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*GENIUS OF THE
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THE GENIUS OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

VII.

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THE
GENIUS OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN,
Exegetically and Practically Considered,

CONTAINING
*FIFTY-ONE HOMILETIC SKETCHES, TWENTY-
EIGHT GERMS OF THOUGHT, AND
TWENTY PRELECTIONS,*
ALSO
INTRODUCTION TO THE GOSPEL.

BY
DAVID THOMAS, D.D.

AUTHOR OF

"THE GENIUS OF THE FIRST GOSPEL (MATTHEW)," "COMMENTARY ON PSALMS," "PROBLEMATA
MUNDI" (JOB), "PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHER" (PROVERBS), "PHILOSOPHY OF HAPPINESS,"
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I. CHRIST IS THE MASTER OF THE HUMAN RACE.

First: *His power is Absolute.*

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Thirdly: *He interferes not with the Freedom of any.*

Fourthly: *He does not value Service by its Amount.*

Fifthly: *He has no misgivings about the Results.*

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First : *The scepticism of Thomas was Negative.*

Secondly : *The scepticism of Thomas was Intellectual.*

Thirdly : *The scepticism of Thomas was Frank.*

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II. AN EXEMPLARY RELIGIOUS GUIDE.

First : *The Direct Specialty of His Merciful Treatment.*

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Thirdly : *The Moral Influence of His Merciful Treatment.*

III. A SUPER-EMINENT RELIGIOUS FAITH.

First : *It is possible for those who have never seen Christ to believe in Him.*

Secondly : *Those who believe in Him without seeing are Peculiarly Blest.*

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THE
GENIUS OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL.
JOHN.

No. CIII.

HEAVEN.

(*Jesus comforts His disciples. The Holy Spirit promised.*—JOHN xiv. 1—31.)

“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me,” &c.
xiv. 1—3.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—“We now come,” says *Olshausen*, “to that portion of the Evangelistic history which we may with propriety call its ‘Holy of holies.’ Our Evangelist, like a consecrated priest, alone opens to us the view into this sanctuary. It is the record of the last moments spent by the Lord in the midst of His disciples before His last passion, when words of heavenly thought flowed from His sacred lips. All that His heart, glowing with love, had still to say to His friends was compressed into this short season. At first the intercourse took the form of conversation. Sitting at the table they talked familiarly together. But when the repast was finished, the language of Christ assumed a loftier strain; the disciples assembled around their Master, listened to the words of life, and seldom spoke a word. At length, in the Redeemer’s sublime intercessory prayer, His full soul was poured forth in express petitions to His heavenly Father, on behalf of those who were His own. It is a peculiarity of these last chapters that they treat most exclusively of the most profound relations—as that of the Son to the Father, and both to the Spirit; that of

Christ to the Church; of the Church to the world, and so forth. Moreover, a considerable portion of these sublime communications surpassed the points of view to which the disciples had at that time attained: hence the Redeemer frequently repeats the same sentiments in order to impress them more deeply upon their minds, and because of what they still did not understand, points them to the Holy Ghost, who would remind them of all His sayings, and lead them into all truth.”

Ver. 1.—“*Let not your heart be troubled.*” No doubt the little company were at this moment greatly troubled. Christ had told them He was going to depart,—that would trouble them. Judas—one of their number—had been convicted as a traitor and had left; that would trouble them. Peter had been told that in the early morning, before cock crow, he would deny Christ thrice; this would trouble them. Christ propounds an antidote for their trouble, viz. trust in His Father and Himself. “*Ye believe in God, believe also in Me.*” Whether these words should be taken in the indicative or the imperative is a question not easily settled, and scarcely worth discussion. The meaning

is, trust in God the Father and the Son, and this will support you under all your trouble. Trust in Him as the absolute Truth. Trust in Me as the image and Revealer of that Truth.

Ver. 2.—“*In My Father’s house.*” The Greek word used for house here is slightly different from that used for the material temple on earth, in chap. ii. 16. The exact meaning will be at once seen from a comparison of 2 Cor. xv. 1, the only other passage in the New Testament where it is used metaphorically. The Jews were accustomed to the thought of heaven as the habitation of God, and the disciples had been taught to pray, “Our Father, which art in heaven.” (Comp. Ps. xxiii. 13, 14; Isa. lxiii. 15; Matt. vi. 9; Acts vii. 49, and especially Heb. ix.) “*Many mansions.*” Abodes or dwellings. The word does not refer to diversity of abodes, but to number. The idea is amplitude, room enough

for all. “*If it were not so, I would have told you.*” Otherwise I would have told you.—*Davidson.* “*I (R. V. FOR I) go to prepare a place for you.*” “It is not enough that the Father’s house is spacious, access to it must be open to them, and an abode there assured them. For this purpose Jesus will precede them. (Comp. Heb. vi. 20, Christ as the Forerunner.) It is under this image that He teaches them to regard His death, first as that which will open to them by its atoning efficacy an entrance into heaven, and then as His elevation to that Divine condition in which He will make them sharers by the gift of Pentecost.”—*Godet.*

Ver. 3.—“*And if I go and prepare a place for you, I (R. V. COME AGAIN) will come again and receive you unto Myself.*” This means, when I shall have gone to prepare a place for you, I will come again.

HOMILETICS.

Things were now converging to a crisis in the life of Christ and in the spiritual history of humanity. The “hour was come,” the hour to which all past economies pointed, and the hour from which all future improvements in human history would derive their impulse and take their date. It is the last meeting of Christ with those few poor men whom He at first called into His confidence and made His disciples. He had taken them away from their avocations, social friendships, and secular duties, and wrought such a thorough change in their spiritual sympathies and aspirations, that those things that once pleased them had lost their fascination and their charm. By joining Him they raised their country and their age in fierce opposition against them. And now He was about leaving them. Jesus knew their feelings, observed every billow of anguish that surged through their hearts, and He mercifully condescended to minister the necessary relief. “*Let not your heart be troubled.*” The subject of these verses is *Heaven*.

They lead us to consider—

I.—THE COMMON HEAVEN FOR ALL THE GOOD.

Christ calls this His “*Father’s house.*” The old temple was called His house, the true Church is called His house. He dwells in His people. But here the reference is to some magnificent district in His great universe. Heaven is a *place* as well as a state. In truth, we cannot conceive of existence apart from space. This place is sometimes represented in the Bible as a *garden*, implying

that it is the choicest spot in the creation; as *a city*, implying that it is a scene of glorious social existence; sometimes as a *palace*, where the Infinite is on the throne, and holy intelligences are in loyal attendance; and sometimes as *an inheritance*. Three thoughts are here suggested concerning it.

First: It is a scene of family life. It is the "*Father's house*." Wherever that region is, all within its precincts are members of *one* family. Christ is the Head:—of "Whom the whole family in Heaven and earth is named." A family is something more than a *Society*. A society may be based on some common interests, and held by some compact; but a family is based on *natural affinities*. Souls are linked together by a vital tie; all hearts centre in one head. It is a *large* family. The Bible teaches that there are celestial intelligences of countless number and vast variety—"an innumerable company of angels," "thrones, principalities," &c. It is a *holy* family. All are pure, free from selfishness, from error and sin. It is a *harmonious* family. Though mixed and of vast gradations, they are all united in thought, sympathy, and aim. A family society is not like political, ecclesiastical, commercial, literary societies. These are organized by rules and laws, but this is united by vital affinities. It is an *undying* family. Death never enters that circle. It is an *ever increasing* family. Who can tell how many worlds of intelligent beings are created every day, and how many *are added to this family*? Another thought suggested is—

Secondly: It is a scene of great amplitude. "*Many mansions*," or dwelling-places, these are the abodes in God's great "*house*." Every orb that rolls throughout immensity, from the smallest to the largest, may be one of these "*mansions*." Astronomy shows that the multitude of those orbs baffle all arithmetical calculations. Where is heaven? Wherever God is, and holy beings are. Hell in the universe is only as one miserable hut in an immeasurable city of palaces, one withered leaf in the boundless forest. Heaven is a large place. It is, moreover, suggested here—

Thirdly: It is a scene of undoubted reality. "*If it were not so, I would have told you*." It is no poet's dream, no fictitious realm. The word of Christ attests its existence, what other proof is needed?

(1.) He is too intelligent to be mistaken. He knows every part of the universe. He existed before the creation. He knew it in archetype. "I was set up from everlasting," &c. (2.) He is too truthful to misrepresent. In Him there is no motive to deceive. *He* is truth, unerring and unerrable truth. (3.) He is too kind to delude. "*I would have told you*." Two things should be remembered. (a) His knowledge. I speak from knowledge; I know every part of the universe. "I was set up from everlasting," &c. (b) His sincerity. He had no disposition to deceive. "*Were it not so, I would have told you*."

Such is the universal heaven of the good—a scene of family life, of vast amplitude and undoubted reality. The text leads us to consider—

II.—THE SPECIAL HEAVEN FOR CHRIST'S DISCIPLES.

“*I go to prepare a place for you.*” * Amid the “*many mansions,*” I will “*prepare a place for you.*” Learn—

First: Man's heaven is a scene which Christ prepares. Christ, in a way which I cannot explain, prepared a “*place*” in God's great universe especially for His disciples. “When Thou didst overcome the sharpness of death, Thou didst open the kingdom of heaven to all believers.” It is not necessary to suppose they live alone, shut off from communion with other intelligences. Whilst they have a particular apartment, they are still in the same vast house or palace, and may be permitted to pay visits to all, and receive visits from all that dwell in other apartments of the Great “*House of the Father.*”

Secondly: Man's heaven is a scene into which Christ introduces him. “*I will come again, and receive you unto Myself.*” What is the death of a true disciple? The advent of Christ. He comes to take His children home from school. He comes to you in the school of affliction, and says, Come away with Me, my young brother, to our “*Father's house*”—your education is finished; you are qualified to take office in the eternal kingdom; the days of your minority are over; come away to your inheritance. Here the soul is imprisoned in the body. He comes and opens the prison-doors and lets the prisoner free.

Thirdly: Man's heaven is a scene in which Christ's fellowship is enjoyed. “*Where I am, there ye may be also.*” The heaven of man is to be where Christ is.

CONCLUSION. What consolation we have for troubled souls in these verses! Christ says in effect to all such,—Trust in My Father and in Me for the present, and look for perfection in the future. Faith and hope will soothe and sustain you. How many sorrowing souls have these words comforted! Sir Walter Scott just before his death desired to be drawn into his library, and placed by the window that he might look down upon the Tweed. To his son-in-law he expressed a wish that he should read to him. “From what book shall I read?” said he. “Can you ask?” Scott replied. “There is but one.” “I chose,” says his biographer, “the fourteenth chapter of John. He listened with mild devotion, and said when I had done: ‘Well, this is a great comfort. I have followed you distinctly, and I feel as if I was to be myself again.’”

* See Germ, p. 5.

GERMS OF THOUGHT.

No. LII.

CHRIST IN RELATION TO HEAVEN.

“In My Father’s house are many mansions,” &c.—xiv. 2, 3.

We present another plan of treatment of these verses, and use them to illustrate *Christ in relation to heaven*. From the text we infer—

I.—CHRIST REVEALS MAN’S HEAVEN.

He reveals it here—(1.) As a scene of family life. “*My Father’s house.*” (2.) As a scene of great amplitude. “*Many mansions.*” (3.) As a scene of undoubted reality—“*If it were not so, I would have told you.*” Christ knows the universe too well to be deceived, and He is too incorruptibly honest to deceive. “*I would have told you.*” He reveals man’s heaven; He draws the veil, and gives a glimpse of it.

II.—CHRIST PREPARES MAN’S HEAVEN.

“*I go to prepare a place for you.*” (1.) All places in the universe would not suit us *physically*. There are worlds unsuited to our organization. (2.) All places would not suit us *intellectually*. They would not present the class of truths we crave for, or in the forms we need. (3.) All places would not suit us *emotionally*. They would not suit our sentiments of admiration, love, and worship. Christ prepares a place for us, suited for us in every respect. The mother of a large family has just received a letter from a loved son who has been for years in a distant land, informing her he will be home on a certain day. What preparation forthwith she sets about! She thinks of his tastes, his wants, what will please him, what will supply his needs, and yield him joy. Father and brothers and sisters join her in the work. One says he likes music, and a piece of music is studied wherewith to charm him; another remembers that he loves flowers, and splendid bouquets are collected; another recollects he is fond of some outdoor sport; another thinks of drawings and paintings; another of poetry; and so on the preparations are made. Love makes preparations for the known tastes of the loved one. Thus our *Great Brother* in the other world prepares a place exactly suited for us after death.

III.—CHRIST INTRODUCES INTO MAN’S HEAVEN.

“*I will come again, and receive you unto Myself.*” What is the death of the good man? The advent of Christ. Christ comes and opens the material door which encloses our spirits, and conducts us to the world He has prepared. He takes us (1) *Gently*, (2) *Securely*, (3) *Triumphantly*. What matters the distance, what matters the labyrinthian path, if He is with us as our Convoy?

IV.—CHRIST CONSTITUTES MAN'S HEAVEN.

"That where I am, there ye may be also." This is His desire. "Father, I would that they may be with Me where I am." And this is their desire. They feel to be with Christ is "far better."

"Let me be with Thee where Thou art,
My Saviour, my eternal Rest,
Then only will this longing heart
Be fully and for ever blest.

"Let me be with Thee where Thou art,
Where none can die, whence none remove,
There death nor sin my soul shall part,
From Thy blessed presence and Thy love."

No. CIV.

THE WELL-BEING OF HUMANITY.

"And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know," &c.—xiv. 4—7.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Ver. 4.—*"And whither I go ye know (R. V. THE WAY), and the way ye know."* Jesus seems to say that now He had answered their question in chap. xiii. 2—36, both as to whither He was going, and the way for their going thither. He had plainly stated it in the foregoing words. He was going to His Father's house. There was room there for them all. He was going with the express object of arranging everything for their arrival. And He assured them of His coming again to take them to Himself, that they might be there also. If they were not utterly blinded, they must see what He had made so plain.

Ver. 5.—*"Thomas saith unto Him, Lord, we know not whither Thou goest; and how can we know (R. V. KNOW WE) the way?"* "Our Lord's words had laid stress upon the 'way.' Thomas lays stress upon the 'whither.' His mind seeks for measured certainty. In all that he has heard of the Father's house of 'many mansions,' of being with the Lord, there is much that he cannot understand. The Messiah, he thought, was to reign upon earth. There was this vast royal home, with dwelling-places for all, to which Christ was going first, and to which they were to follow. They know not whither, and without that knowledge they cannot even think of the way."—*Watkins.*

Ver. 6.—*"Jesus saith unto him, I*

am the Way, (R. V. AND) the Truth, and the Life." "I," emphatic. *Lange* regards "truth and life" here as explicative, and as meaning the truth as well as the life of this way. Christ is the *Truth* of this way: its clear manifestation, its life, and its animating power. *"No man (R. V. ONE) cometh unto the Father, but by Me."* Thomas thought of the "Way" to the "mansions" of which Christ had spoken; Christ here virtually says the way to the Father, to His presence and friendship, is the way to the mansions. To be with the Father is to be at home. This is the grand end, the chief good, and to this end Christ leads the way.

Ver. 7.—*"If ye had known Me, ye should (R. V. WOULD) have known My Father also."* "The thought here is made quite plain by what has preceded; but the form in which it is expressed demands attention. The emphasis of the first part of the sentence is not upon 'Me,' as is generally supposed, but upon 'known.' In the second part the emphatic words are 'MY FATHER.' The English word 'known' represents two Greek words in the latter text, which are not identical in meaning. The former means, to know by observation; the latter to know by reflection. It is the difference between *connaitre* and *savoir*; between *keunen* (*ken, know*) and *wissen* (*wit, wisdom*). We may express the meaning more

exactly thus, 'If ye had *recognized* Me, ye would have known *My Father* also.' If ye had recognized who I really am, ye would have known that I and My Father are one." "*And from henceforth ye know Him, and have seen Him.*" "See 1 Cor. xiii. 31,

where the glorifying of the Son of man is regarded, as in the future which is immediately present. He can, therefore, say that from this time onwards, after the full declaration of Himself in verses 6 and 9 *et seq.*, they know and have seen the Father."

HOMILETICS.

The subject of these words is *The Well-being of humanity.*—
Notice—

I.—THE END ESSENTIAL TO MAN'S WELL-BEING.

What is that? Fellowship with the Father. It is not merely being conveyed into one of the "many mansions," for if we are not with the Father even there, we shall be desolate and miserable. "*Cometh unto the Father.*" What does this mean? Not that the Father is distant from us. He is "not far from every one of us." He is *locally* near. We are in constant contact with Him. He is *relationally* near. Nearer to us than any other relation. He is our Proprietor; aye, our very life. He is *sympathetically* near. No one feels such a deep interest in us as He does. But it means that we are morally estranged from Him. We are without God. "He is not in all our thoughts." Coming to Him means cherishing a supreme sympathy with Him, assimilation to His character—a growing consciousness of His presence, His love and fellowship. To be with the Father is to be in light, freedom, and perfect blessedness. To be away from Him is to be in darkness, thralldom, and misery. "In Thy presence is fulness of joy: at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore!" Another thought suggested is—

II.—THE MEANS ESSENTIAL TO MAN'S WELL-BEING.

By what means are we to come to the Father? Here is the answer. "*I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.*"

First: Christ is the "*Way*" to the Father. "*I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.*" The "*Way*"*—to a supreme sympathy with God, to an experimental knowledge, to a loving sympathy and perfect friendliness with Him. He is the "*Way*"—(1.) Because He is the "*Truth.*"† No unrealities can conduct us to the Father. He is the "*Way*"—(2.) Because He is the "*Life.*"‡ No inanimate force can lead us to Him. It requires the most animated, the most inspiring life. Christ is that Life. Without a way there is no progress, without truth there is no certainty, without life there is no motion.

Secondly: Christ is the only "*Way*" to the Father. "*No man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.*"§ These words coming from the

* See Germ, p. 8.

† See Germ, p. 9.

‡ See Germ, p. 9.

§ See Germ, p. 10.

lips of any mere man, however exalted in intelligence and character, would fall on our ears as the utterance of blasphemous presumption; but from the lips of One Who displayed the attributes, Who lived the life, Who wrought the works that Christ did, they come with exquisite naturalness and simplicity. “*No man.*” (1.) The nature of the case shows this. Where else can you find that Divine force of character, that sublime energy of thought and passion, that mighty moral influence suited to win souls back to the Father, but in Christ? “*No man.*” (2.) The history of the race shows this. Have any of the millions of the race been brought back to the Father, but through Christ? If so, who?

CONCLUSION. How profoundly thankful should we be for this passage! It teaches us what no other system has ever taught mankind—*Man’s chief good, and the true way of attaining it.* His chief good is friendship with the ever loving Father, and the true way is practical faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

GERMS OF THOUGHT.

No. LIII.

CHRIST THE WAY TO THE FATHER.

“I am the Way.”—xiv. 6.

Christ is man’s “*Way*” from spiritual ignorance to knowledge, spiritual bondage to liberty, spiritual degradation to dignity, spiritual misery to blessedness. But here He speaks of Himself as the “*Way*” to man’s spiritual fellowship with the Father, and this involves all the rest. That He is the “*Way*” to the Father, will be seen if we consider, what keeps men away from the Father.

I.—INDIFFERENTISM.

The great bulk of mankind are utterly indifferent concerning God; they are without God. “God is not in all their thoughts.” Who can remove this indifferentism? No one but Christ. He comes to the soul, and gives such a revelation of the Father, as stirs its sympathies and excites its interest.

II.—DREAD.

Men are afraid of God. “I heard Thy voice in the garden, and was afraid.” The soul flees from the object it dreads. Who but Christ can remove this dread? He comes and reveals God not as a heartless tyrant or a vindictive judge, but as a Father full of tenderness and love. He comes to the soul in the name of God and says—“It is I, be not afraid.”

III.—ENMITY.

The object you dread you are sure ultimately to hate. By a law of mind, you invest him with the most hideous attributes—

attributes which you loathe and curse. Thus men hate God: "the carnal mind is at enmity with God." So long as they hate God they will keep away from Him, they will shun Him. Who can destroy this enmity? Christ. He comes and assures them that the Object they hate loves them, and always has done.

CONCLUSION. Inasmuch as *Indifferentism*, *Dread*, and *Enmity*, keep the soul away from God, and Christ alone can destroy these, He is, with emphasis, the "*Way*" to a loving fellowship with the Father.

No. LIV.

CHRIST THE TRUTH.

"I am . . . the Truth."—xiv. 6.

The human world abounds with *unrealities*: "Every man walketh in a vain show." Christ is the great Reality in the human world—*the Truth*.

I.—HE IS THE TRUTH IN ITS MOST IMPORTANT FORM.

There is truth in relation to nature, and its passing phenomena, but Christ is Truth in relation to the grandest realities of being.

First: He is "*Truth*" in relation to *God*. He gives a *true* idea of God; no one else has ever done so, or ever can. "No man hath seen God at any time." You see what God is by looking at Him. Hence he that has seen Him has seen God.

Secondly: He is "*Truth*" in relation to *man*. There are a thousand theories concerning Man, but Christ is the Truth. Truth concerning—(1.) His origin; (2.) His wonderful nature; (3.) His solemn obligations; (4.) His moral condition. He is the "*Truth*" in all these points. "He came to bear witness to the truth."

II.—HE IS THE TRUTH IN ITS MIGHTIEST FORM.

Truth in every form is powerful. Truth in propositions is powerful; truth in example is more powerful. Truth in the example of a child is powerful; truth in the example of a great man is more powerful; truth in the example of the great God is *moral omnipotence*. Here is Eternal Truth embodied in a Divine life.

No. LV.

CHRIST THE LIFE.

"I am . . . the Life."—xiv. 6.

There are untold millions of lives, lives of every species, and of every degree of importance in the universe—plant life, brute life, mind life. But there is *One* life above all others in the world of mind. "*The Life*."

I.—HE IS THE ONLY QUICKENING LIFE.

Human souls in a spiritual sense are dead; dead in relation to

the higher—(1.) Claims; (2.) Enjoyments; (3.) Engagements, and (4.) End of being. Christ is the only Quickener of such souls. His words, “they are spirit and life.” His life is life-giving.

II.—HE IS THE ONLY MODEL LIFE.

No other life ever appeared on earth that has realized the perfect ideal of manhood. There have been men good in some respects, but bad in others. Such were even the best of the patriarchs, the prophets, even the apostles. But Christ was good in *all*, the only perfect Example. Perfect assimilation to Him is at once our grand obligation and our perfect blessedness. “Follow Me,” &c.

III.—HE IS THE ONLY SUSTAINER OF LIFE.

“I am the Bread of life.” His ideas, and spirit, and character are as essential to the life of the soul, as bread is to the life of the body. *His life is the Grand Necessity.* It is only as we drink in His soul-inspiring thoughts that we can live: apart from Him we die.

No. LVI.

MEDIATORIAL RELIGION, THE RELIGION OF MAN.

“No man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.”—xiv. 6.

We shall endeavour to develop the meaning of this remarkable expression by the statement of three facts:

I.—THAT A SPIRITUAL CONNECTION WITH THE ABSOLUTE FATHER, IS THE SUPREME INTEREST OF ALL MORAL INTELLIGENCES.

The language implies, that to come to the Father is the highest destiny of souls. But what is meant by coming to the Father? (1.) It does not mean coming to His *being*, for He is ever *with all*, and *in all*. (2.) It does not mean coming to His *influence*, for “His constant visitation preserveth our spirits.” *It means an approximation—*

First: To His moral attributes. An assimilation to His character; becoming partakers of His nature. It means an approximation—

Secondly: To a deeper consciousness of His love. It means an approximation—

Thirdly: To an entire identification with His will. Having our wills lost in His, He becoming the “*all in all*” of our thoughts, emotions, and activities.

Three things show that this approximation is the *supreme* interest of moral intelligence. (1.) Instinct. The profoundest desire of the soul is for a God. “Show us the Father” is the deepest cry of humanity. (2.) Reason. This approximation is *right*. We are the offspring of God, and *ought* we not thus to come to Him? It is *necessary* as well as *right*. From the con-

stitution of our nature we cannot be happy without. (3.) The Bible. "In Thy presence is fulness of joy."

II.—THAT SUCH A CONNECTION BETWEEN THE ABSOLUTE FATHER AND MAN DOES NOT GENERALLY EXIST.

This is implied. Man is not with the Father, otherwise there would be no meaning in the language. Do not observation and experience show that he is not with "*the Father?*" (1.) Does his character agree with the moral attributes of God? (2.) Has he a consciousness of God's love? Is his *guilty conscience* not rather alarmed with a sense of His displeasure? (3.) Is his will identified with the will of God? Is he not a rebel? Is not the language of his heart, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey Him?" Alas! man is not in spiritual connection with the absolute Father. This is his crime and ruin.

III.—THAT THIS SPIRITUAL CONNECTION BETWEEN THE ABSOLUTE FATHER AND MAN IS OBTAINED THROUGH CHRIST.

"*No man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.*" There are four classes of men who seek to come to the Father.

First: Those who seek to come *without* any Mediator. Deists are of this class.

Secondly: Those who seek to come through a *wrong* Mediator. Pagans, Catholics, Jews. These have their priests and sacrifices.

Thirdly: Those who seek to come through a *right Mediator in a wrong way.*

Fourthly: Those who seek to come through a right Mediator *in a right way.* What a position does Christ assume! He stands between the everlasting Father and humanity, and says, "*No man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.*" No man, be he sage or sovereign.

No. CV.

MAN'S CRY AND CHRIST'S RESPONSE.

"Philip saith unto Him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us," &c. xiv. 8—11.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Ver. 8. "*Philip saith unto Him.*" There is not much recorded of this Philip in the Holy Word. There are a few little incidents which throw some light upon his character, and give us the impression that he was a doubting, irresolute, diffident man. He was of the city of Andrew and Peter, and was at first a disciple of John the Baptist, and heard the testimony which John had given concerning the Messiah. He was called to follow Christ the day after the call of An-

drew and Peter, and was the fourth who attached himself to Jesus as His disciple, and left all and followed Him. The first act recorded of him is one of interest and instruction. He brought Nathanael, who is supposed to have become an apostle under the name of Bartholomew, to Jesus. In Nathanael's case he had a prejudice to contend with which he overcame in an exemplary manner. "Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found Him, of Whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write,

Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Joseph" (chap. i. 44—47). The next incident which we find recorded of Philip is in connection with the miraculous feeding of the five thousand (chap. vi. 1—7). We find that Christ on that occasion singled Philip out from the rest and put this question to him, "Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?" This question, we are told, Christ put to prove him, to try his faith. There were five thousand men assembled on the mountain, weary, and wanting food. The question of our Lord was a perplexing one. Philip's answer was, "Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little." His answer indicated that he entertained no idea that Christ's miraculous agency would meet the case. The next account we have of him is in chap. xii. 22, 23. Certain Greeks came to him, wishing to be introduced to Christ, saying, "Sir, we would see Jesus." Philip does not take the responsibility of the introduction, but gets Andrew to assist him. The only other mention of him is in this verse, and the question he here puts to Christ, and the answer given, constitute one of the most precious sections in the revelation of mercy. "Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us." Two of the disciples had already interrupted Christ at the supper on this His last evening, Peter and Thomas, and now Philip. Such interruptions undoubtedly show how much they felt at ease in the presence of their loving Master. Philip was evidently materialistic in his idea of God. He wanted a *visible* manifestation of Him, and thought that such a manifestation would be all-satisfying.

Ver. 9.—"Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you,

and yet hast thou not known (R. V. DOST THOU NOT KNOW) Me, Philip? he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?" Philip had been upwards of three years with Him. Their intercourse was free and frequent, and yet Philip failed to see the Father in Him. There seems to be a wail of love in this utterance of Christ, as if He had said, Alas, after My three years' manifestation of the Father in Me, thou art ignorant of Him, and this on My last night.

Ver. 10.—"Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? the words that I speak (R. V. SAY) unto you I speak not of (R. V. FROM) Myself: but the Father that dwelleth (R. V. ABIDING) in Me, He doeth the (R. V. HIS) works." Whatever these words mean, they cannot mean personal oneness. Hooker says, the "Son is in the Father, as light in that light out of which it floweth without separation; the Father is in the Son as the light in the light which it causeth and leaveth not." We can understand something of one soul dwelling in another, each making the other the paramount object of its love, the dominant subject of its thought, the primary mover of its actions.

Ver. 11.—"Believe Me that I am in the Father." In affection, thought, purpose. "And the Father in Me." As His image and organ. "Or else believe Me for the very works' sake." "The meaning of our Lord's reply," says Godet, "is that the true Theophany has long been before your eyes in My character, teaching, and works." "Observe," says Dr. Brown, "how this expression of the Mutual In-being of the Father and the Son, passes almost insensibly from the words He said to the works He did."

HOMILETICS.

The passage may be looked upon as containing the *Spiritual cry of man, and the glorious response of Christ.*

I.—THE SPIRITUAL CRY OF MANKIND.

"Shew us the Father." We may take Philip here as representing all men in their deepest spiritual experiences. For what in truth

is the cry of the world, but the cry of spiritual orphans after a lost Father? This is the spring and spirit of all its cries, the wail of the world's heart. It goes forth from different lands and in different languages, but the meaning is the same. The soul has lost its great Father, deeply feels its loss, and cries after Him. "O that I knew where I might find Him!" The cry implies an underlying belief—

First: In the existence of a Great Father. "*Shew us the Father.*" There is no *atheism* in the human heart. *Atheism* is a phantom of the brain, not an instinct of the soul. The idea of God is at the root of all ideas; it is the axle on which the wheels of reason turn. Nor is there any *pantheism* in the human heart. A father is a personality. The heart holds its faith in a father as distinct from the universe as the author from his works. It shows, further, that there is no *Molochism* in the human heart. There are theologies that represent God as cruel and malignant, burning with anger, that can only be appeased by torture and anguish, the Draco of the universe. Some of the popular theologies of Christendom thus misrepresent and blaspheme the Infinite Father. Deep in the heart of man is the belief that the God of the universe is the Father of the soul. You cannot reason this instinctive belief away; it is the deepest hope of the sinner on his deathbed, of the criminal on the gallows. The heart turns to it as the flower to the sun. This cry implies an underlying belief—

Secondly: In the sufficiency of the Father's manifestation. "*It sufficeth us.*" Until the Father comes the soul will have a gnawing hunger and an aching void. (1.) It will satisfy the *intellect*. It will solve the problems our reason seeks to solve in vain, and whose crushing weight philosophy but augments. (2.) It will satisfy the *affections*. It will unfold, purify, harmonize, and centralize all the affections of our moral nature. The repentant prodigal was flooded with joy in the warm caresses of his father's love. As the genial sun of May sets the choristers of the grove into music, the presence of the Father will not only hush all the cries of the child, but fill the heart with filial rapture. The passage contains—

II.—THE SATISFACTORY RESPONSE OF CHRIST.

"*He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father.*" "He was God manifest in the flesh and the brightness of His glory." In Christ the Father of man appears to man in man's nature.

First: This was now amply attested. "*The words that I speak unto you I speak not of Myself: but the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works.*" "*Believest thou not that I am in the Father?*"* Who but the Father could have wrought those works which He accomplished? Who but the Father could have inspired those

* See *Germes*, p. 14, 15.

sublime doctrines which He proclaimed? Who but the Father could have produced such a character as He manifested?

Secondly: This was now practically ignored. "*Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip?*" Two things are to be observed here. (1.) A criminal neglect of means. "*Have I*"—the medium of His power, the organ of His love, the Revealer of His thoughts, and the Image of His character—"been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me?" (2.) The finality of revelation. "*How sayest thou then, shew us the Father?*" There is no other revelation of the Father to come, "No man hath seen God at any time: the only begotten Son, He hath declared Him." If you cannot find the Father in Me you will never find Him. You will not find Him abroad in the universe, nor in the speculations of philosophy.

CONCLUSION. The great want of our nature is fellowship with the Father. Without this, whatever else thou hast, thy destitution is terrible. No amount of worldly wealth, no measure of social influence, no degree of intellectual culture, will be of any real or lasting service to thee without this. Unless thou art brought back to the home, the bosom, the embrace of thy Father, thou wilt be of all orphans the most wretched for ever and ever. Brethren, our work is, as far as we can, to show men the Father. The unsophisticated millions yearn for a Father, and neither in church or chapel do they often find Him, and they retire and avoid such scenes altogether. One preacher will present a *Partial Deity* instead of a Father, and tell men that the Supreme One chooses the few and damns the many. Another preacher will present an *Infinite Merchant* as the Father, and represent Him as having disposed of a certain number of human souls on stipulated conditions to Christ, that they only will be saved, and the others damned. Another preacher presents Him as an *Avenging God*, burning with such wrath towards the sinner as can only be quenched by the blood of His innocent Son. The unsophisticated men when they come, hear such representations, recoil with revulsion and horror from such a God, and still cry out—"Shew us the Father." We need a Father.

GERMS OF THOUGHT.

No. LVII.

CHRIST IN THE FATHER.

"Believest Thou not that I am in the Father?"—xiv. 10.

Christ is—

I.—IN THE FATHER'S AFFECTIONS.

He loves Christ more than He loves the universe. "This is My beloved Son." As a loving child lives in the affection of his parent,

so Christ in an infinitely higher degree lives in the heart of God. Christ is—

II.—IN THE FATHER'S THOUGHTS.

- What an intelligent being loves most he will think most about. (1.) He is the Logos, the Revealer of the Divine thought. As the word is in the mind before it is sounded, Christ is in God. (2.) He is the Executor of the Divine thought. By Him His creative and redemptive thoughts, His governing, and His retributory thoughts, are carried out,—“*I am in the Father.*”

No. LVIII.

THE FATHER IN CHRIST.

“I am in the Father, and the Father in Me.”—xiv. 10.

Christ probably means to say, “*The Father in Me,*” as—

I.—HIS SPECIAL TEMPLE.

He Whom the “Heaven of Heavens cannot contain” has a special dwelling in Me. In Me, He manifests Himself in a fulness and glory in which He is seen nowhere else. He is in Me as—

II.—HIS SPECIAL ORGAN.

As the soul dwells in the body He dwells in Me, and works by Me. He is in Me as—

III.—HIS SPECIAL REVEALER.

“I am the brightness of His glory, the express image of His person.” I reveal His power, His wisdom, His moral character, which is all pure, just, tender, and compassionate. He is in Me as—

IV.—HIS SPECIAL DEVOTEE.

He is the Object of My supreme love. I subordinate all My thoughts, and powers, and aims, to Him. I am devoted to His will. He is “My all in all.”

No. LIX.

GOD IN CHRIST.

“The Father in Me.”—xiv. 11.

The Father, is He not in all? In every tree, stream, and star? Verily, He is in all. There is no life in which He is not. But Christ says, He is in Me. And this in a higher sense than He is in any other existence. He is in nature as the animating principle. He is in holy souls as an inspiring influence. But He is in Christ as a Divine Personality. In Him He is “God manifest in the flesh.”

I.—THE FATHER IS IN HIM AS AN APPRECIABLE PERSONALITY.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to realize the Divine personality

in nature. He seems so vast and so boundless. But in Christ He comes within the range of our (1) *senses*, (2) *sympathies*, and (3) *experiences*. He has "bowed the heavens," and come down in our midst.

II.—THE FATHER IS IN HIM AS AN ATTRACTIVE PERSONALITY.

Does *Wonder* attract? He is "the Wonderful." Does *Love* attract? He is the tenderest, the strongest, the most self-sacrificing and unconquerable love. Does *Beauty* attract? He is the "altogether lovely." In Christ there is the power to draw all men to Him.

III.—THE FATHER IS IN HIM AS AN IMITABLE PERSONALITY.

Our obligation and our well-being require us to become like God, partakers of the Divine nature, "holy even as He is holy." In Christ He appears pre-eminently imitable. (1) His love wins our hearts, (2) His principles command our consciences, (3) His moral glories inspire our admiration. Thus we can imitate Him.

No. CVI.

THE SPIRITUAL REFORMATION OF HUMANITY.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also," &c.—xiv. 12—14.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Ver. 12.—"*Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also.*" It must be remembered that Christ was consoling His disciples in prospect of His departure. It was His final meeting with them before His death. Deeply, no doubt, did they feel how much they would lose, when a Friend, Who had wrought amongst them such mighty works, would withdraw. Virtually He says to them, "Let not your hearts be troubled about this matter, because when I am gone," "*the works that I do shall he do.*" You shall perform miracles if you believe on Me. This promise was fulfilled. "*And greater works.*" The word "*works*" here should be omitted, although it is implied. What were the greater works? Not greater miracles, for their history shows that the miracles they wrought after His departure were not so great in their nature or number as His. The works, undoubtedly, refer to those connected with the *Spiritual Regeneration* of the world: in other words, the conversion of mankind. Witness, for example, the moral wonders of the day of Pentecost. "*Because I go*

unto My (R. v. THE) *Father.*" This refers to His re-entrance into the heavenly world.

Vers. 13, 14.—"*And whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will I do,*" &c. "This prayer is thought of as addressed to the Father, but the answer here, and still more emphatically in the following verse, is thought of as coming from the Son, Who is one with the Father. The width and limitation of the promise are both to be noted. It is, '*whatsoever ye shall ask;*' and it is ask '*in My name.*' This means as My representatives on earth, as doing My work, living in My Spirit, seeking, as I have sought to do, the will of My Father. It follows from this that personal petitions are not contemplated here, except as far as they are for the glory of God; and that petitions asked in ignorance may be most truly answered when they are not granted."—*Watkins*. The essence of these verses may be given as follows, I think: **WHATSOEVER IN CONNECTION WITH THIS GREAT WORK YOU HEARTILY DESIRE FOR MY SAKE, I WILL DO, AND THUS GLORIFY THE FATHER.**

HOMILETICS.

The great subject of these words is the *Spiritual Reformation of Humanity*, and they suggest three facts in relation to this great work.

I.—THAT IT IS A “GREATER WORK” THAN THE PERFORMANCE OF A MIRACLE.

“Greater works than these shall he do.”

Another fact suggested concerning this “greater work” is—

II.—THAT FAITH IN CHRIST WILL QUALIFY ANY MAN TO ACHIEVE THIS “GREATER WORK.”

“He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also.”

The other fact suggested concerning this “greater work” is—

III.—THAT THE ASCENSION OF CHRIST TO HEAVEN IS THE GUARANTEE FOR ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THIS “GREATER WORK.”

*“Because I go unto My Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will I do.”**

No. CVII.

THE DIVINITY OF A CHRIST-LOVING SOUL.

“If ye love Me, keep My commandments,” &c.—xiv. 15—27.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Ver. 15.—*“If ye love Me.”* “Me” is emphatic. “Keep (R. V. YE WILL KEEP) My commandments.” Probably He especially refers to the precepts He was addressing to them in this discourse.

Ver. 16.—*“And I will pray the Father.”* I will ask the Father. The words imply nearness and familiarity. *“And He shall give you another Comforter.”* Paraclete. This word means “advocate,” and it is used here (and in verse 26, also chapters xv. 26; xvi. 7) for the Divine Spirit, Who is here spoken of as a person. John in his epistle (1 chap. ii. 1) applies the word to Christ Himself. The word “another” points to an advocate or “Comforter” in some sense distinct from Himself. He had been a “Comforter” or Advocate to them up to this point, but now He was about leaving them and departing to His Father, and He would send them some other person, or, as some suppose, He would in some

other way come and comfort them. *Help* would perhaps be the best word. *“That He may abide (R. V. BE) with you for ever.”* He, their “Comforter,” in the person of a Man, was now leaving them, but He would come again in the person of the Paraclete, and in this spiritual way He would remain with them (Matt. xxviii. 20).

