

THE
SOUTHERN PREACHER :

A COLLECTION
OF
SERMONS,

FROM THE
MANUSCRIPTS OF SEVERAL EMINENT MINISTERS OF THE GOSPEL,
RESIDING IN THE SOUTHERN STATES.

CAREFULLY SELECTED FROM THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPTS, WITH THE CONSENT AND
APPROBATION OF THEIR RESPECTIVE AUTHORS.

TOGETHER WITH

A FEW POSTHUMOUS SERMONS,

FROM THE
MANUSCRIPTS OF EMINENT DECEASED MINISTERS,
Who, when living, had resided in the Southern States.

CAREFULLY SELECTED FROM THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPTS,
WITH THE CONSENT AND APPROBATION OF THOSE IN WHOSE POSSESSION THEY WERE
FOUND.

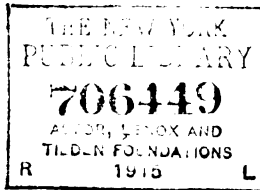
BY THE REV. COLIN M'IVER.

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, } DISTRICT OF CAPE-FEAR,
NORTH CAROLINA DISTRICT. } *To wit :*

BE IT REMEMBERED, that, on the 7th day of March, in the forty-eighth year of the Independence of the United States of America, A. D. 1823, the Rev. Colin M'Iver, of the said District, has deposited in this office, the title of a Book, the right whereof he claims as Proprietor, in the words following, viz :—

“The Southern Preacher: a collection of Sermons, from the Manuscripts of several eminent Ministers of the Gospel, residing in the Southern States. Carefully selected from the Original Manuscripts, with the consent and approbation of their respective authors. Together with a few Posthumous Sermons from the Manuscripts of eminent deceased Ministers, who, when living, had resided in the Southern States. Carefully selected from the Original Manuscripts, with the consent and approbation of those in whose possession they were found. By the Reverend Colin M'Iver.”

In conformity to the Act of the Congress of the United States, entitled, “An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned;” and also to an act entitled “An act, supplementary to an act, entitled an act, for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned, and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching. Historical and other prints.” Witness Carleton Walker, Clerk of the District of Cape-Fear.

CARLETON WALKER.

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SERMON VII.*

ON THE DOCTRINE OF A PARTICULAR PROVIDENCE.

PSALM XCVII. 1.

“The Lord reigneth, let the Earth rejoice.”

THE belief of a Supreme and intelligent Being, as the Creator of the world, has been universally entertained. This truth is demonstrated by the works of creation. When we contemplate the firmament and all its starry hosts, or survey the earth and gaze on that rich attire with which its surface is clad; when we attend to the perfect adaptation of each part, for the promotion of the general end of the whole system, or inspect the wisdom which appears in the organization, both of animate and inanimate nature; when we listen to the roaring storm, behold the glittering lightning, and look on the billows of the ocean; when we turn to the consideration of ourselves, and watch the operations of our own minds; when we examine the structure of our bodies, and see how fearfully and wonderfully they are made—we are convinced of the existence of God, and also that he is a Being of infinite wisdom, power, and goodness. The Deity is seen in every object around us. Creation exhibits in every direction, evidence, which reason is unable to resist, that there is a God, whose tender mercies are

* Delivered on Thursday, Nov. 7th, 1822, being a day set apart, by the Civil Authority, for public Thanksgiving, Humiliation, and Prayer.

over all his works. God spake ; and from chaos creation arose. At his voice, the Heavenly orbs appeared, and this ponderous globe, on which we dwell, was formed. He said, "let there be light, and there was light." In the space of six days he erected the magnificent temple of the universe, and furnished it with that varied order of beings which we behold. In this temple he placed man, made in his own likeness, who, as the priest of nature, should declare in still more exalted strains than the other works of his hand, his glory and goodness. But after having created the world, and placed man in it, did the Almighty withdraw from the work of his hands, and leave this stupendous machinery with all its complicated parts to continue in motion, from that impetus which he at first impressed on it ? And is the divinity now shrouded in the eternity of his nature, to be regarded only as the spectator of those changes which take place in the inanimate parts of his works ; and also of that happiness and misery, which the being whom he has made after his own image, daily experiences ? Against a supposition so cheerless as this, the sympathies of our nature revolt, the voice of reason pleads, and the declarations of Holy Writ stand opposed. No : "The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice."

