

**A SUNDAY MANUAL,
USED AT THE CHAPEL
IN BEAUMONT SQUARE,
MILE END OLD TOWN**

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A Sunday Manual, Used at the Chapel in Beaumont Square, Mile End Old Town by John Thomas Barber Beaumont

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JOHN THOMAS BARBER BEAUMONT

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IN BEAUMONT SQUARE,
MILE END OLD TOWN**

*For The Trinity College Dublin
from the Author
J. E. Barber Beaumont*

A

SUNDAY MANUAL,

USED AT

THE CHAPEL

IN

BEAUMONT SQUARE,

MILE END OLD TOWN.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

ALL persons who have applied their minds to moral and religious inquiries must be gratified by discovering, that in every age and nation, and amid all conflicting theories of religion, the wise and good have always thought nearly alike on the general principles of conduct which produce human happiness or woe. These principles are in fact nothing more than rational inferences from what is seen and learnt in the workings of nature; and so long as people adhere to nature and reason for their guide, they cannot but travel together, and arrive at similar conclusions.

The concurrence is delightful; and while it necessarily tends to excite mutual good-will and sympathy among mankind, it also creates a hallowed mindfulness and adoration of the great first cause from which such admirable harmony and every blessing flows. This *Natural Theology* is the basis of *all religions*, and is in itself the *universal religion*. The Scriptures abound with admirable elucidations of these principles: but the teachers of sects insist on professions of implicit belief in certain mysteries, miracles, and dogmas, whereon many reasoning Christians are unconvinced; and as the latter would consider it a disgraceful act of hypocrisy, and a gross impiety, in public worship, to address their Creator with protestations that were insincere, they abstain from attending church or chapel altogether.

To afford Christians of every sect, and the religiously disposed of all persuasions, the satisfaction of assembling together for divine worship, and of having their minds refreshed and invigorated by expositions of the principles which naturally produce peace and happiness, free from the supernatural creeds upon which mankind are divided and exasperated, the Chapel in Beaumont Square has been opened and endowed.

The arrangement of the Morning Devotion on Sundays is as follows:—

The service begins at eleven A. M. with a symphony. The Minister then, in an *opening address*, states the objects of the Meeting, exhorting the congregation carefully and impartially to reflect on and inquire into what has been their conduct, particularly since the last weekly meeting, and to ask their consciences whether they have faithfully discharged their moral duties, of which he gives a summary description. He suggests that those who have fulfilled them as occasion has required, are entitled to rejoice in the cheerfulness of an approving conscience; but that others who have violated, or neglected them, are not entitled to that comfort, until they shall have repented, and made the best amends in their power by redoubled diligence in doing good.

This exhortation is followed by a *hymn, anthem, or chorus*.

A *lesson* is then read upon one of the moral duties. These are brought under twelve leading principles or laws of nature; one of which is made the subject of a

lesson on each Sunday: and the whole are gone through once in every quarter, or four times in a year.

The reading of the lessons is followed by a *hymn, anthem, or chorus*.

An *adoration* of the Almighty is then delivered, having reference to some of the most striking manifestations of the Divine wisdom and goodness in the physical and moral world.

This is followed by a *hymn, anthem, or chorus*.

A *lecture or sermon*, which usually bears on the lesson of the day closes the service, and a strain of music in accordance with the lecture accompanies the departure of the congregation.

The object is every Sunday morning to bring the principles of conduct which conduce to our safety and happiness in life before the minds of the congregation—first by describing the whole round of duties in a summary manner in the opening address, then by reasoning on some particular duty in the lesson of the day, and afterwards illustrating it, and enlarging on it in the sermon.

The Sunday evening service will commence at seven o'clock, and consist of a series of lectures in which the most remarkable phenomena of nature will be described and explained, in illustration of the infinite wisdom, beneficence, and power of God, in a manner which, it is hoped, will strengthen the mental capacity, and enrich its stores, while it improves the moral and religious feelings of the hearers.

INTRODUCTION.

THE great business of life is to preserve it, and virtuously to enjoy it, for without exertions to support life it expires; and enjoyment, or the hope of enjoyment, is necessary to stimulate exertions. Looking around us, we see that a benevolent Creator supplies us with abundant materials for these purposes, and with reason to direct us in the use of them; and that as we act on virtuous or vicious principles we succeed or fail. Careful observations on the events of life, and their causes and consequences, instruct us in the one and the other. They teach us that certain actions and forbearances produce good, and that other actions and indulgences lead to evil, the welfare or woe of our fellow-creatures being essentially mixed with our own individually.

The lessons which follow are intended practically to point out these important distinctions. They are inferences from the workings of nature elicited during a long experience, and are believed to accord with those of the generality of thinking persons; but the writer has no desire to press them beyond a fair hearing. Every man with an honest purpose, and a careful attention, is entitled to think for himself, to examine the workings of nature with his own reasoning powers, and abide by his own conclusions.

Appended to these lessons are extracts from the moral precepts contained in the Old and New Testament, in the writings of Chinese, Greek, and Roman philosophers, and also in the Koran of Mahomet. These shew that among the enlightened and sagacious of all ages and

nations, similar inferences have been drawn for our rules of moral conduct. The concurrence of the wisdom of the ancients with modern observations is of less importance, as giving sanction to the latter, than as shewing that so long as mankind are faithful to nature and reason, scarcely a shade of difference arises amongst them on the general principles of their duties.

The enlightened natural Religionist, while elevating his thoughts above the objects that surround him to the worship of the Creator, and to an understanding of the Divine laws, which are revealed to him by the workings of nature, and which it is his duty to obey, has the highest authority for his guidance. The works of nature afford the clearest manifestation of the Divine presence that is permitted to mortal man. Those works compose his text book. He therein reads the will and intention of his Creator: he finds instructions for his conduct in life which are just, consistent, and clear; and, at the same time, he feels inspired with an exalted sense of the infinite power and wisdom of the Divinity, and a pure and holy adoration of his boundless mercies. He also acquires continual mental and moral improvement and delight while attending his devotions, in place of that bewilderment of the reasoning powers, and prostration of the understanding, and disregard of truth, which are produced by insisting on his professing belief in mysteries, which he is unable to comprehend.

In the religion of nature there is nothing that encourages a belief that indulgence in sins intended, and absolution for sins committed, may be purchased by those who can pay for them, or that a life of crime may