Ver. 17.—*“Even the Spirit of truth.”* “Compare chaps. xv. 26; and xvi. 13; 1 John v. 6. He is called the ‘Spirit of Truth,’ because part of His special office is to bring truth home to the hearts of men, to carry it from the material to the moral sphere, to make it something more than a collection of signs seen or heard, a living power in living men.”—*Watkins.* *“Whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth (R. V. BEHOLDETH) Him not, neither knoweth Him.”* “It was by no arbitrary act that the Spirit came down upon one hundred and twenty only, on the day of Pentecost, and not on

* A fuller development of these thoughts will be found in Homily at end of volume.

all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the former having alone undergone the indispensable preparation. Jesus explains wherein this preparation, which the world is without, consists; before receiving they must have seen and known the Spirit. The Spirit identifies Himself too closely with our individual life to be merely a bestowed gift; if He is to dwell in us He must be desired and summoned by us.—*Godet*. “*But ye know Him; for He dwelleth (R. V. ABIDETH) with you, and shall be in you.*” The words imply that they already had some knowledge and experience of this Paraclete or Helper. So they had of Christ.

Ver. 18.—“*I will not leave you comfortless (R. V. DESOLATE). Orphanous,—orphans. “I will come to you” (R. V. I COME UNTO YOU). I will return to you. Here, undoubtedly, it is implied that He Himself is the Paraclete, Who will in spirit return and administer to His disciples. “The Holy Spirit,” says Tholuck, “is only the Person of Jesus spiritualised.*”

Ver. 19.—“*Yet a little while, and the world seeth (R. V. BEHOLDETH) Me no more; but ye see (R. V. BEHOLD) Me.*” Though I shall be beyond your physical vision you shall see Me in the spiritual presence of the Paraclete. “*Because I live, ye shall live also.*” For I live, and ye shall live. His life is the Source of all spiritual life in His disciples.

Ver. 20.—“*At (R. V. IN) that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you.*” “*That day*” indicates a definite period, particularly the day of Pentecost. That was the day of Christ’s spiritual advent to the world, the most important of all His advents. His advent in the flesh was only for a short period, and confined Him to certain limits; but His advent in the Spirit, or in the Paraclete, is for indefinite ages, and for the wide and ever-growing world of humanity. In this period His disciples will know the vital identification of Christ with the Father, and they with Him.

Ver. 21.—“*He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is*

that loveth Me: and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to (R. V. UNTO) him.” The meaning is that obedience to Him will demonstrate their love for Him, and their love to Him will ensure both the love and the manifestation of the Father.

Ver. 22.—“*Judas (R. V. NOT ISCARIOT) saith unto Him, not Iscariot.*” That he was not Iscariot is mentioned to distinguish him beyond all possibility of confusion, from him who had gone out into the darkness, and was no longer one of their number (chap. xiii. 30). He is commonly identified with Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddæus, and was a brother or son of James (Luke vi. 15). “*Lord, how is it (R. V. WHAT IS COME TO PASS) that Thou wilt manifest Thyself unto us, and not unto the world?*” The word “*manifest*” started to the mind of Judas, as the word “*See*” to the mind of Philip, thoughts of a material manifestation of God; such as Moses desired. But the manifestation which Christ meant was a spiritual one—the manifestation of the moral reign of God in the soul. Christ’s words seem to have taken Judas by surprise: he says virtually, “*What has happened that Thou wilt manifest Thyself to us?*”

Ver. 23.—“*Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love Me, he will keep My words (R. V. WORD): and My Father will love him.*” Here the condition necessary to a consciousness of the Divine Presence and Power is once more repeated,—it is love and obedience. “*We will come unto him, and make our abode with him.*” This language is perhaps an allusion to God as dwelling in symbol, in the sanctuary of old among His people.

Ver. 24.—“*He that loveth Me not keepeth not My sayings (R. V. WORDS), &c.* No man that does not love Christ will obey Him, and no man that does not obey Him can enjoy this intimate connection with Himself and the Father.

Ver. 25.—“*These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you.*” (R. V. WHILE YET ABIDING WITH YOU.)

I tell you these things while I am in the flesh.

Ver. 26.—“*But the Comforter, which is (R. V. EVEN) the Holy Ghost (R. V. SPIRIT), whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring (R. V. TO YOUR REMEMBRANCE) all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have (R. V. ALL THAT I SAID) said unto you.*” This Paraclete was to be sent to them by the Father; sent by the Father in the name of Christ; sent in the name of Christ in order to reproduce in their memory and consciousness all things Christ had said.

Ver. 27.—“*Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you,*” &c. “The immediate context speaks of His departure from them (vers. 25 and 28), and it is natural therefore to understand these words as suggested by the Common Oriental formulas of leave-taking. Men said to each other, when they met and parted, *Shalom! Shalom!* (*Peace, Peace*) just as they say the *Salaam! Salaam!* in our own day (1 Sam. i. 17; Luke vii. 50; Acts xvi. 36; Eph. vi. 23; James ii. 16; 1 Peter v. 14; 3 John i. 15).”—*Watkins*. Peace is His legacy. A peace unlike that of the world.

HOMILETICS.

These verses may be looked upon as unfolding the *Divinity of a Christ-loving soul*. Here such a soul is represented as living a Divine life, possessing a Divine Helper, enjoying Divine companionship, and participating in Divine peace.

I.—AS LIVING A DIVINE LIFE.

The life is that of practising Divine commandments. “*If ye love Me, keep My commandments.*” It is taught in this paragraph that this obedience is at once the effect and evidence of love to Christ.

First: It is the effect. “*If ye love Me, keep My commandments.*” Here is a law of mind. He who really loves another is naturally desirous of acting in accord with the wishes and the will of the object loved. Without such a desire there is no true love. It may be mere sentiment, passing emotion, but infinitely remote from love of the right stamp. The child that really loves its parent wishes to act out the will of its parent, and thus at once gratify and prove its affection. Love is always hungering for an opportunity to reveal itself to its object in some practical way. And this is its happiness. Obedience to Christ’s commandments, if not the effect of love is not obedience at all.

Secondly: It is the evidence. “*He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me.*” He, and no one else. There may be the most glowing songs of praise, the sublimest language of adoration, and the most vigorous observance of the mere letter of His law, but all this would not necessarily prove the existence of *love*. Love is only proved by practical obedience. Hence, then, the Christ-loving soul is ever living a Divine life, carrying out in all the plans and pursuits of daily existence the laws of the Divine. He is, in a sense, the Divine “word made flesh,” the will of God embodied and wrought out. How unlike the life of mere worldly men. They embody and work out only

the current ideas and notions of their age. "I will run the way of Thy commandments when Thou shalt enlarge my heart." Here the Christ-loving soul is represented—

II.—AS POSSESSING A DIVINE HELPER.

"And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth." This is promised to the Christ-loving soul and to no other. Four things are taught in the passage concerning this "Comforter," Advocate, or Helper.

First: He is the Gift of the Father. "*I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter.*" The "Father," Who "so loved the world as to give His only begotten Son," so loves those who love His Son, as to send this spiritual Helper. It is a gift, a free, sovereign, priceless gift. Another thing taught concerning the "Comforter" is—

Secondly: He is the Messenger of reality. "*Even the Spirit of Truth.*" The human world is under the dominion of falsehoods and shams; error rules it. "Every man walketh in a vain show." False ideas of life, and duty, and God, and happiness, and greatness everywhere prevail. This is its guilt and its ruin. This Paraclete comes as the messenger of reality, comes to scatter delusions, and to bring souls into contact with the morally real. Christ's Kingdom is the kingdom of truth. "I came to bear witness of the truth." Another thing taught here concerning the "Comforter" is—

Thirdly: He is exclusively for the Christ-loving. "*Whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.*"* This love is at once the receptive and the recognizing faculty: without it He can never be received or seen. Love opens the eyes of the soul to see, and the doors of the heart to welcome. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. ii. 14). As soon may a man who has not attained the faculty of reading, see in "Paradise Lost" the genius of Milton that breathes in it all, as the man who has not the love of Christ see and receive the Spirit of God, the glorious Paraclete. Another thing taught here concerning the "Comforter" is—

Fourthly: He is the spiritual presence of Christ. "*I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.*"† Though My body will depart from you, and pass beyond the reach of your senses, "*I will come to you*" in Spirit. "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end." Christ is as truly here with His genuine disciples now as He was when He tabernacled among them in the flesh. The other thing taught here concerning the "Comforter" is—

* See Germ, p. 22.

† See Germ, p. 22.

Fifthly: He instructs in the things of Christ. "*He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.*" In another place Christ said, "He will guide you into all the truth." The things that Christ has said He would bring to "*remembrance,*" re-produce with new vitality and vigour, and into the regions of undiscovered truths He will lead them as their Guide. Here the Christ-loving soul is represented—

III.—AS ENJOYING DIVINE COMPANIONSHIP.

"*At that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you.*" "*My Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.*" Love to Christ makes the soul the residence of God. Such a soul He enters not as a passing visitor, but as a permanent guest. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (1 Cor. iii. 16.) And here He says, "*We will come unto him,*" the Father and the Son. "If any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him." What a companionship is this!

"In secret silence of the mind,
My Heaven and there my God I find."

Truly "our fellowship is indeed with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ." Here the Christ-loving soul is represented—

IV.—AS PARTICIPATING IN DIVINE PEACE.

"*Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you.*" "*Peace,*"—what a blessing! Peace with our own conscience, peace with society, peace with God. "*Not as the world giveth, give I unto you.*" (1.) Not as to *quality*. The world gives *inferior* gifts. Christ gives the highest. The world gives *non-essential* gifts. Men can do without the best things that the world can give; they cannot do without Christ's gifts. (2.) Not as to *manner*. (a) The world gives *selfishly*. It looks for something in return. Christ gives from infinite disinterestedness. (β) The world gives *limitedly*. It cannot give much; it has neither the heart nor the capacity. Christ gives *unlimitedly*. He openeth His liberal hand. (γ) The world gives *occasionally*. It is only now and then by moods. Christ gives *constantly*. (δ) The world gives to its *friends*. It loves its own. Christ gives to His enemies.

GERMS OF THOUGHT.

No. LX.

THE SPIRIT WITH YOU AND IN YOU.

"He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."—xiv. 17.

Three remarks are suggested. It is implied—

I.—THAT A MAN MAY HAVE THE DIVINE SPIRIT WITH HIM, BUT NOT IN HIM.

The Divine Spirit was now with the disciples in the Person of Christ. He was the temple of the Godhead. Every man on the earth has the Divine Spirit *with* him. With him—(1.) In the operations of nature. With him—(2.) In the revelations of the Bible. With him—(3.) In the events of history. With him—(4.) In the biography of all good men. It is implied—

II.—THAT IT IS A GREAT PRIVILEGE FOR A MAN TO HAVE THE SPIRIT OF GOD WITH HIM.

What a privilege it was for the disciples to have the Spirit of God with them in the person of Christ! When the Spirit of God is with us, we have one at our side Who is ever ready to Guide us, Protect us, Strengthen us, and Perfect us. It is implied—

III.—THAT IT IS A GREATER PRIVILEGE FOR A MAN TO HAVE THE SPIRIT OF GOD IN HIM.

Christ had unfolded to His disciples an infinite system of truth; but His doctrines lay cold and dead in their memories. He deposited precious seed in the soil; but the soil lacked that warmth and sunshine that the Spirit of God alone could give. When the Spirit of God is in you, you have spiritual *Life, Satisfaction, Power*. Compare the difference between the apostles when Christ was *with* them before His death, and when He came *into* them at the Pentecost.

No. LXI.

SOUL ORPHANHOOD.

"I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you."—xiv. 18.

Ορφάνους is the original word here, and it is a pity that the translators should have rendered it "*comfortless*." The text leads us to offer some remarks on soul orphanhood.

I.—SOUL ORPHANHOOD CONSISTS IN MORAL SEPARATION FROM GOD.

This seems to be implied. We say *moral* separation, not *local*, for God is everywhere, and no spirit can flee from His presence. Not *physical*; for as an existent it has its life and force in God.

But *morally* it may be distant from Him, and in the case of the unregenerate is ever distant from Him. It is alienated from Him in sympathy, purpose, and pursuit. It is without God. "God is not in all its thoughts." The ungodly world is a world of orphans. They are without a father's fellowship and guidance.

II.—SOUL ORPHANHOOD IS AN EVIL OF STUPENDOUS MAGNITUDE.

The language of Christ implies, that His disciples would feel this orphanism to be the greatest of evils; and a terrible evil in truth it is.

First: Orphanism, so far as human parents are concerned, is a *calamity*; but *this is a crime*. A child bereft of its parents, left alone, disconsolate, and desolate in this cold world, is truly an object of commiseration, but not of blame. The Great Disposer of life deprived him of his earthly guardians. But in the orphanage of soul there is guilt. The soul has broken away from its Father: the Father has not gone from it.

Secondly: Orphanism, so far as human parents is concerned, may *have its loss supplied by others*, but *this cannot be supplied*. Society in many cases supplies the poor orphan with friends, and does more for his happiness than his parents could. Thank God, society in this age has loving hearts, and wholesome food, and comfortable clothing, and good homes for orphans. But nothing on earth can relieve *soul orphanhood*: nothing in the universe;—nothing can take the place of God in relation to the soul. Oh! there is no evil comparable to it. The starving child at night in a wilderness, teeming with beasts of prey, crying for food, protection, and guidance, is not in a condition half so terrible as an orphan soul—a soul without God: such a soul is benighted, perishing, lost.

III.—SOUL ORPHANHOOD IS REMOVED BY THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST.

"*I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.*" Here Christ speaks of Himself not merely as the Substitute of the Father, but as the Father Himself; as if He had said, "My coming to you will be as the coming of the Father to you, for I and My Father are one." "Show us the Father, and it sufficeth," said Philip. Christ answered, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father also." Christ brings the soul into a loving, joyous, blessed fellowship with God. The deep cry of humanity is the cry of the orphan for the Father. The response to that cry is the advent of Christ.

No. CVIII.

CHRIST'S EXIT FROM THE WORLD.

"Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away," &c.—xiv. 28—31.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Ver. 28.—*"Ye have* (R. V. YE HEARD) *heard how I said unto* (R. V. TO YOU) *you, I go away, and come again* (R. V. I COME) *unto you."* Christ had in verse 12 said, "I go unto My Father." In fact, He had stated it more than once, with more or less distinctness (see also ver. 19, 20). "*If ye loved Me, ye would rejoice*" (R. V. HAVE REJOICED). "The words," says *Godet*, "*If ye loved Me,*" are exquisitely tender. The Saviour uses them to make their joy the duty of affection; He calls their attention to His approaching exaltation (compare xiii. 3, 31, 32). What friend would not rejoice to see his friend raised to a position truly worthy of him? And if they rightly understood the extent of this change in their Master's situation, they would at the same time rejoice for themselves. It implied that His departure would, in some way, be to His advantage, therefore, though His separation from them might be painful to them to some extent, inasmuch as they loved Him, they should rejoice. It is the eternal law of true love to rejoice in the good of its object. '*My* (R. V. THE) *Father is greater than I.*' This is an expression which is much controverted. It is difficult for those who hold the tenet that the Son is the very God of the substance of the Father, begotten before all worlds, to accept the idea of His inferiority here expressed. Distinctness of personality from the Father, and subordination to Him, is here declared. At the same time, His transcendent greatness is undoubtedly implied. What should we think of the greatest men that ever lived, Paul, Plato, Socrates, &c., thus comparing themselves with the Infinite One, and saying, He is greater, &c.? Calvin supposes that the inferiority here implied is not in His *personality*, but in His *condition*. His words are, 'Christ does not here compare the Godhead of His Father with His own, nor His

human nature with the Divine essence of the Father, but His present condition with that heavenly glory into which He was soon to be received.'" The Father's condition in the universe is infinitely glorious and blessed. But Christ's condition when on earth was one of humiliation. He appeared without any form of comeliness, "a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief."

Ver. 29.—"*And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might* (R. V. MAY) *believe."* Here again, He tells them the event before the accomplishment, that it may serve to strengthen their faith. "Two interpretations of this verse are possible. (1.) That He told them of the coming of the Advocate to teach all truth, and bring all things to their remembrance, in order that in the fulfilment of this they might, with increase of faith, believe in Him. (2.) That He told them of His going to the Father in order that when the hour of departure came they might believe that He had gone to the Father. Upon the whole, and especially considering the close parallel with chap. xiii. 29, the first seems the more probable meaning."

Ver. 30.—"*Hereafter I will not talk* (R. V. I WILL NO MORE SPEAK) *much with you."* I will say but little more to you. My words are coming to a close. My teaching is approaching its end. My voice you will soon hear no more. "*For the prince of this* (R. V. THE) *world cometh, and* (R. V. HE HATH) *hath nothing in Me."* Here the existence, the personality, and world-wide authority of the evil spirit is unmistakably taught by the Infallible Teacher. Elsewhere he is called "the Prince of the power of darkness, that worketh in the children of disobedience." The "*Prince of this world cometh,*" cometh with hostile intent, cometh for a last grand attack. Foiled in his first deadly assault he

had “departed,” but for a season only. (See Luke iv. 13.) That season is now all but come, and his whole energies are to be once more put forth—with what effect the next words sublimely express. “*And hath nothing in Me.*” Nothing of his own in Me, nothing of sin on which to fasten as a righteous cause of condemnation. As the prince of this world he wields his sceptre over willing subjects, but in Me he shall find no sympathy with his objects, no acknowledgment of his sovereignty, no subjection to his demands.

Ver. 31.—“*But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave Me commandment—even so I do.*” The most probable arrangement of this verse is to omit the period after “*So I do,*” and to consider

all down to this point as governed by “*that.*” We shall read them thus,—“*But that the world may know that I love the Father; and that as the Father gave Me commandment, so I do, arise, let us go hence.*” He has asserted, in the previous verse, the sinlessness which makes His act wholly self-determined. He now expresses the subordination of His own to the Father’s will. The words seem to point back to the “prince of the world” who has just been mentioned. The prince cometh, but it is to a defeat, and the very world over which he has ruled will see in the self-sacrifice of Jesus the love of the Father. That love will reclaim them from the bondage of the oppressor, and restore them to the freedom of children.

HOMILETICS.

The following remarks are here suggested concerning *Christ’s Exit from the World*:—

I.—HIS DEPARTURE WAS OF HIS OWN FREE CHOICE.

“*Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away.*” “*I go.*” I am not driven or forced from the earth, but I go out of it unforced and free. Thus indeed He came into the world at first. “*I am come that ye might have life.*” All other men were *sent* into the world. They had no choice. But He came of His own free will, came at His own time, into the sphere and condition in which He appeared. During His sojourn on this earth He moved freely, went hither and thither according to His own good pleasure, and now He departs from it with a free step. “*I go away.*” This fact exposes the moral impropriety, nay, the blasphemy of representing Him as the *victim* of forces over which He had no control, an object to be compassionated, to be wept over with the tears of pity. Christ even upon the Cross should be preached, not as a *Helpless Victim*, but as a victorious Hero fighting the moral battles of humanity. How often did He assure His hearers of this during His public ministry! “*No man taketh My life from Me. I have power to lay it down, and take it up again. For this purpose I came into the world, to bear witness of the truth.*” To pity Him even in His greatest agonies is impiety. To adore Him as the Commander of the people, and the “*Captain of human salvation,*” is that state of mind which He deserves, demands, and alone approves.

Observe here—

II.—HIS DEPARTURE WAS ONLY FOR A BRIEF PERIOD.

“*I go away, and come again unto you.*” Christ comes to His disciples in two ways—

First: By His Spirit. “I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.” Thus He comes into their souls in all Righteous admirations, all Holy aspirations, all True consolations, and all Purifying and Uplifting influences. He comes in to the spirit of His disciples with the advent of every truth.

Secondly: By their dissolution. “I will come,” He says, “and take you unto Myself.” “In such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.” Yes, He comes at death, dis-imprisons the spirit from its mortal cell, leads it through the “valley of the shadow of death.” His departure therefore was very temporary. He withdrew His body from their senses, only that His Spirit might enter their souls. Indeed it is ever true that the withdrawal of the bodily forms of our friends by death serves to bring them not only near to our hearts, but into the very chamber of our spirits. When a godly friend dies he virtually says, “*I will come again unto you,*” and verily he does come and dwell as a Permanent Resident in our memories.

III.—HIS DEPARTURE WAS A RETURN TO HIS FATHER.

“*If ye loved Me, ye would rejoice,* because I said, I go unto the Father: for My Father is greater than I.*” What does He mean by going to the Father? Was not the Father always with Him? Yes. But there were certain obstructions to the closest fellowship and the fullest enjoyment: obstructions which death alone could remove. What were they?

(1.) *There was the body with its infirmities.* His body was, as it were, a material veil which lay between Him and the Infinite Father. His hungerings, thirstings, fatigues, tended no doubt to interrupt the fellowship. (2.) *There was the sinful condition of the world in which He lived.* The evils of falsehoods, dishonesties, impieties, blasphemies, which crowded the moral atmosphere of the age in which He lived, tended, no doubt, to interfere with His fellowship with the Father. (3.) *There was the influence of the principalities and powers of darkness.* Satan, “the prince of the power of the air,” never perhaps deserted Him, assailing Him at every point of His soul. Though he could not tempt Him, yet he teased Him. No doubt, therefore, His fellowship with God here was interrupted. Now all these things interrupt the fellowship of the good man with God here. Every good man has—
(a.) The body with its thick veil intervening. (b.) A sinful world whose exhalations darken his moral sky. (c.) Satanic influence

* See Germ, p. 28.

pressing him away from the Father. But in connection with all this, the godly man has something more. He has what Christ had not,—*Worldly cares, Inward depravity, Corrupt habits.* At death, however, these things are removed, the soul passes away from the material and corrupt into the immediate presence of its God. We should not sorrow for the departed good. Indeed, if we love them, we ought to rejoice because they have gone to the Father. They are with their Father. Away from clouds and storms and enemies, they are “for ever with the Lord.”

IV.—HIS DEPARTURE WAS MERCIFULLY FORETOLD.

“*And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe.*” To be forewarned is to be forearmed. Suppose all the horrors connected with Christ in the garden of Gethsemane, and before His judges, and in His dying agonies on the cross, had come upon His disciples unawares, could their faith have stood the revelation? Would they not have been tempted to feel that He Whom they had been following as the Messiah was but a feeble man, therefore a gross impostor? Christ knew the danger, and here forewarns them; tells them that He knew all that was before Him; that nothing would come upon Him as a surprise; that with all His coming agonies He was perfectly acquainted; and into the roaring fiery tempest He entered freely. This foretelling of the whole prepared them so, that when the storm came, instead of shaking their faith it deepened and strengthened it.

V.—HIS DEPARTURE WAS AN ENCOUNTERING OF SATAN.

“*Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me. But that the world may know that I love the Father. . . Arise, let us go hence.*”* He had before grappled with Satan in the wilderness when He was an hungered forty days and forty nights, but now He was to encounter him in more terrible forms. He was to meet this gigantic fiend, who works in the children of disobedience, in the treachery of Judas, in the violence of the Roman ruffians in the garden of Gethsemane, in the slanders and insolence of His judges, Caiaphas, Herod, Pilate, in the mockeries and insults of the maddened rabble that surrounded His Cross. Truly on His way out of the world to the Father He had a terrible battle with this fiend. Yet He conquered, He spoiled their principalities and powers, and “made a show of them; openly triumphing over them in His cross.”

CONCLUSION. The departure of truly good men from the world is in some respects like the departure of Christ. It is more or

* See Germ, p. 30.

less voluntary. "I am ready to be offered, and the time of My departure is at hand." It is a going to the Father, in "Whose presence there is fulness of joy; at Whose right hand there are pleasures for evermore." It is an encountering of Satan in his bitterest opposition, knowing that it is final; knowing that if they leave this world uncrushed by him they pass beyond his reach for ever.

GERMS OF THOUGHT.

No. LXII.

THE DEATH OF THE GOOD A REASON FOR JOY.

"If ye loved Me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father."—
xiv. 28.

There are three things connected with this verse which strike us at the outset.

First: The view which Christ had of His death. "I go away." "*I go unto the Father.*" Whence does He go? From this world, where He had been so wickedly treated, &c. Whither does He go? To "*the Father,*" not to *destruction*, not to eternal solitude, not to fellowship with minor souls. But to "*the Father.*" How does He go? He is not *driven*—He is not forced against His will. "*I go.*" Other men are sent to the grave. Christ went—freely went.

Secondly: The sadness of His disciples at the prospect of His death. The eleven were with Him now on the eve of His crucifixion, and sorrow filled their hearts—the sorrow of sympathy, the sorrow of fear. They were troubled; and no wonder.

Thirdly: The consolatory thought which He here addresses to them. That was, that He was going to His Father, going into the happiest conceivable state, into conscious fellowship with Infinite Love. The text contains three general truths.

I.—THAT GENUINE LOVE REJOICES IN THE HAPPINESS OF ITS OBJECT.

"*If ye loved Me, ye would rejoice.*" The love that is more ready to weep with those that weep, than rejoice with those that rejoice, is not of the genuine type. It is of the essence of tried love to yearn after, to struggle for, and to rejoice in, the happiness of its object. To make happy is the supreme wish of love. This fact is so true to our consciousness that it requires no proof. Its illustrations are manifold. It finds its illustrations—

First: In the creation. Whence sprung the universe? From love. Love created in order to diffuse happiness. Love rejoices in the happiness of the creation.

Secondly: In Christ's mission. Christ came into the world to make happy the objects of Infinite Love. He was love's Messenger

to banish the sufferings of humanity, and to fill the world with heavenly joy.

Thirdly: In Christian labour. The strongest wish of all Christian souls, the great end of all Christians, is to make people happy. Happiness is the grand end of all true Church work. Another general truth contained in this passage is—

II.—THAT THE HAPPINESS OF MEN DEPENDS UPON FELLOWSHIP WITH THE FATHER.

“*I go unto the Father.*” “In Thy presence is fulness of joy; at Thy right hand are pleasures for evermore.” It is as impossible for the human soul, constituted as it is, to be happy without God, as it is for the stream to flow on cut off from the fountain, the tree to grow uprooted from the soil, the star to shine severed from its great centre orb. The Infinite Father is the Fountain of all true joy.

First: Happiness is in love. Where there is no love there can be no happiness.

Secondly: The love to produce happiness must be directed to the Father. His perfection delights it; His goodness reciprocates it.

Thirdly: Love for the Father yearns for fellowship with Him. Love always craves for the presence of its object. The happiness of the soul is to be with the Father. The great end of Christ's mediation was that “the Lord God might dwell amongst men.” Another general truth contained in this passage is—

III.—THAT DEATH INTRODUCES THE GOOD INTO A SPECIALLY CLOSE FELLOWSHIP WITH THE FATHER.

“*I go unto the Father.*” But had He not always been with the Father? Yes; but there had been obstructions to the closest fellowship. What were they? As we have already said—

First: There was the body with its infirmities. His body was, as it were, a material veil which lay between Him and the Infinite Father. His hungerings, thirstings, fatigues, tended no doubt to interrupt the fellowship.

Secondly: There was the sinful condition of the world in which He lived. The evils of falsehoods, dishonesties, impieties, blasphemies, which crowded the moral atmosphere of the age in which He lived, tended no doubt to interfere with His fellowship with the Father.

Thirdly: There was the influence of the “principalities and powers of darkness.” Satan, the prince of the power of the air, never perhaps deserted Him, assailing Him at every point of His soul. Though He could not tempt Him, yet he assailed Him. No doubt, therefore, His fellowship with God here was interrupted. Now, all these things interrupt the fellowship of the good man with God here. (1.) He has the body with its thick veil

intervening. (2.) He has a sinful world whose exhalations darken his moral sky. (3.) He has Satanic influences pressing him away from the Father. But in connection with all this, the godly man has something more. He has what Christ had not. (1.) Worldly cares. (2.) Inward depravity. (3.) Corrupt habits. At death, however, these things are removed; the soul passes away from the material and corrupt into the immediate presence of its God.

CONCLUSION. We need not sorrow for the departed good. Indeed, if we love them, we ought to rejoice because they have gone to their Father. They are with their Father. Away from clouds and storms and enemies, they are "for ever with the Lord."

No. LXIII.

THE CALMNESS OF CHRIST.

"Arise, let us go hence."—xiv. 31.

"Go hence." Whither? To the horrors of Gethsemane, to the tortures of hostile tribunals, to the insults of infuriated mobs, to the agonies of the Cross. Considering His *whither*, what a spirit of sublime calmness breathes in these words! The moral calmness of Christ appears everywhere in His history; it breathes in His answers to insulting and malignant men, in His sublime silence before His hostile judges, in His unperturbed bearing amidst infuriated mobs. It is indeed the story of His life. His calmness suggests—

I.—HIS CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE RECTITUDE OF HIS CHARACTER AND PROCEDURE.

Had He been guilty of any moral impropriety, of any wrong against God or man, conscience would have disturbed Him, for remorse creates inner storms. Or, had He had any misgiving as to the rectitude of His procedure in endeavouring to work out the moral restoration of mankind, He might have been disturbed. His calmness, inasmuch as it was not stoicism, or indifference, or the lack of sensibility or passion—for Christ was exquisitely sensitive and emotional—shows that He had a profound sense of the rectitude of His procedure. His calmness suggests—

II.—A SETTLED SENSE OF HIS SUBLIME SUPERIORITY.

Well He knew the ignorance and depravity, the feebleness and wretchedness of those who were dealing out to Him their scoffings and insults on every hand, and He rose above all; He felt His superiority. Their stormy insults awoke no ripple upon the deep translucent lake of His great nature. His calmness suggests—

III.—AN INWARD ASSURANCE OF HIS ULTIMATE SUCCESS.

He had an end to accomplish, and had laid His plans by which to reach it. All the opposition which He met with had entered

into His calculations before He commenced this sublime enterprise. "He set His face as a flint, and would not fail or be discouraged." He knew that He would "see of the travail of His soul, and be satisfied." He set at defiance all opposition. Though "the heathen raged, and the people imagined a vain thing," He laughed them to scorn. His calmness suggests—

IV.—THE HARMONY OF ALL HIS IMPULSES AND POWERS.

Because in our depraved natures there are two elements warring against one another—the law of the flesh and the law of the spirit—we are constantly being disturbed, right wars against policy, conscience against impulse, and we are subject to constant tempests, and we get like the troubled sea. Not so with Him. All the elements of His soul moved as serenely and harmoniously as move the planets. He was at One with Himself as well as with His God and the universe. His calmness suggests—

V.—HIS COMMANDING CLAIM TO OUR IMITATION.

Had He been subject to disturbances of passion, had He been irritated with the conduct of His contemporaries, had He been thrown into a tumult of indignation by the conduct of His enemies, or of fear at the prospect of His awful sufferings and death, He would have failed as an example to us, for we feel that moral calmness is what we all want. God enable us to imitate Christ in this calmness! To be calm amidst the surges of human passion, calm in the prospect of death, what a blessing! A lady once asked Mr. Wesley, "Supposing that you knew that you were to die at twelve o'clock to-morrow night, how would you spend the intervening time?" "How, Madam?" replied he, "why, just as I intend to spend it now. I should preach this evening at Gloucester: and again, at five o'clock to-morrow morning. After that I should ride to Tewkesbury, preach in the afternoon, and meet the societies in the evening. I should then repair to friend Martin's house, who expects to entertain me: converse and pray with the family as usual, retire to my room at ten o'clock, commend myself to my Heavenly Father, lie down to rest, and wake up in glory." "*Arise, let us go hence.*"

No. CIX.

THE TRUE SPIRITUAL LIFE IN MAN.

(*Christ the true Vine, &c.—Jerusalem.—JOHN xv. 1—27.*)

"I am the true Vine, and My Father is the Husbandman," &c.—xv. 1—8.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—After the words, "Let us depart hence," it is likely that Jesus and the disciples withdrew from the upper chamber and directed their steps to Jerusalem, at the declivity which descended into the valley of Kedron, near to Gethsemane. Vines abound in this

neighbourhood, and it may be that Jesus stopped at one loaded with branches, saw in it an emblem of the vital connection between Him and His genuine disciples.

Ver. 1.—“*I am the true Vine, and My Father is the Husbandman.*” “The point of comparison between Christ and the vine is that organic union by which the life of the trunk becomes that of the branches. As the sap in the branches is that which they draw from the vine, so will the life in the disciples be the life they will derive from Jesus glorified. This comparison might undoubtedly have been borrowed from any other plant. But the vine has a special dignity, resulting from the nobleness of its sap and the excellence of its fruit.”—*Godet*. “*The true Vine.*” The word here translated “*true*,” rather means original than genuine. Elsewhere Christ calls Himself the “*True Bread*,” the “*True Light*,” here the true (or original) “*Vine*.” Other men, “from whose thoughts and spirit people may derive some kind of spiritual life,” are mere copies, imitations. He is the grand original. Or perhaps, He means this natural vine before Me, is but a shadowy symbol of Myself as a Source of all true spiritual life. “*My Father is the Husbandman.*” Eternal Father, at once the Proprietor and Cultivator of the vine.

Ver. 2.—“*Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit He taketh (R. V. IT) away: and every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth (R. V. CLEANSETH) it, that it may bring forth (R. V. BEAR) more fruit.*” “Two classes of Christians are here set forth—both of them in Christ—as truly as the branch is in the vine; but while the one class bears fruit, the other bears none. The natural husbandry will sufficiently explain the cause of this difference. A graft may be mechanically attached to a fruit-tree, and yet take no vital hold of it, and have no vital connection with it. In that case, receiving none of the juices of the tree—no vegetable sap from the stem—it can bear no fruit. Such merely mechanical attachment of the True

Vine is that of all who believe in the truths of Christianity, and are in visible membership with the Church of Christ, but having no living faith in Jesus nor desire for His salvation, open not their souls to the spiritual life of which He is the Source, take no vital hold of Him, and have no living union to Him.”—*Brown*.

Ver. 3.—“*Now (R. V. ALREADY) ye are clean through (R. V. BECAUSE OF) the word which I have spoken unto you.*” “*Ye*,”—My disciples, in contradistinction to others. The vine-dresser has two things to do—cut off the rotten and the redundant branches, and trim the others of all excrescences that may hinder growth. These disciples had been thus pruned or cleansed.

Ver. 4.—“*Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more (R. V. SO NEITHER) can ye, except ye abide in Me.*” If I withdraw from you, you would die; if you withdraw from Me, you would wither and rot. We must remain in vital connection.

Ver. 5.—“*I am the Vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth (R. V. BEARETH) much fruit.*” Here is a repetition of what He had said before, and perhaps it is repeated in answer to some question which His previous remarks had started. “*For without (R. V. APART FROM) Me ye can do nothing.*” What can the branch produce cut off from the trunk?

Ver. 6.—“*If a man abide not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered.*” When a branch is cut from the trunk, of what service is it but to be burnt? And when a soul is detached from Christ it is utterly worthless.

Ver. 7.—“*If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and (R. V. ASK WHATSOEVER) it shall be done unto you.*” Here is a large promise—a promise to have whatever we ask for, if we remain in vital connection with Christ.

Ver. 8.—“*Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so*

shall ye be *My disciples*." Fruitfulness, in spiritual virtues and usefulness, is the grand end to be secured by this

connection with Christ. This fruitfulness honours the Father.

HOMILETICS.

This beautiful passage suggests the following remarks in relation to *The True Spiritual Life in Man*:—

I.—THAT MAN'S SPIRITUAL LIFE IS DERIVED FROM CHRIST.

Religion is not a mere creed or form;—it is a life, and the life is a "*branch*" of Christ's life. It grows out of Him. The vital sap—the spirit—comes from Christ as the Root, and runs through every branch, leaf, and fibre. There is no true spiritual life where Christ's Spirit is not the inspiration. "Without Me," &c. It teaches—

II.—THAT MAN'S SPIRITUAL LIFE IS DEVELOPED IN FRUITFULNESS.

"*Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit He taketh away.*" The production of fruit is what is required; it is not to pass off in foliage and blossom—it is to yield fruit. Unless we yield fruit we are worthless, and doomed to destruction. What is the fruit? "Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." It teaches—

III.—THAT THIS FRUITFULNESS IS PRODUCED BY THE JOINT AGENCY OF GOD AND MAN.

First: Man must seek an abiding connection with Christ in order to produce it. "*The branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine.*" Cut the branch from the tree, it will wither and rot. Abide in Me.

Secondly: God must act the part of the great Husbandman in order to produce it. The mere abiding in Christ will not do of itself. "*Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit He taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.*" He prunes: "Unto him that hath shall be given."

No. CX.

CHRIST'S LOVE FOR HIS DISCIPLES.

"As the Father hath loved Me," &c.—xv. 9—11.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Ver. 9.—"*As* (R. V. EVEN AS) *the Father hath loved Me, so have I* (R. V. I ALSO HAVE) *loved you.*" (See chap. xvii. 26.) "As the Father loved Me, I also loved you: abide in My love."—DAVIDSON. "*Continue* (R. V. ABIDE) *ye in My love.*"

That is, continue to love Me: abide in the possession, the enjoyment of it.

Ver. 10.—"*If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love; even as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love.*" Here is a law. The way not only to

retain but strengthen the love that we have for another is to practise, as far as we can, his wishes and his will. Disobedience is the death of love.

Ver. 11.—“*These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain (R. V. MAY BE) in you.*” The joy that He had in loving and obey-

ing His Father He would have them to possess and enjoy. “*That your joy might (R. V. MAY) be full*” (R. V. FULFILLED). The highest joy of an intelligent being is in loving and being loved—loving the best Being, and being loved by Him.

HOMILETICS.

The subject of these words is, *Christ's Love for His disciples*; and there are three remarks suggested concerning it.

I.—THAT IT IS LIKE THE LOVE THE FATHER HAS FOR HIM.

“*As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you.*”

“This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased.” No being in the universe is so dear to the Infinite heart as Christ. Does Christ mean by this—

First: That as *Really* as the Father loves Me, I love you? The reality of the Father's love for Him was a grand reality attested by His own consciousness. He could not doubt it. It was proved to Him in a thousand ways, in every faculty and fact of His life. But not less really did He love His disciples. His love for them was a mighty, ever-operating force within Him. Or does He mean—

Secondly: That as *Disinterestedly* as the Father loves Me, I love you? The Father's love for Christ was absolutely and spontaneously unselfish, so was Christ's love for His disciples. There was nothing in them to merit His affection, nothing in them to render Him more glorious or more happy. Another remark suggested concerning Christ's love for His disciples is—

II.—THAT IT IS PERPETUATED BY OBEDIENCE TO HIS COMMANDS.

“*If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love; even as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love.*” How does Christ retain the love of His Father? By working out His will. It would seem as if the Father's love, great though it be, would wane and die if the Son ceased to obey. So with Christ's love towards His disciples. Its continuance depends upon a practical fulfilment of His will. It seems almost a law of mind that love must work to live. If it remain in the mind merely as a sentiment or emotion, it would perish. The mother's love is kept alive by working for her children. When the work ceases the maternal affection wanes. If we would keep the love of Christ strong in the heart we must keep His commandments. No emotion of the soul will strike root, live and grow, only as it is translated into acts. Love only lives in deeds. Still more, another remark suggested concerning Christ's love for His disciples is—

III.—THAT IT YEARN'S TO MAKE ITS OBJECTS HAPPY.

"These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." It is the essence of love to glow with desires for the happiness of its object. See this in the unwearied services of parents; see it also in the countless efforts of genuine philanthropy. In Christ's love for man this desire is unquenchable and ever-operating. To make men happy was the grand object of His advent to earth. He was not so much the Teacher of the intellect, as the Inspirer of the heart. He poured ideas into the understanding in order that they might kindle love in the soul. He knew and He taught that men could only be happy as they loved, as He loved, disinterestedly, continuously, practically. No truth is more profoundly philosophic, than that human happiness is in love. No truth is more clear in the Scripture than this, that Christ came to fill the human heart with Divine love. "I am come that ye might have life." "He came to heal the broken-hearted, preach deliverance to the captives, recovery of the sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, and to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." Christ wishes His disciples not only to be happy, but to be full of happiness. "That your joy might be full." All saddening emotions are foreign to Christliness. Christliness is sunshine, music, rapture.

No. CXI.

BROTHERLY LOVE.