The importance of the declaration here made, we have now assembled, agreeably to the wise and judicious regulation of the council of our city, to consider. The doctrine of the text is one which every event in the history of our lives is calculated to teach us ; for in "him we live, and move, and have our being." But there are seasons, in which we have experienced, in a peculiar manner, the displays of Almighty goodness and mercy, that imperiously call for public expressions of gratitude. Calamities have been experienced, from the annihilating effects of which we have been preserved by the interpo-

sition of God, that not only justify, but urgently demand those grateful returns, humiliating acknowledgments, and prayerful desires, which we have assembled this day to express, and render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards us. Such is the present season.

In discoursing further from the words of our text, we shall, in the first place, endeavour to establish the doctrine of a Particular Providence. Secondly, we shall enumerate some of those consolations which the belief of this doctrine imparts; and in the last place, we shall make such an application of the remarks, offered, as the object of the present meeting requires.

In the *first* place, let us endeavour to establish the doctrine of a Particular Providence. "The Lord reigneth." This truth has been denied, and by many who profess the Christian religion. The system of a General Providence has been set up in opposition to the one which we are now to consider, viz. the immediate agency of the Divine Being, in the production of every event in the world. In illustration of the truth of the text, let us, in the first place, examine the system of a General Providence.

The belief of those who reject the doctrine of a Particular Providence, but yet maintain the system of a General Providence, is this: that when God created the world, he infused into every department of it certain energies, or principles, or powers, which were of themselves sufficient, after the original impetus impressed by the Almighty on universal nature, to produce all those changes which we see; and regulate the movements of the world: or, in other words, the advocates of this system, compare the world to an ingenious piece of mechanism, which is made up of various parts, but the regular exercise of all, necessary to the accomplishment of the final end designed. Now, as the constant interposition

of the human artist is not required after the machine has been set in motion, so neither, say the supporters of the doctrine against which we contend, does the machinery of the world, stand in need of the unremitted agency of that infinite Being who made it.

The Divine Architect is supposed, from the very beginning, to have withdrawn from the government of the world, and to have left the performance of the revolutions which we behold, to the laws which he enacted. Such is a brief view of the system of a General Providence. Now we maintain with those who have defended the doctrine of our text, and to whom we are indebted for the leading ideas on this division of our discourse, that this view is fallacious, inasmuch as it does not accomplish the end for which it was introduced, viz. to exclude from the mind the idea of the present agency of the Divine Being. In the first place, this mode of reasoning is drawn from analogy, and therefore objectionable. Analogical arguments can only be consistently used, when the object in view is the establishment of facts; but they are inadmissible for supporting abstract truth. But secondly, I would ask what are those general laws, which, it is asserted, 'exclude the interposition of the Divine Being? Can it be pretended that these laws are self-active beings, or that they are any other than immediate determinations of the infinite will? Is not the system of general laws, but an exhibition of the mind of the Omnipotent? Can these laws reflect, contrive, and execute? Does not every operation of a law imply an agent? Unless we consider the laws of nature in this point of view, they are but unintelligible, and their terms unmeaning. If it be admitted, then, that the world be governed by general laws; and also, that these laws are but the pleasure of the Sovereign Mind, the doctrine of our text is established; for agreeably to the remarks made, in what-

ever place these laws operate, there does God operate. The operation of these laws is universal. The agency of the Divine Being is therefore universal. Thus, in the system of a General Providence, as it has been stated, is contained the doctrine of a Particular Providence.

