fill the world with their fame—exploits of a different kind indeed from those of the sincere christian, but of imperishable memory and disastrous lustre.*

As the Bible is important, so its precepts should be early instilled. It contains milk for babes, as well as strong meat for those of mature age. They should be taught that "the eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good;" and exhorted to contemplate upon the divine character with the utmost reverence, and to pursue their duty with the strictest integrity. Nothing will be more likely to call forth the powers of the mind, than a knowledge of its nature and destination. If you would expect actions worthy of their riper years, discover, at an early period, the awful and glorious rewards of eternity. If youth is spent in idleness or dissipation, grey hairs will not be a crown of glory, but a monument of folly. To render probable the fabulous feats of a Hercules, destroying giants, when

* *Edwards on Infidelity.*

in a state of manhood, the heathens represent him, while an infant, as strangling the serpent in his cradle.

The precepts of religion early imbibed, will be a powerful restraint upon the wayward dispositions of the heart, when persons are called into the scenes of active life, and surrounded with the delusive allurements of the world. But some choose to let them follow nature, and leave it to the future exercise of reason to check their irregularities and reform their lives. Will reason induce those to do well, who have become *accustomed* to do evil? Yes, "when the Ethiopian changes his skin and the Leopard his spots."

Is it not easier to give a right direction to a current, than to stop it, in the violence of its progress? Is it not easier to prevent, than to remove an inundation of evils? for, though reason may decide in favor of the purity of the gospel, the evil bent of the natural heart and a course of open vice may find or make formidable objections to it. Opposition to revealed religion does not find its origin in any inconsistency of scripture doctrines, or impracticability and deleterious effects of scripture precepts, but in the blindness, obstinacy and vice of human nature. It is recorded of the Earl of Rochester, after he had become a convert to christianity, that, laying his hand on the Bible, he would say, "This is true philosophy. It is language that speaks to the heart. There can be no objection to this book, but a bad life."

But whatever objections may be made, and whatever vices obstinately practised: though "fools may make a mock at sin," and bless themselves in their safety, it shall never cover their folly, nor avert their danger. The day of judgment will shew that "he that walketh uprightly walketh surely:" and that "the wages of sin is death." The "Lamb of God"

will become the "Lion of the tribe of Judah." He will "cast abroad the rage of his wrath, and behold every one that is proud and abase him." The wicked will be "destroyed by the breath of his mouth and the brightness of his coming." They shall "go away into everlasting punishment."

There shall be "weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth." "Their feet now "stand on slippery places, and they shall slide in due time."

Sinner, wouldst thou escape the wrath to come? wouldst thou avoid the bitter reflection, "How have I hated instruction, and despised reproof?" Bow to the will of God—believe in the adorable Saviour—study and obey the holy scriptures, and trust not to the delusive opinion, the suggestion of Satan, that the Supreme Judge will falsify his own declaration, and that "the righteous shall be as the wicked"—that those on the left hand as well as those on the right, shall all be included in that merciful sentence, "Come ye blessed of my Father."

"They that go down into the pit cannot hope for the truth." "The hope of the hypocrite shall perish and his trust be as a spider's web." For God has said, and he will accomplish it, "JUDGMENT WILL I LAY TO THE LINE AND RIGHTEOUSNESS TO THE PLUMMET, AND THE HAIL SHALL SWEEP AWAY THE REFUGE OF LIES, AND THE WATERS SHALL OVERFLOW THE HIDING PLACE."

FINIS.

P. S. While this pamphlet was in press, and after the first part was struck off, Martha Purrinton died—July 30th.



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