"This is My commandment, That ye love one another," &c.—xv. 12—16.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Ver. 13.—"*Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.*" There is a greater love than this; the love which Christ had, for He laid down His life for His enemies. But no mere man has a greater love than that which sacrifices life for friends. "Scarcely for a righteous man would one die; yet peradventure, for a good man, some would even dare to die." Love shows its strength in sacrifice. Never does it appear so strong as when it sacrifices life.

Ver. 14.—"*Ye are My friends, if ye do whatsoever* (R. V. THE THINGS WHICH) *I command you.*" The accent is not on the condition, "*if ye do,*" but upon the statement, "*Ye are My friends,*" as though Jesus meant to say, "It was not without a reason that I just now

said for his friends (ver. 13), for this is really the relation I have borne to you." And what is there more touching in domestic life, than a master who, finding a servant really faithful, raises him to the rights and title of a friend?

Ver. 15.—"*Henceforth I call you not* (R. V. NO LONGER DO I CALL YOU) *servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of* (R. V. I HEARD FROM) *My Father I have made known unto you.*" This proves the reality of the statement. He had bestowed upon them an unbounded confidence, by communicating to them all that the Father had revealed to Him regarding the great work for which He sent Him.

"Undoubtedly there were still many

things of which they were not yet informed (xiv. 12). But it was not from want of confidence and love that He had not revealed these also, but to spare them in their state of weakness, and because another alone could fulfil this task. The title, "My friends," used in Luke xii. 4, long before the present moment has been adduced in objection to this 'ou'kėti' (I no more call you); as though the tendency to make them His friends had not existed from the very first, and could have failed to manifest itself from time to time! It has also been objected that the apostles continued to call themselves *servants of Jesus Christ*, as though when the master chooses to make his servant a friend, the latter is not at all the more bound to remind himself and others of his real condition."—*Godet*.

Ver. 16.—"Ye have not chosen (R. V. DID NOT CHOOSE) Me, but I have chosen

(R. V. CHOSE) you." "Chosen," here, does not point to eternal predestination, but to the fact that He selected these disciples of His from their various worldly avocations, such as fishermen, tax-gatherers, &c. "And ordained (R. V. APPOINTED) you." Appointed you for what? To be fruitful: "That you should go and bring forth (R. V. BEAR) fruit." To be permanently fruitful. "Your fruit should remain" (R. V. ABIDE). And be successful in prayer: "That whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in My name, He will (R. V. MAY) give it you." "In My name." This may mean in My character, in My spirit. It is certain that the man who prays to the everlasting Father in the true spirit of Christ, will have what he requires, for he will ask for the right thing in the right spirit, and for the right reason.

HOMILETICS.

The subject of these words is *Brotherly Love*. "This is My commandment, That ye love one another." This is repeated in verse 17 also. "I command you, that ye love one another." The following remarks are suggested concerning the love that Christ's disciples should have for one another:—

I.—THAT IT HAS THE HIGHEST MODEL.

"As I have loved you." How did Christ love?

First: Disinterestedly. There was not a taint of selfishness in His love. He looked for no compensation, no advantage.

Secondly: Earnestly. It was an all-pervading, all-commanding passion. It was a zeal consuming Him.

Thirdly: Practically. It was a love that slept not as an emotion in the heart; not a love that expended itself in words and professions; it was a love that worked all the faculties to the utmost; a love that led Him to the sacrifice of Himself. This is the kind of love we should have one toward another. This is the brotherly love that unites Christ's disciples together, honours Him and blesses the world with the most beneficent influences. Concerning this love it is suggested—

II.—THAT IT FORMS THE HIGHEST FRIENDSHIP.

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.* Ye are My friends, if ye do whatsoever I command

* See Germ, p. 37.

you. Henceforth I call you not servants.* It not only establishes a friendship between themselves, but a friendship between them and Christ. "I call you not servants, but I have called you friends."

First: A true friendship between man and man is the greatest blessing on earth.

Secondly: A friendship between man and Christ is the consummation of man's well-being. If Christ is my Friend what want I more? Concerning this love it is suggested—

III.—THAT IT HAS THE HIGHEST SOURCE.

"Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you." We did not chose to love Christ first, but He chose to love us. His love to us generates our love to Him. "We love Him because He first loved us." He chose His first disciples from their worldly avocations and called them into His circle; this inspired them with His love. Men will never love one another properly until Christ sheds abroad His love in their hearts. He is to all His disciples what the sun is to the planets; around Him they revolve, and from Him derive their life and unity. They are united one to another by the bonds that unite them to Christ. Concerning this love it is suggested—

IV.—THAT IT REALIZES THE HIGHEST GOOD.

First: Spiritual fruitfulness. "Ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit." The fruit involves two things—(1.) The highest excellence of character. (2.) The highest usefulness of life. Rendering others the highest service.

Secondly: Successful prayer. "Whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in My name, He may give it you." There is no true prayer that is not offered in the name and spirit of Christ, the spirit of reverence, humility, earnestness, submission to the Divine will. And no such prayer is offered in vain. The Father gives whatever you ask.

GERMS OF THOUGHT.

No. LXIV.

DEMONSTRATION OF FRIENDSHIP DIVINE AND HUMAN.

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are My friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you."—xv. 13, 14.

In the text Christ indicates the strength of His friendship for His disciples. There is a real friendship between Christ and His people. There is between them (1.) a mutual love, (2.) a concurrence of sympathy, (3.) a unity of aims. The words lead us to make two remarks—

I.—CHRIST DEMONSTRATES HIS LOVE TO MAN BY DYING.

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Here He states—

* See Germ, p. 39.

(1.) The utmost limit of human love. Nothing is felt by man to be more precious than his life. Everything he has will he sacrifice for this. A love that will lead to the sacrifice of this is a love in its highest human measure. History has very few examples of it. Indeed there is only one instance known to me in the whole history of eighteen centuries, and even that may be fabulous. I refer to Damon and Pythias, two bold Pythagoreans of Syracuse. It is said that Pythias being condemned to death by Dionysius, the tyrant of Syracuse, begged to be allowed to go home for the purpose of arranging his affairs. Damon pledged his own life for the re-appearance of his friend. Dionysius accepted the pledge, and Pythias returned just in time to save Damon from death. This noble example of friendship so struck the ruthless tyrant that he not only pardoned Pythias, but desired to be admitted into their friendship. According to Christ, Damon in this instance showed the highest degree of human love. Perhaps had occasion required it, the friendship existing between David and Jonathan would have risen to the same degree.

(2.) Christ's love transcended the limits of human love. He laid down His life for *enemies*. "God commendeth His love to us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." There is nothing in human history approaching this. "Scarcely for a righteous man would one die, yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die." The sublimest imagination cannot conceive of a higher love than this: "Heaven is love." This transcendent love is—

First: The love of *compassion*. There could be neither gratitude nor esteem in it, for the subjects are all enemies, and hideous in wickedness. This transcendent love is—

Secondly: The love of *disinterestedness*. He had nothing to gain by it. His glory and happiness were infinite, and admitted of no enhancement. "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ," etc.

II.—MAN DEMONSTRATES HIS LOVE TO CHRIST BY OBEYING.

"*Ye are My friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.*" Surely all men ought to love Christ. The demonstration of His transcendent love is not only designed to destroy all indifference towards Him, but to generate in every heart the highest measure of love to Him. Where this love exists, and it should exist everywhere, it demonstrates itself in *obedience*. The obedience will always be marked by three things—

First: By *heartiness*. Obedience will be nothing more than the expression of love. It will be a thing not of "letter," but of spirit. Not so much a thing of outward act as an inspiration of soul. "Love is the fulfilling of the law." Where love is, there will be

obedience to Christ, though the tongue be sealed, and the hand be paralysed. The obedience should be marked—

Secondly: By *cheerfulness*. Where this love is, obedience to Christ is the highest *gratification* of the soul. The first question love asks is, What shall I do to please the object? "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" When the heart is "enlarged" with love, man runs in the way of Christ's commandments. Obedience to Christ is the "meat" and "drink," the bread and wine, of a loving soul. Practical Christianity is happiness. The obedience should be marked—

Thirdly: By *entireness*. "*Whatsoever I command you.*" Love does not sort duties, does not weigh and measure them, does not say, "I will do so much, and no more." It bounds into the "*whatsoever.*" Whatsoever the object wishes, even unto death, it shall be done. Hence Christian martyrdom.

CONCLUSION. This subject—

First: Supplies the test of Christian piety. Christian piety is not a ritualism, however becoming; not a theology, however Scriptural; it is a *love* to Christ that shows itself in a hearty, cheerful, universal obedience. This subject—

Secondly: Indicates the true method of preaching. What is the true work of the Gospel minister? So to exhibit Christ's love to human souls as to awaken in them love to Him. Love is the central doctrine of Christianity; love is the renovating power of souls; love is the soul of all excellence and the fountain of all joy.

"Love is God's seal upon the universe,
The hand and sign of His omnipotence;
And hearts enshrining love the most on earth,
Find here the most of heaven."—*Swain*.

No. LXV.

MAN'S RELATION OF SERVITUDE AND FRIENDSHIP TO CHRIST
COMPARED.

"Henceforth I call you not servants, . . . but I have called you friends."—
xv. 15.

The whole human race may be divided into two classes, and these are represented by the two words in the text, "*Servants*" and "*Friends.*" All human beings have to do with Christ, and their service must be either that of slaves or of friends. Our Lord here intimates the superiority of the one relationship to the other. This superiority will be obvious by comparing the relationships together.

I.—THE ONE IS LEGAL, THE OTHER IS LOVING.

The master treats his slave, and the slave treats him, according to legal contract. The servant works by rule, and the master treats

him accordingly; the slave lives and works in the letter of the contract, he goes not a step beyond it. But the service of the *friend* is irrespective of all prescriptive rules, of all legal arrangements. He does not feel himself to be under the law at all, and although he does more real hard work in the service of his friend than that of the slave in the employ of his master, he does it neither by enactment or law; love is his inspiration, and love is his law.

II.—THE ONE IS WATCHED, THE OTHER IS TRUSTED.

The master keeps his eye upon the slave; he knows that he is not the character to be trusted, he is a mere eye-servant. If the contracted work is to be done he is to be kept up to it by force. Not so with the friend; he is trusted, he is thrown upon his love, upon his honour, his sense of gratitude and justice. Thus Christ treats His disciples; He does not tell them how much to do, or how to do it. He trusts to their love, knowing that if they love Him they will keep His commandments. This is the true way to treat men—trust them. Thus Dr. Arnold treated his boys at Rugby, and thus all whom Providence has put in authority over men should treat their subordinates, in order to get from them the highest service they can render.

III.—THE ONE IS DISTANT, THE OTHER IS NEAR.

The master keeps his servant at a distance, he stands on his authority, gives out his orders, and insists on their discharge. They live not only in different apartments, but in different mental worlds. Not so with the friend—the friend is near to the heart. An old philosopher defined friendship as the existence of two souls in one body. Thus near are Christ's disciples to Him. "The servant," He says, "knoweth not what his Lord doeth, . . . but all things that I do I have made known unto you." How close and vital the connection! "Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?" said God.

IV.—THE ONE IS USED, THE OTHER USES.

The master uses his slave, uses him as he does a piece of machinery; he has no tender interest in him. All he cares for is what benefits he can extract from his service; the slave is used—used as a beast of burden. But the friend is *using*. All his services, as a true friend, answer his own purpose, conduce to his own happiness of soul. He acts from love, and love, like the philosopher's stone, turns the commonest things into moral gold, to enrich his own heart. Thus it is with Christ's disciples: all their efforts to serve Him serve themselves. "All things are yours," life, death, &c. Everything turns to the real use of those who are the friends of Christ.

V.—THE ONE IS COERCED, THE OTHER IS FREE.

The slave is not free in his work ; he would not serve his master if he could help it. He is placed under considerations that force him to do his work. But the service of the friend is free, he would not but do what he does, and his desires to render service transcend his abilities. Thus it is with Christ's disciples. "He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit." The love of Christ constrains them ; they welcome the slightest intimation of duty from their Lord.

CONCLUSION. What is our relationship to Christ—that of servitude or friendship? All must serve Him, either *against* their will, or *by* their will. The former is the condition of devils, the latter that of holy Saints and blessed Angels.

No. CXII.

KOSMOS: UNREGENERATED HUMANITY.

"These things I command you, that ye love one another," &c.—xv. 17—25.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Ver. 17.—*"These things I command you, that ye love (R. V. MAY LOVE) one another."* This is a repetition of the twelfth verse. The duty of brotherly love is here re-stated, probably with a view to the persecutions which Christ proceeds to foretell. The meaning may be, Love one another, for the world hates you.

Vers. 18, 19.—*"If the world hate (R. V. HATETH) you, ye know that it hated (R. V. HATH HATED) Me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his (R. V. ITS) own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen (R. V. CHOSE) you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."* "The 'if' suggests no doubt of the fact, but prepares them for the terrible reality, and furnishes them the antidote." The word "*world*"—*Kosmos*—here does not mean the physical frame of the world, the globe, nor the human race which it is frequently employed to represent, but the corruptive portion of the race—unregenerate humanity. It is used five times in this nineteenth verse. It is that vast section of humanity of which Satan is the prince ; it is the kingdom of evil.

Ver. 20.—*"Remember the word that I said unto you, The (R. V. A) servant*

is not greater than his Lord. If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept My saying (R. V. KEPT MY WORD), they will keep yours also." Elsewhere it is said, "If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household." (Matt. x. 25.)

Ver. 21.—*"But all these things will they do unto you for My name's sake, because they know not Him that sent Me."* The Christians in the opening of the second century were put to death for professing to be Christians, and because they would not renounce the name. Pliny wrote to Trajan, the Emperor, that this was his practice in Bithynia. Athenagoras pleaded before the heathen magistrates that the Christians should not be punished for bearing the name when in other respects they were blameless. Tertullian says in the second century, even the name was hated in men perfectly innocent. The disciples were called Christians, and Peter says, "If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed." (1 Peter iv. 16.) James asks, "Do they not blaspheme that worthy name by which ye are called?" (James ii. 7.)

Ver. 22.—*"If I had not come and*

spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke (R. V. EXCUSE) for their sin." Our Lord here declares that their sinfulness was wonderfully augmented in consequence of His appearing amongst them. Had He not come they would have been amongst the ordinary class of sinners, which God of old overlooked in the times of ignorance. (Acts xv. 31.)

Ver. 23.—"He that hateth Me hateth My Father also." Hatred against the disciples is hatred against their Master, and hatred against Him is hatred against God the Father.

Ver. 24.—"If I had not done among them the works which none other man (R. V. OMITTS MAN) did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and

hated both Me and My Father." What wonderful works He did! (See chaps. v. 36; ix. 3, 4; x. 21—37; xiv. 10.) His great works were great proofs of His superhuman power, and mission.

Ver. 25.—"But this cometh to pass, that the word might (R. V. MAY) be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause." The word "may" is better than might: and the words, *this cometh to pass*, which are italicised should be omitted. The sense is, not that their hatred came to pass in order to fulfil an old Scripture, but it so turned out that an old Scripture was illustrated by it. The passage referred to is found in Psalms lxix. 4; and xxxv. 19. There was no just reason for their hatred of Him.

HOMILETICS.

These verses present this *Kosmos* or *Unregenerate Humanity* in two striking aspects, as glowing with hate and as loaded with responsibility.

I.—AS GLOWING WITH HATE.

"The world hateth you."

The words suggest the following remarks concerning this hatred.

First: It was a hatred of goodness. To hate the mean, the selfish, the false, the dishonest, and morally dishonourable would be right. But evil was not the object of their hatred. (1.) It was good as embodied in the life of Christ. "It hated Me before it hated you." How deep, burning, persistent, and cruelly operative was the enmity which unregenerate men exhibited towards Christ, from His birth in Bethlehem to His Cross on Calvary! (2.) It was good as reflected in His disciples. Just so far as they imbibed, and reflected, the spirit of Christ were they hated. "All these things will they do unto you for My name's sake." Because of what they see of Me in you. The words suggest—

Secondly: It was a hatred developed in persecution. It was not a hatred that slumbered in a passion or that went off even in abusive language; it prompted the infliction of the greatest cruelties. The history of true Christians in all ages has been a history of persecution. The words suggest—

Thirdly: It was a hatred without a just reason. "They hated Me without a cause." Of course they had "cause." The doctrines of goodness clashed with their deep-rooted prejudices, the policy of goodness with their daily procedure; the eternal principles of goodness flashed on their consciences and exposed their wickedness. But their "cause" was the very reason why they ought to have loved

Christ. Christ knew and stated the cause of the hatred. "*If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.*"* The words suggest—

Fourthly: It was a hatred forming a strong reason for brotherly love amongst the disciples. Christ begins His forewarning them of it by urging them to love one another. "*These things I command you, that ye love one another.*" As your enemies outside of you are strong in their passionate hostility towards you, be you compactly welded together in mutual love. Unity is strength.

The verses present Unregenerate Humanity,—

II.—AS LOADED WITH RESPONSIBILITY.

"*If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin.*" These words must of course be taken in their comparative sense. Before He came amongst them the guilt of their nation had been augmenting for centuries, and they had been filling up the measure of their iniquities. But great as was their sin before He came, it was trifling compared to it now since His advent amongst them.

First: Had He not come, they would not have known the sin of hating Him. Hatred towards the best of beings, the incarnation of goodness, is sin in its most malignant form; it was the culmination of human depravity. But had they not known Him they could not have hated Him; the heart is dead to all objects outside the region of knowledge.

Secondly: Had He not come, they would not have rejected Him. "He came to His own, and His own received Him not." The rejection of Him involved the most Wicked Folly, the most Heartless Ingratitude, the most Daring Impiety. "If they which despised Moses' law died without mercy under two witnesses, of how much sorer punishment suppose ye shall he be thought worthy that hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and done despite unto the Holy Ghost?"

Thirdly: Had He not come, they would not have crucified Him. What crime on the long black catalogue of human wickedness is to be compared to this?

CONCLUSION. (1.) Good men, accept the moral hostility of the unregenerate world. Your great Master taught you to accept it. It is in truth a test of your character, and an evidence of your Christliness. "Woe unto you when all men speak well of you." (2.) Nominal Christians, read your doom! Christ has come to you, and you have hated Him; you have rejected Him; you have crucified Him "afresh," and your responsibility is tremendous. "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago."

* See Germ, p. 44.

GERMS OF THOUGHT.

No. LXVI.

THE PEDIGREE AND POSITION OF TRUE MEN.

“If ye were of the world, the world would love his own : but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.”—xv. 19.

The text leads us to make two remarks concerning the *Pedigree* and *Position* of true men.

I.—THE PEDIGREE OF TRUE MEN.

They have been brought out of the world by Christ. “*I have chosen you out of the world.*”

First: They were once in the world. They were members of that vast assemblage of human beings who are in the “gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity.” That world is characterized by three things—(1.) Practical atheism. They who make up this world are practically without God. Though some of them may not be avowed atheists, they live without Him, and form their plans and work them out as if He existed not. “God is not in all their thoughts.” They go “into this city and that, and buy and sell, and get gain,” and never take Him into their counsels or calculations. It is characterized by—(2.) An imperial materialism. They have no practical recognition of a spiritual universe, spiritual relationship, and spiritual obligation. They are canopied by matter. They “walk after the flesh;” they live to the flesh. They seek their happiness, their wealth, their dignity, in earthly things. They endeavour to get the bread of their being, the supreme good, out of stones. It is characterized by—(3.) A dominant selfishness. Each one is governed by selfish interests. Self-interest is the goal towards which each directs his steps; self is the idol at whose shrine each renders his devotions.

Secondly: They have been brought out of the world by Christ. Out of this world, from this vast body of human beings, whose lives are all characterized by practical atheism, imperial materialism, and dominant selfishness, Christ brought His disciples, and brings all true men now. No one but Christ can bring men out of such a state. Philosophy, civilization, natural religion—all these are powerless. Christ alone has proved equal to the task. He penetrates men with the idea of the true God. He draws the curtain of materialism, and reveals the spiritual world. He destroys the selfishness, and constrains men with His own love. This work of Christ is represented by an Emancipation, a Resurrection, a Regeneration, a Creation—and none of these appellatives are too strong.

The words lead us to notice—

II.—THE POSITION OF TRUE MEN.

They are rendered repugnant to the world by Christ. "*Because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.*" The words imply—

First: That the hatred of the world to true men is of the same *kind* as that which Christ experienced. Towards Christ it showed itself in slander, ridicule, misrepresentation, insults, and cruelties. Its genius is persecution. The forms of persecution change, but the spirit remains. If it is prevented from mangling the body, it will mangle the reputation. Venom rankles on from age to age, in the serpent's seed against that of the woman. The words imply—

Secondly: That the hatred of the world to true men is for the same *reason* as that which Christ experienced. Why did the world hate Christ? Because (1.) His purity condemned their depravity, (2.) His benevolence their selfishness, (3.) His humility their pride, (4.) His truth their prejudices, and (5.) His spirituality their carnal pleasures. For these reasons, now, the world hates true men. "Cain was of that wicked one, and slew his brother." And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous. This is the philosophy.

No. CXIII.

THE GREAT WORLD-RESTORING SPIRIT.

"But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you," &c.—
xv. 26, 27.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Ver. 26.—
"*But when the Comforter is come.*"
Read Advocate instead of Comforter.
"*Whom I will send unto you from the Father.*" What childish and withal presumptuous speculations have technical theologians indulged in, in what is called the *procession* of the Holy Ghost! For example, the Greek Church held the dogma that the Spirit proceeded from the Father only through the Son: while the Latin Church insisted that He proceeded from the Father and the Son: and the one short word *Filioque*, which the latter would exclude and the former insert in the Creed, was the cause of the great schism between the Eastern and the Western Churches. "*Even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father.*" Truth is a small word, but it is an infinite thing; it is the underlying, unchangeable

reality in the great universe of thought. In character this Spirit is eternal reality in the universe of shadows, semblances, and phenomena. "*He shall testify (R. V. BEAR WITNESS) of Me.*" *Dr. Browne* says:—"This refers to that glorious Pentecostal attestation of the Messiahship of the Lord Jesus which in a few days gave birth to a flourishing Christian Church in the murderous capital itself, and the speedy diffusion of it far and wide."

Ver. 27.—"*And ye also shall bear (R. V. ALSO BEAR) witness, because ye have been with Me from the beginning.*" "The apostles should bear witness by their inspired records of Christ's life, which we have in the Gospel narratives. This they should do, not independently of the Spirit, but under His prompting, and yet individually, giving each his own testimony."

HOMILETICS.

Here we have presented to us *The Great World-Restoring Spirit*, the Spirit that was striving with men in the antediluvian age, and with men in every subsequent age, and that came with new arguments and power after our Saviour's ascension to heaven. Here we have—

I.—HIS ADVENT FORETOLD.

“*When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you.*”

First: The prediction here given was to comfort them in the prospect of the persecution to which He had just directed their attention. They are given to understand that however great their approaching trials may be, and though He Himself was about departing from them, One would soon come to them from His Father, Who would be *all sufficient* for their help.

Secondly: The prediction here given was strikingly fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, in connection with the preaching of Peter. “And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” Here we have—

II.—HIS CHARACTER PORTRAYED.

“*The Spirit of Truth.*” There is a spirit of *lying* abroad in the world, sowing the seeds of error in human souls, and cultivating them into briars and thorns, into poisonous weeds, and Upas trees. But here is the Spirit of Truth, who is also abroad and at work.

First: He is *infallible* truth. Truth without any admixture of error or impurity. His ideas and His affections, so to say, are in perfect accord with eternal fact.

Secondly: He is *redemptive* truth. His truth is to open the eyes of ignorance, to break the chains of bondage, to cleanse the heart from impurities, to deliver the conscience from guilt! In one word, to restore the soul to the Knowledge, the Image, the Friendship, and the Enjoyment of the great God. Here we have—

III.—HIS WORK INDICATED.

First: His work is that of an *Advocate*. He goes into the Court of human conscience, and there He pleads for spirituality, benevolence, righteousness, God, against worldliness, selfishness, wrong, the devil. Sometimes He pleads in whispers, sometimes in thunder. Always is He earnest and persevering. He inspires

His ministers to say, "We beseech you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled unto God."

Secondly: His work is that of a *Witness*. A witness for Christ, for the perfection of His character, the purity of His doctrines, and the beneficence of His influence. He does this through the teaching, the miraculous works, the moral triumphs, and the noble lives of those whom He inspired as the Apostles of Christ.

CONCLUSION. Let the assurance that this Restoring Spirit is in the world encourage us in our efforts to spread truth, and in our trials to be magnanimous and patient.

No. CXIV.

CHRIST'S METHOD OF PREPARING HIS DISCIPLES FOR HIS DEPARTURE. 16

(Persecution foretold further promise of the Holy Spirit.—Jerusalem.—JOHN xvi. 1—33.)

"These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended," &c.—xvi. 1—6.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Ver. 1.—*"These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended"* (R. V. MADE TO STUMBLE). "*These things.*" The reference appears to be not to the whole revelation of the vital union of the believer with Christ.—*Westcott*. "We find here expressed the ultimate aim of all that has been said from chap. xv. 18 onwards, and the point of view is here shown under which all must be viewed. The design was, namely, to obviate the offence which the hatred of the Jews could not fail to occasion, especially as authority and scientific knowledge were on their side. '*These things*' do not refer merely to the fore-announcement of their hatred; it includes also everything that had been said to place their hatred in the true light, as well as the help which had been promised in the sending of the Paraclete."—*Hengstenberg*.

Ver. 2.—"*They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time* (R. V. HOUR) *cometh, that whosoever killeth you will* (R. V. SHALL) *think that he doeth God service"* (R. V. OFFERETH SERVICE UNTO GOD). He will think that he is offering a religious service unto God, as Saul of Tarsus did (Acts xxvi. 9, 10; Gal. i. 9, 10; Phil. iii. 6).

Ver. 3.—"*And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor Me.*" The persecution will result from ignorance. This is nearly a verbal repetition of chap. xv. 21.

Ver. 4.—"*But these things have I told* (R. V. SPOKEN UNTO) *you, that when the time* (R. V. THEIR HOUR) *shall* (R. V. IS) *come, ye may remember that I told you of them* (R. V. HOW THAT I TOLD YOU). *And these things I said not unto you at* (R. V. FROM) *the beginning, because I was with you.*" "You will be confirmed in your faith, and strengthened in courage. He had said it pretty clearly (Luke vi. 22), but not so nakedly as in ver. 2."—*Brown*.

Ver. 5.—"*But now I go My way to* (R. V. I GO UNTO) *Him that sent Me; and none of you asketh Me, Whither goest Thou?"* As I gave you to understand in chap. xiv., and none of you asketh Me where I go. They were inquisitive while they thought only of His going to some city to be crowned King, or otherwise; but now that He had opened to them the plan for departure, that He was going to the Father, they are mute on the subject; and are overcome with sorrow

on their own account, when they ought to be glad."

Ver. 6.—"Because (R. V. BUT BECAUSE) I have said (R. V. SPOKEN) these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart." The sorrow was reason-

able, but the word *filled* implies that it was excessive and reprobable. But He goes on to express with a stronger emphasis the consolation He had already proffered, namely, the coming of the Comforter.

HOMILETICS.

These verses furnish us with a specimen of *Christ's Method of dealing with His disciples*. Observe—

I.—CHRIST FORETELLS HIS DISCIPLES OF APPROACHING EVILS, NOT TO TERRIFY THEM, BUT TO STRENGTHEN THEM.

The evils which He here foretells as approaching were indeed tremendous. Tremendous—

First: On account of the injuries they would sustain. Here is—(1.) Banishment from the synagogue. "*They shall put you out of the synagogues.*" Their most sacred associations were connected with the synagogues, and to be shut out of them would imply degradation and loss. (2.) Destruction of their life. "*Whosoever killeth you.*" "Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life." Martyrdom is the culmination of all physical sufferings. Not only were the evils tremendous on account of the injuries they would sustain, but—

Secondly: On account of the spirit which inspired the men who inflicted them. "*Whosoever killeth you will think he doeth God service.*" No passion in the human breast is so strong when excited, so savage and so cruel, as religious fanaticism. Take Saul of Tarsus as an example. It maddened him; it gave him an intense thirst for blood; he breathed out slaughter, and thought he was doing "*God service.*" But these tremendous sufferings are here foretold, not in order to alarm or distress them, but in order to encourage and strengthen them. "*These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended.*" They were foretold in order—

(1.) To prepare them so that they should not be surprised, and at their wits' end. To be forewarned is to be forearmed.

(2.) To establish their confidence in Christ when they came. When they came, instead of having their faith shaken in their Master, it would be deepened and strengthened with the assurance that He was Divine, because cognizant of the future.

II.—CHRIST REPROVES THE DEFECTS OF HIS DISCIPLES NOT WITH ANGER, BUT WITH TENDERNESS.

These defects seem to have been twofold.

First: An apparent indifference to His departure. "*None of you asketh Me, Whither goest Thou?*" His departure to Him was a

sublimely solemn event, both in His history, and in the history of the race, and yet they did not seem to have any deep concern in it.

Secondly: A sadness on account of His approaching absence. They seemed to be sorry on their own account that He was going to leave them. He had been with them for three years, and so long as He was with them they knew they would be well protected. But now when He left them what would become of them? "*Sorrow hath filled your heart.*" In this reproof there seems not only the utter absence of all anger, but a spirit of deep and touching tenderness. It is as if He had said, Why don't you ask Me concerning the scenes into which I am going? If you did I would tell you and give you all information. Don't be so sad, there is no just cause for it. My departure will turn out to your advantage.

III.—CHRIST DEPRIVES HIS DISCIPLES OF SOME BLESSINGS NOT FOR THEIR INJURY, BUT FOR THEIR BENEFIT.

Of what was He going to deprive His disciples now? Of nothing less than His own personal presence. To them this would seem, undoubtedly, an unspeakable loss. But why did He do it? Not to injure them, but to bless them by preparing them for the Divine Spirit, which would always be with them, teaching, comforting, and strengthening them.

No. CXV.

THE GREATEST TRIALS LEADING TO THE GREATEST BLESSINGS.

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth," &c.—xvi. 7.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Ver. 7.—"*Nevertheless I tell you the truth.*" In the preceding verse Christ says to His disciples, "*Sorrow hath filled your heart.*" They were indeed in trouble, in deep, sad distress on account of His apprehended departure from thence, and here He means to say: "It must be so; I tell you the truth; I who know all your badness, and all your needs, and all that is best for you; I tell you the truth." "*It is expedient for you that I go away.*" My departure need not distress you; it is in truth necessary for you, "*it is expedient.*" "*For if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart (R. v. go), I will send Him unto you.*" "We may not indeed," says an able modern author, "fathom the deep counsels of

God in which the reason of these words is to be found; but the order fixed in these counsels was that the Son of man should complete His work on earth, and offer the sacrifice of Himself for sin, and rise from the dead, and ascend to the Father's throne, before the Advocate should come. The Son of man was to be glorified before the Spirit was to be given. Humanity was to ascend to heaven before the Spirit could be sent to humanity on earth. The revelation of saving truth was to be completed before inspiration was to breathe as the breath of life into man's soul. The conviction of sin, righteousness, and judgment could only follow the finished work of Christ."

HOMILETICS.

The subject of these remarkable words is *The Greatest Trials leading to the Greatest Blessings*, and the following general truths are suggested:—

I.—THAT THE GREATEST TRIAL MAY PROVE THE GREATEST BLESSING.

First: The departure of Christ from His disciples was felt by them to be a most grievous trial. "Sorrow," He said, "hath filled your heart." He had been with them for three years, won their affections, changed their whole history, both their inner experience and their outward circumstances. And now He was leaving them. What a bereavement! The Sun of their souls sinking beneath the horizon, and their world left in darkness and desolation.

Secondly: The advent of His Spirit to His disciples would be the greatest blessing. He was the "*Comforter*," the Spirit of Truth. He would enter the inner temple of their nature and reproduce all the impressions that Christ had made, bring all things to their remembrance, and abide with them for ever. His advent more than compensated for the departure of Christ. Thus it ever is, ever has, and ever will be, with great trials to the good. So it was with Abraham, Daniel, Paul, &c. "Our light afflictions." Another truth suggested is—

II.—THAT THE GREATEST TRIAL MIGHT BE NECESSARY TO THE GREATEST BLESSING.

"*It is expedient for you that I go away.*" * The departure of the One was necessary to the advent of the Other. To attempt assigning the reasons in the Eternal Mind for this would be manifestly presumptuous. Albeit, we can discover certain things which seem to render it necessary. What rendered it expedient?

First: It seemed "*expedient*" in order to give a more vivid meaning to the life of Christ. Never does the life of a loved friend come with such meaning and might into the heart as when death has removed him from the sphere of our observation. Death which takes our friend from our outward eye, enshrines him in the soul, and there he assumes lovelier forms, and yields a more potent influence. It was so with Christ. When He ceased to be seen without, He became formed within them, the "*Hope of Glory.*"

Secondly: It seemed "*expedient*" in order to dissipate all their material and local conceptions of Him. So long as He was with them corporeally, and judged after the flesh, their religion was sensuous. The impressions of His form, voice, and touch formed the greater part of their religious experience. Even Mary, after

* See Homily at end of Volume.

His resurrection, wanted to *touch* Him, embrace Him only after the flesh. His kingdom was to them *local*, confined to Judæa, Jerusalem its seat. Spiritual virtue, the cause of truth, and the well-being of their souls, required all these sensuous and local conceptions to be swept away from their minds. His departure tended at once to spiritualize and universalize their conceptions.

Thirdly: It seemed "*expedient*" in order to stimulate them to study the eternal principles of duty. So long as our teacher is with us in person, we are contented to have our duty pointed out to us from day to day. Like children we shall be controlled by verbal rules and voices from without. But when he is gone there is a sphere and a stimulus for the use of our faculties. We must study for ourselves, enquire in the great temple of truth all the days of our life. How inferior is the mind moving by prescriptive rules to one that is ruled by universal principles!

Fourthly: It seemed "*expedient*" in order to throw the soul upon the help of its own faculties. Man only really grows and advances as he works his own faculties, and becomes self-reliant. Up to a certain period parental watching and superintendence are indispensable to the well-being of a child; but if it is extended beyond the proper age it becomes an evil. The law of nature is evidently that the parent, after a certain time, should withdraw, not his *affections*, but his exclusively supporting agency, so that the child may be brought to realize the importance of self-reliance. It is a wise law, yes, a *kind* law, though painful at times, which requires one child after another to withdraw from the parental roof where everything has been supplied, and seek out whatever is needed for himself. It was so in relation to the disciples. I do not think that they would have made much advancement if they had continued to depend upon the personal direction of the Lord, and not upon great principles. Look at them on the Galilean lake in the storm. Where did they rest? Not upon principles, but upon a Person. Look at Peter whilst Jesus was yet on earth. When in the stillness of the night the Roman band approached Gethsemane, when his Master was bathed in tears and blood, he "forsook Him and fled;" and that very same night, with the spirit of a coward, he in the court exclaimed before Caiaphas, "I know not the Man." A few weeks rolls away. Jesus has left the world; He has been crucified; He has been buried; He has risen from the dead; He has ascended to Heaven; He appears no more in their midst; they see not His form, they hear not His words;—He is gone; the clouds have received Him up out of their sight. The disciples now begin to examine for themselves: they *meet*, and *read*, and *think*, and *pray*, and thus grow in strength. The day of Pentecost dawns—men from all parts of the world are gathered together to celebrate that ancient festival. And now look at Peter; look at

the man who, but a few weeks before, trembled at the question of a servant-maid, standing up with an indomitable heroism before that mass of anti-Christian men, and charging upon them the guilt of Christ's crucifixion (Acts ii. 22, 23). A few days pass on, and he is brought a prisoner before the very men who crucified his Lord, into the very hall where he too *denied* Him. But how different his spirit! (Acts v. 28—31.)

The principle that the greatest trials may be *necessary* to the greatest blessings, illustrated in the departure of Christ and the Advent of the Spirit, is capable of a very wide and general application to human history. It is often necessary for a man to lose his *friends, property, health*, and even *liberty* to prepare him for the great blessings of eternal life. The words suggest—

III.—THAT THE GREATEST TRIALS AND THE GREATEST BLESSINGS
ARE ALIKE UNDER THE DIRECTION OF CHRIST.

First: The greatest trial is under His direction. "*I go away.*" There is no compulsion, no driving; "*I go away.*" Christ was free in His death. "I have power to lay down My life," &c. Sublime power this! "*I go*"—through Gethsemane, over Calvary, down into the grave, up through the clouds, on to the central throne of the universe. "*I go.*" All power is in His hand.

Secondly: The greatest blessing is under His direction. He sends the Spirit. "*I will send Him unto you.*" *Him*; not *it*. A *person*, not an *influence*. He "hath received gifts for men." Our destiny is in the hands of God in Christ. Let us trust in Him. The whole of our life is made up of loss and gain; but if we are His, He takes away one good thing in order to give us a better. Trust Him, my brother!

"Trust Him in days of sorrow,
And meekly tread the thorny way;
It may be thou wilt see to-morrow,
The love that chastens thee to-day."—*Maurice*.

No. CXVI.

THE DIVINE SPIRIT IN RELATION TO THE REDEMPTIVE
DISPENSATION.

"And when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin," &c.—xvi. 8—15.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Ver. 8.—
"*And when* (R. V. AND HE WHEN) *He is come, He will reprove* (R. V. CONVICT) *the world* (R. V. IN RESPECT OF) *of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.*" Convict the human world, the unregenerated race, mankind. "This conviction of the world is by witness

concerning Christ (chap. xv. 26). It is the revelation to the hearts of men of the character and work of Christ, and therefore a refutation of the evil in their hearts. The result of this conviction is twofold, according as men embrace it, accept its chastening discipline, and are saved by it: or

reject it, and in the rejection harden their hearts, and are thus condemned by it (comp. 2 Cor. ii. 15, 16). The effect of St. Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost is the first great historical comment on this verse, but the comment is continued in the whole history of the Church's work. The last part of the verse enumerates the three steps in this conviction, which are more fully defined in the three following verses. "Righteousness." Ideal righteousness, righteousness as embodied and exemplified in the character of Christ. Righteousness the antithesis of sin. "Of judgment." Retribution. Convince them that both from sin and righteousness retributive results will spring.

Ver. 9.—"Of sin, because they believe not on Me." Unbelief in Christ is in itself a sin, and is the prolific source of sin.

Ver. 10.—"Of righteousness, because I go to My (R. V. THE) Father, and ye see (R. V. BEHOLD) Me no more." When I am gone to My Father the Spirit will convince you of My righteousness. "The special reason of the conviction of righteousness is the resurrection and ascension of our Lord. Man called Him a sinner (chap. ix. 24), and His crucifixion was the world's assertion that He was a malefactor (chap. xviii. 30), and even when He was hanging upon the cross, there came to the centurion's mind the conviction, 'Truly, this Man was innocent,' and His return to the Father was heaven's witness to His righteousness. For the way in which this conviction was brought home to the hearts of the apostles, and through them to the hearts of mankind, comp. especially Acts ii. 27, 31, 36. Also Acts iii. 14; vii. 52; 1 Peter iii. 18; 1 John ii. 1—29; iii. 7."

Ver. 11.—"Of judgment, because the prince of this world is (R. V. HATH BEEN) judged." "The prince of this world," the old serpent, the devil, the "prince of the power of the air." The completion of Christ's work on the earth, His triumph over death, His ascension to heaven, effected a terrible retribution on Satan, and this retribution proves a retribution upon all his

adherents. The sin of the world, the rectitude of Christ, the judgment or retribution following the wrong, are the great subjects with which the Divine Spirit was to carry profound conviction into the souls of men.

Ver. 12.—"I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." Christ reveals to men just so much as they have the capacity for receiving, and no more. Let the capacity expand, and more light will come.

