

for his soul?" What man under the sentence of death for a breach of law that would not give all he possessed of earthly substance to atone, if his life could only be spared? How few there are that would not be willing to give the whole world, if they possessed it, for their lives.

Why is this universal desire planted in the human breast to live? It is a law ordained in nature for good. We may call it instinct, or by what name we please—it is a universal law in all intelligent beings to seek to retain the organization they possess. Hence when sickness assails us, an enemy appears in deadly array with a show to lay us low in death; every faculty of the soul is aroused to repel it, and we use all the means in our power to stay the progress of disease.

The Scriptures inform us that the greatest gift of God is eternal life. Is this a gift of God in deed and in truth? Yes; I understand it to be, to all intents and purposes, the gift of God. Yet eternal life is not attained without compliance on our part with those principles that lead to the attainment of it. I will illustrate this by what we see daily in our natural life. We understand, by what we learn daily, that there are certain things that tend to destroy this tabernacle; and there are other things which, if we deserve, have a tendency to prolong the organization of this tabernacle and our temporal existence.

For example, we have learned, by numerous observations and examples, that if an individual cast himself into the sea, without having any means of floating, he will sink in the water and under it, and he cannot live. A certain thing is necessary to his existence, which is the pure, wholesome air inhaled into the lungs. Anything that cuts us off from this supply terminates our earthly existence: the machinery of this tabernacle cannot be kept in motion without it. We

have also learned that excessive heat or excessive cold will stop this machinery of life. There are various other causes which stop the machinery of life in our mortal tabernacles. If we would prolong our organization for any certain number of years, we must carefully guard against those evils that endanger our tabernacles. Excesses of every kind have a tendency to weaken, and ultimately to destroy the tabernacle of man. An excessive appetite, if encouraged with rich viands, and this persisted in, will make the possessor a glutton, and shorten his mortal career.

If a person having a strong desire for stimulants, such as spirituous liquors, tea, coffee, tobacco, opium, &c., that stimulate the nervous system to excess, and continues to gratify this appetite, will soon destroy the elasticity of his nervous system, and become like a bow that is often bent almost to breaking. If a bow be kept strung up to its utmost tension, it loses its power and strength, until it is of little or no use.

So in nature: the more any powerful stimulant is made use of in the human system, the sooner the human machinery will be worn out. It follows, then, if we will secure life and preserve the organization of this tabernacle, we must observe the laws of life—we must abstain from intemperance of every description. We must neither indulge in excessive eating, excessive drinking, nor in excessive working, whereby to overtax our physical energies or our nervous system. Perhaps no kind of labor will so rapidly weaken the power of life within us, or strength of these tabernacles, like excessive mental labor, because it has a more direct influence upon the nervous system. The nervous system seems to be a sort of connecting link between our spirit and our tabernacles. Yet a proper amount of labor, physical and mental, be-