But *secondly*—The doctrine of a Particular Providence will appear, if we consider the omnipresence of God. This perfection of the Deity, must be admitted by every reflecting mind. We see the Divinity in every object around us. We behold him in those successive changes which occur on this globe ; in the growth of every blade of grass, and in that variety of colour which the earth's surface presents. We view him in the revolutions of the celestial orbs, and in the splendour of those celestial lights, which rule by day and by night. His presence is felt in the gloom of Winter, the ethereal mildness of Spring, the genial warmth of Summer, and the decay which marks Autumn. He appears about us in the roaring storm, the glittering lightning, and the angry sky. His presence is also experienced by us, in those moral changes through which we pass, in our intellectual reflections, and in our pious meditations. But is God thus every where present, and yet will it be affirmed that he does not exercise an instant agency in the production of every event ? That the general laws, already considered, account in a satisfactory manner for the production of these changes ; and therefore exclude his immediate interposition ? In reply to this, we would again ask : Can these laws think or act ? Have they any existence by themselves ? Do these laws form a class of agents, inferior to the Infinite Being ? Is a law of nature different from the God of nature ? But rather, are not the expressions of these general laws, mere terms denoting the pleasure of the Divine Being, which our ignorance of his nature, and the poverty of language have forced us to adopt.



God is omnipresent ; and these laws are but applications of the omnipresent will. Each event which takes place is a particular expression of the will of God. All the events which occur constitute the system of a General Providence, which is made up of particular applications of the pleasure of Him who is every where present, beholding the good and the evil. Hence from the omnipresence of the Deity, we learn the truth of the doctrine, contained in these words : " The Lord reigneth."

In the *third* place, the truth of the doctrine of a Particular Providence will appear, if we consider the nature of those desires and sympathies which have been implanted within us. Human life has been beautifully compared to a journey. We enter on the path over which we are to travel this journey, with hopes and expectations, which soon prove delusive. In the world sorrow and care exist. The morning of life may be calm and bright, but before its rays increase, and shine in noon-day splendour, clouds and darkness may have gathered ; the gale of adversity may blow, and the storm of misfortune howl around us. All of us are exposed to the shafts of misfortune. Our feelings are often wounded, and unreasonable prejudices entertained against us. We are deceived in those upon whose friendship we relied. The tongue of calumny is raised against us, our reputation, for a season, is obscured, and our usefulness diminished. We are tossed on the billows of affliction, and have often to drink to the dregs of the cup of sorrow. Besides these, there is a sorrow which the soul alone feels, and there are pangs, that are known only to that bosom which experiences them. There are moments when the voice of friendship is unable to soothe, when the honours of the world become the objects of unconscious gaze, when trouble has invaded the mind, and a pensive train of reflections is induced, that not only produces the belief of a Particular

Providence, but also renders this truth the only foundation of support and consolation. To what living testimony can I turn in confirmation of these declarations ?

Aged follower of Jesus, whose wrinkled brow and head silvered over with age, indicate but a few more revolving suns on earth—of you, I ask, has not the belief of this truth imparted, in the days that are past, the richest consolation ? In the season of affliction, on the couch of disease, and at the loss of friends, have you not fled to that ark of safety, which the doctrine of a Particular Providence affords ; and under the influence of this truth, been comforted ? Daughter of affliction, thou who hast been brought to mourn over the grave of him who was dear as thy own self—of you, I ask : Have you not retreated to that shelter, which a superintending Providence affords ? To that friend who sticketh closer than a brother ? To that God whose arm is at all times stretched out for your deliverance ? Disconsolate parent ! whose child now lies in the tomb, and over whose remains you have but recently been mourning ; of you, I ask : Have you not experienced the consolation, which the Particular Providence of God imparts ? What comfort, what peace, did not that Being, whose kingdom ruleth over all, administer unto you, in the season of your affliction. Every feeling of the heart which trouble elicits, tells us, in the words of the text : “ The Lord reigneth.” Every sigh which escapes from the cell of the penitent criminal, wafts with it this truth : “ The Lord reigneth.” Every groan which affliction utters, confirms the words of the text : “ The Lord reigneth.” These feelings were implanted within us by God. They have “ grown with our growth, “ and strengthened with our strength.” They are to be considered as the oracles of God, set up within us ; by consulting which, we are taught, that the infinitely wise and benevolent Mind, would not have formed us with

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feelings that can only be gratified by the belief of the doctrine of his constant and immediate agency, if he had withdrawn from the government of the world, when he created it.