Ver. 13.—"Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will (R. V. SHALL) guide you into all (R. V. THE) truth: for He shall not speak of (R. V. FROM) Himself; but whatsoever (R. V. THINGS SOEVER) He shall hear, that (R. V. THESE) shall He speak: and He will shew (R. V. SHALL DECLARE UNTO) you things (R. V. THE THINGS THAT ARE) to come." This means probably the truth. All the truth, essential to the spiritual restoration of mankind. "For He shall not speak of (R. V. FROM) Himself." The meaning is not He shall not speak concerning Himself, but He shall not speak from Himself, in the sense immediately to be added.

Ver. 14.—"He shall glorify Me." "The pronoun is here full of emphasis. The thought is that the future guidance of the Spirit promised in verse 13 will be the revelation of the many things of Christ Himself which they cannot hear now" (verse 12). "For He shall receive (R. V. TAKE) of Mine, and shall shew (R. V. DECLARE) it unto you." Better as in ver. 13, announce it unto you. This is the test of the Spirit, "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that confesseth not Jesus is not of God." The revelation of Christ is not an imperfect revelation which the Holy Spirit is to supplement. It is a free revelation imperfectly received, and His office is to illuminate the heart and bring home to it the things of Christ."

Ver. 15.—"All things that (R. V. WHATSOEVER) the Father hath are Mine: therefore said I, that He shall take (R. V. TAKETH) of Mine, and shew (R. V. DECLARE) it unto you." These words I think do not express the

relation of the Son to the Father, but the amazing plenitudes of truth which the Father had communicated to Him. "*All things*" refers, I am disposed to think, to the things connected with Christ's mission, character, purposes, and deeds, His whole his-

tory, and this the Spirit was to present to the world when He was gone. Reproduce not merely the revelations that He had made to them, but unfold revelations that He had yet to make. (See *Watkins, Lange, Godet, Stier, and Westcott, &c.*)

HOMILETICS.

These verses bring under our notice the *Divine Spirit in relation to the Redemptive Age*. Observe—

I.—HIS ADVENT INTO THE WORLD IN CONNECTION WITH THIS AGE.

This Divine agent here called "*Comforter*" or Advocate, the "*Spirit of truth*," had always been in the world. He had been working in its *material* department. He evolved this bright and lovely world out of chaos. He spread out the heavens, poured out the oceans, and piled up the hills. He had been working in its *mental* department, teaching men how to build houses, cultivate lands, and establish order, live holy and noble lives.* He strove with the antediluvians, He worked in bad men, in Balaam, Cyrus, Saul, &c., stimulated them to good actions. He inspired patriarchs and prophets to noble deeds and sublime utterances. But *now* in connection with this redemptive dispensation, He comes because Christ had finished His work, left the earth, and ascended to heaven. He came to work upon humanity through the biography of Christ, to press that biography in all its sublimest significance and quickening forces on the souls of men. The Gospel was a new organ through which this Divine agent was to work in the world. He came on the day of Pentecost through this Gospel and worked wonders, and has been working in the world ever since: so that the Gospel comes to the world now not in word only but with "much assurance," and with "the power of the Holy Ghost." Observe—

II.—HIS MINISTRY IN THE WORLD IN CONNECTION WITH THIS AGE.

First: His ministry is that of moral conviction. "*Reprove the world of sin.*" Though the world is well acquainted with sin, for its hideous form and terrible results are everywhere, it has no deep conviction of it, and a conviction of its terrible enormity is the first step to its abandonment, the first impetus to an effective struggle for the true, the beautiful, and the good. "*Of righteousness.*" Christ's righteousness. The righteousness which rung in His every

* See a service entitled the "Holy Spirit," p. 150, in "Biblical Liturgy," published by Higham.

word, shone in His every look, beamed and bounded in every act of His life, was the righteousness of which the world required the deepest and strongest conviction. It required this in order to see the ghastly heinousness of sin, and the grand ideal which it should endeavour with intense earnestness and perseverance to attain. "*Of judgment*"—retribution. The world required a conviction of this, that men have not done with deeds as they perform them, but that those deeds by an eternal law bring after them momentous consequences. "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." Such are the convictions which the Divine Spirit through the Gospel has to burn into the souls of living men.

Secondly: His ministry is that of spiritual guidance. "*He will guide you into all truth.*" The world lives in the realm of shadows, dreams, fictions, unrealities, it walks in a "vain show." The work of the Spirit is to take it into the universe of eternal realities, and especially to bring out those vital truths which Christ had to communicate, but which His disciples at present were incapable of receiving. "*I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.*" An expression this which indicates—(1.) That Christ's disciples are not ignorant for lack of knowledge in their Teacher. "*I have yet many things to say.*" Ah, how many! A universe to communicate. (2.) That Christ's disciples are ignorant because of their incapacity to receive. "*Ye cannot bear them now.*" A man's capacity to receive knowledge depends upon his attainments, the lower those the less capable; the higher, the more. Hence the duty to study. The deeper the cavity in the earth the more water the clouds can pour into it.

Thirdly: His ministry is that of Christ—glorifying. "*He shall glorify Me.*" How will He glorify Christ? Here is the answer. "*He shall receive of Mine, and shall shew it unto you.*" To reveal Christ is to glorify Him. To take of the things of an inglorious and a degraded being would be to bring him into contempt. But to take of the things of a Being Who is Himself glorious, and reveal them is to glorify Him. The Sun is glorified by the rays that it pours out on the rolling orbs that reflect its brightness, and Christ is glorified by having Himself revealed.

CONCLUSION.—Such, then, is the advent and mission of this Divine agent. Has this Divine agent come to us through the Gospel, producing convictions, guiding into all the truth, and glorifying Christ, revealing Him to our inmost souls? Has He given permanent impressions of Christ's glory to us? We are told that the inventor of photography found at first a great difficulty in fixing his sun pictures. The solar beams came and gave the image, but when the tablet was drawn from the camera the image had vanished. What he wanted was, that which has since

been obtained—a fixing solution to arrest and retain the fugitive impressions. This is what we want with the impressions that Divine truth makes upon the soul, and this is the work of the Spirit. He forms Christ in the heart, the Hope of Glory.

Flow down, Thou stream of Life Divine,
Thy quick'ning truths deliver,
Oh, flow within this soul of mine
For ever and for ever.

Flow down, and cause this heart to glow
With love to God the Giver ;
That love in which all graces grow,
For ever and for ever.

Flow down, as flows the ray and rain,
In vital work together,—
Refreshing roots and quickening grain,
For ever and for ever.

Flow down, as flows the living sun
Upon the sparkling river,
Whose crystal wavelets chiming run,
For ever and for ever.

Flow down, revive this famished soul,
And bear away all error,
That I may praise Thee, God of all,
For ever and for ever.

No. CXVII.

THE RELATION OF CHRIST TO THE INTELLECTUAL PERPLEXITIES OF HIS DISCIPLES.

“A little while, and ye shall not see Me,” &c.—xvi. 16—24.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Ver. 16.—
“A little while, and ye shall not see Me
(R. V. BEHOLD ME NO MORE) : and again,
a little while, and ye shall see Me.”—
The two expressions “see Me” here
are from two different Greek words,
the former from a word signifying
seeing either by the bodily or mental
eye, the latter signifying mere bodily
sight. He here points either to His
departure from them by death and
His return forty days after His resur-
rection, or to His departure from them
at His ascension, and His return to
them at the Pentecost, at their death,
or at the final judgment. Probably
the reference is to the Pentecost and
His appearing in the Paraclete, for it
is of this advent the whole context
speaks. The expression “little while”
does not settle which, but, “one day

with Him is as a thousand years,” &c.
“Because I go to the Father.” (R. V.
OMITS THIS CLAUSE.) “The majority
of the better MSS. omit these words
at this place. They have probably
been inserted here from the end of
next verse.”

Ver. 17.—“Then said some of His
disciples among themselves (R. V. SOME
OF HIS DISCIPLES THEREFORE SAID ONE
TO ANOTHER), *What is this that He
saith unto us?*” &c. They did not
understand Him, they were perplexed.

Ver. 19.—“Now Jesus knew (R. V.
PERCEIVED) that they were desirous to
ask Him, and said unto them, *Do ye
enquire among yourselves of (R. V. CON-
CERNING THIS) that I said?*” &c.
“Jesus here gives them a last proof
of His superior knowledge, not only
by showing them that He was con-

scious of the questions which were engrossing their thoughts, but also by solving in this last conversation all the enigmas by which they were tortured.”—*Godet*.

Ver. 20.—“*Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament.*” These last two words represent the intense grief of the Apostles between His crucifixion and resurrection. “*But the world shall rejoice.*” While they were weeping the Jewish world was rejoicing. When they saw Him fastened in the grave, they thought He was finally crushed, and their triumph was complete. “*And ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.*” Not only shall your sorrow be followed by joy, but it shall itself be transformed into joy.

Ver. 21.—“*A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come.*” “The Greek is more exactly, ‘the woman hath pangs’—that is, the woman in the well-known illustration. This figure was of frequent use in the prophets. (Comp. Isa. xxi. 3; xxvi. 17, 18, and especially lxvi. 7, 8; Jer. iv. 31; xxii. 23; xxx. 6; Hos. xiii. 13, 14; Mic. iv. 9, 10.) ‘*That a man is born into the world.*’ The word is the wider word for human being. The thought is of the joy of maternity swallowing up the pangs of childbirth. These cease to exist, but that continues; she forgets the one in the fulness of the other.”—*Ellicott's Commentary*.

Ver. 22.—“*And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man (R. V. ONE) taketh (R. V.*

AWAY) from you.” Elsewhere we are told that at His appearing to them after His resurrection the “disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.” How joyous, too, were they after His Pentecostal appearance in the Paraclete. “And they continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the Church daily, such as should be saved” (Acts ii. 46, 47).

Ver. 23.—“*And in that day ye shall ask Me nothing.*” This seems in all probability to refer to the whole period of the Spirit's dispensation, commencing with the Pentecost. “*Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask (R. V. IF YE SHALL ASK ANYTHING OF) the Father in My name, He will give it you (R. V. HE WILL GIVE IT YOU IN MY NAME).*” “*Whatsoever*” must, of course, have its limitations. Nothing, of course, that would involve an alteration in the established laws of nature or the purpose of God will be given. “*In My name.*” In My spirit and purpose.

Ver. 24.—“*Hitherto have ye asked nothing in My name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full (R. V. FULFILLED).*” “They had not up to this time received the Holy Spirit. When He came He was as the presence of Christ dwelling in them. Under His influence their will became the will of Christ, and their thoughts the thoughts of Christ, and their prayers the prayers of Christ.”

HOMILETICS.

The passage leads us to consider the *Relation of Christ to the Intellectual Perplexities of His disciples*. They did not understand what He meant by the reference to His departure and return, “*in a little while.*” The passage suggests three remarks—

I.—CHRIST FREQUENTLY OCCASIONS THE PERPLEXITY OF HIS DISCIPLES.

He did so now, “*What is this that He saith?*” “Seven times does the phrase ‘*a little while*’ occur in these chapters, and at this point their query is specially fixed upon that clause, but not that

clause only. They take His last expressions by piecemeal, and toss them from one to another. They would be glad to know, but dare not interrogate the Lord."

Christ often, by His symbolical and enigmatical language, threw His hearers into intellectual perplexity. Thus, when He speaks of soul redemption as a new birth, Nicodemus says, "How can these things be?" Thus, when He speaks of His death and resurrection as the destruction and rebuilding of the temple, His hearers considered He meant literally the destruction and rebuilding of the temple at Jerusalem in three days. When He speaks of His absolute necessity for human souls, in the figure of eating His flesh, and drinking His blood, His hearers said, "This is a hard saying, who can hear it?" But the examples are too numerous to quote. Constantly did our Saviour throw His hearers and His disciples into intellectual perplexity. He puzzled them. This must have been intentional. We can see good reasons for this.

First: It would serve to impress them with their ignorance. It is scarcely conceivable that any could have heard Him without being impressed with the greatness of His intellect and the affluence of His knowledge. The hearing, therefore, of utterances from Him that baffled their understanding could scarcely fail to impress them with their ignorance. The first step to knowledge is a consciousness of ignorance.

Secondly: It would serve to stimulate their thoughts. It would break the monotony of their minds, set them thinking, urge them to inquiry. The great object of His teaching was to educate His hearers. Difficulties are essential to educational work. The schoolbook that is mastered by the pupil ceases to be educational, and becomes obsolete. There never lived a Teacher so potent in stirring the mental faculties into vigorous action as Jesus of Nazareth. He broke the monotony of mind and set the wheels of thought agoing. Almost every word of His roused inquiries, and His answers to the inquiries constituted a very large portion of His public ministry. The passage suggests—

II.—CHRIST IS ALWAYS ACQUAINTED WITH THE INTELLECTUAL PERPLEXITIES OF HIS DISCIPLES.

"Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask Him, and said unto them, *Do ye enquire among yourselves of that I said?*" Christ "knew what was in man." Before they spoke He knew their doubts and difficulties. And more, we are told that He knew from the beginning who they were that should betray Him. No other Teacher ever showed, or ever had, such a thorough acquaintance, with the unspoken thoughts that coursed through the mind of His hearers. Indeed, so frequently are they ignorant that they often

infer that where there is scepticism, there is faith; where there is impiety, there is religion. Not so with Christ: no hearer ever deceived Him, for all souls are more open to Him than the tropical seas are to the beams of the sun. This fact should have two effects upon us.

First: It should encourage us to search the Scriptures. The difficulties we have in endeavouring to understand the writings of the great authors of antiquity, are not known to them, when we ponder perplexed over their utterances, nor have they the power to help us in our difficulties. Not so with Christ. He not only knows our difficulties in studying His Word, but is ready if we ask Him, to yield a satisfactory solution.

Secondly: It should urge us to cultivate sincerity in our thoughts. For us to profess to know things of which we are ignorant, to believe in things of which we are sceptical, is to insult His Omniscience. Our prayer should be, "Teach me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." The passage suggests—

III.—CHRIST WILL FURNISH A SATISFACTORY SOLUTION OF THE INTELLECTUAL PERPLEXITIES OF HIS DISCIPLES IF DESIRED.

"*Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask Him.*" And because they were "*desirous,*" He here gives a full explanation. In His explanation concerning His departure and return, He states three things—

First: That His departure would involve them in great sorrow, whilst the world would be rejoicing. "*Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice.*" Who can tell what poignant agony they endured when they saw Him on the Cross, and heard His expiring groans, and beheld Him conveyed to the grave? On His way to the Cross we are told, "there followed Him, a great company of people, and of women who also bewailed and lamented Him." Do you want to know—as if Christ had said—what I mean by the "*little while, and ye shall not see Me?*" I will tell you in order to prepare you, that that period will be a time of sore distress for you, "*ye shall weep and lament.*" You will soon know all about it, from bitter experience. The event is just at hand. Yes; you will indeed "*lament,*" even while the world is rejoicing. My enemies will revel in unholy delight when they know that death has done its work on Me. He states—

Secondly: That His return will change their sorrow into high rejoicing. He indicates here two or three things concerning their joy at His return. (1.) It will be intensified by their previous distress. "*A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her*

hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world." The anguish of the mother is lost in the rapture she feels, when she presses to her bosom the new-born babe. So it will be with all the sorrows and trials of the good man on earth. They will be lost and forgotten in the celestial felicities of the future. (2.) It will be beyond the power of man to take away. "*Your joy no man taketh from you.*" It will be in them as "a well of water, springing up into everlasting life." A man may take away your property, your health, your life, but your joy never. "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away." (3.) It will be associated with the power of obtaining all spiritual blessings from the Father. "*In that day ye shall ask Me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it you.*" "*That day,*" that long day beginning with the Pentecost, running on through all the ages of redeemed spirits. With the Spirit working in you, you shall obtain from the great Father, the primal Source of all goodness, whatever you shall require. Thus Christ, without going minutely into particulars concerning His departure and return, states facts abundantly sufficient to set their souls at rest.

CONCLUSION. If we are genuine disciples of the Holy Christ we shall have a full and satisfactory solution of all our perplexities and difficulties one day. What we know not now, "we shall know hereafter." Wait a little.

No. CXVIII.

THE DAY OF THE SPIRIT.

"These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs," &c.—xvi. 25—28.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Ver. 25.—"*These things have I spoken unto you.*" Perhaps the things He had just spoken, beginning at ver. 16. "*In proverbs,*" or as in margin "parables." "There is a sense," says an able modern expositor, "in which it is necessarily true of all Christ's teachings and indeed of all teaching in words. They are but parables, until the truth which they contain has been thought out by the man who hears them. To the disciples much of Christ's teaching remained in a parabolic form until the Spirit came, and uncovered their meaning." "*But the time* (R. V. HOUR)

cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall shew (R. V. TELL) you plainly of the Father." The time referred to is the time of the Spirit, the Paraclete, who should carry the naked truth there amidst souls.

Ver. 26.—"*At* (R. V. IN) *that day ye shall ask in My name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you.*" These words have often been taken to mean, "that I will pray the Father for you is a matter of course which I need not tell you;" but this sense is excluded by the following verse. The thought is

rather, "I do not speak of praying for you, because in the presence of the Advocate you will yourselves be able to pray in My name to the Father." "His prayer is thought of as not necessary for them, and yet the form of the words implies that He will pray for them, if it should be needed. While their hearts are the temples of the Holy Ghost, and they maintain communion with the Father, they will need no other advocate, but 'If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous' (1 John ii. 1). Compare chapters xiv. 16 and xvii. 9, which refer to the time which precedes the gift of the Holy Ghost."—*Ellicott's Commentary*.

Ver. 27.—"The Father Himself loveth you, because ye have loved Me,

and have believed that I came out from God" (R. V. FORTH FROM THE FATHER). The love here of the Father must be something more than that general philanthropy that embraces the whole human race, for it refers to individual men, and these men are those who loved Christ, and believing, regard Him as coming forth from the Father. The language seems to teach that God has a special love for all those who love His Son, and bless His messenger.

Ver. 28.—"I came forth (R. V. OUT) from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to (R. V. UNTO) the Father." He came from the Father to this earth, and He returns to the Father. He came and He goes, for the spiritual restoration of mankind.

HOMILETICS.

The passage suggests a few thoughts concerning *The "Day" of the Spirit*. The day is here referred to in the expression, "*at that day*." This is a long day; it began on the Pentecost, and runs on through the ages until the "restitution of all things." It is the best day that has dawned on humanity since the fall; better than the day when God "spake unto the fathers through the prophets," running on for forty centuries; better than the day of Christ's personal ministry² on the earth. It is a day that will grow brighter and brighter until it floods all souls with the sunshine of infinite love. The prophets call it the "notable day of the Lord," the "great day of the Lord," and sometimes the last day; it is a day in which moral wonders multiply every hour. There is no day after this, it runs into the endless ages of retribution. Two thoughts are here suggested concerning this day of the Spirit—

I.—IT IS A "DAY" IN WHICH CHRISTLY TEACHING BECOMES MORE AND MORE INDEPENDENT OF WORDS.

"The time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall shew you plainly of the Father." Proverbs, words, language, are not truth; at best they are the mere vehicles. They are no more truth than the water-pipes are water; the pipes may be broken into atoms, but the waters continue as free and as boundless as ever, and will work their way through other channels. They continue to flow in rivers, bound in oceans, sail in clouds. The Bible itself, even its most inspired utterances, is not *truth*—it is the mere shell, symbol, channel. Christ used words in order to convey truth to His disciples. Sometimes His words did convey

truths to their spirits, and sometimes they did not. When He says, therefore, "*I will no more speak unto you in proverbs,*" He points to a more direct, more thorough, and more effective way of conveying His truth to human souls, the way in which the Paraclete would do it—bring all things that He had said to their remembrance, make His very "*proverbs*" blaze in their consciousness. He would take the sense out of the sound, the spirit out of the letter, of even inspired language, and convey them into the inmost depths of their spiritual nature. The men who are most under the influence of this Paraclete are seldom able to trace their most sacred impressions, most devout aspirations, most godly resolves, most elevated experiences to any words, even the words of Christ Himself. "*The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, Whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things.*" "The anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you." "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things." Christ says here, "*I shall shew you plainly of the Father.*" To see the Father is to see all truth, and to see that is the supreme necessity of human nature. But how can the Father be plainly shown? Not in words, for no words can reveal the Father. The Father can only be seen with the heart; a loving, pure heart. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Another thought suggested is—

II.—IT IS A "DAY" WHEN FELLOWSHIP WITH THE FATHER BECOMES MORE AND MORE INDEPENDENT OF MEDIATION.

Christ seems to say in illustration of this—

First: That His disciples in this day will pray in His name, and therefore will not require Him to pray for them. "*At that day ye shall ask in My name.*" He had just before said, "Hitherto have ye asked nothing in My name." Why? They had not at that time received the Paraclete. But when He came it was stated that they would pray in His name, which means, I presume, that the Spirit would so inspire them with the sentiments and purposes of Christ that they would always pray in the spirit of Christ, and therefore their prayer would be real and effective. Because of this He says, "*I say not unto you that I will pray the Father for you.*" It is not necessary; you will have My spirit in you, and will pray as I should pray. Christ had prayed for them, and was just about interceding for them again, but after this it is implied that His prayers would be unnecessary. The coming of the Paraclete was, in fact, the *second advent of Himself*. Thus He represents it, "I will not leave you comfortless, but will come unto you." It is His coming, not as at the first, into their sensuous region, but into their spiritual natures, into their souls.

Hence His intercession is intercession in their souls, and intercession with them on behalf of the claims of God. "The Spirit maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." Popular theology represents Christ as engaged in one constant earnest prayer to His Father on behalf of the world, as if His Father's malignity was so deep and strong, that it required long ages of Christ's earnest intercession in order to melt His heart into mercy.

"Lift up your eyes to the heavenly seats
Where your Redeemer stays ;
Kind Intercessor there He sits,
And loves, and pleads, and prays."

Such sentiments as these are still sung in some so-called churches. Is this a Divine fact or a godless fiction? Undoubtedly the latter. Christ seems to say—

Secondly : That His disciples in this day will have such a sense of the Father's love that they will not feel the need of the intercession of others on their behalf. "*For the Father Himself loveth you, because ye have loved Me, and have believed that I came out from God.*"

Observe, incidentally—(1.) That God loves men individually. "*The Father Himself loveth you.*" He loves all, but He does not overlook the individual in the millions. His love embraces each, as if the each were the whole. (2.) That God loves the individuals especially who love His Son. "*Because ye have loved Me.*" He loves all, whether they love Christ or not, but it would seem from this He has a *special* love for those who love His Son. In truth no man can love the Father who does not love the Son, who is His Revealer and Image. And no man who does not love the Father can be conscious of the Father's love for him ; and if he is conscious of the Father's love, why should he require an intercessor with God to entreat Him to bestow that of which he is in conscious possession? Under the ministry of the Paraclete all Christ's disciples will have the blessed and ever-deepening consciousness that the great Father loves them, and with this consciousness there will be *direct* communion between the Father and His children. Another thought suggested is—

III.—IT IS A "DAY" IN WHICH CHRIST CAME FROM THE FATHER AND WILL RETURN TO HIM AGAIN.

"*I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world : again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.*"* He came from the Father as the expression, evidence, and channel of the Father's love for the world ; came to reveal the regenerating thoughts, the quickening sympathies, the glorious purposes of that love to estranged humanity, in order to win it back to filial loyalty and

* See Germ, p. 64.

unbounded trust. When He had done His work on earth He left a history which constitutes the gospel of the world. He returns to the Father in order that the Paraclete—Himself—may come in Spirit to apply effectively that history to the men of all coming times.

CONCLUSION. Such is the Day of the Spirit. How are we using this day? It is the day of grace, the day of salvation.

O Spirit, descend
As the beams of the morn,
In the brightness of God
Our natures adorn.
Come down as Thou didst
On chaos of old,
Bring forth those creations
Thy prophets foretold.

O Spirit, descend
As the rain and the dew,
That the beauties of Eden
May spring up anew.
Come down as the wind
On the dry bones of old,
Breathe life into souls
That are withered and cold.

O Spirit, descend
As on Pentecost hour,
When thousands that met
Were changed by Thy power.
Come down as a fire
From Thine altar above,
Re-ignite within us
The flames of Thy love.—“*Biblical Liturgy.*”

GERMS OF THOUGHT.

No. LXVII.

FROM THE FATHER TO THE FATHER.

“I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.”—xvi. 28.

These are remarkable words in a remarkable address, delivered on a remarkable occasion. They reveal a history sublimely unique and infinitely profound. Of all the millions of men that have appeared on this earth, none but Jesus Christ could say, “*I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.*”

The text contains three facts—

I.—CHRIST HAS BEEN HERE ON THIS EARTH AND GONE.

“*I came.*” “*I leave.*”

First: This is one of the best attested facts in the world’s history.

It is attested by collateral history, by numerous truthful and contemporaneous witnesses, and by the mighty and accumulating moral and social influences of eighteen centuries. That Christ has been here and gone is better proved than that Socrates, Aristotle, Cæsar, Alexander, Napoleon have ever lived and wrought on this earth. Christ has been here. The fact is engraven in imperishable characters all round the beaming brow of growing Christendom.

Secondly: This is the most glorious fact in the world's history. No fact has so blest the world. It was the creation of a Sun in man's moral heavens, the opening of a Fountain in man's moral desert. What has it done? All that is wholesome in the governments, pure in the morals, benevolent in the institutions, holy in the spirit and manners of the world, owes its existence to this fact. Insignificant as this Planet is, as compared with other orbs in the fields of immensity, the fact that Christ has trod its soil, and breathed its air, has given it a moral lustre that pales the brightness of them all. Notice—

II.—CHRIST HAS BEEN HERE ON THIS EARTH, AND GONE BY HIS OWN CHOICE.

“*I came. . . . I leave.*” What man amongst the millions that have appeared could say this? All have been *sent* here, irrespective of their choice or effort, and all in the same way have been despatched to other scenes. But Christ *came*. He fixed His own *time*, His own *birthplace*, His own *country*, His own *parentage*, His own *circumstances*. He might have come or not come, might have come as an angel or as a man, as a prince or as a pauper. All rested with Him—“*Lo, I come.*” In the same way He departed—“*I leave.*” I leave *when* I please, now or in the distant future. “*I leave*” *how* I please. By a natural death, or by the hands of violence. “I have power to lay down My life, and power to take it up again.” What man could ever say this? We are sent away; often by means most revolting, and at a time most dreaded. “No man hath power over his spirit,” &c. We are in the hands of another absolutely, as “clay in the hands of the potter.” Observe—

III.—CHRIST, IN VISITING THIS EARTH AND DEPARTING FROM IT, WAS THE CONSCIOUS MESSENGER OF THE FATHER.

“*I came forth from the Father. . . . I leave the world, and go to the Father.*” What does this mean? It does not mean that while on this earth He was *absent* from the Father. The Father was always with Him. “I am not alone, for the Father is with Me.” The language suggests two things—

First: The life of true souls. “*I came forth from the Father and go to the Father.*” Coming from the Father with our motives,

inspirations, and directions for His service, and returning with the results of our labours. As rivers have their existence by rolling from the ocean to ocean, so the true life of souls is in consciously moving *from the Father to the Father*: the Cause and End of all activities. The language suggests—

Secondly: The interference of the world with this life. Christ speaks as if, when in the world, He was away from the Father. There were circumstances in His history which seem to eclipse His Father's face; hence, on the cross He exclaims, "Why hast Thou forsaken Me?" There is much in the experience of every holy man, connected with his life here, which obscures Divine presence, and interferes with Divine communion:—the power of the senses, physical sufferings, secular engagements, and social trials. The Father does not always seem to be with us whilst on this earth; but when we leave this world we go to Him. We shall no longer see "through a glass darkly; we shall see Him face to face."

CONCLUSION. With what holy gratitude should we celebrate the advent of Christ to this earth! He is the great redeeming Man Who came here from the Great Father, and returned to Him again, having accomplished His mission. We rejoice that He is with the Father; and all who serve the Father as He served Him return also into His beatific presence. Alas! how many who come into this world return not to the Father, but to the devil.

No. CXIX.

NOTEWORTHY ASPECTS OF CHRIST AND HIS DISCIPLES.

"His disciples said," &c.—xvi. 29—33.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Ver. 29.—"*His disciples said unto Him* (R. V. HIS DISCIPLES SAY), *Lo, now speakest Thou plainly, and speakest no proverb.*" "They are heartily rejoiced at their own understanding; they congratulate themselves that they can gladden their Master by the declaration that they can understand Him. They recognize in their understanding a foretaste of the fulfilment of the promise given in ver. 25 to which they verbally refer. Now they breathe freely, and inhale the fresh air."—*Hengstenberg.*

Ver. 30.—"*Now.*" This is emphatic. "*Are we sure* (R. V. KNOW WE) *that Thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask Thee: by this we believe that Thou camest forth from God.*" They recognized in their acquaintance with His

thoughts, and in the new light which He brings them, the Divinity of His mission. They seemed to feel as if the day had already dawned when they need ask for nothing, for He knows all things, and would communicate to them all necessary truths.

Ver. 31.—"*Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe?*" The question does not mean that He doubted their avowal, for He knew the state of their hearts. He knew, however, that the hour of their full illumination had not yet dawned. "Their present light," to use the language of another, "was as the flash of a meteor, brilliant but passing away." He knew that clouds were still gathering round them, and a storm that must break over their heads.

Ver. 32.—"*Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scat-*

tered, every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone." He refers to the hour of His crucifixion, when they were all so overwhelmed with terror that they forsook Him and fled, and He was left alone. "And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me." In a sense He was away from them. Such a soul as His must have felt isolation in the midst of crowds.

Ver. 33.—"These things I have spoken unto you, that in Me ye might (R. V. MAY) have peace." Freedom from all anxieties and apprehensions, and a settled faith in the immutable and all-loving Father. "In the world

ye shall have (R. V. YE HAVE) tribulation." Afflictions, and sorrows, and persecutions are always the lot of true disciples. "But be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." "The last and crowning act of His victory, indeed, was yet to come. But it was all but come, and the result was as certain as if it had been already over—the consciousness of which, no doubt, was the chief source of that wonderful calm with which He went through the whole of this solemn scene in the upper room."—*Dr. Brown.*

HOMILETICS.

In these verses we have certain *Noteworthy aspects both of Christ's disciples and of Himself.* Here we have—

I.—CHRIST'S DISCIPLES IN NOTEWORTHY ASPECTS.

They appear here—

First: As professing satisfaction with the explanations of their Master. "His disciples said unto Him, Lo, now speakest Thou plainly, and speakest no proverb. Now are we sure that Thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask Thee: by this we believe that Thou camest forth from God." Some say that the language of the disciples here is not that of sincerity; that they did not really appreciate the meaning of Christ, as their subsequent history shows; that they only professed to do so. If they were really assured in their own minds that Christ knew "all things," and did really believe that He came "forth from God," all the better for them; but if their avowal was a mere pretension, most daring was their impiety. At the same time, alas, in this they would only be types of the teeming millions in every age, whose religion is but that of empty profession. How many to-day in England profess to understand the teaching of Christ, who are utterly ignorant of His spiritual meaning! They appear here—

Secondly: As unconsciously nearing a terrible crisis. "Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe?" Are you really sincere? Then I tell you, "Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone." The truth of your confession will soon be tested; you are soon to pass through a terrible trial. The reference here is of course to the crucifixion, which was just at hand. How did they stand the test? We are told elsewhere (Matt. xxvi. 56) that "all the disciples forsook Him and fled." Panic-struck, they hurried "every man to his own" home, and left their Master "alone."

A time comes in the experience of every professor of religion to test the falsehood or reality of his religion, in great afflictions and dying hours. Here we have,

II.—CHRIST HIMSELF IN NOTEWORTHY ASPECTS.

First: Forsaken by all. "*Shall leave Me alone.*" Alone, when just as a Man, His human heart would yearn for the presence of His friends. Perhaps the words of an Old Testament writer will express His experience in this dark hour. "I looked for some to take pity, and there was none, and for comforters, but I found none." There is a sense in which the highest natures must always feel themselves *alone*, unapproached by inferior souls. Of Christ this was true in a pre-eminent degree. No one could enter into His thoughts and feelings. Here He is represented as—

Secondly: In communion with His Father. "*Yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me.*" "*With Me*" in all My deepest experiences. Philosophy shows that if there be a God He is with all men: leaves none alone. Conscious guilt shows that God is present as a righteous and inexorable Judge, but piety evermore recognizes His presence as a Father. "*The Father is with Me,*" said Christ. If the Father is with us we have all we need. Here we see Him as—

Thirdly: Giving encouragement to His disciples. He does this in three ways, by—(1.) Warning them of the tribulations they would meet with. "*In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer.*" "*In the world,*" that is, in their *outward* life. Great and overwhelming were the trials into which the disciples were about to plunge, and the history of the true Church in all ages has been a history of tribulation. Christ here prepares them for it by forewarning them, and to be "forewarned is to be forearmed." Trials rushing upon them suddenly and unexpectedly would crush them; but here they are led to expect tribulation, and this was an element of encouragement. He encourages them by—(2.) Promising them peace in Him. "*That in Me ye might have peace.*" Peace for the *intellect*: no sceptical distracting thoughts need trouble you. Peace for the *heart*: all your affections harmonized and centred in Me. Peace for the *conscience*: no more remorseful reminiscences and forebodings. This peace is to be found in Christ, "*in Me*"—not in Churches, not in priesthoods, not in creeds, but "*in Me.*" How peaceful are the planets whose Sun is their centre! The mightiest hurricanes of the earth cannot touch them, nor can the most terrible earthquakes shake them in their peaceful orbits. Emblem this of the peace of that man even under the greatest trials of earth whose soul is centred on Christ. He encourages them by—(3.) Assuring them of His mastery over the world. "*I have overcome the world.*" Christ often speaks of what is to come

as if it had already transpired, so certain was He of the future. The world for a few hours longer would be in fierce antagonism with Him, insulting Him, wounding Him, and murdering Him; but, sure of the result, He says, "*I have overcome the world.*"

No. CXX.

SUPREME THINGS IN MAN'S SPIRITUAL HISTORY.

(*Christ's Last Prayer with His disciples.*—JOHN xvii. 1—26.)

"These words spake Jesus," &c.—xvii. 1—3.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Ver. 1.—"*These words* (R. V. THINGS) *spake Jesus.*" Of all the grand and touching passages that make up this, the grandest of all books, the Bible, this chapter stands pre-eminent, so simple in language, that a child can interpret it; so sublime in ideas and sympathies as to surpass the grasp of an angel's intellect. It reveals the heart of Christ as it points up to the Infinite Father, and looks down through all the scenes and ages of the race. It is a prayer for Himself, the Apostles, and for the universal Church. "*And lifted* (R. V. LIFTING) *up His eyes to heaven.*" "The words ought not to be taken to imply that He looked up to the sky, and must therefore have been in the open air. The upward look is naturally expressive of feeling, and irrespective of place." It would seem that the preceding words of Christ were spoken on the way from Jerusalem to Gethsemane; and now, as He was about crossing the Brook of Kedron, He lifts His eyes to heaven, and pours out His great soul in prayer. "*And* (R. V. HE) *said, Father, the hour is come.*" The hour which He had often referred to, the hour of His crucifixion. This hour was one of the greatest epochs in the history of our world; to it all past events pointed, and from it all future history would take its date and derive its influence. "*Glorify Thy Son.*" "What is meant by glorifying the Son is further explained in ver. 5. But this implies the dark path of death, which has to be trodden before that glory will be attained." "*Thy Son,*" in a unique sense, in a sense that transcends all human con-

ception. "*That Thy* (R. V. THE) *Son also may glorify Thee.*" The prayer is absolutely disinterested. What He invokes is something that would enable Him to glorify the Infinite Father. "The glorifying of the Father by the Son is the manifestation of God's glory in the completion of the Messianic glory by the mission of the Advocate, and the future victories of the Church." (See *Luthardt.*)

Ver. 2.—"*As Thou hast given Him power* (R. V. EVEN AS THOU GAVEST HIM AUTHORITY) *over all flesh.*" What is the idea here? Is it that power over all mankind in order that He may bestow upon some—viz. the elect—"Eternal life?" This is the current idea in what is called orthodox theology. But the words do not convey this idea. The translation of Dr. Samuel Davidson is: "That Thy Son may glorify Thee, even as Thou gavest Him authority over all flesh, that whatsoever Thou hast given Him, He should give to them life everlasting." The following criticism explains this: "'All flesh' represents a Greek translation of a Hebrew phrase. It occurs again in Matt. xxv. 22; Mark xiii. 20; Luke iii. 6; Acts ii. 17; Rom. iii. 20; 1 Cor. i. 29; and xv. 39; Gal. ii. 16; 1 Pet. i. 24. St. John uses it in this place only. Its special signification is humanity as such, considered in its weakness and imperfection." "*That He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him.*" (R. V. THAT WHATSOEVER THOU HAST GIVEN HIM, TO THEM HE SHOULD GIVE ETERNAL LIFE). "Literally, 'That all whom Thou gavest Him, He may give to them eternal life'

(comp. ver. 6). The word 'all' is in the Greek a neuter singular, and signifies collectively the whole body of humanity given to Christ. The word for 'to them' is masculine and plural, and signifies the individual reception on the part of those to whom eternal life is given." (See "Commentary for English Readers," by Bishop Ellicott.) Dean Alford's version is: "According as Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that whatsoever Thou hast given Him, to them He should give eternal life." To me the idea seems to be this: INASMUCH AS THOU HAST GIVEN HIM AUTHORITY OVER ALL MANKIND, THAT HE SHOULD GIVE TO ALL MANKIND WHAT THOU HAST GIVEN TO HIM,—ETERNAL LIFE.

Ver. 3.—"And this is life eternal, that they might (R. V. SHOULD) know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent" (R. V. HIM WHOM THOU DIDST SEND, EVEN JESUS CHRIST). From what Christ here says of eternal life, it would seem it is not a physical but a moral quality; is not an endless state of being, but an endless moral mood of soul, consisting in a true knowledge of the great God and His blessed Son. Moral goodness is eternal life, and moral goodness consists in the highest spiritual intelligence. "Eternal life consists in the knowledge of the Father as the only Being answering to the ideal thought of God."—(See Ellicott's "Commentary.")

HOMILETICS.

These wonderful words may be taken as setting before us some of the *Supreme things in Man's Spiritual History*. We have here suggested—

I.—THE SUPREME PURPOSE OF EXISTENCE.

What is that? To glorify the Father. For this Christ prays, "*Glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee.*" What is it to glorify God? It is not laudation, however enthusiastic and continuous. Because vain men are pleased with panegyrics and eulogiums, they foolishly imagine they will be acceptable to the Almighty, hence they compose laudatory hymns, set them to music, and call their productions "Services of Song." It is not contributing in any way to the blessedness of His nature, or the grandeur of His being. This cannot be done! To *glorify* Him is to reveal Him in our character and life. Whatever creature works out the nature which God has given him in harmony with His will, glorifies Him. Thus the "heavens declare His glory." The soul that lives as God intended it to live manifests His glory. Thus we are commanded to glorify God in our body and our spirits, which are His. It is here indicated that we can only glorify God as He glorifies us. "*Glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee.*" As if He had said, I cannot glorify Thee, unless Thou wilt glorify Me. This is true of men; unless God will glorify us by enabling us to live according to His will, we cannot glorify Him. Were it possible for the orbs of heaven to reverse their course and rush into chaos, they would not show forth His glory; it is only as His creatures move in harmony with His eternal law that they radiate His glorious character. "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all to the glory of God." There is more of God seen in a

Divinely inspired and righteously regulated soul, than is seen in all the splendour of the heavens, the grandeur of the ocean, or the beauties of the earth. We have here suggested—

II.—THE SUPREME MISSION OF CHRIST.

What is the grand object of this mission? To give to all men that which the Father gave Him—“*eternal life*,” that is, eternal goodness. “*As Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him.*” In this verse there seem wrapt up several glorious truths.

(1.) That Christ is the Master of the human race. “*Power over all flesh.*” “All power is given to Him in heaven and on earth.” His authority is absolute and independent, yet never interfering with the freedom of any of His subjects, and ever more estimating their services, not by their amount, but by their motive.

(2.) That Christ is the Master of the human race by Divine appointment. “*Thou hast given Him power.*” “The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His hands.” The Divine right of human kings is an *impious fiction*, but Christ reigns by Divine right, and therefore we should obey Him, and rejoice in His government.

(3.) That Christ is the Divinely-appointed Master of the human race in order to make us happy. “*That He should give eternal life.*” “*Eternal life*”—or goodness, is the supreme necessity of human nature. Moral goodness is essentially eternal, because God is eternal. Goodness is the incorruptible seed, the perennial river of life, the unfading crown. Sin is death, goodness is life, and goodness is everlasting. So long as God continues it will endure.* We have here suggested—

III.—THE SUPREME SCIENCE OF MAN.

What is that? “*And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.*” Science abounds, the science of the organic and the inorganic, the science of matter and the science of mind; and these sciences are promoted and extolled amongst us. But unless a man knows the true God and His Christ—not with a mere speculative knowledge, but with a spiritual, sympathetic, and practical knowledge—all other knowledges are but meteors that flash across the heavens of mind, and leave the darkness more profound. I only really know the man with whose character I have an intense sympathy, and without this sympathy I know not God; and if I have this sympathy I have moral goodness, and this is “*eternal life.*” The man who has this supreme science has “*eternal life.*” Has it—not the means to it—but itself; has it, not will have it—it is his; he has it already in possession.

* See Homily at end of the volume.

No. CXXI.

TRUE SOUL GLORY.

"I have glorified Thee on the earth : I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do," &c.—xvii. 4, 5, 22.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Ver. 4.—*"I have glorified"* (R. V. I GLORIFIED) *Thee on the earth: I have finished* (R. V. HAVING ACCOMPLISHED) *the work which Thou gavest* (R. V. HAST GIVEN) *Me to do."* Observe—(1.) Christ came into the world to accomplish a certain Divine work. This is true of every man; every man has a Divine mission. (2.) This Divine work He had now finished. He had fulfilled His Divine mission; this is what every man ought to do. (3.) Having finished the work, He glorified God, and ceased His earthly life. God is glorified in the execution of His will, and when that is done, so far as that will relates to earth, our connection with earth terminates. It was so now with Christ. Though He had not at this time left the earth, and would not for upwards of forty days, yet He speaks of Himself as having actually departed. His work on the earth had *finished*, and He regarded His connection with the earth as over. If a man could do all that God intended him to do on the earth, however long he continued on the earth after, the earth would become heaven to him.

Ver. 5.—*"And now, O Father,*

glorify Thou Me with Thine own self."

As I have finished My work on earth, and thus glorified Thee, I ask Thee, O Father, to glorify Me. *"With the glory which I had with Thee before the world was."* We are far enough from saying that Christ had not an eternal existence, but the words do not convey that idea. They only convey the idea of a pre-existence. He might have existed before all time, before the creation, and yet not from eternity. (See chap. i. 18; Phil. ii. 4, 9.) One expositor says: "That there can be no explanation of verses 1 to 5 of this chapter, which denies that Christ claims for Himself that He was Divine and co-eternal with the Father." Though we disclaim Unitarian views on this point, honesty compels us to say that there can be such an explanation. The words do not necessarily convey the idea of co-eternity with the Father.

Ver. 22.—*"And the glory which Thou gavest* (R. V. HAST GIVEN) *Me I have given* (R. V. UNTO) *them; that they may be one, even as We are one."* Here, again, the future is regarded by Christ as present. What is the glory? Ideal goodness, moral excellence, that which is as we shall see, the glory of God.

HOMILETICS.

We have brought verse twenty-two in connection with the fourth and fifth verses, because it has to do with the same grand subject, viz. the glory of God, or *True Soul Glory*.

Glory implies the manifestation of something that is adorable. There are manifestations of the adorable where the adorable does not exist. Worldly pomp, glitter, and pageantry, the thoughtless render homage to these manifestations, as if there was something really intrinsically adorable behind them. Whereas, if the thing behind the vanity, the selfishness, the superstition, and the ignorance were truly seen, men would recoil from the manifestation with disgust. Now, what is the really adorable thing, the thing which, if manifested, would excite honour and reverence and praise? It is MORAL EXCELLENCE. This is the glory of God.

When Moses besought God to show him His glory, what was the reply? Was it, "I will show thee the Almightyness of My power, the infinity of My wisdom, the immensity of My dominion, the boundlessness of My wealth?" No. Men cannot from their souls *adore* these things. But He said: "I will cause all My *goodness* to pass before thee." *God's glory is His goodness*, His infinite moral perfection. Hence the passage suggests two things in relation to true glory—

I.—IT IS THE SAME IN ALL MORAL BEINGS, WHEREVER IT EXISTS.

We are taught here that—

First: In *God* it is the manifestation of moral excellence. "*I have glorified Thee on the earth.*" Take from the Infinite His disinterested love, His absolute purity, His inflexible rectitude, and though you leave Him in possession of His Omnipotence, His Omniscience, and His Almightyness, you have stripped Him of all that moral souls can really adore. We are taught here that—

Secondly: In *Christ* it is the manifestation of moral excellence. "*And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was.*" (1.) Christ had it as the *eternal Logos*. He was the Word, the Logos that was with God "in the beginning." He was, so to say, the organ, through which the absolute and unknowable One revealed Himself in the creation of worlds. "By Him were all things made that were made." This was the glory He had with the Father in the beginning, the glory of creating innumerable worlds, and systems, and myriads of existences to manifest Him who "dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto, Whom no man hath seen, nor can see." (2.) Christ seeks it now as the *incarnate Logos*. "*And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was.*" He would now ascend to the same power and influence that He had before. He "humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death." He would have His nature now raised into the full effulgence of eternal excellence. That glory had been, to a great extent, under a cloud during the days of His flesh; the cloud was about breaking, and He yearned for the original refulgence. We are taught here that—

Thirdly: In *man* it is the manifestation of moral excellence. "*And the glory which Thou gavest Me, I have given them.*" Man is glorious only as he realizes, embodies, and manifests the *eternal ideal of excellence*. True glory, then, wherever it exists, is the same—the same in *God*, the same in *Christ*, the same in *Humanity*; there is no other glory worth the name. To be glorious is to be good, and to be good is to be like God. The passage suggests in relation to true glory that—

II.—WHEREVER IT EXISTS ON EARTH, IT COMES THROUGH CHRIST
FROM GOD.

“*And the glory which Thou gavest Me, I have given them; * that they may be one, even as We are one.*” How does it come through Him?

First: He reveals it to men. “We beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” He revealed the moral perfections of the Eternal, not only in His teaching, but in the whole of His life. He was not only the incarnate *Logos—reason*, but the *eternal life—goodness*. In Him was “life, and the life was the light of men.” He was the “express image” of the invisible God. All the elements of spiritual excellence were in Him livingly, harmoniously, and constantly. Never did spiritual excellence appear before men in such a radiant and regnant manner. Sages had reasoned about it, poets had sung about it, but it was all in haze and weakness.

Secondly: He inspires it in men. He implants its germ in the human soul, or, rather, He kindles its flame. “God, Who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”

GERMS OF THOUGHT.

No. LXVIII.

TRUE GLORY.

“And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them.”—xvii. 22.

This chapter is the sublimest prayer that ever ascended from this earth to heaven—the prayer of Christ. It reveals at once—(1.) The purpose of God; (2.) The heart of Christ; and (3.) The wants of humanity. Every sentence is a text, and the sentence we have selected is not the least significant. It leads us to make three remarks concerning true glory.

I.—TRUE GLORY IS THE SAME IN ALL MORAL INTELLIGENCES.

“*The glory which Thou gavest Me.*” The prayer in the chapter refers to several grand *Unities*. It speaks of *one life*. The life of God, and Christ is here spoken of as *One*. It speaks of *one truth*—“Thy truth.” Truth has many sides, but it is one essential whole. What are called truths, are but phases of the one truth, of which God is the centre and circumference, the root and the branch. It speaks of *one Church*—“that they all may be one.” There is but one Church. The Christly in all sects, countries, worlds, are but members of one grand spiritual whole: one family, of which Christ is the Head.

* See Germ, below.

“The Church on earth and all the dead
But one communion make.”

It speaks of *one love*. That “the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them.” Benevolence has many modifications—justice, mercy, forbearance. But in essence it is the same in all minds. *Love* is one, as God is one. In the text it speaks of *one glory*. “*The glory which Thou gavest Me.*” The glory which Christ had was the glory of God, and this glory He imparts to mankind. What is true *glory*? It is the glory of *moral goodness*. In the eye of conscience, in the light of the Bible, and in the estimate of the great God and His holy universe, the good only are glorious.

II.—TRUE GLORY IS COMMUNICABLE FROM ONE BEING TO ANOTHER.

The glory which Christ had came from God, and was now being imparted to His disciples. Three things are necessary to its communication.

First: The manifestation of it. Were the Eternal to conceal His glory, no creature intelligence could participate in its rays. Goodness, to be communicated, must be revealed. A good being, to make others good, must show his own goodness.

Secondly: The contemplation of it. What boots it, if glory is manifested, if no eye observes it, no mind contemplates it? The man who in noontide splendour shuts his eyes, is as truly in darkness, as he who gropes his way in the depths of midnight.

Thirdly: The imitation of it. There must be an effort on the part of the observer to imbibe, cherish, and develop the Divine spirit of goodness and of glory. Thus true glory is communicated. It comes not to us irrespective of our choice and effort. It requires attention, study, practice.

III.—TRUE GLORY COMES TO MAN THROUGH JESUS CHRIST.

“*I have given them.*” Christ was the *only perfect Revealer* of true glory. “We beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” “He was the brightness of His Father’s glory.” No other being revealed God to man as Christ did. “No man hath seen God at any time: the only begotten Son, He hath revealed Him.” It is by studying Him, and imitating Him, that men become glorious. “For we all with open face beholding, as in a glass; the glory of the Lord.” There is no true glory for man dissociated from Christ.

IV.—TRUE GLORY IS CONSISTENT WITH CIRCUMSTANTIAL SUFFERING.

The disciples had received their glory from Christ, yet what were their *circumstances* in the world? They were poor, tried,

persecuted, regarded as the "offscouring of all things." Ultimately, most of them left the world through the agonies of martyrdoms. Yet, in all their struggles and toils, in all their afflictions and dangers, in all the obloquies they received, in all the tortures they met with from enemies, they *were glorious*. In affluence of heavenly thought, in force of holy will, in peace and energy of conscience, in purity and disinterestedness of love, in an unconquerable power of endurance, in an invincible heroism, in free fellowship with God, in high hopes of immortality, in a fame that coruscates and in an influence that widens and deepens through the ages, they were glorious. Glorious, too, were they in their achievements. "Through faith they subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, and escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens." To their bloodless victories we owe our liberty, our Bible, our schools, our asylums, our Christendom.

No. CXXII.

THE APOSTOLIC COMMUNITY.

"I have manifested Thy name unto the men which Thou gavest Me," &c.—
xvii. 6—8.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Ver. 6.—
"I have manifested (R. V. I MANIFESTED) *Thy name*." Thy holy character. "Unto the men which (R. V. WHOM) *Thou gavest Me out of the world*." Christ here regards His Apostles as a body separated from the world, and entrusted to His spiritual care. "*Thine they were, and Thou gavest them (R. V. TO) Me; and they have kept Thy word*." "The meaning of these words is that they were morally prepared by the earlier manifestation of God for the fuller manifestation in Christ. They were God's in more than name, and therefore when Christ was revealed to them, they recognized Him of whom Moses and the prophets did speak (compare chap. i. 37)."—"New Testament Commentary," by Bi-hop Ellicott.

Ver. 7.—"*Now they have known (R. V. KNOW) that all things whatsoever Thou hast given Me are of (R. V. FROM) Thee*." Christ here asserts what they had just before attested. "Now we are sure (know we) that Thou knowest

all things, and needest not that any man should ask Thee" (chap. xvi. 30). He acknowledges their faith, feeble as it was.

Ver. 8.—"*For I have given unto them the words which Thou gavest Me (R. V. THE WORDS WHICH THOU GAVEST ME I HAVE GIVEN UNTO THEM); and they have received them, and have known surely (R. V. KNEW OF A TRUTH) that I came out (R. V. FORTH) from Thee, and they have believed (R. V. THEY BELIEVED) that Thou didst send Me*." "From their perception of the absolutely Divine character of His word, they had risen to that of the Divine origin of His person and of His mission. These sayings also breathe that sentiment of inward joy and lively gratitude which Jesus had but a few moments since experienced; for it was but quite recently that the glorious result for which He gave thanks to His Father had been obtained (xvi. 29—31). The harvest seemed undoubtedly scanty: eleven Galilean peasants after three years' labour!

But it is enough for Jesus, for in these eleven He beholds the pledge of the continuance of God's work upon earth. 'They have received,' upon the author-

ity of My testimony; 'they have known,' by their own moral discernment; 'they have believed,' by the surrender of their whole being."—*Godet.*

HOMILETICS.

Christ here states two great facts in relation to the *Apostolic Community*, the college or training school which He had established for the diffusion of His doctrines and Spirit. A school infinitely superior to the schools established by Epicurus or Zeno, or by any other philosopher of ancient or modern times. He states certain facts concerning these men—

I.—THAT THEY ARE GIVEN TO HIM BY THE FATHER.

"I have manifested Thy name unto the men whom Thou gavest Me out of the world: Thine they were, and Thou gavest them Me." What is the meaning of these words? The answer by a certain, and, alas! a popular school of theology, is—that far back in the "counsels of eternity" (as the phrase is) the Absolute One gave over to Christ a certain number of human souls to be saved, on the condition that He would become their Substitute, and endure all the penalties attached to the laws which they had broken. This is called the "covenant of redemption." I confess that such a covenant I have been unable to discover in any part of the Sacred writings, and it seems to me derogatory to the Infinite Father of souls, who Himself is Love. It is a mere theological fiction, a fiction, I fear, that has wrought immeasurable spiritual mischief. Whatever is meant by God giving men to Christ, it cannot mean the three following things:

First: It cannot mean that men are so given to Christ as to interfere in any measure with their perfect freedom as responsible beings. To give a man is to give a being whose very essence is freedom. Take away his liberty of action, and you take away his humanity; and at best he is a mere animated machine, he is not a man.

Secondly: It cannot mean that men are so given to Christ as to lessen to the smallest extent God's claim upon them. When we, in good faith, bestow any object unconditionally on another, we sink our claim to it; the thing given is no longer ours, it is the property of the recipient. God's claim to the supreme love and service of all moral intelligences can neither be abrogated or lessened.

Thirdly: It cannot mean that men are given to Christ in such a way as to render their salvation absolutely certain. The expression—"All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me," has been so interpreted as to favour this blasphemy. If the Father has given them to Christ they shall come to Him, it matters not where they live, when they live, or how they live; they shall "come."

But the very language of Christ in the context shows that such an idea as this is inadmissible to the last degree. If their salvation is certain, why does Christ here pray for them? Why does He say, "Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given Me?" Moreover, why does He say that Judas, who had been given Him, was lost, and had become the "son of perdition?"

Denying all these ideas, I can attach a sublimely impressive meaning to these words; *Christ, as the Model of piety, ascribes everything He has to His Father.* It is the instinct of piety to trace all things up to the primal Source—God. Indeed, even sufferings He regarded as the gift of God. The political power of Pilate to condemn Him He regarded as the gift of God. "Thou couldest have no power to condemn Me, except My Father gave it." The cup of suffering He drank in the garden of Gethsemane He traced up to His Father as His gift. "The cup which My Father has given Me, shall I not drink?" Christ traced everything, but sin, up to the Father. He says, "*All things are given unto Me.*" "All power is given unto Me." Piety always does this. A congregation has been deprived of its minister; another has come to occupy his place whom they consider pre-eminently suitable. The piety of the Church says, God has given us another pastor. A godly man is in great distress; a man visits him in his sufferings who heartily sympathizes with him, alleviates his anguish, and removes his burden, and he says, God has given me a friend. The words of Christ must, therefore, be taken not as the language of a spurious theology, but as the natural expression of the highest piety. "God is All and in All." Christ states the fact—

II.—THAT THEY ARE BELIEVERS IN THE FATHER THROUGH HIM

"They have believed that Thou didst send Me."

First: They believed in the Father so as to obey His will. "*And they have kept Thy word.*" "Though it is still necessary that they should be sifted, they have stood the main test, and have not suffered themselves to be entangled in the apostasy of Judas. To Christ's eyes they do already issue victorious out of temptation."—*Lange.*

Secondly: They believed in the Father so as to accept Christ as His Messenger. "*For I have given unto them the words which Thou gavest Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from Thee, and they have believed that Thou didst send Me.*" They were led to regard Christ as the Administrator of the Father's blessings, and the Revealer of the Father's character. Through Christ they heard the Father, they saw the Father. "*Have known surely that I came out from Thee.*" They were thoroughly convinced of this fact.

CONCLUSION. Profoundly interesting are those facts connected with the members of that Training School which Christ established—a school which teaches the sublimest doctrines which can engage the thoughts of men, and the most elevated ethics, congruous at once with reason and with conscience; ethics embodied in a spotless life. Oh! that all men were disciples in this school! “There is but one apostolic Christianity, and none besides; whoso will not have that has none. That unity of the Father and Son is, therefore, not simply a type, but a true and effective *cause* of the oneness of Christianity. If the Church of Christ stood forth as a harmonious community of brethren, where nought but order and love ruled, it would be so unique a phenomenon that every one would be forced to acknowledge that here was Divine work. All doubts as to, and accusations against, Christianity must perforce hold their peace.”—*Heubner*.

No. CXXIII.

THE DIVINE SUPPLIANT.

“I pray for them: I pray not for the world,” &c.—xvii. 9—19.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Ver. 9.—“*I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which* (R. V. THOSE WHOM) *Thou hast given Me; for they are Thine.*” Christ did pray for others. In this chapter He says, “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word.” And on the cross He prayed for His enemies. “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” But here He intimates that His prayer is confined entirely to the apostles.

Ver. 10.—“*And all* (R. V. THINGS THAT ARE) *Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine.*” “Any man,” says a modern expositor, “may say, What is mine is thine, but only the Son can say, What is Thine is Mine.” This is not quite correct, for there is a sense, and a very profound sense, in which every godly man may truthfully say to the Father, What is mine is Thine. Of this more hereafter. “*And I am glorified in them.*” “This expression has been variously understood. There is no reason for departing from the constant meaning of the term to be glorified. Notwithstanding His form of a servant, Jesus had appeared to their hearts in all His beauty as the

Son of God; even before having been restored to His glory, He had regained it in them by the fact that they had recognized Him for what He truly was.”—*Godet*.

Ver. 11.—“*And now I am no more in the world, but* (R. V. AND) *these are in the world, and I come to Thee.*” “The immediate future is still regarded as present. The words have a special reference to the interval between His death and the Day of Pentecost, which would be for the disciples a time of darkness and danger, when they would have special need of the Father’s care. ‘*Holy Father.*’ (Comp. verses 1, 24, 25.) There is a special fitness in the word ‘*holy*’ here, as in opposition to the world. The disciples were left in the world, but they were not of the world. These were spiritually God’s children separated from the world, and He commits them to the Holy Father that He may keep them from the evil of the world. ‘*Holy Father, keep through* (R. V. THEM IN) *Thine own name* (R. V. THY NAME) *those whom* (R. V. WHICH) *Thou hast given Me.*’ The reading is slightly doubtful, but if we take what would certainly seem to be the true text, the rendering

should be, 'Keep them in Thy name which Thou hast given Me.' (Comp. verse 12.) The Authorized Version renders the same words by 'through Thy name' in this verse, and by 'in Thy name' in verse 12. The thought appears to be that the revelation of the nature of God by Christ to the world (verse 6), was that which He Himself received from the Father. 'I have not spoken of Myself, but the Father which sent Me gave Me a commandment, what I should say and what I should speak.' 'That they may be one as (R. V. EVEN AS) We are.' This clause depends upon the words, 'Keep them in Thy name.' They had so far realized the revelation of God that they had known Christ's whole life to be the utterance of God to their spirits. He prays that they may be kept in this knowledge in order that they may so know the Father through Him, as to become themselves one with the Father." (See *Watkins, Olshausen, Stier, &c.*)

Ver. 12.—"While I was with them in the world (R. V. OMITTS IN THE WORLD), I kept them in Thy name." I have now done with the world, My mission is finished, and I am no more in the world, but these are in the world. "Those that Thou gavest (R. V. WHICH THOU HAST GIVEN) Me I have kept (R. V. AND I GUARDED THEM), and none (R. V. NOT ONE) of them is lost (R. V. PERISHED), but the son of perdition." Webster and Wilkinson observe on this expression, that "it is not implied that Judas was one of those whom the Father had given to the Son;" but I think if language means anything it is implied. "That the Scripture might be fulfilled." What Scripture? It is not given. I know of no inspired prediction pointing to this event. It is probable therefore that the Heavenly Teacher had some infallible prediction before His mind with which we are utterly unacquainted.

Ver. 13.—"And now come I (R. V. BUT NOW I COME) to Thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might (R. V. MAY) have My joy fulfilled in themselves." "The world is far behind, the agony is past, He stands

upon the Mount of God, approaching His Father's smiling face. But all this is upon a conceptual standpoint, for He immediately adds, 'these things I speak in the world.' Why speak them in the world? The words immediately following explain, that His apostles might hear, that one apostle might record, so that their joy, and the joy of the future Church, whom they represent, may be fulfilled."

Ver. 14.—"I have given them Thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." (See on chap. xv. 18—21.)

Ver. 15.—"I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of (R. V. FROM) the world." Though their departure would be a gain to them, it would be a loss to the world. "But that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil" (R. V. EVIL ONE). That is, from all moral evil.

Ver. 16.—"They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." (See on verses 6—9, and chap. xv. 13.)

Ver. 17.—"Sanctify them through Thy (R. V. IN THE) truth: Thy word is truth." Not only keep and guard them, but sanctify them. Make them holy. Truth here means God's truth as revealed in Christ.

Ver. 18.—"As Thou hast sent (R. V. DIDST SEND) Me into the world, even so have I also sent (R. V. SENT I) them into the world." "As their mission was designed for no other end than to carry into effect the purpose of His own mission in the world, so He speaks of the authority by which He was sending them into the world, as but an extension of the same authority by which Himself was sent of the Father. As He was the Father's Ambassador and Agent, so they were to be His. Nay, He represents them as already sent, just as He represents His own personal work on earth as already at an end: and what His soul is now filled with and looking forward to is the coming fruit of that work, the travail of His soul, and His satisfaction therein."—*Dr. Brown.*

Ver. 19.—"And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they (R. V. THEM-

SELVES) *also might* (R. V. MAY) *be sanctified through the* (R. V. IN) *truth.*" Christ consecrates Himself to the

service of His disciples, and consecrates Himself in order that they may be consecrated.

HOMILETICS.

Our subject is *The Divine Suppliant*. There are certain truths implied in this part of Christ's prayer that cannot be too prominently or powerfully set forth. What are they ?

I.—THAT THE SUPREME GOOD OF MAN IS SPIRITUAL, AND NOT TEMPORAL.

The blessing that Christ here seeks for the disciples is entirely spiritual. It is that they may be "*kept from the evil*,"—that they may be thoroughly "*sanctified*,"—that is, made holy ; that they may be all spiritually united, "*all may be one*,"—made one with themselves, with Him, and with their Father. He does not pray that they may be healthy in body, prosperous in circumstances, or enjoy a long life in this world. He does not undervalue these things, but temporal prosperity to Him was of very insignificant importance, compared with spiritual. There are good reasons for this.

First : Temporal prosperity is utterly insufficient to satisfy the cravings of the human soul. "A man's life (happiness) consisteth not in the abundance of things which he possesseth." "What shall it profit a man ?" &c.

Secondly : Temporal prosperity often leads to spiritual adversity and ruin. How often it happens that the higher a man rises in worldly things, the lower he sinks in moral destitution and degradation. Hence He does not pray for this temporal prosperity, nor does He anywhere encourage it. On the contrary, His command is, "Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven and His righteousness." Another truth implied here is—

II.—THAT THERE IS A COMPLETE UNITY OF INTEREST, BETWEEN CHRIST AND HIS FATHER.

"*And all Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine ; and I am glorified in them.*" The first part of the verse is—

First : True, absolutely. God is the universal Proprietor. All spiritual existences, even the highest, are bound to say with Christ, "*All Mine are Thine.*" We have nothing that we can call our own. We are trustees, not owners. The second part of the verse is—

Secondly : True, subjectively. "*And Thine are Mine.*" Genuine goodness in all good creatures has both an instinct and capacity to appropriate not only all things that belong to God, but God Himself. What an old Hebrew writer said, all genuine saints can say. "The Lord is my portion, oh, my soul." Though in a worldly sense they may be indigent, in a spiritual sense they "inherit the earth," they "possess all things." "All things are yours ; whether

Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." The language of deep love to its object is, "*all that is Mine is Thine.*" "His are the mountains, and the valleys His," &c. I rejoice in Thy possessions, more, I claim them as my own. This appropriation of God in His universe is the glory of man. "*I am glorified in them.*" Another truth implied here is—

III.—THAT SINCE THE DEPARTURE OF CHRIST FROM THIS EARTH, THE PRESERVATION OF A GOOD MAN IN HIS GOODNESS, DEPENDS UPON THE AGENCY OF THE GREAT FATHER.

"*And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to Thee. Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given Me, that they may be one, as We are.*" The meaning is, "I have taken care of them until now. Now I am leaving them, and commend them to Thee." Two things are here indicated—

First: The way of keeping them. "*Through Thine own name.*" That is, His moral character, which is His name. His moral excellence is at once the power to convert them to goodness, and to "*keep*" them in goodness. Would that preachers would practically recognize this, and preach like Paul at Athens. "Him declare I unto you," not their little dogmas and speculations.

Secondly: The reason for keeping them. "*That they may be one, as We are.*" We are "*one*" in a supreme purpose, inspiring spirit, and moral character. Let them be kept that they may be "*one*" with us. Real unity of soul consists of oneness of aim, spirit, and character. What attraction is in the material world, binding all things together, the vast and the minute, the proximate and the remote, disinterested love is in the moral system. Another truth implied here is—

IV.—THAT AMONGST THOSE WHO ARE GIVEN BY GOD TO THE SCHOOL OF CHRIST, THERE ARE BAD MEN AS WELL AS GOOD.

"*While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Thy name: those that Thou gavest Me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the Scripture might be fulfilled.*" Judas was with the disciples, and perhaps there has ever been a Judas in all the communities of Christian discipleship. In the gospel field there are tares as well as wheat; in the fold goats as well as sheep; in the net the unclean as well as the clean. All are God's gifts. Bad men as well as good are the *property* of God; He can give them. Bad men as well as good are under the *direction* of God. Judas did not go into the school of Christ by accident, but "*that the Scripture might be fulfilled.*" Bad men as well as good are

employed in the service of God. Judas did a useful work. Bad men in the school of Christ must meet with a terrible end. Judas was lost; the "son of perdition" went to his own place. It is better for a man to fall from the level sands than from a lofty cliff; it is better for a soul to fall into ruin from the corrupt world, than from the height of Christian privilege and profession. Another truth implied here is—

V.—THAT THE GRAND DESIRE OF CHRIST IS, THAT ALL HIS DISCIPLES SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN HIS JOY.

"And now come I to Thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have My joy fulfilled in themselves." Christ had joy. Though in one sense He was a "Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," no man ever walked this earth who had so much joy as He had. The joy of an innocent conscience, of an approving God, of a disinterested love, of close and unbroken fellowship with the Everlasting Father. He had "meat to eat" of which other men knew nothing. Now His desire is that all His disciples should participate in this joy, and at last all His faithful ones will "enter into the joy of the Lord." As there is but one glory in all moral beings—the glory of moral excellence, there is but one joy, "the joy of the Lord." Another truth implied here is—

VI.—THAT THE FAITHFUL CARRYING OUT OF CHRIST'S DESIRE, WILL EXCITE THE WORLD'S HATRED.

"I have given them Thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." (See my remarks on chap. xv. 8.) The "world" here of course does not mean the physical world, but the unregenerate race of mankind, and this world is a world of practical atheism, practical selfishness. It is in direct antagonism to the ethical teaching and the ideal life of Christ. The man therefore who will act out the teaching of Christ will ever come in direct antagonism with all the passions and prejudices of the world. "If the world hate you," says Christ, "ye know that it hated Me before it hated you." Yes; it did hate Him with a malignant and mortal hatred. The conduct of a truly godly man acts upon the sensibilities of the corrupt as the noontide sun on diseased eyes, as strains of music on diseased auricular nerves.

Another thing implied is—

VII.—THAT IT IS POSSIBLE SO TO LIVE IN THE WORLD, AS NOT TO BELONG TO IT.

"They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."* In the current language of life there is a difference between a man of

* See Germ, p. 88.

the world and a worldly man. By a man of the world is generally meant not a man of sordid avarice, but of certain habitudes of life—a man who has made use of the world to enrich his experience, deepen his insight of life, polish his manners. He stands opposed to the clown, the pedant, the recluse, the sectary. He is supposed to be a man free from crotchets, angularities, a man of breed, soul, and genial humour. By the worldly man, on the other hand, is meant one who lives *for* the world, and *to* the world, and in the selfish spirit of the world. The wealth he covets, the honours he aspires to, the pleasures he seeks, the society he cultivates, are all worldly. He is of the world; he loves it. Christ did not belong to the world in either of these senses, neither do His disciples. The world in which a man really lives is the realm of his *governing purpose*. Whatever is a man's chief aim, that is his life. To it all his sympathies tend, in it all his activities operate, to it he renders all his circumstances subservient. Now the main purpose of Christ and His disciples is to "do the will of their Father" in heaven. But the purpose in which worldly men live is their own self-gratification. Hence it is that though the disciples of Christ are in the world, they are not of the world. The world is *practically atheistic*; it has no God. Christ and His disciples are *intensely theistic*. The world is *practically materialistic*, it judges after the flesh, it "walketh after the flesh." Christ and His disciples are *intensely spiritual*. Another truth implied here is—

VIII.—THAT FOR A GOOD MAN TO BE KEPT IN THE WORLD, IS NOT SO DESIRABLE, AS THAT HE SHOULD BE KEPT FROM ITS EVIL.

"I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil." Observe—

First: That it is not always desirable for a good man to leave the world.

(1.) It is not always desirable on *his own account*. Until good men reach maturity of character they require this world. This world is furnished with all the appliances for spiritual training. Serious evils have, we conceive, arisen from what has long been, and still is, a popular notion in the Christian world, namely, that there is a necessary opposition in this world to true religion. The existence of monasteries is based upon this absurd opinion: and the current excuses which even the majority of Christian men urge for their not being more spiritual and devoted, are grounded upon the same foolish and miserable notion. Indeed, from the pulpit this dogma is frequently proclaimed. The truth is, the necessary claims of business, and the avocations of this life, instead of being opposed to spiritual culture, are amongst the most important means of grace and facilities for spiritual training. The man, for example,

who has to work hard on the soil, and by the sweat of his brow obtain the means of subsistence for himself and family, is called by that very labour to put into exercise those principles of self-dependence, perseverance, and endurance, which are essential elements in the Christian character. So he who has to take his stand in the market and engage in the barter of business, has a noble opportunity for rousing his energies, testing his honesty, sharpening his powers, and, through the conduct of buyer and seller, attaining a practical knowledge at once of the nature and character of man. All experience shows that the necessary labour in these departments of operation is highly conducive to spiritual training. The men who say business is against religion, are men who are not acting on the true principles of business. The man who works in the field, the shop, or the senate-house, on the principle of godly honesty, must by the effort grow in vigour of character.

The notion we are combating is derogatory to the Divine character. Were the necessary duties of this life absolutely opposed to our spiritual interests, where would be the wisdom, goodness, and justice of God in sending us into such a state, and at the same time demanding from us the cultivation of a character opposed by all the circumstances of our being? Nor is the notion more derogatory to the Divine character than it is injurious in its bearings upon man. Men are everywhere making excuses for their religious indifference upon the supposed opposition which the world offers to it. Christians, you need the world in order to perfect you. You need its trials to humble you; you need its storms to purify the atmosphere of your heart; you need its difficulties to challenge your powers to action; you need its changes to remind you that this is not your home; you need its labour to invigorate your brain, on whose healthful action both your intellectual power and moral character depend. Do not, as too many do, indulge in morbid sentiments of dissatisfaction with the world; you cannot dispense with it. Use it, therefore, as the farmer uses the field, to produce fruit, that shall abound in after-life; as the pupil the school, to attain a knowledge that shall fit him for high offices in time to come. Use it as the mariner the winds and waves, to bear him on to the desired haven.

(2.) It is not always desirable on account of *others*. The truly good are social benefactors. For them to "remain in the flesh is needful." They are the correctors of the evil, and the conservators of the good. They are the lights of the world. They break through the clouds of the world's errors, sensuality and vice, and bring to bear on it the radiance of eternal truth. They are the "salt of the earth." They penetrate with their influence the mass, and prevent it from sinking into entire corruption. When good men leave the world, the world loses their prayers, sympathies, and

personal presence. The death of a good man is the quenching of a light in our sky, the drying-up of a fountain on our earth. Observe—

Secondly: That it is always desirable for a good man to be kept "*from the evil.*"

(1.) Evil is in the world. Its introduction is a mystery, but its fact is patent to all. The history of the world is little less than a history of evil. It is a serpent enfolding all things in its deadly coil; it is a dark, cold mist hanging over every scene, intercepting the rays of the sun, and checking the growth of nature; it is a miasma impregnating the atmosphere, and causing disease and death in every breath.

(2.) Into this evil good men are liable to fall. This is clearly implied in the prayer. Evil here is the ascendant principle. It is everywhere. It presses all into its service—the loftiest genius and the greatest talent. It adorns itself in all the attractions that art can furnish. It speaks in the strains of music. It appears in all the fascinating forms of beauty. It promises sensual gratification, social power, and secular affluence. The prizes of the world are in its hand. In addition to this there is in the bosoms of even the best of men a susceptibility of being influenced by it. There are combustible elements which the fires of evil can kindle; latent germs slumbering within which outward evil can quicken into life and power. "The law in the members" is a lever in the human system always within its reach.

Add yet to this fact, *that there are infernal agents of evil*—agents whose numbers are overwhelming, whose skill and powers are immense, and whose efforts are incessant—availing themselves of every opportunity to contaminate and seduce. All these considerations are quite sufficient to show that good men while here are in danger of falling into evil. Meek-souled Moses was overcome by a gust of passion and carnal impulse. Peter, brave and bold, crouched into fear, and passed from cowardice to falsehood, ingratitude, and blasphemy. Indeed, the history of humanity only furnishes us with the example of ONE Who passed through the world uninfluenced by its evil. "The prince of the world cometh, and findeth nothing in Me." Temptation fell on His nature as dewdrops on Etna's fires; as sparks on ocean waves.

(3.) The falling of a good man into evil is immensely injurious. To yield to one temptation, to swerve from one principle, to give up one element of truth, is a most serious thing. It is to break down the moral fences of the soul, and lay it open to every enemy. One sin may destroy peace of mind, self-respect, and send us mourning all our days. It injures our power of usefulness. One sin greatly incapacitates for good. It weakens the arm, takes emphasis from the voice, and influence from the life. And, in addition to all this, it unfits for Heaven. "Without holiness no

man can see the Lord." "And there shall in no wise enter in any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life" (Rev. xxi. 27).

(4.) The power of God is necessary to prevent this falling into evil. Christ invokes the Almighty to keep them from it. Who else can? What arm but His can hold us above the surging waves? What wisdom but His can guide us safely through? "Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to the Only Wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever." Another truth implied here is—

IX.—THAT BETWEEN THE COMMISSION OF CHRIST AND THAT OF GENUINE EVANGELIC MINISTERS, THERE IS A CORRESPONDENCE.

"As Thou hast sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world."

First: They correspond in their authority. Both are of Divine authority. God sent Christ into the world, and Christ sends the Church. Christians have a *right* to go into every part of the world, to unfurl their banner on every shore, and fight the battles of the Lord. We want no licence from bishops or potentates to authorize us to preach the gospel.

Secondly: They correspond in their principle. What induced Christ to come into the world, and inspired Him in working out His mission? *Love*: all-embracing, disinterested, unconquerable love. The same feeling must influence the Church, and no other feeling.

Thirdly: They correspond in their object. Why did He come? "To seek and to save the lost." This is our work. We have to save from ignorance, sin, the devil.

Fourthly: They correspond in their mode. (1.) Both are spontaneous. (2.) Both are self-denying. (3.) Both are persevering. (4.) Both are diligent. (5.) Both are devout.

Fifthly: They correspond in their *encouragements*. (a.) Christ had the Divine presence, so has the Church. (b.) Christ had the highest sympathy, so has the Church. (c.) Christ had the assurance of success, so has the Church. Another truth implied here is—

X.—THAT THE HOLINESS OF MAN INVOLVES THE AGENCY OF DIVINE TRUTH, AND THE CONSECRATION OF CHRIST.

"Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." The word "*sanctify*" means to render holy, and to render holy by an inward consecration to God, and this consecration is effected—

First: By *God's truth*. "*Thy truth*." What truth? All truth

is God's. All truth in physical and mental science is God's truth. But the truth here must be regarded as the "truth as it was in Jesus," as it appears in the incarnate *Logos*, His redemptive truth—the Gospel. The Gospel is the truth, its doctrines are in accord with the eternal realities; its morality in accord with the immutable principles of rectitude; its provisions in accord with the spiritual exigencies of fallen human nature. The consecration is effected—

Secondly: By God's truth in connection with the consecration of Christ. "*For their sakes I sanctify Myself,*" &c. The consecration of His entire life to the spiritual interests of humanity is the soul and essence of redeeming truth. Here, then, is the power to make men holy, to put men in possession of that moral excellence which is the glory of God, the glory of Christ, and the glory of all moral beings.

GERMS OF THOUGHT.

No. LXIX.

THE UNWORLDLINESS OF CHRIST.

"I am not of the world."—xvii. 16.

What does this mean?

It does not mean—

First: That He cared nothing for mankind. There are men so utterly selfish, so utterly absorbed with their own personal concerns, that in a sense they may be said to be "*not of the world.*" The great human world about them they care nothing for. Christ was not unworldly in this sense. He was intensely interested in the condition of all the men about Him. "He went about doing good." He healed all manner of diseases; He wept over Jerusalem. It does not mean—

Secondly: That He did not appreciate the natural blessings of the world. There are austere and ascetic souls who are "*not of the world*" in this sense: its innocent amusements they regard with a pietistic horror; they have a superstitious fear of eating and drinking lest they should give their body an advantage over their soul. The spirit of Christ was foreign to this. He came eating and drinking, and hence He was called a Samaritan, a glutton, a winebibber by the ascetic men of His time. What is the world? The human world is—

I.—PRACTICALLY ATHEISTIC.

It is "without God." Not *theoretically*, for the laws of the human mind render atheism as a conviction, an impossibility. But *practically* men are now "without God," and have been since the Fall. His presence is not practically recognized. His authority

is not practically acknowledged. His will is not practically consulted. So thoroughly atheistic is the world in its everyday life that were it to be assured to-day that no God existed, its life would remain unaltered. Christ was not of the world in this sense. He was *intensely theistic*. The Father ever filled His whole horizon. His presence was the sun through which He saw everything. "I am not alone," He says; "the Father is with Me." The Father was never out of His mind: His communings were with Him, His works were by Him, His sermons were about Him, His inspiration was from Him. The moment the soul feels God to be in the world, the world assumes a new form. "Surely God is in this place," &c., says Jacob. The human world is—

II.—PRACTICALLY MATERIALISTIC.

Men ever since the Fall "judge after the flesh," "walk after the flesh," "live after the flesh." Christ was *intensely spiritual*. Men are "carnally minded."

First: Their pleasures are material. "What shall we eat?—what shall we drink?" Christ's pleasures were spiritual. "I have meat to eat that ye know not of."