But in the *last* place, the doctrine of a Particular Providence is declared in explicit terms in the Scriptures. What is the history of the world to the days of Moses, the conduct of God to the Israelites in all their journey through the wilderness, their settlement in the land of Canaan, their future prosperity and adversity; and the mission of the Prophets, but the truth of a Particular Providence? The language of the New Testament is so conclusive that I shall only adduce the following passages: "The very hairs of your head are all numbered; "not a sparrow falleth to the ground without your "Heavenly Father." "Wherefore, if God so clothe the "grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast "into the oven; shall he not much more clothe you, oh, ye "of little faith." These declarations of the Saviour prove to demonstration the truth of a Particular Providence, as recorded in the sacred volume, and now stated. Upon the belief of this doctrine, the whole of religion is founded. Every act of public and private devotion is an ostensive evidence of the declaration: "The Lord God Omnipotent reigneth." The interposition of a Divine Being, has formed a fundamental principle, in all the various systems of religion, which exist in the world.

This truth is so clearly revealed in the sacred volume, that I shall not dwell on it longer. "The Lord reigneth." God is the Sovereign Ruler of the Universe. Nothing occurs but by his immediate agency. He works around us, about us, and within us. He controls the wanderings of the smallest insect, and directs the motions of the worm on which we tread. He guides the planets in their course. He holds the stars in their place. He orders and

brings to pass the revolutions of those systems, which fill the unseen realms of immensity.

The doctrine of a Particular Providence, we have endeavoured to point out, in the first place, from the very statement of those who reject this truth, but yet who believe in a General Providence. In the second place, from the omnipresence of the Deity ; thirdly, from the character of our feelings ; and in the last place, from the Word of God.

This leads me in the *second* place, to make some general observations on that joy and consolation, which the belief of this truth imparts. Every idea connected with fate and necessity is gloomy. The belief that we live in a fatherless world, that we have no Almighty Parent who careth for us, whose government over us is constantly exercised for our good, and whose arm is ever extended to supply our wants, remove our fears, mitigate our pains, and avert from us surrounding dangers, is a view, so contrary to the sympathies of our nature, as to fill the mind with melancholy gloom. The thought that we are deserted by God, and left to ourselves, excites the most desponding emotions.

That we are insufficient of ourselves, unable to avoid those numerous temptations which beset our path, or to direct our steps ; exposed to so many dangers, the sport of every wayward desire and passion ; incapable of resisting the influence of prosperity, or of always bearing up against the frowns of adversity ; liable to disease, sorrow and death, and at the same time, deprived of the consolatory belief, that we are under the guidance of unerring wisdom, and unbounded goodness, is a proposition over which the darkest clouds of scepticism have settled. The nature of man revolts at the idea that God has withdrawn from the government of the world, and sits beyond the elements which he hath made, an unconcerned

spectator of all their commotions. No, "The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice."