Secondly: Their honours are material. The highest honour is an earthly crown; the highest victories are those of the sword. Christ's kingdom was "not of this world." He did not war after the flesh. He was a King, but His empire was Spirit. He was a Conqueror, but His weapons were truth, and His soldiers legions of angels. The material world to Christ was but the symbol and scene of spiritual existences and operations. He lived whilst here not so much amongst the things "seen and temporal," as amongst the things "unseen and eternal." The human world is—

III.—PRACTICALLY SELFISH.

Every man seeks his own. There are as many interests in the world as there are men; hence the collisions, domestic, social, ecclesiastic, national. Selfishness, which is the fountain of all crime, is the law of every man's life. Christ was "*not of the world*" in this sense. He was Love, tender, disinterested, compassionate, unconquerable love. He "pleased not Himself."

Thus Christ was "*not of the world*." Though corporeally in it, He was spiritually out of it. He was at an infinite distance from its ruling spirit, its moral heart. The subject furnishes—

First: A test of genuine Christianity. He only is a *true Christian* who, like Christ, is "*not of the world*." "Be not conformed," &c.

Secondly: A guide as to man's grand interest. What is it? To get out of the moral spirit of this world, which is the Babylon of the soul. "Arise ye, and depart," &c.

No. CXXIV.

CHRIST IN RELATION TO HIS DISCIPLES IN ALL FUTURE TIMES.

"Neither pray I for these alone," &c.—xvii, 20—24.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Ver. 20.—*"Neither pray I for these alone* (R. V. FOR THESE ONLY DO I PRAY), *but for them also which shall believe* (R. V. THAT BELIEVE) *on Me."* "The true reading here is one we should not have expected, 'for them which believe on Me,' πιστευόντων, not πιστευσόντων. But the evidence in its favour is decisive, while the received reading has but feeble support. Of course the sense is the same; but this reading exhibits the whole company of believers as already before the eye of Jesus in that character—a present multitude already brought in, and filling His mighty soul with a Redeemer's satisfaction. How striking is it, that while all future time is here viewed as present, the present is viewed as past and gone."—*Dr. Brown.* "Through their word." Their testimony concerning Him. He had manifested the character of God, and they had believed, and now His disciples must through all times bear witness to the same ideal.

Vers. 21.—*"That they all may* (R. V. MAY ALL) *be one; as Thou* (R. V. EVEN AS THOU), *Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us"* (R. V. MAY BE IN US). Not theologically or ecclesiastically one, but morally one: one in master-purpose and supreme desire. "The design," says *Lange*, "is triply intensified: (1.) All one; (2.) One as We; (3.) One in Us." Here is the unity of the Father and the Son. "As Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee." The union of all disciples into that unity, "that they also may be one in Us," and the union of the disciples amongst themselves, "that they may be one." "That the world may believe that Thou hast (R. V. DIDST) sent (R. V. SEND) Me." Such a unity would carry the conviction to the outlying world of the Divinity of Christ's mission.

Ver. 22.—*"And the glory which*

Thou gavest (R. V. HAST GIVEN) *Me I have given them; that they may be one, even as We are one."* (For remarks on this verse [see article on *True Soul Glory*, page 72.]

Ver. 23.—*"I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in* (R. V. MAY BE PERFECTED INTO) *one; and that the world may know that Thou hast* (R. V. DIDST) *sent* (R. V. SEND) *Me, and hast loved* (R. V. LOVEDST) *them, as* (R. V. EVEN AS) *Thou hast loved* (R. V. LOVEDST) *Me."* All but the last clause of this verse is a repetition of preceding utterances. This cannot mean that exactly the same affection as the Eternal had for the Son He had for the disciples. But rather that as truly as He loves His Son, so does He love His disciples.

Ver. 24.—*"Father, I will."* θήλω. This does not seem to be so much the language of determination as purpose. "That they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am" (R. V. THAT WHICH THOU HAST GIVEN ME, I WILL THAT WHERE I AM THEY ALSO MAY BE WITH ME). In chapter xiv. 3, He had assured His disciples that they should be with Him. He said, "I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." "Where I am." I shall be somewhere, I shall not cease to be, and I will that they shall be with Me. "That they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me: for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world." The glory, δόξα, of a moral being, as we have said, is excellence or goodness. It is in God as its Source, in Christ as its Medium, in His disciples as its recipients and reflectors. To desire men to behold this glory, has nothing of vanity in it; it is a pious desire that all men should adore God, the Eternal Source. A man whose only glory, such as it is, is in some material, social, or mental

distinction, is often inspired by vanity to request men to come and behold his glory. But where there is true glory no such a desire could exist; the *ego* is lost in the infinitude of goodness.

HOMILETICS.

The words lead us to look at *Christ in relation to His Disciples in all Future Times.* Observe—

I.—HIS REALIZATION OF THEIR ACTUAL EXISTENCE.

The only disciples living were the eleven, but He prays for them which shall hereafter “*believe*” on Him “*through their word.*” How many have believed “*through their word*” during the last 1800 years, and how many more will believe before humanity shall cease on earth! It will verily be “a great multitude which no man can number.” And yet all these seem *present* to Christ at this moment; they come within the range of His far-reaching vision; His great soul realized each in his distinctive personality, and for them He prays. To a soul in vital fellowship with God, and inspired with the spirit of Omniscience, *time and space* are of little account. The old Hebrew seers threw their glance far away into the distant centuries, and had a glimpse of generations and kingdoms yet to come. But none of them saw the future so clearly and realistically as did the Son of God, the incarnate *Logos*. A Being Who thus knows the future can never be disappointed; He will have all His purposes realized, and He is now “sitting down in the heavens expecting His enemies to be made His footstool.” In relation to His disciples in all future times, observe—

II.—HIS METHOD OF CALLING THEM INTO HIS SCHOOL.

“*Believe on Me through their word.*”

First: They must “*believe*” on Him. Not on what men say about Him, not on priesthoods, but on Him, the living, loving Son of God, and the Redeemer of the world. This is the way of becoming a disciple, there is no other way; it has ever been so, it is so now, and will continue to be till the end. “He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.”

Secondly: They must “*believe*” on Him “*through their word.*” That is, their testimony of Him. By their “*word,*” which is the word of inspired truth, He will be made known to men. It is a witnessing word. How can they believe on Him of Whom they have not heard, and how can they hear without a preacher, and how can they preach unless they be sent? This is the method. Do not expect any other. Observe, in relation to His disciples of the future—

III.—HIS SUPREME DESIRE THAT THEY SHOULD BE UNITED ON EARTH, AND DWELL WITH HIM IN HEAVEN.

First: That they should be united on earth. “*That they may be one, as Thou, Father, art in Me.*”

Observe—(1.) The *nature* of this unity. (a.) It is a unity that is very vital. One living in another. “*I in them, and Thou in Me, that they also may be one in Us.*” There is nothing mysterious or uncommon in the idea of one soul living in another. The object we love most, without figure, lives in us, not as a mere form, but as a living force. Friend lives in friend; the parent lives in the loving child. Love brings the distant object near, bears it over oceans, and often from the other world, and enshrines it in the heart. Thus, those who love Christ have Christ in them, and those whom Christ loves are in Him; and as Christ and His disciples both love the Infinite Father, He is in them, and He loves them that are in Him. (β.) It is a unity of the Infinite with the finite, of the Creator and the creature. As attraction links the smallest atom to the highest orb of immensity, love links the humblest disciples to the great heart of the Infinite, and He to them. Observe—(2.) A *reason* for this unity. “*That the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me.*” No argument could be formulated by all the logicians in the universe to convince the world of the Divinity of our Saviour’s mission, so mighty as a thorough union of soul in all the professed disciples of Christ. Unphilosophic religionists have endeavoured to create a doctrinal unity. This is impossible. But could it be done, it would be highly mischievous to souls. They have sought, too, and to some extent succeeded, in creating ecclesiastical unity, which is a huge imposture, and a terrible bane. Hence various denominations and churches, and sects universal, that put professed disciples in antagonism one with another, and thus create a universal scepticism. The union wanted, and the only real union that can exist, is a *moral* union—a union in purpose, sympathy, and inspiration. This is the union to convert the world. Christ’s supreme desire is—

Secondly: That they should dwell with Him in heaven. “*Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory which Thou hast given Me: for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world.*” (1.) With Me in *person* as well as in *sympathy*. With Me as disciples, as friends, as brethren. (2.) With Me, to “*behold My glory.*” That they may see Me as I am. My glory is the glory that “*Thou hast given Me;*” it is a gift and a reflection of Thyself. Thou hast given it Me, “*for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world.*” The world had a “*foundation.*” Christ was before all worlds, and before all worlds the Father loved Him. “*He was in the beginning with God,*” the “*first-born of every creature.*”

No. CXXV.

THE "AMEN" TO THE SUBLIMEST OF ALL PRAYERS.

"O righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee," &c.—xvii. 25, 26.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Ver. 25.—
 "O righteous Father." The "O" should be omitted, say some. "The world hath not known Thee (R. V. KNEW THEE NOT); but I have known Thee (R. V. I KNEW THEE), and these have known (R. V. THESE KNEW) that Thou hast sent (R. V. DIDST SEND) Me." All this being regarded as past. I knew Thee, these disciples knew Thee, but the world knew Thee not.

Ver. 26.—"And I have declared (R. V. MADE KNOWN) unto them Thy name, and will declare it (R. V. WILL MAKE IT KNOWN): that the love wherewith Thou hast loved (R. V. LOVEDST) Me may be in them, and I in them." "The last word of the Lord's prayer corresponds with the last word of His discourses (xvi. 33). He is Himself the Source of victory and life."—*Westcott.*

HOMILETICS.

Sincere prayer reveals the heart of man; inspired prayer reveals the heart of God as well. In this, the sublimest prayer ever breathed from this planet, we have a reflection of all that is glorious in the human heart, and all that is loving and tender in the heart of God. These verses give us the *Amen to the Sublimest of all Prayers*. The following subjects are here suggested to our reflection: God and the world, Christ and His school, the preacher and his mission.

I.—GOD AND THE WORLD.

First: Here is *God*. "O righteous Father." Here is a subject for thought; this is infinitely the grandest, the most invigorating and ennobling subject that can be brought within the range of creature intellect. Notice—

(1.) His relationship. "*Father*." No relationship more intelligible, attractive, morally assimilating than this. It means *causation, affection, resemblance*. Christ never represents God as an inexorable Judge, a mighty Monarch governing the universe by rigorous laws, but as a Father full of the tenderest concern for the well-being of His children. His God was not a cold King upon the throne, but a loving Father Whose heart yearns for the return of His prodigal children. Ah me! How theologians have calumniated this God! Notice—

(2.) His character. "*O righteous Father*." There is such a thing as rectitude in the universe; the sentiment of right is co-extensive with the moral creation. What is right? Not something independent of God, some principle outside of Him. The idea is preposterous and pernicious. (α) His existence is the Foundation of all right, (β) His will the Standard of all right, (γ) His works and word the Revelation of all right. Our Father not only never has done wrong, but never can do wrong. All consciences in the universe, however fallen and miserable, are bound to admit that "just and right is

He." Let us trust our Father, He will never wrong us. His righteousness is not opposed to love; nay, it is love itself. Justice is love sternly resisting all that will injure the moral universe; aye, and sometimes overwhelming in ruin the resisting forces. It is love uprooting the weeds out of the paradise of virtue. Love often binding corrupt spheres of intelligences in the iron band of frost, in order that the spring may be more free from the pestiferous, and more abundant with the beautiful and the good.

Secondly: Here is *the world*. "*The world hath not known Thee.*" That is, unregenerate humanity. What ignorance is this—the worst of all ignorances!

This ignorance is—(1.) *Most universal*. The barbarian world "*hath not known Thee,*" did not know Thee, and does not know Thee. It is sunk in idolatry, superstition, and gross sensuality. The *civilized* world "*hath not known Thee,*" nor does now. When this confession was made, Egypt, Greece, and Rome had worked their intellects, made discoveries, and advanced considerably in civilization. They had their philosophies, their religions, and their arts, but even in Athens, the eye of Greece, God was the "unknown." The *conventionally Christian* world "*hath not known Thee.*" Its science often denies Thee; its literature, commerce, and politics ignore Thee; its creeds and its Churches malrepresent Thee.

This ignorance is—(2.) *Most inexcusable*. Men may have just excuses for not being scholars, historians, scientists, but they have no excuse for not knowing God. Nature is made to reveal God, and it does so everywhere, in every form that strikes the eye, or sound that falls on the ear. The soul is made to know Him, its eyes and ears and touch are given for this purpose. He is ever with us, and we in Him. The blindness of the man who shuts his eyes to the sun is not more inexcusable than the ignorance of the man who knows not God.

This ignorance is—(3.) *Most ruinous*. The man who is ignorant of God is in moral midnight. The distinguishing germs and faculties of his soul are as dead as the buried seed on which the quickening sun of heaven never falls. Ignorance of God is the "blackness of darkness." Another subject here is—

II.—CHRIST AND HIS SCHOOL.

First: Christ. "*I have known Thee.*" From any lips but those of Jesus how presumptuous would these words sound! Through the teeming millions of the race, including the greatest scholars, geniuses, sages of all ages, who could say this to his Maker?

(1.) No one had the *opportunity* of knowing God that Christ had. He was in the "bosom of the Father." He knew the motive that prompted the creative act, and the plan on which the whole

was organized. (2.) No one had the *capacity* of knowing God that Christ had. Looking at Him merely as a Man, and judging of Him by His sublime utterances, what an intellect He had!—how keen and how far-reaching its vision, how immeasurable its sweep, how firm its grasp, how amazing its fertility! What is the greatest human intellect to His? What is a blade of grass to the majestic cedar, a bee to the imperial eagle, a rush light to the noontide sun?

(3.) No one had the *heart* for knowing God that Christ had. No person can really know another unless he has heart sympathy with him. To know all the facts of a man's history is not to know the man. You must be one with a man in soul in order to understand him. Christ was one with God in a transcendent sense. "*I and My Father are One*"—one in heart, spirit, and purpose. Notice—

Secondly: Christ's school. "*These have known that Thou hast sent Me.*" All His genuine disciples know this. Without this knowledge, indeed, they could not enter His school. How did they know it?

(1.) By the mighty works which He wrought. "We know that Thou art a Teacher come from God, for no man can do these miracles that Thou doest." (2.) By the sublime doctrines He propounded. His ideas about God, the universe, duty, destiny, were not only sublimely original, but so accordant with the reason, conscience, the moral intuitions, and the deep felt wants of humanity, that people were constrained to ask the question, "Whence had this Man this wisdom?" (3.) By the manner of His teaching. "Never man spake like this Man." There was something so natural, so unconventional, so spontaneous, so rational, and devout in His manner, that all His hearers felt He was not like the Scribes and Pharisees; they had never heard such a Teacher before. They felt He was the Master of their souls. (4.) By the matchless purity of His character. There was a moral halo about Him which all felt detached Him from them. Though He mingled with them, sat with them, feasted with them, they all felt that morally He was not "of them," that He was made higher than they. Even Peter said, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man." The ruffians in the garden fell prostrate before the majesty of purity that sat upon His brow.

Notice—

III.—THE PREACHER AND HIS MISSION.

What Christ did is the genuine work of every true preacher. What was the work?

First: A persistent declaration of the Divine character. "*I have declared unto them Thy name, and will declare it.*"* To declare self, theories, or speculations, about God is what Churches do, but to

* See Germ, p. 93.

declare His "*name*," His moral character, the *essence* of which is love, is what Christ did and does. All His moral perfections, all His true glory are rooted in love.

Secondly: A persistent declaration of the Divine character, in order to transfuse Divine love into human souls. "*That the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them.*" Alas! how many there are who so preach God as to transfuse into the minds of their hearers terror, abhorrence, loathing, atheism. He only is the true preacher, who so presents God to his hearers as to transfuse into them God's love.

CONCLUSION. I have thus gone through this wonderful Prayer—a prayer which reveals at once the heart of man and the heart of God. We see in it all that is glorious in renewed human nature, and all that is loving and tender in the heart of the Infinite.

I have assumed that the prayer here is a genuine record of the devout utterances of Jesus. Men have asked, How could they have been recorded? There is no proof that the apostle had a pencil in hand to note down the sublime words as they fell from those sacred lips. Be it so. Was not John present, and the other ten disciples? Would they not all be profoundly interested in Him, and in all they heard Him say? Would not every tone be marked, every sigh noticed? Does not memory always seize and hold most tenaciously everything in which the heart is most deeply interested? Since most of us know men who can repeat whole sermons from memory, is it not likely that every listener to this prayer would retain it? And then when they met together—which probably they would—immediately at its close, would not each one repeat to the other what he heard, and thus, in comparing their recollections, would it be possible for a single word to be lost?

Profoundly conscious am I of my lack of qualifications, both intellectual and moral, to do anything like justice to such a transcendent composition as this. Yet I have not dogmatized. I have endeavoured to free myself from all theological predilections in looking through the words. In consulting the expositions of others, both ancient and modern, I have been saddened at discovering the prejudicial theological influence under which most expositors have laboured. They have spoken of the "counsels of eternity," and the contract between God and His Son before the "foundation of the world" was laid, or the wheels of time commenced their revolutions. They have penetrated the Divine essence, and laboured to expound the mysterious connection between Christ and the Father. All this I regard as impiously presumptuous, and fruitful only in the pernicious.

It would be well for all theologians to take to heart the words of *Thomas Carlyle*:—

“Is this what thou namest ‘Mechanism of the Heavens’ and ‘System of the World;’ this, wherein Sirius and the Pleiades, and all Herschel’s Fifteen-thousand Suns, per minute, being left out, some paltry handful of Moons and inert Balls had been looked at, nicknamed, and marked in the Zodiacal Way-bill; so that we can now prate of their Whereabout; their How, their Why, their What, being hid from us, as in the signless Inane? Systems of Nature! To the wisest man, wide as is his vision, Nature remains of quite *infinite* depth, of quite infinite expansion; and all Experience thereof limits itself to some few computed centuries and square-miles. The course of Nature’s phases, on this our little fraction of a Planet, is partially known to us, but who knows what deeper courses these depend on; what infinitely larger Cycle (of causes) our little Epicycle revolves on? To the Minnow every cranny and pebble, and quality and accident, of its little native Creek may have become familiar; but does the Minnow understand the Ocean Tides and periodic Currents, the Trade-winds, and Monsoons, and Moon’s Eclipses; by all which the condition of its little Creek is regulated, and may, from time to time (*unmiraculously* enough), be quite overset and reversed? Such a Minnow is Man, his Creek this Planet Earth; his Ocean the immeasurable All; his Monsoons and periodic Currents the mysterious Course of Providence through Æons of Æons. Metaphysical Speculation, as it begins in No or Nothingness, so it must end in Nothingness; circulates and must circulate in endless vortices, creating, swallowing—*itself*! Which of your Philosophical Systems is other than a dream-theorem; a net quotient, confidently given out, where divisors and dividend are both unknown? What are your Axioms, and Categories, and Systems, and Aphorisms? Words, words. High Air-Castles are cunningly built of Words, the Words well bedded also in good Logic-mortar; wherein, however, no knowledge will come to lodge. Like a God-created, fire-breathing Spirit-host, we emerge from the Inane, haste stormfully across the astonished Earth, then plunge again into the Inane. But whence? O Heaven, whither? Sense knows not; Faith knows not, only that it is through Mystery to Mystery, from God and to God.”

GERMS OF THOUGHT.

No. LXX.

THE DIVINE CHARACTER.

“I have declared unto them Thy name.”—xvii. 25.

The “*name*” of God is His moral *character*. His character is the stability and glory of the universe. These words present it—

I.—AS THE HIGHEST OBJECT FOR REVELATION.

“*I have declared,*” &c.

Paul said at Athens, “Him declare I unto you.” Not only is it the highest function of the material and angelic universe to manifest God, but also of *Christ the greatest Being*. These words present the Divine character—

II.—AS THE GRAND ORGAN OF REFORMATION.

Why is it manifested? “That the love wherewith Thou hast loved me,” &c. God’s character is the reformatory force. Observe—

(1.) Moral reformation consists in the transfusion of Divine love into souls. (2.) This transfusion of love can only be accomplished through a manifestation of the Divine character. God’s character alone generates love.

No. CXXVI.

A MOST REMARKABLE MEETING.

(*Departure to Gethsemane—Betrayal and Imprisonment—Mount of Olives.*—
MATT. xxvi. 30—36, 47—56; MARK xiv. 26, 42—52; LUKE xxii. 39—53;
JOHN xviii. 1—12.)

“When Jesus had spoken these words, He went forth,” &c.—xviii. 1—10.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—It does not seem that John intended to give a complete narrative of our Lord’s Passion. In all probability he was perfectly acquainted with the details as given by the Synoptists. It might be that through the whole of his narrative he had in view the accounts of his predecessors.

Ver. 1.—“*When Jesus had spoken these words, He went forth with His disciples over the brook Cedron* (R. V. KIDRON), *where was a garden, into the which He entered, and* (R. V. HIMSELF AND) *His disciples.*” “Kedron, a deep dark ravine to the north-east of Jerusalem, through which flows the small storm-brook, or winter torrent, and which in summer is dried up.” Though John here refers to the garden, he does not give all particulars of the sufferings of the Lord there as did the Synoptists.

Ver. 2.—“*And* (R. V. NOW) *Judas also, which betrayed Him, knew the place: for Jesus oftentimes resorted*

thither with His disciples.” “John alone states the fact that Judas was familiar with the place, as he had often accompanied our Lord in His retirement there. Often had Jesus sought this retreat from the bustle and persecution of the city. The wretch who could plot to betray our Lord, could take a guilty advantage of such sacred privacy.”—*Jacobus*.

Ver. 3.—“*Judas then, having received a* (R. V. THE) *band of men* (R. V. SOLDIERS) *and officers from the Chief Priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons.*” “The other gospels tell us of a great multitude. John uses the technical word for the Roman cohort. It was the garrison band from Fort Antonia at the north-east corner of the temple. This well-known band is mentioned again in the New Testament. The torches and lamps were part of the regular military equipment for night service. Dionysius describes soldiers rushing out of their tents

with torches and lamps in the same words which are used here.”—*Ellicott's Commentary*.

Ver. 4.—“*Jesus therefore, knowing all things* (R. V. THE THINGS) *that should come* (R. V. WERE COMING) *upon Him, went forth, and said* (R. V. SAITH) *unto them, Whom seek ye?*” “Not that Jesus did not know whom they sought. Not that their leaders did not know Him by the traitor's kiss. He speaks to make them confess their object, and then to show that they can attain it only by His active permission.”

Ver. 5.—“*They answered Him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am He. And Judas also, which betrayed Him, stood* (R. V. WAS STANDING) *with them.*” “The band of disciples was stationed within the garden in two divisions like a watch. The three intimates of Jesus were in the background, the eight others near the entrance. From the standpoint of these latter, to whom Matthew belonged, the most striking occurrence was the pressing of the troop with Judas at their head into the garden; from the standpoint of the three Jesus hastens to meet the throng.”—*Lange*.

Ver. 6.—“*As soon then as* (R. V. WHEN THEREFORE) *He had said* (R. V. HE SAID) *unto them, I am He, they went backward, and fell to the ground.*” “The whole action,” says *Westcott*, “represents the effects of fear, awe, veneration, self-humiliation, not of external force; the exaggeration which describes the men as ‘falling backwards’ is utterly alien from the solemn majesty of the scene.”

Ver. 7.—“*Then* (R. V. AGAIN THERE-

FORE) *asked He them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth.*” “By a Divine authority He pushes their impotence with these same questions.”

Ver. 8.—“*Jesus answered, I have told* (R. V. I TOLD) *you that I am He: if therefore ye seek Me, let these go their way.*” “This is an intimation to the armed crowd what playthings they might be in His hand. He then points to the disciples, sacrificing Himself, but saving others.”—*Whedon*.

Ver. 9.—“*That the saying* (R. V. WORD) *might be fulfilled, which He spake, Of them which* (R. V. THOSE WHOM) *Thou gavest* (R. V. HAST GIVEN) *Me have I lost none*” (R. V. I LOST NOT ONE). What was the word to be fulfilled? It is to be found in chapter xvii. 4, 12.

Ver. 10.—“*Then Simon Peter* (R. V. THEREFORE) *having a sword drew it, and smote* (R. V. STRUCK) *the High Priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The* (R. V. NOW THE) *servant's name was Malchus.*” “The Jews,” says *Westcott*, “among the company seem to have been foremost in the arrest. The incident is described by all the Evangelists, but John alone mentions the names of Peter and Malchus. It is easy to see why these were not likely to be particularized in the original oral gospel while both were alive and at Jerusalem. It was not lawful to carry weapons on a feast day.” Who was *Malchus*? No one knows. What particular office did he hold? No one can tell. He was struck by Peter no doubt on account of his prominent position amongst the rabble.

HOMILETICS.

It will be seen John records some most suggestive circumstances in Christ's biography that are not recorded by the Synoptists. It is true he omits other circumstances connected with the Memorable Night which the other biographers distinctly record. I cannot see how this difference in the narrations can, in any just way, be regarded as invalidating the testimony of either. It seems to me to give an air of naturalness and reality to the statements of all. Fabricators of a history would never have acted thus: they would have been studious in their endeavours to make their

respective testimonies agree—not only in their essence, but also in their accidents. Indeed, had there been this uniformity, there would have been reason for suspecting their veracity. Many, if not most of the events of Christ's life, occurred in connection with turbulent multitudes and immense excitement. Under such circumstances it would have been almost impossible for the observers to detail them in the same order. From the nature of the case, each would have a stand-point peculiar to himself, would be struck with a circumstance which the other would not have an opportunity of observing, and be in a position to receive a deeper impression from some incident which the other, perhaps, would scarcely deem worthy of note. Hence this *formal* diversity would almost necessarily take place in the honest statements of independent and trustworthy witnesses. The fact is, the narrative of each of our Lord's biographers naturally differs by greater or less fulness, as each regarded the events from his own point of view. Our remarks will be confined entirely to John's utterance, as elsewhere we have referred to the statements of other Evangelists on the narrative.*

We have, therefore, before us an account of a *Most Remarkable Gathering*, and in connection with the gathering three things are noteworthy—

I.—THE SCENE OF THE GATHERING.

“*He went forth with His disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which He entered with His disciples.*” “As it is in the reflective Gospel only that the circumstance of His crossing the brook Kedron is mentioned, we can hardly doubt that to the Evangelist's own mind there was present the somewhat analogous crossing of the same dark streamlet by another sufferer (2 Sam. xv. 23); possibly, also, certain other historical associations (see 2 Kings xxiii. 12).” “Thus surrounded,” says *Stier*, “by such memorials and typical allusions, the Lord descends into the dust of humiliation and anguish.” To this garden, Jesus, it is said, went forth with His disciples. (1.) *Whence?* In John xiv. 31 we have these words, “Arise, let us go hence.” Go hence. From this room where I have been speaking to you, praying for you, feasting with you. From this city—Jerusalem—away from the haunts of men. (2.) *Whither?* Into the solemn grandeur and deep hush of nature. To this garden we are here told He “*oft-times resorted with His disciples.*” Some have supposed that this spot belonged to a friend, and that it was a favourite resort of Christ and His disciples. Thither Jesus had retired. There overshadowed by the silent hills, amidst the deep hush of midnight, with the pale rays of the full moon falling on His brow, He passes

* See “Germes of the Gospel” (Matthew), in *loco*.

into a mysterious agony of soul, and pours out His heart in prayer. "*Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with His disciples.*" Great souls often sigh for solitude, and all souls morally require it. (3.) *Wherefore?* He went there to commune with His Father, to realize His awful mission, and to confront His doom. His going forth with His disciples to this scene, and for this purpose, reveals two elements in His nature—

First: His sublime courage. Terrible are the scenes before Him, yet with a fearless step He goes forth to meet them. Conscientious virtue is always fearless. His going forth reveals—

Secondly: His social sympathy. He goes forth with His disciples. He takes Peter, James, and John with Him that they may be near Him in His agonies. As a Man He yearned for and valued the presence of sympathetic friends in His great trials. Another noteworthy thing here is—

II.—THE PERSONS IN THE GATHERING.

In imagination enter this secluded spot. Though night, it was not dark, the moon was at its full, throwing its silvery rays upon the scene. The group is not large, but wondrously diverse; diverse in Character, Passion, Purpose.

First: Christ and His disciples are there. He is the central figure, poor and sad in aspect, but Divinely grand. On Him all eyes are fixed, to Him all thoughts are directed. Peter, James, and John are there. On them, in all probability, there rests a heart-sinking impression that something awful, they scarcely know what, is about taking place, that something terrible is to happen to the One they love best of all.

Secondly: Judas is there. He, "having received the sop," at the table, we are told, "went immediately out: and it was night." He went out for the purpose of meeting Christ in this garden, His usual resort, there to betray Him to His enemies. In him we see here a threefold development of *greed*, for it was greed that prompted him to this infernal step. "What will ye give me?" this was his reigning impulse.

In his case we find greed running—(1.) Into *base ingratitude*. What favours Christ had conferred upon this man! But the passion of greed buried them all in oblivion. Gratitude and greed cannot co-exist. Here we find greed running—(2.) Into *heartless cruelty*. Judas handed his Benefactor over to ruthless ruffians, and intolerant bigots, to be crucified. Greed is ever cruel, it tramples on the rights and lives of men in quest of its object. Here we find greed running—(3.) Into *atrocious treachery*. In Matthew xxvi. 49 we are informed that Judas came to Jesus and said, "Hail, Master, and kissed Him." His greed overcame all sense of truth and honour, and even moral decency. Greed is

always treacherous, always false; it fills the markets and senates of the world with lies and deceptions.

Thirdly: Unprincipled hirelings are there. "*A band of men and officers from the Chief Priests and Pharisees cometh thither.*" The word "*men*" is superfluous, and not in the original. Two bodies are here mentioned, meaning the detachment of the Roman cohort on duty at the festival, for the purpose of maintaining order, and the officials of the ecclesiastical authorities, the captain of the temple, and armed Levites. These men, perhaps, had no personal impressions concerning Christ, no hostile feeling towards Him, but they were there to do their *duty*, meaning by duty, the orders of their masters. In the sacred name of Duty what crimes have been enacted under these heavens! Soldiers rifle innocent homes, burn villages and cities, shed oceans of human blood, create millions of widows and orphans, in the name of Duty,—meaning by duty the commands of men lost to the claims of humanity, the sense of moral right, and of responsibility to their Maker. Such were the men now in the garden, venal hirelings. Notice—

III.—THE TRANSACTIONS AT THE GATHERING.

Four classes of deeds were here enacted.

First: Those *against* a conviction of duty. What Judas did in conducting the band into the garden, and there betraying Jesus with a kiss, must have been against his convictions of right: well he knew he was perpetrating an atrocious crime. Hear his own confession: "When he saw that He was condemned, he repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the Chief Priests and elders, saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood" (Matt. xxvii. 3, 4). To sin against conscience is to sin with the most aggravated heinousness. Another class of deeds here enacted were—

Secondly: Those *without* any conviction of duty. These were the deeds of the "*band and the officers of the Chief Priests,*" who came with their "*lanterns and torches and weapons*" to seize Christ and to drag Him to the tribunal. These men were like "dumb, driven cattle," they were mere tools. Such men are ready for anything at the bidding of their masters; they have no will of their own; no convictions concerning the right and wrong of actions. Alas, how numerous are such men in every age! Wretched serfs, on them despots build their thrones. The other class of deeds here enacted were—

Thirdly: Those by a *right* conviction of duty. Such were the deeds of Christ. (1.) Mark His intrepidity. "*Jesus, therefore, knowing all things that should come upon Him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye?*" He does not wait for their approach. After Judas had given the treacherous kiss, he retreats perhaps

among the band who followed him, who stand in hesitation. With calm and sublime heroism Jesus steps forward and confronts them with the question, "*Whom seek ye?*" He does not propound this question for His own information, for He knew their purpose well, but in order that they may confess their object, and to impress them with the fact that they could only attain their object by His voluntary permission. (2.) Mark His dauntless confession. "*They answered, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am He.*" Here I am. Here by My own power and choice; here not as a Victim, but as a Victor. I am prepared to meet you: fulfil your mission, do your worst, My time has come. "No hostile hand can antedate My doom." (3.) Mark the moral force of His expression. "*As soon as He had said unto them, I am He, they went backward, and fell to the ground.*" What struck them down? Not physical force, not miraculous agency, it was the flash of His pure soul upon their guilty consciences. They came with deadly "weapons" to seize His body; He by the moral majesty of His looks seized their souls, and they fell as Saul fell on his way to Damascus; fell like the sentinels at the tomb before the angels' withering glance (Matt. xxviii. 4). (4.) Mark His tender consideration. "*Then asked He them again, Whom seek ye?** *And they said, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus answered, I have told you that I am He: if, therefore, ye seek Me, let these go their way.*" They seem to have recovered from the shock, and are on their feet again. And again to impress them with the terrible wickedness and impiety of their mission, He repeats the question, "*Whom seek ye?*" They reply, "*Jesus of Nazareth.*" If you want Jesus of Nazareth, "*I have told you I am He.*" Seize Me, but let My disciples escape. Perhaps some of the Roman cohort, not knowing Jesus personally, were about to lay hold on His disciples, and Jesus thus shields them. Thus the "Shepherd seeth the wolf coming, and fleeth not, because he careth for the sheep." In all this our Lord acted *by the conviction of right*, by the conviction that He was doing the will of His Father in heaven, which was the grand object of His mission to earth. The other class of deeds here enacted were—

Fourthly: Those by a *wrong* conviction of duty. "*Then Simon Peter having a sword drew it, and smote the High Priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus.*" No doubt Peter did this under the impression that he was doing the right. A conviction of duty probably gave force to the impulse to strike in defence of his Master. But the deed was wrong.

To which of these classes do our actions belong? Are we acting *against* the sense of right, or *without* the sense of right, or by a *right* sense of right, or by a *wrong* sense of right? Crucial question this!

* See Germ, p. 104.

GERMS OF THOUGHT.

No. LXXI.

THE MAJESTY AND FORCE OF RIGHT.

"Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon Him," &c.—
xviii. 4—8.

This incident serves to illustrate two things—

I.—THE MORAL MAJESTY OF RIGHT.

This is seen in two particulars—

First: In the heroic manner in which Christ, single-handedly, met His enemies. Jesus, instead of fleeing from their presence, or manifesting the slightest perturbation, goes forth magnanimously to meet them; and looking them, perhaps, directly in the face, says, "*Whom seek ye?*" What great offender are you in search of, at this late hour of the night? "*Jesus of Nazareth,*" said they; a name of reproach. As if they had said, 'We are in search of that infamous carpenter's Son from Nazareth; the Blasphemer, Who is representing Himself as the Son of God and the true Messiah. We want "*Jesus of Nazareth.*"' What was the reply? Did Christ in any way attempt to evade them? No! "*I am He.*" I shrink not from that name, though clothed with obloquy, though the object of imprecation with priests and populace. I am neither ashamed of My abused name, nor of Nazareth, My humble home. "*I am He.*" I shun not My past history; I am ready to have it scrutinized in open day. I, Jesus of Nazareth, have been in poverty, but never in disgrace; despised, but never depraved; assailed by the tempter, but never incited to sin.

Moral majesty is seen here—

Secondly: In the tender consideration which Christ displayed for His friends under the most trying circumstances. "*If ye seek Me, let these go their way.*" As if He had said, "Whatever injury you are going to inflict on Me, save them, though they have neglected Me, and "could not watch with Me one hour." I would not have them injured; and though I should like them to be with Me in this hour of My trial, to sustain Me with their presence and their sympathy, yet for the sake of their safety I forego the gratification; "*let these go their way.*" "Touch not Mine anointed, and do My prophets no harm." He forgets Himself in His disciples. Is there not moral sublimity here? Who that has a soul within him, does not see the highest moral majesty, in Christ thus heroically meeting, single-handedly, His enemies, and seeking the safety of His unfaithful followers, at the moment when His own life was in most imminent peril?

The question which here comes up, and is worthy of a moment's thought, is, What was it that made Jesus so calm and powerful in

this terrible hour? What is the philosophy of this majestic bearing? (1.) It was not *ignorance* of His perilous position. Men are sometimes calm in the midst of dangers, because they are unconscious of their situation. But it was not so with Christ; for we are told that He "*knew all things that should come upon Him.*" All the horrible events which were now to crowd into a few short hours of His life passed distinctly under His vision. The Hall of Caiaphas, the baseness of Annas and of Pilate, the maddened fury of the populace, the agonies of the Cross; He knew all these things, and knew that they were all coming upon Him at once—and yet He was calm. (2.) It was not *stoical insensibility* to His perilous position. The composure of some in trying circumstances is nothing but a stolid obduracy of heart. But it was not so with Christ. He was sensitiveness itself; His soul was all nerve. What then is the cause? It is the consciousness of rectitude. He knew that He was right with Himself, with the universe, and God. And with this consciousness of rectitude, there can never be any moral forebodings or apprehensions as to the future. With this, the future is evermore bright and attractive. With this consciousness of rectitude, moreover, there is always an assurance of God's presence and favour. Hence Christ might exultantly exclaim, "I have set the Lord always before Me; because He is at My right hand, I shall not be moved." This incident illustrates—

II.—THE MORAL FORCE OF RIGHT.

"As soon then as He had said unto them, *I am He*, they went backward, and fell to the ground." What was it that now struck them down? What was the force that laid prostrate these strong men? Was it Miraculous Power? I think not, for the following reasons—

First: Because this supposition does not agree with the general use of Christ's miraculous agency. All the miracles of Christ were characterized by Mercy. The destruction of the barren fig-tree was the only exception. He did not employ His energy to injure, but to bless.

Secondly: Because this supposition is opposed to that general spirit of non-resistance, which He constantly exemplified and inculcated. We never find Him putting forth His hand to resist. He practised the principle He enforced, of returning good for evil.

Thirdly: Because this supposition is not necessary to account for the phenomenon. We think that the Divine and glorious bearing of Christ, when He approached them with His mighty words and piercing looks, was quite sufficient to excite such a rush of violent emotion in their guilty spirits, as would produce the effect here stated. In support of this view, think of three things—

(1.) That violent and sudden emotions always tend to check the current of life. It is a physiological fact, that both sudden and extreme joy and terror, have often paralyzed the physical organs, and produced death. There are instances of culprits who, on receiving tidings of pardon under the gallows, have fallen dead in a moment, as if struck with a thunderbolt. Sudden and extreme terror produces the same effect. Notice—

(2.) The probable state of the minds of these men, when they entered the garden. They must have known and felt that they were doing wrong. Men when they are engaged in wrong work are always timid—always disposed to be alarmed;—"a guilty conscience makes cowards of us all." The nocturnal burglar moves to the door, you may be sure, with a tremulous step and a timid soul. The faintest sound has often broken the purpose of the midnight robber, and paralyzed the arm of the assassin. These men, perhaps, like all cowards, talked very bravely as they wended their way through the streets of Jerusalem, and crossed the brook of Cedron; but we may be certain there was a moral nervousness within.

(3.) The unexpected and morally dignified way in which Christ met them. They expected *resistance*—and then they would have put forth some resolute effort. But, instead of this, when He walked calmly up to them, and spoke in kind and dignified tones, they were taken aback. They felt that there was Divinity in His transcendent bearing, and this roused their guilty souls. Shame, remorse, terror, foreboding, rushed up from the depths of their moral heart like a tempest, before which they fell. It was the Force of Right that struck them down. This subject teaches—

First: The *supreme importance* of being Right. There is nothing of such moment to man as rectitude. This gives value to everything else. Apart from this—wealth, social influence, knowledge, and even life itself, are worthless. Our great want is a "right spirit within us." Nothing will enable us to meet the future but this. There is a Gethsemane before us all; the last night of our existence will come; and foes will approach us then more formidable than those which now surround us. Would we in that solemn moment be calm and firm? Then must we be made right.