The doctrine of a Particular Providence, in the first place, imparts joy and consolation, by furnishing us with just views of the nature and character of God. The perfections of the Divine Being claim, at all times, our warmest admiration and love. His wisdom calls into exercise our adoring wonder. His power awes us into humble submission. The eternity of his Being engrosses every thought of the mind; but his goodness and mercy invite the exercise of our love, expand our generous affections, and harmonise those discordant emotions which the incomprehensibility of his existence produced. Now this mercy and goodness are principally exhibited in the truth that he reigneth—that we are under his constant superintendence—that he is not unmindful of us—that he daily supports us. The works of creation present to our view, in the adaptation which we behold in every thing around us, the most exalted ideas of infinite wisdom and power, and thus furnish us with some conception of the goodness of the Divine Being. But what comfort can the consideration of the works of nature afford? What hope can the idea of this system of power and wisdom, left to the operation of a necessity which is blind and irresistible, impart? But let us change this scene. In addition to the wonders of creative energy which we behold, let us think of the hand which preserves, of the goodness and mercy which are so profusely scattered around, and the character of God is contemplated under a more just and consolatory aspect. He is revealed to us as the Father of Mercies, and the guardian of our lives. The hairs of our head are all numbered by him, the fowls of the air are all fed by him, and the lilies of the field all clothed by his bountiful hand. That his Providence is merciful, and also minutely exercised over

every step of our lives. The doctrine of a Particular Providence, in the first place, imparts joy and consolation, by furnishing us with just views of the nature and character of God, by representing him, not only as wise and powerful, but also, as actively engaged in ministering to our daily preservation and comfort, and thus inspiring the most unlimited confidence, awakening the most filial love, and leading the grateful mind to the cultivation and practice of pious hopes and desires.

In the second place, the doctrine of a Particular Providence imparts to the Christian, joy and consolation, because, upon the exercise of this Providence, depends the fulfilment of all the predictions and promises recorded in the Scriptures. Believers in Christ—to you I more particularly address myself; you know in whom you have believed, and that he is able to keep that which you have committed to him until the great day, because he reigneth. You are assured that his grace will be given unto you, and that none of you will perish, nor shall any be able to pluck you out of his hand, because he reigneth. You know that against his Church the gates of Hell shall not prevail; and from its sacred fount the streams of spiritual life continue to flow, because he reigneth. You know his kingdom will come, his glory cover the earth as the waters do the sea, and at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess, because he reigneth. You see by faith the doctrines of the Cross preached with success to the Jew and Gentile, the Scythian, and Barbarian, the bond and free; and the rays of the Sun of Righteousness illuminating every Heathen altar in the universe, because he reigneth. And finally, you hear the last trump sound, witness the dead rising from their graves, the judgment seat erected, Heaven opened for the admission of the righteous, and Hell become the receptacle of the ungodly, because he

reigneth. To the children of God, then, the doctrine of a Particular Providence imparts consolation and joy, for they are assured that the predictions and promises of the Word of God, will receive their accomplishment by the exercise of this agency. But in the last place, the doctrine of the text imparts consolation and joy under the trials of life, and in the hour of death.

The pious man experiences comfort even in affliction, from the remembrance that God has sent it. Affliction, he is assured, cometh not from the dust. He regards it as that rod with which his Heavenly Father chastises his disobedience, and also, as the mean, which, under the sanctifying influence of grace, is to work out for him an exceedingly great and eternal weight of glory. Believing that the Judge of all the earth, will do that which is right, he is led to exclaim, with Eli, "It is the Lord! let him do what seemeth him good." And who, my brethren, that reflects on the trials of the present life, would wish to discard from his creed the belief of a Particular Providence? When misfortune overwhelms you, when troubles follow in close succession, when the voice of friendship is rendered mute, and the lispings of filial love forever hushed, when poverty succeeds affluence, when the finger of contempt is pointed against you, when the furious elements are in commotion above you and around you, and bursting on your defenceless habitations with all their violence—what anchor have you in this tempestuous sea, by which the vessel of existence can ride in safety, but that which is provided in the words of our text, "The Lord reigneth?" The doctrine of a Particular Providence imparts consolation under the trials of life, because it assures us that we are under the guidance of our Heavenly Father, who careth for us. But there is another hour still more awful, than that to which we have alluded; there is another scene, in gazing on which,

fancy trembles : this is the hour and the scene of death. And who can pass through the dark valley and shadow of death, an avowed unbeliever of the Providence of God. When the progress of disease, and the sorrow of friends indicate the approaching moment ; “ when the curtain is “ about to fall, the door to be shut, and the lamp forever “ extinguished,” what hold can dissolving nature embrace but that which is furnished in the words of our text. Eternity about to be entered, and life relinquished, the friends of our youth, and the relatives of our bosom given up. Oh, God ! whither can the soul go but to thee, and on what arm can it rely but that of him, who is over all, God blessed forevermore ? Upon this rock does the pious man rest, for the everlasting arm of Jehovah is under him, and his rod and staff comfort and support him. Such are the comforts and consolations which the doctrine of a Particular Providence imparts.

Let us now make an application of this doctrine to the object of our present meeting. With what sentiments of gratitude should our hearts glow on this occasion ! This day is, as it were, the anniversary of grateful praise. On this altar arises the incense of thankfulness. We have met, my brethren, for the purpose of rendering unto the Lord, the homage of our hearts, for that goodness and mercy, with which he has visited us, during the past season.

In reviewing the period which has recently passed away, do we not behold displays of the Divine goodness, and forbearance, which lead us to adopt the language of the Psalmist ? “ Bless the Lord, oh my soul, and all that “ is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, “ oh my soul, and forget not all his benefits ; who forgiveth “ all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases, who re- “ deemeth thy life from destruction ; who crowneth thee “ with loving kindness and tender mercies.” The appoint-

ment and observance of this day, is a living evidence of the doctrine of the text—"The Lord reigneth." Those blessings which we have enjoyed, have been rich and numerous. The past Summer has been indeed eventful. During its revolution, we were called to witness scenes, which excited alternately our hopes and fears, and upon which the eyes of the most aged inhabitant in our community never before gazed. The first display of the Particular Providence of God which we are required this day to recognise, is that which led to the detection of a privy conspiracy. The view I am to take of this civil commotion, must be exclusively of a religious kind. To the interposition of God we are to look for the disclosure of this atrocious combination. His Providence, you have seen, brethren, is particular. He brings to pass every event. And on this occasion, when the storm which had been long gathering, was about to burst upon our unconscious community, the vengeance of God against these workers of iniquity was no longer restrained; and by the occurrence of an event, in itself trivial, but highly important, when viewed with regard to its results, he made us acquainted with our situation, and suppressed this savage enterprise by our own instrumentality. Yes! The Lord of Hosts was with us; the God of Jacob was our defence. He interposed, and by the use of those means which were within our control, this barbarous design—this projected attempt, in which an impious disregard to the laws of God, to every feeling of gratitude, and every principle of humanity, appeared—was overthrown. But there are none in whose bosoms the emotions of gratitude should beat more intensely, than that class of our population to which the chiefs in this conspiracy belonged. It becomes them in a very peculiar manner, on the present occasion, to render thanksgivings unto the Lord for his interposing goodness, and, by the instru-

mentality of man, preventing a scheme which must have ended in their own extermination. It becomes us all, my brethren, to sing unto the Lord this day with thanksgiving, to sing praise on the harp unto our God, for his mercy endureth forever.

Secondly—We are called upon this day to thank the Lord for that portion of health, which, as a community, we have enjoyed. The enjoyment of life depends much on the possession of health. Health is the most valuable temporal gift which God has conferred on man. Without it, existence is in danger of becoming burdensome, riches palling, talents useless, social intercourse disagreeable and unprofitable. This blessing, then, from its being the most important of those which we have, demands the most animated songs of grateful praise. And need I observe, that on this day we are called upon in the loudest strains to exalt and magnify the goodness of God. During the past summer we have enjoyed an uninterrupted portion of health; and, indeed, so great has been the health of our city, that during the month, usually regarded the most sickly, the weekly bill of mortality was so small, as to have become the subject of general observation. To strangers, it had been incident, to become the victims of disease, in a climate to which they were not enured, and their remains had been often followed to the grave before the return of winter. But during the season that is past, residents from abroad, have been exempt from danger, and even from its apprehensions. And while we deeply sympathize in that distress and desolation which have visited the largest and most populous city in our Union, and fervently pray that this dispensation of Providence may be sanctified to that community, let us render unto the Lord, for all his benefits towards us, the tribute of grateful praise. Let us thank God for his providential goodness in preserving our lives, in averting from our

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community the seeds of disease, and in permitting us this day to enter his holy temple.