Secondly: The *Divine method* of promoting Right. How are men to be made to feel its power? Not by force and violence, but by a calm display of itself.

Thirdly: The *ultimate triumph* of Right. The falling of these men before the moral majesty of Christ seems to prefigure what must one day be the case everywhere. The Right must conquer. The *Right is might*,—Divine might. Almightyness is with the right thought, act, and life. The wrong cannot stand before it: it must fall, as the colossal image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream fell at the

touch of the little stone. The wrong in science, literature, government, institutions, religion, must fall before the Right.

Fourthly: The *folly of opposing* the Right. Priests and princes may rise up against it. Intrigue and violence, armies and navies, may be employed to put it down; but fruitless will prove all their efforts. The Triumphal Car of Right must roll over the dust of the Herods, Caiaphases, Julians, Neroes, Alexanders, and Napoleons of the world.

NO. CXXVII.

PETER'S SWORD.

"Then Simon Peter having a sword, drew it," &c.—xviii. 10, 11.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Ver. 11.—
"Then said Jesus (R. V. JESUS THERE-
FORE SAID) unto Peter, Put up thy
sword into the sheath: the cup which
My (R. V. THE) Father hath given

Me, shall I not drink it?" "The image of the cup used to designate a lot to be submitted to, recalls the similar expression in the prayer in Gethsemane."—*Godet.*

HOMILETICS.

We have three things here worthy of notice—

I.—AN IMPULSE MANIFESTLY GENEROUS, WRONGLY DIRECTED.

"Then Simon Peter having a sword drew it, and smote the High Priest's servant." This fact is recorded by all the evangelists. John alone records that it was done by Peter, and the name of the servant of the High Priest—Malchus. The motive that prompted Peter to this act was not greed, ambition, or personal vengeance, it was that of sympathy for his Master; a generous desire to protect Him. But this impulse, *good* in itself, was *improperly* directed: directed to bloodshed and murder. How much good feeling is wrongly directed in this world!

First: There is *parental affection*. How generally is this employed to the advancement of a child's temporal good, rather than to his spiritual; to pamper his appetites rather than to discipline his heart; to make him independent of labour, rather than to train him to habits of honest industry; to make him a great figure in the world, rather than a good man in the universe; to enrich him with the wealth of the world, rather than with the wealth of a Christly character, which is the heaven of the soul!

Secondly: There is *religious sympathy*. Religious sympathy is one of the most glorious attributes of humanity. But how often is it directed, not to the making of our own characters so great and Christlike as to be witnesses or God wherever we go, but to formulate and promote theological dogmas, and establish and nourish little sects!

Thirdly: There is *philanthropic sentiment*. A love for humanity

is an instinct as universal as the race. But this instinct, instead of being directed in endeavours, first to improve the moral heart of humanity, and then working from the heart to the whole outward life, and from the individual to the race, is directed to the creation and support of costly machinery for lopping off branches from the Upas, applying salves to the ulcers, and whitening the sepulchres of depravity. No man can be improved, only by first improving his heart; the fountain must be cleansed before the streams can be pure. We have here—

II.—A VIOLENCE ENTIRELY DEFENSIVE, DIVINELY CONDEMNED.

“*Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath.*” Did Peter expect his Master to say, “Well done, Peter, I value thy generous effort on My behalf?” If so, he was disappointed: strong words of disapproval came instead. “*Put up thy sword.*” In Matt. xxvi. 52, we have an addition to this: “All they that take the sword, shall perish by the sword.” The words from Matthew may be taken in one of two senses, either as a *prediction* or as a *law* of humanity. If taken in the former sense, almost every chapter in the history of the world supplies abundant fulfilment. The nations of the earth that have practised war, have ultimately been ruined by wars. If in the latter sense, we find instincts in the human soul which lead to the result. Anger begets anger, love begets love, and “with what measure we mete, it is meted again.” But clearly the words imply on Christ’s part disapproval of Peter’s deed. How could He approve of such an act? It was contrary to the old law, “Thou shalt not kill,” and contrary to the law He introduced, to return “good for evil.” We have here—

III.—A RESIGNATION ABSOLUTELY FREE, SUBLIMELY DISPLAYED.

“*The cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?*” Christ was in His present condition not by necessity, but as a matter of free choice. He had “power to lay down His life, and power to take it up again.” Matthew reports Him as saying on this occasion—“Thinkest thou not that I could pray to My Father, and He would send Me twelve legions of angels?” &c. Notwithstanding this, He submits with filial loyalty to overwhelming sufferings. “*The cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?*” * Observe—

First: The sufferings of the good are a “*cup*,” not an ocean. Happiness is an immeasurable sea, misery is only a “*cup*” in the universe: an exhaustible and exhausting quantity. Observe—

Secondly: The sufferings of the good are a gift from the Father. They are not a curse from the devil. It is an instinct of genuine piety to trace up all evil as well as good to the Father. “What

* See Germ, p. 109.

son is he whom the Father chasteneth not?" All hells are benevolent institutions. Observe—

Thirdly: The sufferings of the good are to be accepted with filial resignation. "*Shall I not drink it?*"

GERMS OF THOUGHT.

No. LXXII.

THE RIGHT WAY TO VIEW AND ACCEPT SUFFERING.

"The cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?"—xviii. 11.

Christ was an Example to us in Suffering, The significant and somewhat tragic exclamation of the text shows how He viewed and accepted affliction.

I.—TAKING HIM AS OUR EXAMPLE, WE SHOULD REGARD SUFFERINGS, EVEN WHEN INFLICTED BY WICKED MEN, AS COMING FROM GOD.

A band of officers from the Chief Priests, led on by a treacherous disciple, had come down from the garden to arrest Him; and of this assault He speaks as the "*cup*" which His Father gave Him. As no suffering can come upon us without the Divine Knowledge and Permission, it is reasonable and right to recognize God's hand in it. In persecutions, trials, aye in martyrdom itself, we should recognize a "*cup*" in the hand of God.

II.—TAKING HIM AS OUR EXAMPLE, WE SHOULD ACCEPT SUFFERINGS, HOWEVER INEXPRESSIBLY DISTRESSING, AS COMING FROM GOD AS A FATHER.

"*My Father hath given Me.*" It is not held out to Me by the hand of an Iron Necessity, or of an Indignant Judge, but by the hand of a Father. "*Shall I not drink it?*" (1.) Shall I not drink it without *reluctance*? Take it freely and in filial confidence. (2.) Shall I not drink it *thankfully*? I know it is for My good. The bitterest cup has curative elements.

No. CXXVIII.

PHASES OF A CORRUPT GOVERNMENT.

(*Jesus before Caiaphas—Peter's Denial—Jerusalem.*—MATT. xxvi. 56, 57, 69—75; MARK xiv. 53, 54, 66—72; LUKE xxii. 54—62; JOHN xviii. 13—18, 25—27.)

"Then the band and the captain and officers," &c.—xviii. 12—14.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Ver. 12.—*"Then (R. v. so) the band and the captain (R. v. CHIEF CAPTAIN) and officers of the Jews took (R. v. SEIZED) Jesus, and bound Him."* The

record of the examination before Annas is peculiar to John. He no doubt was present; the enumeration of the band, the captain and the officers, show that, however different

they were in many respects, they were one in their antagonism to Christ. The band was in all probability a cohort.

Ver. 13.—“*And led Him away* (R. V. LED HIM TO) *to Annas first; for he was father in law to Caiaphas, which was the High Priest that same year*” (R. V. THAT YEAR). “The former relations which Annas had sustained to the high priesthood, both in himself and in his family, would make him an honorary officer still. He had been high priest eleven years, five of his sons had succeeded him in the office which was now held

by his son-in-law, and he himself was probably a vice high priest: besides, this was so special a case, it seems fit that he should be consulted.”—*Jacobus.*

Ver. 14.—“*Now Caiaphas was he, which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.*” “John here doubtless refers to the counsel of Caiaphas, to show that he was fully prepared to carry out whatever orders Annas might give for the destruction of Christ.”—*Whedon.* (See our notes on xi. 50.)

HOMILETICS.

In these words we have several *Phases of a Corrupt Government in its Endeavours to Crush the Right.* “*Then the band and the captain and the officers of the Jews took Jesus, and bound Him.*” Why did the government of Judæa desire so earnestly, and labour so indefatigably, for the destruction of Christ? Was there anything in His *genealogy* to account for it? No. He was One of their own race—a Jew, Who by birth came down from the most illustrious of their ancestors. The blood of Abraham quivered in His veins. Was there anything in His *appearance*? Was He hideous in form or countenance, somewhat monstrous or repulsive in presence? Not so, I trow. In bodily presence I imagine Him to have been beauty idealized, “altogether lovely.” Why then? He was the Embodiment and fervid and fearless Advocate of RIGHT—right between man and man, and man and God. The Government was wrong—wrong to its very core—and it could not bear the right. The Right flashed on its corrupt heart, as sunbeams on diseased eyes. Hence they were determined to put an end to it, to kill it, to bury it, and to seal it down so that it should rise no more. Corrupt governments are always against the Right, hence the persecutions and the martyrdoms. A corrupt government appears here *endeavouring to crush the Right*—

I.—BY THE EMPLOYMENT OF HIRELINGS.

Who are now employed? “*The band and the captain*” were the Roman cohort, and the “*officers*” were the apparitors. There are in all countries and under all governments, multitudes of men so utterly dead to the sense of justice, and the higher instincts of manhood and independency, that they are ready at any hour to sell themselves for pay, to services the most dishonourable and unrighteous. These have ever been, and still are, the ready tools of despots.

From these come, for the most part, the soldiers who, at the command of the authorities for the time being, will engage in the most iniquitous crimes, with malignant enthusiasm and ruthless cruelty. Alas, that creatures, formed in the image of God, endowed with grand possibilities, commissioned by heaven for services of justice and beneficence, should be thus so embruted and fallen! As we look upon them trooping forth, at the bidding of their masters, bearing with them the implements of cruelty and death, we are urged to cry out with the prophet, "Can these dry bones live?" Can these Thoughtless Bipedes, who sell themselves to the work of plunder and murder for thirteen pence a day, ever become *men*, alive with the sense of manly independence, and personal responsibility? A corrupt government appears here *endeavouring to crush the Right*—

II.—IN THE NAME OF LAW.

"*And led Him away to Annas first, for he was father in law to Caiaphas, which was the High Priest that same year.*" This Annas is pronounced by Josephus to have been the most fortunate man of his times. He had occupied the post of high priest for not less than fourteen years, and four of his sons had also filled that eminent office, and now his son-in-law Caiaphas occupied the distinction. His venerable age, and his ancient title to the priesthood, invested him with great legal authority. Because the enemies of Christ wanted their diabolical conduct and intentions towards Him to be sanctioned by law, they now commanded their hirelings to take Him to Annas and Caiaphas. They gained their purpose, and went forth to enact the infernal tragedy of Calvary under the authority of Law.

The greatest crimes ever perpetrated under these heavens have been perpetrated under the sanction of law. "We have a law, and by our law He ought to die." Despots say that the Law must be respected and sustained, or as their cant is, "law and order." But no; if your law and order are built on moral falsehood and wrong, tread them in the dust. The progress of the world requires this. The heroes of imperishable renown have given themselves to this work. What is wrong in morals, can never be right in any Government. A corrupt government appears here *endeavouring to crush the Right*—

III.—UNDER THE PRETEXT OF A MISERABLE EXPEDIENCY.

"*Now Caiaphas was he which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.*" In relation to this "*counsel*" three remarks may be offered.

First: That it was *apparently adapted* to the end. Christ was alienating the people from the institutions of the country, and shaking their faith in its authorities. The most effective plan for terminating the mischief *seemed* to be to put Him to death.

This would appear to strike the evil at the root. When this was done public excitement would soon subside, and the feeling of the people speedily flow back to its old level, and roll on monotonously in its old channel as heretofore. It was anyhow plausible.

Secondly: Though seemingly adapted to the end, it was *radically wrong in principle*. What right had Caiaphas to propose the death of any man, however criminal that man might be? And even assuming his right as a governor, to put a criminal to death—a prerogative, however, which we deny to all but God,—certainly there was no show of right in proposing the death of One Who, like Christ, had never violated any law, Who had wronged no one, but blessed all. *The apparent fitness of a measure to an end does not make it right*. The only Standard of Right is the will of God.

Thirdly: Their policy being radically wrong, was *ultimately ruinous*. Did the putting of Christ to death avert the dreaded calamity? Did it secure Judæa from the invasion of the Romans? Did it serve in any way even the *temporal* interest of the country? No, no; it hastened the flight of the Roman eagle; it brought upon them judgments which speedily broke up their commonwealth, and beneath which the Jewish people have been groaning to this hour. Ah! what seems "*expedient*" to-day may prove in the future to have been most disastrous. Eternal principle is the only pillar to guide shortsighted creatures in their endless path. Let Governments be warned by the policy of Caiaphas.

No. CXXIX.

A TEMPORARY FAILING OF TRUE COURAGE.

"And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple," &c.
xviii. 15—18.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Ver. 15.—*"And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple: that (R. V. NOW THAT) disciple was known unto the High Priest, and went in (R. V. ENTERED) with Jesus into the palace (R. V. COURT) of the High Priest."* It is generally supposed that by the "*other disciple*," John is speaking of himself. Peter and John are often found in special connection with each other; they now followed Jesus. How John was "*known to the High Priest*" is not stated, although in Acts iv. 6 his name appears amongst the kindred of the High Priest.

Ver. 16.—*"But Peter stood (R. V. WAS STANDING) at the door without."* He remained outside with the crowd. Jesus, as a Prisoner, and the other dis-

ciple as a friend of the High Priest, went into the court. *"Then went out that other disciple (R. V. SO THE OTHER DISCIPLE), which was known unto the High Priest, and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter."* It is customary even at the present day, in the East, for the doors of the wealthy to be superintended by a portress, who receives a fee for her services from the visitors.

Ver. 17.—*"Then saith the damsel (R. V. THE MAID THEREFORE) that kept the door unto (R. V. SAITH UNTO) Peter, Art not thou also (R. V. ART THOU ALSO) one of this man's disciples? He saith, I am not."* There is no charge brought against him; it is simply an inquiry.

Ver. 18.—*"And (R. V. NOW) the*

servants and officers stood (R. V. WERE STANDING) *there, who had made* (R. V. HAVING MADE) *a fire of coals; for it was cold: and they warmed* (R. V. WERE WARMING) *themselves: and Peter stood* (R. V. ALSO WAS) *with them* (R. V. STANDING), *and warmed* (R. V. WARMING)

himself." Probably the "other disciple" had gone forth and followed Christ up, and entered the house. But fear compelled Peter to mix with the officers and servants, desiring that he should be regarded as one of them.

HOMILETICS.

Our subject is *The Temporary Failing of True Courage*. Observe here—

I.—HERE IS TRUE COURAGE NOBLY DISPLAYED.

"*And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple, into the palace of the High Priest,*" or the court. Here is heroism. To follow One Who was cursed by the nation, and was being dragged in bonds by Roman ruffians to undergo a mock trial, and Who in a few hours would, amid the fury of a maddened multitude, undergo the agonies of a terrible crucifixion, revealed a bravery of heart of no mean character. They stood firm and faithful to Him in "Whom they believed," although they knew that the spirit of their age and the rulers of their country were against Him.

II.—HERE IS TRUE COURAGE TEMPORARILY FAILING.

"*But Peter stood at the door without. Then went out that other disciple, which was known unto the High Priest, and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter.*" It would seem that at this stage Peter's courage began to fail, for he halted at the door, so that John had to go and take him in. As he entered he was recognized by the portress, who said to him, "*Art not thou also one of this man's disciples? He saith, I am not.*" Here is fear seeking to protect itself by falsehood. "*And the servants and officers stood there, who had made a fire of coals; for it was cold: and they warmed themselves: and Peter stood with them, and warmed himself.*" Fear had taken possession of Peter, and to protect himself, he halted by the fire, and mingled with the servants and officers who stood there, desiring, it may be, that he should be regarded as one of them.

Now here is a failure of courage which led to a terrible falsehood thrice repeated, even with curses. *Fear*, perhaps, is one of the most *prolific parents* of lies. *Greed* is a parent of lies; it fills the market with fallacies. *Vanity* is a parent of lies; it fills all social circles with misrepresentations. *Malice* is a parent of lies; it hatches the slanders that destroy reputations and often break hearts. But perhaps *fear* is the most fruitful source of lies, though these lies, in my judgment, are not the most venal. They are not aggressive, but defensive. Still they cannot be justified, although some good men have sought to justify them. Their

influence is pernicious. The influence of Peter's falsehood upon John, his fellow-disciple, must have been most distressing, and the influence upon himself was to injure his self-respect, and to sting him with remorse.

But this fear was only *temporary*, his failing courage was soon restored. The look of Christ rallied the drooping forces of his moral manhood, and ever afterwards he appears as a hero amongst heroes in the cause of his Master. Witness his conduct before the Sanhedrim when he said to his accusers, "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto man rather than unto God, judge ye." Witness his sermon on the day of Pentecost, &c.

CONCLUSION. Learn—

First: The liability of a good man to moral reactions. Here is Peter, who was almost constitutionally bold and courageous—so that He Who knew what "was in man" called him a "rock"—struck with cowardice and trembling before the breath of a silly maid. So it often happens, men of great faith have sceptical moods, men of great hope desponding seasons, men of generous natures have misanthropic feelings. Learn—

Secondly: Whatever the moral reactions, the good element will ultimately prevail. The cowardice of Peter was only a passing mood. Courage lay at the root of his nature, and this courage came out in his after life in many a form sublimely inspiring. In his martyrdom, too, as given by tradition, the heroism of his soul shone in splendour.

No. CXXX.

A CONVENTIONAL JUDGE, AN INSOLENT SYCOPHANT, AND AN UNIQUE PRISONER.

(*Jesus before Caiaphas—He declares Himself to be the Christ—Jerusalem.*—MATT. xxvi. 59—68; MARK xiv. 55—65; LUKE xxii. 63—71; JOHN xviii. 19—24.)

"The High Priest then asked Jesus of His disciples, and of His doctrine," &c.
—xviii. 19—23.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Ver. 19.—

"The High Priest then asked Jesus of His disciples, and of His doctrine" (R. V. TEACHING). Luke calls both Annas and Caiaphas high priests in Acts iv. 6. "It is easy to imagine," says *Westcott*, "that arrangements had been made for a private examination in the chamber of Annas, at which Caiaphas was himself present, and in which he took part. At the close of the unofficial proceeding, Annas sent Jesus to Caiaphas for a formal trial. The preliminary examination was directed to the obtaining of materials for the formal accusation which was to follow."

Ver. 20.—"*Jesus answered him, I spake* (R. V. HAVE SPOKEN) *openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue* (R. V. IN SYNAGOGUES), *and in the temple, whither* (R. V. WHERE ALL) *the Jews always resort* (R. V. COME TOGETHER); *and in secret have I said* (R. V. SPAKE I) *nothing.*" His preaching had been in the regular public places, the synagogue and the temple. He had no conspiracy, no secret society.

Ver. 21.—"*Why askest thou Me? ask them which* (R. V. THAT HAVE) *heard Me, what I have said* (R. V. WHAT I SPAKE) *unto them: behold, they know*

what I said" (R. V. THESE KNOW THE THINGS WHICH I SAID). "Jesus claims that the examination should proceed in due order by the calling of witnesses."

Ver. 22.—"And when He had thus spoken (R. V. SAID THIS), one of the officers which stood by (R. V. STANDING BY) struck Jesus with the palm of his hand (R. V. WITH HIS HAND), saying, Answerest Thou the High Priest so?"

It was not one of the servants, but one of the High Priest's attendants, or possibly one of the band who had brought Him thither.

Ver. 23.—"Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou Me?" "If I have said anything improper, stand forth as a witness against Me; but if not, why employ brute force towards Me?"

HOMILETICS.

These verses present to us three subjects of thought, *A Conventional Judge*, *An Insolent Sycophant*, and *An Unique Prisoner*. Here we see—

I.—A CONVENTIONAL JUDGE.

Whether Annas had any right to exercise judicial authority at this time, or assumed it because he had long exercised it, and was of great experience and extensive influence, he now assumes that authority, and subjects Christ to interrogations. I discover three very censurable elements in the conduct of this conventional judge on this occasion. Here is—

First: *Officiousness*. If he had been in possession of judicial authority at this time, he had no right whatever to ask the prisoner concerning "*His disciples, and of His doctrine.*" His business was with His personal conduct. Was He personally guilty of any sin against ecclesiastic or civic laws, or not? But, inasmuch as in all probability he was not in possession of any judicial authority, his officiousness was *indecent* and *offensive*. Another element discoverable in this conventional judge is—

Secondly: *Craftiness*. The question was evidently designed to entrap Christ into some statements that might be used against Him at His trial; some statements that might involve Christ in something like a self-crimination. Craftiness is one of the most despicable attributes of character, and scarcely anywhere is it so prominent and prevalent as in Courts of Law, and on the Judicial Bench. In sooth it is regarded too much as a qualification for judicial work. Another censurable element discoverable in this conventional judge is—

Thirdly: *Heartlessness*. It might have been supposed that an old man, who had been brought up from childhood in the religion of the patriarchs, and who, long before Christ was born, occupied the highest position, in order to vindicate its rights and extend its influence, would have been touched into the tenderest compassion at seeing a young Man Whose countenance had no trace of vice, but radiated with virtue, bound in chains, and awaiting a terrible doom. But no, his old heart is callous. The atmosphere of the

high office which he had sustained for many a long year had frozen within him all the fountains of humanity. In a Conventional Judge, sad to say, there is nothing very rare in this. How often do we find an old man on the bench, who seems to gloat over every new contribution of evidence that goes to convict the prisoner, and with the black cap on his head, will pronounce sentence of death with heart unthrilled, and a voice unquivering. It is said that justice is cold. This is a libel on the celestial attribute. Justice is a ray of love, it is indeed a modification of love, it is rooted in love, and cannot live without the root. Quench love in the soul, and what is called justice becomes statutory rigorousness.

“The calm Divinity of justice sits
And pities while she punishes mankind.”

The words present to us—

II.—AN INSOLENT SYCOPHANT.

“*One of the officers which stood by, struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest Thou the High Priest so?*”

First: Here is an act of Sycophancy. This man was one of those mean craven souls, who are ever ready to flatter superiors. He wished Annas to think, that he saw in the reply of Christ the want of that respect which such a high dignitary should always have; and the miserable lacquey considered that he would be pleased by a prompt recognition and avengement of the same. No doubt this was the spirit that actuated this man. A more despicable and pernicious character than this, know I not: *despicable* because it implies the lack of all manly independence; *pernicious*, for it degrades the possessor, deceives others, and impedes the progress of individuals and communities. But whilst it is despicable and pernicious, it is, alas, prevalent not only in courts, but in all circles society through. Parasites abound, the Calibans count their millions.

“Deceitful, smiling, fawning flatterers,
Like rats oft bite the holy cords in twain,
Too intricate to unloose: soothe every passion
That in the nature of their lords rebels:
Revenge, affirm, and turn their halcyon beaks
With every gale and vary of their masters.”

Secondly: Here is an act of Insolence. He “*struck Jesus with the palm of his hand.*” Mark the heartless insolence of this creature: he struck an innocent Man Who stood before him bound as a prisoner; more than that, he struck incarnate Divinity. The lowest-natured persons are always the most insolent. Men who are the most ready to flatter those above them, are ever most disposed to treat with the greatest rudeness those of a humbler grade. The reason is obvious, the sycophant can have no true respect for

himself, for being an abject toady he finds nothing in himself to respect, and much with which to feel self-disgust. He who respects not himself has neither the desire, nor the qualification to respect others. At the bidding of those in power, the servile multitudes will deal out insults, not only to every passer-by, but even to those in the higher ranks of intelligence and morality.

The words present to us—

III.—AN UNIQUE PRISONER.

First: Mark His Reply to the Conventional Judge. "*Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing. Why askest thou Me? ask them which heard Me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said.*" In this Reply three things are observable.

(1.) *Manly Independency.* There is no bowing down before this venerable official, nothing crouching or craven. He speaks to him as man to man. It is noteworthy that Christ pays no respect to mere Office. In these last days, men have come to think that an elevated office of itself has a just claim to respect and honour. A huge fallacy this. Legislative, administrative, regal offices, what are they worth if not occupied by morally worthy men? Nothing; they are simply contemptible. The more elevated the office is, the more dishonourable the man who occupies it, if not intellectually and morally qualified. Ignorance and depravity are bad everywhere; bad in the poor and the obscure, but a thousand times more abhorrent in the legislator, the judge, and the king. Mere office is an abstraction; it is the man who makes the office worthy or unworthy. Christ had no respect for this man as a man, and therefore no respect for him as a judge. In this Reply we see—

(2.) *Conscious Honesty.* Christ's referring the question to His disciples indicates that He had nothing to fear. "*Why askest thou Me? ask them which heard Me, what I have said.*" I am no conspirator: what I have said and done has been in the face of all the world, in the synagogues of the Jew and in the temple at Jerusalem, in the face of open day have I said what I had to say. Does not this indicate conscious honesty? It was this that made Him fearless and invincible. In this Reply we see—

(3.) *Faith in Humanity.* No one had such an overwhelming and painful sense of the moral depravity of the men of His age as Christ had, yet He was prepared to trust to their verdict. He seemed to feel that it would be impossible for them, if they had any remnant of conscience left, to accuse Him of anything underhanded or conspiratory. Confidence in human nature is the effect and evidence of conscious honesty. Treat every man as a rogue until you find him honest, is the maxim of the world. Christ acted on the

converse, He treated every man as honest until He found him otherwise. The greatest rogues are ever the most suspicious.

Secondly: Mark His Reply to the Insolent Sycophant. "*Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou Me?*" Though a miserable retainer, the base minion of bloated authority, albeit Christ treats him as a man, and says virtually, "If I have said anything improper, stand forth as a witness against Me, but if not, why employ brute force towards Me?" If this man had a soul, this rebuke must have shaken its every fibre. An Unique Prisoner this! In truth, He was only a Prisoner in form and aspect. The conventional judge and his insolent sycophant, they were, in reality, the prisoners; their little souls were manacled by chains stronger than adamant. He was the true Judge, the Sublime Judge of all Mankind.

No. CXXXI.

THE TWO DENIALS OF PETER.

"Now Annas had sent Him bound unto Caiaphas the High Priest," &c.—
xviii. 24—27.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—On the termination of Christ's pre-examination by Annas, he sent Him bound in chains into the hall of Caiaphas, which was contiguous, and probably under the same roof. "Our evangelist, it would seem, had nothing to add to the ample details of the trial and condemnation of the Lord Jesus, and the indignities with which He was thereafter treated. And next to nothing on the sad fall of Peter in the midst of these transactions. With all this he holds his readers already familiar through the records of the three preceding evangelists."

Ver. 24.—"*Annas sent Him bound unto Caiaphas the High Priest.*" The private interrogation at which Caiaphas had assisted, led to no decisive result. Annas therefore sends Him on to the High Priest officially.

Vers. 25, 26, 27.—"*And (R. V. NOW) Simon Peter stood (R. V. WAS STANDING) and warmed (R. V. WARMING) himself. They said therefore unto him, Art not thou also (R. V. ART THOU ALSO) one of His disciples? He denied it, and said, I am not. One*

of the servants of the High Priest, being his kinsman whose ear (R. V. OF HIM WHOSE EAR) Peter cut off; saith, Did not I see thee in the garden with Him? Peter then (R. V. THEREFORE) denied again: and immediately (R. V. STRAIGHTWAY) the cock crew." "Although John relates in the briefest terms two of Peter's denials, and the crowing of the cock, this is merely to supply one small but striking particular, which had not been noticed in the preceding gospels: how one of those who charged Peter with being a disciple of Jesus was able to identify him, by his own relationship to the man whose ear Peter had cut off in the garden, and who saw him do it." —*Dr. Brown.* The fact that the other Synoptists record the three denials of Peter at the house of Caiaphas, and John, only two here can be explained by the fact that Annas and Caiaphas in all probability occupied the same sacerdotal palace, and that the passage from the presence of the one into that of the other would occupy scarcely any time, and the three denials therefore would be regarded as successive.

HOMILETICS.

There are four things here in connection with *Peter's Denial*, on which we may profitably fasten our attention.

I.—HE HAD STEPPED AT THE OUTSET INTO A TEMPTING SOCIETY.

First: In that Hall he would meet with a rank of men *Superior to his own grade*. No doubt there were present some of the magnates of Jerusalem, some perhaps even members of the Sanhedrim, and others their acquaintances and friends. Peter was a poor fisherman; his pedigree was obscure, and his circumstances were impoverished. One poor man in the presence of magnates could scarcely fail to feel that influence; would, whilst listening to their words and marking their stately manners, involuntarily cower in their presence. The poor are ever disposed servilely to honour and imitate the rich.

Secondly: The rank of men that Peter would meet in that Hall were all *Hostile to Christ*. He would hear not only their disparaging remarks concerning Him, but their language of ridicule, scorn, and contempt. Arguments, too, conducted perhaps with logical power, would fall on his ears, to show from the Old Testament Scriptures that Christ was a blasphemous impostor. In such a social atmosphere as this, his confidence in Christ would be shaken; grow cold and weak. Sad for thee, Peter, that thou shouldst enter such a circle! "Evil companions corrupt good manners." "One rotten apple," says *Feltham*, "will infect the store; the putrid grape corrupts the whole sound cluster. If I have found any good companions I will cherish them as the choicest of men, or as angels which are sent as guardians to me. If I have any bad ones, I will study to lose them, lest by keeping them I lose myself in the end." Another circumstance here worth noticing is—

II.—HIS PERILS INCREASED THE LONGER HE CONTINUED.

Peter might well have concluded that if his Master were to be actually crucified, his own ruin would be terrific and inevitable. The devotees of the universally hated One would be hated; of the murdered One would be destroyed. And all this because very likely every hour the clouds were becoming more and more widespread and black, all the stars of hope had set, the sky was black—blackening into midnight. How could he continue in his devotion to Him in such a tremendous hour? Fear impelled him to deny, and deny he did. Fear emasculates a man, strikes down his courage, takes the heart out of him; it makes the most open nature often quiver in every fibre.

“I feel my sinews slackened with the fright,
And a cold sweat trills down o’er all my limbs,
As if I were dissolving into water.”—*Dryden.*

Another circumstance here deserving remark is—

III.—HE WAS RECOGNIZED BY THE BROTHER OF HIS ENEMY.

“*One of the servants of the High Priest, being his kinsman whose ear Peter cut off, saith, Did not I see thee in the garden with Him?*” It was bad enough for him to have been recognized by the portress as Christ’s disciple, bad enough that those who stood by while he was warming himself should ask, “*Art thou not one of His disciples?*” but far more distressing was it to be recognized by an official, the ear of whose kinsman his sword had cut off. “*Did not I see thee in the garden with Him?*” This was scarcely a question of curiosity, scarcely a question put for the sake of information: it breathes vengeance. It means perhaps this, Dost thou mean to say that I, whose brother thou hast injured, did not see thee in the garden with Him? Did I not stand by thee, and glare at thee with indignation when thou didst assault my brother? Terrible stroke this for Peter! Perhaps when he entered this Hall he congratulated himself upon his good fortune; it was warm in the cold night, and he stood side by side with great men. “Thou art more fortunate,” says *Gossner*, “in having a friend who preventeth thee from going in to men of the world, than in possessing one who procureth thee access to them, and introduceth thee into their dwellings.” The other circumstance that is noteworthy here is—

IV.—HE WAS UNEXPECTEDLY ROUSED TO THE SENSE OF HIS SIN.

“*Peter then denied again: and immediately the cock crew.*” The cock crew in the very climax of his infidelity. Twice before the shriek of this bird had filled his ear, now it fell like a thunder-clap on his conscience. God can give the most innocent object in nature an arrow to pierce the soul, the most feeble voice a power that shall rouse the sleeping conscience into fury. Elsewhere it is said, “Peter remembered the words of Jesus,” and when he thought thereon “he wept.” And, again, it is said he “went out and wept bitterly.” He went out from the companionship of ruffians, and the scene of bigotry and injustice—he went out from the circle where he had been tempted to a course of wickedness, whose memory now struck him with horror and alarm—he went out into the solitudes of nature, under the quiet vault of night, to weep his tears at the foot of justice, and to breathe his sighs into the ear of mercy. He went out to unburden himself of that load of guilt which he had contracted, and to consecrate his being once more to the will of his Maker. He wept bitterly, and his tears were

“Like blessed showers
Which leave the skies they come from
Bright and holy.”

No. CXXXII.

SPURIOUS SANCTITY.

(*The Sanhedrim lead Jesus away to Pilate—Jerusalem.*—MATT. xxvii. 1, 2 ; MARK xv. 1—5 ; LUKE xxiii. 1—5 ; JOHN xviii. 28—38.)

“Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall,” &c.—xviii. 28.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Ver. 28.—“*Then led* (R. V. THEY LED THEREFORE) *they Jesus from Caiaphas.*” It is noteworthy that John does not record Christ’s trial before Caiaphas ; the Synoptists do. “*Unto* (R. V. INTO) *the hall of judgment*” (R. V. PALACE). This was the official residence of the Roman governor. His private home was at Cæsarea, but during the Passover season there was an influx of strangers and consequent general excitement, so that he felt it his duty to be present in the city, that peace and order might be preserved. The ceremony referred to here is the Passover. “*That they might* (R. V. BUT MIGHT) *eat the Passover.*” Because all the other Evangelists assured us that Jesus had eaten the paschal lamb the night before, viz. on the Thursday evening ; John’s statement here that it was eaten on the present day, viz. on the Friday, is difficult to be understood. Sceptics have discovered a damaging contradiction. Various theories have been propounded by Biblical critics for solving the difficulty. I agree with a modern expositor, who says that “the simplest and most satisfactory solution is found in the different meanings of the word ‘Passover.’ It no doubt often did signify simply the paschal lamb. But it also had a more extensive meaning, so as to include the entire festival of the Passover week.” Such is the obvious meaning in John ii. 13—23 ;

vi. 4 ; xi. 55 ; xii. 1 ; xiii. 1. So also in 2 Chron. xxx. 22. “They did eat throughout the feast seven days, offering peace offerings.” Now during the Passover week, there was to be on each day a burnt offering : two young bullocks, one ram, and seven lambs ; also a meat offering, and one goat for a sin offering. Unleavened bread was to be eaten through the week. There was also the *chigagah*, which was a festive thank offering made by private individuals and families. To partake of these during any day of the festival was to keep or eat the Passover. That John did not disagree with the other Evangelists in holding the supper on the night of Christ’s betrayal to be the Passover we have good historical proof. For his disciple Polycarp, in a discussion of the question occurring in his day, expressly declared that “John himself celebrated the Easter supper on the fourteenth of Nisan, the time of the Jewish Passover.” (On the whole subject read Excursus F., in Bishop Ellicott’s “Commentary for English Readers,” vol i. p. 559.) The sentiment is vastly more important than either the scene or the ceremony. “*And they themselves went not into the judgment hall* (R. V. PALACE), *lest they should be* (R. V. THAT THEY MIGHT NOT) *defiled.*” They sent Christ in the custody of Roman officers ; these remained outside, “*lest they should be defiled.*”

HOMILETICS.

These wretches who were thirsting for the blood of Him Who was “harmless,” “holy,” undefiled, “separate from sinners,” Who was the Son of God Himself, were afraid of being ceremonially “defiled” if they entered the apartments of a heathen majesty.

Here is a *Spurious Sanctity*. In relation to this wretched state of mind, I predicate the following facts—

I.—IT IS COMMON.

How many religionists there are in Christendom, of almost every creed and sect, who are afraid to enter certain places, lest their holy souls should receive a taint! Papists stand aloof from all Protestant scenes of worship; and Protestants from a similar sentiment avoid all churches of the Catholic order. Nor are the numbers few amongst the adherents of the Episcopal Church of England, who would not enter the churches of Nonconformist communions, "*lest they should be defiled.*" As if, forsooth, those who every Sunday proclaim themselves in the great congregation to be "*miserable sinners,*" felt themselves at the same time so pure as to dread defilement in entering Churches, where such men as John Foster, Robert Hall, John Howe, Caleb Morris and Dr. Chalmers preached; where Milton sang, and Cromwell knelt! Nor are Nonconformists free from this miserable sentiment. There are thousands of narrow souls in the region of Dissent, who avoid Episcopal Churches lest they should receive a taint. The men, of this Spurious Sanctity, Who are they? Are they lawyers, who never take advantage of their clients; merchants who never practise dishonesty on their customers; doctors who never impose on their patients; servants who never cheat their masters; mistresses who never deal unkindly and unjustly with their servants; aristocrats who are never haughty, overbearing, and licentious? I trow not. The chances are, the high probability is, that the men of spurious sanctity belong to these classes. For no order of men had the Divinest of all Teachers and the Noblest of all Characters a profounder contempt. "Woe unto you," &c. To His all pure and piercing eye they were "whited sepulchres." Verily, the most soul-polluted men and women I know are those of this class. I could not trust them. All healthy moral virtues have quitted their natures, and their graces are all shams. I predicate another fact in relation to this Spurious Sanctity, and that is—

II.—IT IS IRRATIONAL.

First: It is founded on an absurd idea of *localities*. It presupposes that some places are in themselves more holy than others. Is St. Peter's in Rome more holy than St. Paul's in London? Or is St. Paul's in London more holy than the Methodist Chapel in the City Road, or any other place, shop, or sanctuary? Nay, all places are alike: every spot on which we tread is "holy ground," for the Holy God made it, and is present with it every minute. True, the purpose for which a certain place has been consecrated, or set apart, may be good or bad, but the place is the same

whether it be for a Cathedral or a Market. The notion that one place on this round earth is more holy than another, is an offence to reason, an insult to common sense.

Secondly : It is founded on an absurd idea of *human obligation*. It supposes that a man is bound to be more holy in one place, or in one period, than in another ; more holy in the church than in the shop ; more holy on the Sunday than on the other six days of the week. This notion, which is terribly prevalent, is a superstitious phantom, a preposterous fiction. Man, though of complex elements and faculties, is but *one* being, and *moral* in all and evermore. Even all his physical voluntary actions have a moral quality, and so have all his volitions, whether referring to the movements of bodily organs or of mental faculties. "Whatsoever he does in word or deed," whether in business or in worship, he is bound to do all to the "glory of God."

Thirdly : It is founded on an absurd idea of *mind*. It supposes that the human mind is some passive substance that can be defiled by some outward element or agent, irrespective of its own choice and effort—a kind of fabric, a piece of ware or stone that you can daub or wash. But it is not so. Nothing outward can affect the mind irrespective of itself, no force can soil or cleanse it independent of its own efforts. It can make itself filthy in scenes and services supposed to be the most holy ; it can wash itself from its pollution in scenes considered the most corrupt and vile. There is a power in the body, when in a healthy state, to appropriate whatever goes into it from external nature that is wholesome and necessary, and to expel that which is noxious and superfluous. The soul has a power analogous to this—a power to appropriate the wholesome and to expel the injurious. This power we call the *transformative*. Let us use it rightly—use it as Noah used it, who, amidst the blasphemy and ridicule of a corrupt generation, "walked with God," and fulfilled a noble destiny ; as Paul used it at sceptical Athens, and dissolute Corinth, and in Pagan Rome, who from experience left the world this testimony : "All things work together for good to them that love God." Another fact I predicate in relation to this *Spurious Sanctity* is—

III.—IT IS PERNICIOUS.

First : This spurious sanctity is a positive injury to its subject. The religionist who moves about the world with the dread of having his soul "*defiled*" by outward things, is like a man who enters a sick room, afraid of inbreathing the disease of the sufferer ; he is nervous, and feels oppressed by the atmosphere, his buoyancy and brightness for the nonce have quitted him. The spurious saint lacks naturalness, buoyancy, and elasticity of soul. There is no joyous humour in the eye, no manly ring in the voice ; there is

the pietistic face, the whining voice, and the moody eye. He is afraid of being "*defiled*," and he shuns the scenes of innocent recreation, he trembles all over in the presence of heretics and schismatics. Poor creatures, quit the world and retire to the scenes of monks or nuns!