In the *third* place, we are called upon in a very peculiar manner this day, to render thanksgivings unto the Lord, for the preservation of our lives, during the late storm which visited our city. The scenes of that night were appalling, but the disclosures of subsequent days truly heart-rending. We cannot but revert in a particular manner, to the helpless condition of our community, on that occasion. The night was dark, the wind howled as if bearing on it the most extensive desolation. Dangers gathered thick around us. And was there no shelter to which, in this hour of alarm, we could retreat? Was there no human voice which could soothe our fears, or arm that might be extended for our deliverance? No. To escape was impossible. What picture more affecting than that which the population of our city, then exhibited? Family separated from family—friend unable to minister to the relief of friend—heart vibrating in unison with heart—and all waiting, unconscious of what the coming morn would disclose, concerning themselves, relatives and friends. The tempest raged! and the most extensive desolation followed! But notwithstanding the violence of the storm, and the imminent danger in which we ourselves stood, where was the heart, in the midst of us, that did not move with compassion at the remembrance of Sullivan's Island? In this annual retreat of health, in this salubrious asylum, were collected our friends and fellow-citizens. The danger of their situation, past experience enabled us in some degree to realize. And no day ever dawned before upon our city, with more melancholy disclosures than the twenty-eighth of September. The ravages of the storm, met us in every direction; and after having ascertained the mournful intelligence of the almost, I may say total loss

of a family in the vicinity of our city, who had been crushed by the falling roof, we turned with anxious solicitude to know what was the situation of those who resided on the Island. The general character of the intelligence received was more favourable than had been anticipated, but circumstances occurred, and scenes were exhibited, over which the heart of sensibility then wept, and now sighs. Yes. The tears of grief were profusely shed, for the ornaments of social intercourse were withdrawn, and the ties of connubial and parental affection broken. The scenes of the following morning, when the emblems of departed worth and beauty passed along, were truly mournful. But over this picture, and the still more dismal scenes of North Inlet, your feelings and time force me to draw a veil.*

To-day, then, let us render thanksgiving unto God, for his goodness in arresting the elements of the natural world, and bringing us deliverance. Let each one of us adopt the words of the Psalmist : " Bless the Lord, oh, " my soul." Nor can I, when enumerating the various causes of thankfulness this day, overlook the goodness of God in preserving us for so long a period from the destructive element of fire.

Brethren, in reviewing those mercies we have received, during the past year, are we not forced to exclaim— " How precious, oh, God, have thy thoughts been towards us ! how great the sum of thy loving kindness !" But while we render unto God the thanksgivings of our hearts, for his manifold temporal blessings, let us in a still more exalted strain, adore his name for the gift of Christ, for the Gospel of peace, and all its privileges. Let us be humbled on account of our past sins, which are numerous and aggravated ; and, finally, let us fervently pray

* For a more particular account of the ravages of this storm, see Sermon X.

for that grace which shall enable us to evince those grateful sentiments, which we this day cherish, by a godly conversation and life ; and let the grateful language of our hearts be : “ Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is
“ within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my
“ soul, and forget not all his benefits : who forgiveth all
“ thine iniquities ; who healeth all thy diseases ; who re-
“ deemeth thy life from destruction ; who crowneth thee
“ with loving kindness and tender mercies ; who satis-
“ fieth thy mouth with good things ; so that thy youth is
“ renewed like the eagle’s.” *Amen.*