Secondly: This spurious sanctity is a calumny on true religion. The religion of Christ is happiness. "These things have I spoken unto you that your joy may be full." He came to bring the soul out into perfect freedom, and to pour into it "joy unspeakable and full of glory." I am disposed to believe that the teeming thousands of sanctimonious men and women, that crowd churches and chapels, talking in sepulchral tones and pulling long faces, are far greater obstructions to the progress of Christianity, than all the sceptics of the day, for they *misrepresent* the Son of God.

CONCLUSION. Among the many practical lessons that may be drawn from this subject, there is one applicable especially to *Parents*. It is always a deeply anxious period in the history of a pious parent, when the time comes to send his children out in the wide world, to engage in such pursuits as may be the most conducive to their advancement and usefulness in life. This profession is thought of and given up, because of the temptations with which it is associated. That business, though lucrative, is renounced because of the fallacious and dishonest principles on which it is conducted, and the depraved circle with which it stands connected. There is not a single department of secular life, that can be thought of as suitable for the child, that is not beset with perils to his innocence and virtue. And when, after much anxious thought and prayer, the parent decides on that which is least objectionable, on moral grounds, still he is anxious. Which is the way to meet this parental difficulty? Teach the child that his Maker has endowed him with powers of mind and thought, that will enable him to stand against all outward temptation; that if he is true to the spiritual nature which Kind Heaven has given him, he can pass through the most fiery assaults of the devil unscathed, move through the most polluted scenes without a moral taint. Teach him, that his safety is in reliance upon the right use of his own faculties and in the blessing of his God. Teach him, that it is not the unchaste conversation, the filthy song, the profane expression that may go into his ear, that will *defile* him; but the *use* he makes of these. Teach him, that he has a power to turn wickedness to his own spiritual advantage, that he may

"Gather honey from the weed,
And make a moral of the devil himself."

No. CXXXIII.

THE TWOFOLD APPEAL OF PILATE TO THE ENEMIES OF CHRIST, AND THEIR RESPONSE.

“Pilate then went out unto them,” &c.—xviii. 29—32.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Ver. 29.—*“Pilate then* (R. V. THEREFORE) *went out unto them, and said, What accusation bring ye against this man?”* Though Pilate might have a general knowledge of the accusation, it was their place formally to present it. “Bound to respect the Jewish customs, the Procurator steps forth to them.”—*Tholuck*.

Ver. 30.—*“They answered and said unto him, If He were not a malefactor* (R. V. IF THIS MAN WERE NOT AN EVIL DOER), *we would* (R. V. SHOULD) *not have delivered Him up unto thee.”* They are getting impatient, and will not wait for a formal process, and are quite unprepared for the governor’s hesitation.

Ver. 31.—*“Then said Pilate unto them* (R. V. PILATE THEREFORE SAID

UNTO THEM), *Take ye Him* (R. V. TAKE HIM YOURSELVES), *and judge Him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death.”* Pilate means to say, “If He is to pass for a criminal simply in accordance with your sentence, then execute Him also according to your law.” “This reply of Pilate compelled on their part the humiliating confession that the nation since the subjection to Roman power had been deprived of judicial authority over life and death.”

Ver. 32.—*“That the saying* (R. V. WORD) *of Jesus might be fulfilled, which He spake, signifying what* (R. V. BY WHAT MANNER OF) *death He should die.”* See chap. xii. 32; comp. Matt. xx. 19.

HOMILETICS.

As the Spurious Sanctity of these Scribes and Pharisees who thirsted for the blood of Christ, would not permit them to enter the Prætorium, or the “hall of judgment,” into which they had forced Christ to appear before Pilate as a Prisoner, Pilate comes forth to them and asks, *“What accusation bring ye against this Man?”* In this position outside of the Prætorium we have *Two Distinct Appeals which Pilate makes to the Enemies of Christ, and their Response.* Let us notice—

I.—PILATE’S FIRST APPEAL TO THE ENEMIES OF CHRIST, AND THEIR RESPONSE.

“What accusation bring ye against this Man?” It is probable that Pilate had a general knowledge of the charge which they had to bring; but now, as he has to enter on the business of a judge, he would require something more specific. As the Roman procurator, he demands to know the specific crime Christ had committed against the Roman law.

What response did these intolerant bigots make to the appeal? Here it is. It is very characteristic and very significant. *“They answered and said unto him, If He were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered Him up unto thee.”* Look with an analytic eye

into this utterance, and we shall detect three elements of moral depravity—

First: Baseless Calumny. "*If He were not a malefactor,*" an evil-doer. Meaning that He was an evil-doer was a well-attested fact. As if they had said, that He is a great criminal is patent and notorious. But what evil had He done? what crime had He perpetrated? None whatever. Here, then, is a vile calumny implied rather than expressed. Thus slander generally works. It unblushingly assumes wrong in the character it traduces, and expresses it, not in intelligible language, but in oblique innuendo, a nod of the head, a shrug of the shoulder, and an expression of the countenance. Here is—

Secondly: Arrogated Superiority. "*If He were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered Him up unto thee.*" "*We*" could not have done such a thing. As if they had said, 'So vital is our sympathy with rectitude, that we should have recoiled with abhorrence from charging crime on an innocent man.' "*We would not have delivered Him up.*" "*We,*" oh no, not for the world!

There is a great social influence in arrogated superiority, whether intellectual or moral. Let a man assume before his fellows that he is a great thinker, a great scholar, and the thoughtless circles in which he lives will accept him as such, and ring out his transcendent merits. Let a man assume to be pre-eminently holy, and in the especial confidence of heaven, and he shall be accepted as a saint of the first rank, and the chief of all the prophets. The credulous fools in the sphere in which he moves, whether large or small, will regard his prayers as having the power to reverse the laws of the universe, and his dogmas as having an efficacy to rescue souls from damnation. As a rule, alas, our contemporaries take us, not for what we *are*, but for what we *assume* to be. Here is—

Thirdly: Crouching Sycophancy. "*We would not have delivered Him up unto thee*"—thee, the great judge. "Their demand," says Lange, "was intended to convey the right of a greater independence. If we come before thy tribunal that is an honour for thee, in return for which thou canst surely do us the honour to recognize our sentence without further ceremony." Corrupt men always work out their base designs by a crawling servility to men in power. The devil himself is the prince of sneaks and sycophants. Let us notice—

II.—PILATE'S SECOND APPEAL TO THE ENEMIES OF CHRIST, AND THEIR RESPONSE.

"*Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye Him, and judge Him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death.*" Pilate's words here seem

to be an ironical reply to their assumption. They assume that the very fact of their bringing Jesus before him, was in itself a proof of His criminality. Pilate virtually says, "Very well, then, this being so, dispose of Him if you dare, do not trouble me." What was their reply? "*It is not lawful for us to put any man to death: that the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which He spake, signifying what death He should die.*" Two remarks here concerning these enemies of Christ.

First: They were animated by a mortal malice. Their hatred to Christ had become so hot and rampant, that nothing short of His death would satisfy them. "*It is not lawful for us to put any man to death,*" and His death we want. For this we come to thee. Nothing but His death will satisfy us. To what a height had the tide of their depravity risen!

Secondly: Their mortal malice was restrained by Providence. Two things seem to have restrained them: (1.) Public law. They would have inflicted on Him capital punishment themselves, but the Romans had taken away that power. "*It is not lawful for us to put any man to death.*" They were restrained by (2) A Divine decree. "*That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which He spake, signifying what death He should die.*" Christ had frequently predicted that He should die the death of crucifixion. But crucifixion was the Roman mode of inflicting capital punishment. Had it been left to the Jews to put Him to death, it would have been by stoning (Lev. xxiv. 16; 2 Kings vi. 17; Acts i. 16). There was, therefore, a Divine purpose as well as a Roman law, that *restrained* them from putting to death the Son of God.

Sinners live under a grand system of restraints. They are held back from fully gratifying their passions or realizing their aims. It is well that it is so, otherwise the world would soon become a Pandemonium. Even the devil himself, like some fiery steed, is reined in with bit and bridle.

No. CXXXIV.

CHRIST'S REPLY TO PILATE'S ADDRESS, AND PILATE'S REMARK ON CHRIST'S REPLY.

"Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall," &c.—xviii. 33—35.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Ver. 33.—"*Then Pilate* (R. V. PILATE THEREFORE) *entered into the judgment hall* (R. V. PALACE) *again, and called Jesus, and said unto Him, Art Thou the King of the Jews?*" "Pilate," says Hengstenberg, "had set the alternative before the Jews, either to bring a formal accusation against

Jesus, or to judge Him according to their own law. They declined the latter, and we may suppose they adopted the former." Pilate, therefore, entered again into the Prætorium or palace, and summoned Jesus before him. No honest investigation could he carry on amidst the intolerant religionists and roaring rabble, hence

he repairs into the palace where the Jews could not enter, for a private examination. Pilate puts the question directly, "*Art Thou the King of the Jews?*" As if he said, this is the charge against you. Luke tells us, "They began to accuse Him, saying, We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that He Himself is Christ a King." Pilate's question therefore means, Is this the case?

Ver. 34.—"*Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing (R. V. THIS OF) of thyself, or did others tell it thee (R. V. CONCERNING) Me?*" "The most probable interpretation of the question is," says a modern expositor, "that which regards it as establishing a distinction between the title '*king of the Jews*' as spoken by Pilate, and the same title as spoken by Jesus. In the political sense in which Pilate would use it, and in this sense only, the claim would be brought against Him in Roman law, He was not King of the Jews. In the theocratic sense in which a Jew would use that title He was King of the Jews." *Grotius* seems to hit the meaning of our Lord's words

here. "Thou hast been so long a ruler, and so careful a defender of the Roman majesty, and hast thou ever heard anything that would impeach Me of a design to usurp authority against Rome? If thou hast never known anything of thyself, but others have suggested it, beware lest thou be deceived by an ambiguous word."

Ver. 35.—"*Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the Chief Priests have delivered Thee unto me: what hast Thou done?*" Pilate seems here to speak in a tone of a little irritation, at the very suspicion that he paid any attention to the distinctions in a Jewish quarrel: as if he had said, "Do you suppose I am a Jew?" "He gets out of patience," says *Godet*. "What have I to do with all your Jewish subtleties?" There is a supreme contempt in the antithesis, *ἰγώ . . . Ἰουδαῖός* (I . . . a Jew!) Then dismissing the Jewish jargon, which he had allowed the accusers to impose on him for a moment, he examines as an open straightforward Roman. "Come to business. What crime hast Thou committed?"

HOMILETICS.

Here we have *Pilate's Address, and Christ's Reply*. Notice—

I.—CHRIST'S REPLY TO PILATE'S ADDRESS.

To Pilate's question, "*Art Thou the King of the Jews?*" Christ says, "*Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of Me?*" This is not said in the spirit of insolence or disrespect, for that would be foreign to His holy nature. But said, no doubt, as a warning to Pilate, not to be prejudiced against Him on account of the reckless charges of the intolerant Jews. "*Sayest thou this thing of thyself?*" Knowest thou anything thyself concerning My history, to make you suppose that I presume to call myself a King in a political sense? We may legitimately use the words as suggesting an appeal to two classes of men in relation to Christianity.

First: To the *Infidel*. To the infidel we may say when he urges his objections to Christianity, "*Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee?*"

(1.) When he objects to the Divinity of the Bible. When he talks of its difficulties and discrepancies, states how he thinks the manuscripts were produced, and how they were compiled, all in order to show that the book cannot be Divine, we say to him,

"Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee?" Art thou stating all these things on hearsay, or hast thou thoroughly and honestly investigated the question for thyself? If thou hast not done this, be silent, it is a *personal* question. The men from whom thou hast heard thy objections, perhaps, never examined them for themselves, but received them from others, and they also from others, and so on. Hush! *think for thyself*;

(2.) When he objects to the doctrines of the Bible. When you hear him dilate on the absurdity of the Incarnation, the Atonement, the Resurrection, ask him, "*Sayest thou this thing of thyself?*" Hast thou examined these doctrines so as to get an independent judgment? If not, hold thy tongue. In these questions every man should be "fully persuaded in his own mind." We know of no better way to deal with modern infidels than this; silence them in their babblement by saying, "*Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee?*" As for us, "we speak that we do know, and testify what we have seen." The words suggest an appeal to be made—

Secondly: To preachers. When you hear men talk nonsense, even blasphemy, in the pulpit in the name of the Bible; when you hear them advocate sacramentalism, reprobation, Divine wrath to be quenched only by the blood of the innocent, the literal purchase of a certain number of souls to salvation, by the mysterious agonies of the Son of God, and all such blasphemous absurdities as these, say to them, "*Sayest thou this thing of thyself?*" Hast thou found out these things from the Word of God by thine own devout, honest, independent, inductive study, or have others told thee? Hast thou not got all these horrid dogmas, that misrepresent Christianity, outrage the intellect, and shock the moral reason of mankind, from "*others*," from old theologies, hoary creeds, and floating traditions? No man is a True Preacher who does not utter the things which he has "seen and felt and handled for himself." Half the pulpits in England would be shut if the people asked the preacher, "*Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee?*" We have here—

II.—PILATE'S TREATMENT OF CHRIST'S REPLY.

There are two things here worthy of notice—

First: A haughty scorn that is always contemptible. "*Pilate answered, Am I a Jew?*" Who does not see his curled lip and hear his arrogant tone in this? "Do you suppose that *I* belong to that despised and conquered race? No, I am of Roman birth, and represent Cæsar, not only the master of this petty province, but the master of the race." This is very contemptible. There is a scorn that is right and noble, a scorn for all that is mean, and base, and false. But to scorn birth is to the last degree despicable.

Albeit it is *common*. Those who are born in what are called the higher social circles, look with disdain upon the grades below, though from the grades below they all sprung, and by them they are all supported. Albeit amongst them there are often those who, like Garfield, have a moral splendour before which all the brilliancy in castles and courts grows dim. Oh, Pilate, with all thy disdain for the men of Israel, there were greater ones among them than were ever found in Rome—Moses, Solomon, Daniel, Paul! Can you find their match in those grandees who at any time trod the streets of the imperial city? Another thing noteworthy in Pilate's treatment of Christ's reply is—

Secondly: A judicial procedure that is commendable. "*Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered Thee unto me: what hast Thou done?*" With their miserable prejudices, and conventional distinctions, I do not concern myself. Tell me from Thy own lips, "*What hast Thou done?*" Let me hear the truth from Thee, tell out all.

Now this procedure in a Judge is most commendable. Common sense and common justice tell us that in all cases the prisoner ought to be thus treated. But, to the disgrace of our Courts of Judicature, the mouth of the accused is closed. Charges are brought against him in the court; these are urged with legal skill and oratory; but he is not called into the private presence of his judge at the outset, and asked, "*What hast thou done?*" Tell me the whole truth about thyself, especially in relation to the charge brought against thee.

No. CXXXV.

THE MORAL EMPIRE OF CHRIST.

"Jesus answered," &c.—xviii. 36, 37.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Ver. 36.—"*Jesus answered.*"—These words are the reply of Jesus to the question of Pilate, "What hast Thou done?"—"My kingdom is not of this world." Ἡ βασιλεία ἡ ἐμὴ. The "My" here is emphatic. This kingdom of Mine. He does not say it is not in or over, but, it is not of this world, ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου, τούτου, that is, in its origin and nature, and so is no such kingdom as need give thee or thy master the least alarm. "If My kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews." Were it an organism like the Roman Empire or other political governments, military force would be employed. The political kingdoms of

men are established, sustained, and defended by force. Probably He here makes an allusion to the scene of His arrest in the garden which had just occurred, when He bade Peter, who was in the act of employing force for His defence, to put up the sword. "*But now is My kingdom not from hence.*" As if He had said, The fact is, it has neither its origin nor its support from the world. It has been remarked that the word "My" here is emphatic, and occurs no less than four times in this one verse, thrice of His kingdom, and once of Himself. "My kingdom," "My servants," &c. It is in contradistinction to all worldly empires and ministries.

Ver. 37.—"*Pilate therefore said*

unto Him, Art Thou a king then?" I see no reason to believe that there is any sarcasm or contempt in this interrogatory; it is rather the expression of surprise and inquiry. "Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a King." Or, "Thou sayest it because I am a King." "To this end was I (R. V. HAVE I BEEN) born, and for this cause (R. V. TO THIS END) came

I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." "To be a king have I been born, and to be a king came I into the world, in order that I may bear witness unto the truth." "Every one that is of the truth heareth My voice." All, in all times and lands, of a truthful loving spirit, that shall hear My voice, will recognize it as the response to all earnest inquiries.

HOMILETICS.

These words bring under our attention the *Moral Empire of Christ*, and there are three facts suggested concerning it—

I.—IT IS SPIRITUAL IN ITS NATURE AND MINISTRIES.

First: It is "not of this world." This does not mean—

(1.) That *His empire should exert no influence on "this world."* This would be contrary to Christ's teaching, for He taught that His principles were the "leaven," the "salt," the "light" of the world. This is contrary also to *fact*, for His system has modified the political institutions of the world. His ideas will continue to work upon the heart of humanity, until the "kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our God," &c. Nor does it mean—

(2.) That *His subjects have nothing to do with the political duties of the world.* He does not interdict His disciples from the office of magistrate, statesman, king. On the contrary, His teaching binds them to avail themselves of all positions favourable to the diffusion of their heavenly principles. Nor does it mean—

(3.) That *He Himself has no control over the kingdoms of the world.* "He is exalted far above all principalities and powers," &c. But it means that His kingdom is not *like* Worldly kingdoms, built on compromise and force, and sustained in the same way. His empire is an empire over minds and hearts, over thoughts, and feelings, and volitions.

Secondly: It does not employ violence. "If My kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight." Christ's language merely states the well-known *fact* of national wars, He does not *sanction* them. Christ's empire is not only foreign, but hostile, to all violence. He condemns the sword to the scabbard; His weapons are not carnal. He does not sanction, but merely describes the conduct of human governments. He does not say, as war advocates would have Him say, that it is right for governments to employ violence; He only expresses their general conduct. All history shows that human thrones have been reared and supported by force. Their foundations are down in the blood

and sacrificed rights of millions conquered by the sword. His weapons are the weapons of truth and virtue, which work as silently and as mightily as the noiseless dew and the genial ray. His battles are fought, not against the lives and rights of men, but against their crimes and curses, against falsehood and oppression. Another fact concerning this Moral Empire of Christ is—

II.—IT IS WON BY THE TRUTH, OF WHICH CHRIST WAS A WITNESS.

“*To this end was I born, . . . that I should bear witness unto the truth.*” What do we mean by “*truth?*” Truth may be regarded in two aspects—as an *absolute reality*, and as a *relative experience*. As an *absolute reality*, its seat is in God Himself; it underlies the universe, it is the soul and substance of all. It is independent of all minds, yet that for which all minds naturally hunger and thirst. “Where shall wisdom be found?” &c. As a *Relative Experience*, it is *conformity in thought and speech and life to the absolute truth*. The man who thus conforms to the great reality is “*of the truth*” a True man. There is truth of *sentiment*, conformity of thought to the reality; there is truth of *speech*, conformity of language to the inner sentiment; there is truth of *life*, conformity of the man’s character in all his thoughts, utterances, and actions, to the eternal reality. In this form truth appeared in Christ: hence He is called “*the Truth.*” Two thoughts here are worth note, and are suggested—

First: That the world is under the *rule of falsehood*. Men live in fictions, fallacies fill the atmosphere, the “father of lies” rules the world. Men live in a wilderness of phantoms. Lies have become the laws of human activity. Man’s ideas of religion, pleasure, dignity, power—the world over—have no agreement with the eternal realities. This explains its social babblings, its ecclesiastical controversies, its national convulsions. Its crime and curse are that it rolls in an orbit of fiction. Observe—

Secondly: That the grand object of Christ’s mission was to bring man under the *reign of reality*. “*To this END was I born.*” Christ says His mission is to “*bear witness to the truth,*” to shatter shams, to make men real. He was the “*Truth,*” eternal Truth, incarnate, breathing, living, acting, before men. Truth is the mirror of God. The teachings and the lives of the truest men, are but broken pieces of that mirror reflecting only a fraction of the Eternal, and that fraction in a distorted form. Christ’s life was the complete mirror. In Him, “as in a glass, we behold the glory of the Lord.” How directly was His teaching against the popular ideas and feelings of mankind concerning Greatness, Happiness, Worship! He taught that happiness is not in what a man *has*, but what he *is*. He taught that greatness is not in *commanding*, but in *servng*; that worship is not an occasional *service*, but a *living spirit*. Thus

He bore "*witness to the truth.*" Thus He builds up His empire and explodes the reign of fiction. The other fact concerning this Moral Empire of Christ is—

III.—IT HAS AMONGST ITS NUMBERS ONLY THE CHILDREN
OF THE TRUTH.

"*Every one that is of the truth heareth My voice.*"

First: There are men "*of the truth.*" In a world of fiction there are men—few, it is true, in number—who are of the truth, to whom truth is everything; men over whom forms, dogmas, sect-peculiarities, logical definitions, have no dominion, to whom truth is everything; men who are prepared to make any sacrifice on its behalf, and who will listen to its voice from whatever quarter it may come. Their moral intuitions are not so clouded by reason, interest, or prejudice, as to prevent them recognizing Truth, whether it comes garbed in plebeian rags or royal costume. These men are the "*salt of the earth.*"

Secondly: These men "*of the truth*" recognize Christ's voice. He speaks to their common sense, their deep spiritual wants, and they respond to His call. Hence it was not from the conventional religionists and theologues that Christ won His disciples; it was from the unsophisticated people: the "*common people heard Him gladly.*"

CONCLUSION. Mark that none are subjects of this glorious and ever-growing empire of Christ but *true men*. It does not embrace charlatans, hypocrites, men of pretence or sham, but only the men who are practically loyal to the Real. You are not to estimate their number by those enrolled in Church books, but by those who follow Truth to whatever Calvaries it may conduct. Truth has no sectarian limits or geographic boundaries; it is not the property of sects, or classes. The man who has it feels it to be Divine, and that he is a citizen of her holy empire, and bound to promote her sway.

"How sure it is,
That if we say a true word, instantly
We feel 'tis God's, not ours, and pass it on
As bread at Sacrament: we taste and pass,
Nor handle for a moment, as indeed
We dared to set up any claim to such."—*E. B. Browning.*

No. CXXXVI.

A THREEFOLD SUBJECT FOR SOLEMN REFLECTION.

(*Pilate seeks to release Jesus. The Jews demand Barabbas. Jerusalem.*—MATT. xxvii. 15—26; MARK xx. 6—15; LUKE xxiii. 13—25; JOHN xviii. 39, 40.)

"Pilate saith unto Him, What is truth?" &c.—xviii. 38—40.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Ver. 38.— *truth?*" Lord Bacon and others see "*Pilate saith unto Him, What is* a jesting spirit in these words. "What

is truth? says jesting Pilate, and would not stay for an answer." Others see an earnest inquiry in these words. In his experience as a Roman, and especially in his position as a judge, he had heard so many conflicting theories, that he was unsettled and anxious concerning truth: and he asks, What is it? As if he had said, I shall be glad to know it. "*And when he had said this, he went out.*" He does not seem to have waited for an answer to his question; a fact which gives plausibility to Lord Bacon's interpretation. "*He went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in Him no fault at all.*" (R. V. NO CRIME IN HIM.) What is meant is, I find no ground for the criminal charge of which you accuse Him.

Vers. 39, 40.—"*But ye have a custom, that I should release unto you one at the Passover: will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews?*" "These words are immediately connected by John with those of verse 38, because the sending to Herod was preceded as well as followed (Luke xxiii. 4, 14) by a declaration of the innocence of Jesus. These two declarations might be blended in one. The very abridged account which John gives of the episode of Barabbas serves as a link of connection between his narrative and that of the Synoptics. The origin of the custom referred to in Pilate's offer is unknown. It is probable, since the custom was connected with the feast of the Passover, that it contained an allusion to the deliverance of the Jews from their Egyptian captivity. The words *ἐν τῷ πάσχα*, at the Passover, by no means contain the proof, as Lange, Hengstenberg, &c. allege, that the Passover feast was by this time celebrated. The 14th Nisan already formed part of the feast. It is even more probable that the deliverance of the prisoner took place on the 14th than on the 15th, that he might be able to take part in the Paschal feast with all the people. In making this offer to the Jews, Pilate counted on the popular sympathy for Jesus, which had appeared so remarkably on Palm-day. For it was to the entire people that the favour was granted,

and Pilate knew perfectly well that it was from envy that the rulers wished the death of Jesus (Matt. xxvii. 18), and that the feeling of part of the people was against them. In the designation, "*King of the Jews,*" irony prevails, as in verse 14. Only the sarcasm is not addressed to Jesus, for whom Pilate from the beginning feels a growing interest and respect, but to the Jews. Their King? What! This, then, is the only rival whom this people with their national pretensions have to set up against Cæsar? But it is said in Mark xv. 11, "The chief priests moved the people that he should rather release unto them." The friends of Jesus remained mute, or their weak voices were drowned in those of the rulers and their creatures. Some resolute agitators imposed their will on the multitude. This is explained in John's πάντες, all, which corresponds to Luke's *παμπληθεῖ*. The *πάλιν*, again, the authenticity of which is established by the principal documents of both families, is remarkable. Thus far, in John's account, the Jews have uttered no exclamation. It was otherwise in the Synoptics (Comp. Mark xv. 8, *ἀναβοήσας ὁ ὄχλος*, and Luke xxiii. 5, 10). "They were the more fierce, saying . . . they vehemently accused Him." Here again John's narrative expressly assumes that of his predecessors—*Ληστής* does not always signify robber, but a violent man in general. According to Mark and Luke, Barabbas had taken part in an insurrection in which a murder had been committed. The gravity of the choice made by the people is indicated by one of those short propositions whereby John describes a crisis of peculiar solemnity (Comp. xi. 35; xiii. 30). The name of the man who was set up along with Jesus, for the choice of the people, admits of two etymologies. Barabbah, son of the father (either God or any Rabbi), or *Bar-rabban*, son of the Rabbin. In the first case we must double the *b*, in the second the *r*. The MSS. and Talmudic orthography favour the first etymology. The name is not infrequent in the Talmud. According to Mark's narrative, there occurred at

this point something like a rush of people demanding spontaneously the application of the custom, whereby a prisoner was released unto them; and Pilate sought to turn this incident to his purpose—the liberation of Jesus. In any case, whether this incident was

suggested or simply turned to account by Pilate, thus to deliver Jesus was to commit a denial of justice. For He should have been released as innocent. This first weakness was soon followed by a graver.”—*Godet*.

HOMILETICS.

These verses present to us *A Threefold Subject for Solemn Reflection*. Here is—

I.—A POWERFUL VINDICATION OF CHRIST.

Pilate leaves the court in which he had earnestly and carefully examined Christ, stands before the assembled multitude, and says, “*I find in Him no fault at all.*” What stronger testimony could be given to the blameless character of Christ than this? For—

First: He had ample means of knowing all about Christ. Pilate was the Roman governor of Judea, the representative of Cæsar. His position would enable him, and his duty would require him, to make himself acquainted with all the facts concerning a notorious rebel. There was no man who for the last two or three years had roused the popular mind more than Jesus. His name had been on the lips of all: all charges against Him would undoubtedly be brought under the notice of the Procurator. This being so, his testimony was founded on intelligence.

Secondly: He had every inducement to discover His faults if He had any. He was a lover of popularity, and all the influential men over whom he ruled, as well as millions of the commonalty, desired to convict Christ of crime, in order that He might be put to death. If Pilate, therefore, declares His faultlessness, His non-criminality, who can justly allege any charge against Him? Another subject for thought which these verses present to us is:—

II.—A REPREHENSIBLE TREATMENT OF CONSCIENCE.

Personally convinced as he was of Christ’s innocence of the charge, what ought Pilate to have done? To have come out as a man before His accusers, denounced their wicked conduct and delivered Him. But what did he do? He tried to compromise the matter, and proposed to release Jesus, not on the ground of right, but on the ground of an old Roman custom. “*But ye have a custom that I should release unto you one at the Passover: will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews?*” Oh, Pilate! where is thy courage? where thy manhood? Instead of a man thou art a servile minion, controlled by outward circumstances, rather than by inward convictions. When men treat conscience thus—(1.) They *contract guilt*. (2.) They *lose self-respect*. (3.) They *endanger their souls*. The other subject for thought which these verses present to us is—

III.—A SCANDALOUS POPULAR ELECTION.

“Then cried they all again, saying, Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber.” Who was this Barabbas? A notorious brigand, who was at this time in prison on account of sedition and murder. Now the question that Pilate submitted to the choice of the people was, which of the two should he release, set at freedom, to mingle amongst them? Hear their decision, their vote, “Not this man, but Barabbas.”* Not the just, the pure, the tender, and the merciful, but the outrageously dishonest, the disgustingly foul, the morally malignant. Such was their choice, and such, alas, has been too often, and still is, the choice of the people. They prefer the blustering brigands to men of modesty and truth, brute force to moral power. “Who are the chosen of our race,” says *Dr. Archer Butler*, “that poetry crowns with its halo of glory, and every young imagination bows to worship? Who but the laurelled Barabbases of history, the chartered robbers and homicides that stain its pages with blood, and that after 1800 years of Christian discipline the world has not yet risen to discountenancing? Remove the conventional discredit that attaches to the weaker thief, exalt him to the majesty of the military despot, and how many would vote for Barabbas, how many linger with the lowly Jesus?”

So long as the people are morally uneducated, and destitute of practical sympathy with the Right, so long, *vox populi vox diaboli*, will continue to be true. Heaven deliver any country from the suffrage of a democracy, unconverted and unenlightened!

No. CXXXVII.

A THREEFOLD TYPE OF SINNERS.

(*Pilate delivers up Jesus to death. He is scourged and mocked. Pilate again tries to release Him. Jerusalem.*—MATT. xxvii. 26—30; MARK xv. 15—19; JOHN xix. 1—16.)

“Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged Him,” &c. xix. 1—16.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Ver. 1.—“Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged Him.” In order to conciliate the intolerant and bloodthirsty bigots, Pilate had before proposed chastising Christ. “I will therefore chastise Him and release Him” (Luke xxiii. 10). The chastisement here referred to was in all probability the scourging which he now inflicted. “The scourging,” says *Philo Judæus*, “was that inflicted on the worst criminals.” Monuments show that this scourging was a custom in ancient Egypt. Moses legalized the custom,

but limited it to forty lashes. “Scourging,” says a modern expositor, “as practised among the Romans, was so cruel a punishment that the prisoner very often succumbed to it. The scourge was formed of switches or thongs, armed at the extremity with pieces of bone or lead. The prisoner received the strokes while fastened to a small post, so as to have his back bent, and the skin on the stretch. The back became quick flesh, and the blood spurted out with the first strokes.” Pilate now inflicted this chastisement, not as a punish-

* See Homily on *Pilate and the Crucifixion* at end of volume.

ment—for as yet Christ had not been pronounced a criminal—but in order to conciliate the persecutors, and thus, if possible, to avoid that which he felt in his own conscience would be a crime, viz. pronouncing on Him the sentence of death.

Vers. 2, 3.—“*And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put it on His head, and they put on Him a* (R. V. ARRAYED HIM IN) *purple robe* (R. V. GARMENT), *and said* (R. V. AND THEY CAME UNTO HIM AND SAID), *Hail, King of the Jews! and they smote* (R. V. STRUCK) *Him with their hands.*” The crown of thorns and the purple robe, and the reed, which Matthew tells us they put in His right hand, are the expressions of their malignant mockery and derision. It is not said that Pilate commended or even sanctioned them in this, but it was no doubt done under his eyes.

Vers. 4, 5.—“*Pilate therefore went forth again* (R. V. AND PILATE WENT OUT), *and saith unto them, Behold, I bring Him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault* (R. V. CRIME) *in Him. Then came Jesus forth* (R. V. JESUS THEREFORE CAME OUT), *wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe* (R. V. GARMENT). *And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the Man!*” The object which Pilate had in thus bringing Jesus forth, all bleeding from the scourging, wearing in mockery the insignia of royalty, was no doubt so to assuage their wrath, and evoke their pity, that they might willingly let Him go. He bids them look upon Him in His wretched condition and be satisfied. *Eecce Homo!* “The solemn presentation of Jesus before the world preceding His final delivery to death, has produced a most powerful impression upon the minds of the Church of all Christian ages. The pencils of the great masters of Christian art have selected it as a choice subject. Pre-eminently He stands forth, the Man, the Representative of the race, the memento of our sins, the exhibition of our misery.”

Ver. 6.—“*When the* (R. V. WHEN THEREFORE) *Chief Priests therefore and officers saw Him, they cried out, saying, Crucify Him, crucify Him. Pilate saith*

unto them, Take ye Him (R. V. TAKE HIM YOURSELVES), *and crucify Him: for I find no fault* (R. V. CRIME) *in Him.*” “The spectacle of the agonized Prisoner failed to touch their savage natures; like Shylock, they must have their ‘pound of flesh.’ In bringing Christ forth and calling their attention to Him, Pilate seems to say, ‘Here, here is your Man! Look at Him bleeding from the scourge and mocked by the fictitious emblems of a royal crown and royal robe. Surely that is enough. Let Him creep away to His delusions in peace.’ But when this unjust judge perceives that the sop he would throw to Cerberus only makes them more furious, he drops all remaining care for their Victim, throws off the case entirely from his jurisdiction, and cries with mingled vexation and scorn, ‘Well, then, take the Man yourselves, I wash my hands of Him, though I tell you again, I find no fault in Him.’” —*Prebendary Griffiths, A.M.*

Ver. 7.—“*The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our* (R. V. THAT) *law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God.*” It was a custom of the Romans to enjoy their own laws and institutions. The Jews here take their stand on this ground, and appeal to an article in their code (Lev. xxiv. 15), an article which condemns blasphemers to death. “*He made Himself the Son of God.*” Therefore He is a blasphemer, and now we demand that as thou wilt not condemn Him as the King of the Jews on political grounds, thou wilt condemn Him on the ground of our law as a blasphemer.

Vers. 8, 9.—“*When Pilate therefore heard that* (R. V. THIS) *saying, he was the more afraid; and went again* (R. V. HE ENTERED) *into the judgment hall* (R. V. PALACE), *and saith unto Jesus, Whence art Thou?*” The “*Son of God*” had a meaning to Pilate that struck him with terror. Once more he returns to the judgment hall—the Prætorium, and addresses to Christ a question referring to His personal origin, “*Whence art Thou?*” He seemed to feel that He had some supernatural origin, for he knew well concerning His natural origin, viz.

that He was a Galilean. "*But Jesus gave him no answer.*" Christ had virtually answered the question over and over again; further words would be useless. There is a moral majesty in His silence.

Ver. 10.—"*Then saith Pilate (R. V. PILATE THEREFORE SAITH) unto Him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest Thou not that I have power to crucify (R. V. RELEASE) Thee, and have power to release (R. V. CRUCIFY) Thee?*" Pilate seems to have felt the silence of Christ, felt it as a reproach, felt it to the quick, and perhaps with indignant haughtiness asserts his power. Thy destiny is in my hands.

Ver. 11.—"*Jesus answered, Thou couldest (R. V. WOULDST) have no power at all against Me, except it were given thee from above.*" "Thou thinkest too much of thy power, Pilate. Against Me that power is none, save what is meted out to thee by special Divine appointment for special ends." "*From above*"—not from the Roman Emperor, but from heaven. "*Therefore he that delivered Me unto thee hath the greater (R. V. HATH GREATER) sin.*" He, that is Caiaphas, the High Priest, including also all who were acting with him. The whole Sanhedrim is included in this "*he.*"

Ver. 12.—"*And from thenceforth (R. V. UPON THIS) Pilate sought to release Him.*" He had sought to release Him before, he could have released Him by his own powers, but he wanted to do it in a way that would insure their consent. The more he saw of Jesus the more he was impressed with the fact of His innocence, and with His supernatural bearing. "*But the Jews cried out, saying, If thou (R. V. EVERY ONE THAT) let this man go (R. V. RELEASE THIS MAN), thou art not Cæsar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Cæsar.*" Here they struck the blow that would bend the soul of Pilate to their purpose. "They have noted his pliability, they work upon it now by arousing his fears. What! snatch out of our hands a wretch, whom we as friends to Cæsar have publicly denounced before the representative of Cæsar, for conspiring against Cæsar? Remember

if you let such a man escape, you are not one of Cæsar's friends. And this was enough."—*Prebendary Griffiths.*

Ver. 13.—"*When Pilate therefore heard that saying (R. V. THESE WORDS), he brought Jesus forth (R. V. OUT), and sat down in the judgment seat in (R. V. AT) a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha.*" His mind was now brought to their purpose, and he brings Jesus forth, takes the judgment seat and pronounces the sentence against the prisoner. "*The Pavement*" was a hall laid with mosaics or tessellated, on which the throne stood. "*Gabbatha*" signifies an elevation.

Ver. 14.—"*And (R. V. NOW) it was the preparation of the Passover, and (R. V. IT WAS) about the sixth hour.*" "The day before the Jewish (Saturday) Sabbath; that is Friday, the day of crucifixion. As the Jewish Sabbath commenced on the evening of the preceding Friday, so the latter part of Friday was originally devoted to a preparation for the Sabbath. But gradually the line of preparation was extended, and finally the whole day became the preparation. It was the Sabbath preparation in the Passover week." The "*sixth hour*" means towards noon. "*He saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!*" Here Pilate rebounds from compassion and respect, and flies back to contempt and mockery, and with bitter irony exclaims, "*Behold your King!*" There He is.

Ver. 15.—"*But they (R. V. THEY THEREFORE) cried out, Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him.*" King or not, man or not, they will crucify Him. Nothing else will satisfy them. "*Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your king?*" He thus avenges himself for the act of baseness and vengeance to which they had forced him. "*The Chief Priests answered, We have no king but Cæsar.*" *Alford* remarks that those who thus cried died miserably in rebellion against Cæsar forty years after.

Ver. 16.—"*Then (R. V. THEREFORE) delivered he Him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and*

led Him away." "Against all justice, against his own conscience, against his solemnly and repeatedly pronounced judicial decision, that He was innocent, Whom he now gave up.

And so amid the conflict of human passions and the advancing tide of crime, the Scripture was fulfilled which said, 'He is led as a lamb to the slaughter.'"—*Dr. Brown.*

HOMILETICS.

Here we have a *Threefold Type of Sinners*. Perhaps all sinners of all ages may be brought into a threefold class or group: those who sin *Against* conviction, those who sin *From* conviction, and those who sin *Without* conviction.

I.—THOSE WHO SIN AGAINST CONVICTION.

To this class Pilate belonged. How often does he here and in the preceding chapter publicly declare to the Jews that he could "*find no fault*" in Christ! And how manifest, from his various attempts to deliver Christ, was his deep conviction of His innocence. Notwithstanding this he ultimately condemns Him, and thus perpetrates an act in direct antagonism to his profound convictions.

First: To sin against convictions is very *hard* work. How difficult did Pilate find it!—how his better nature struggled against the popular cry that was urging him on to the terrible deed! How many attempts he made to avoid its perpetration, but at last his love of popularity and his dread of Cæsar overbore his conscience, and urged him to that from which his moral nature recoiled. Perhaps the greatest difficulty he encountered was the conduct of Christ in his last interview with Him. The *silence* of Christ to his question, "*Whence art Thou?*" must have shaken him to the centre of his soul. "*Jesus gave Him no answer.*" How terribly eloquent that silence! There is a silence which is often more eloquent than speech. It means more than any words, and speaks ten times more powerfully to the heart. Such, for example, is the silence when the heart is too full for utterance, and the organs of speech are choked by the whelming tide of emotion. The sight of a great man so shaken and quivering with feeling, that the tongue can give no voice to what the heart feels, is of all human rhetoric the most potent. Such also is the silence of a wise man, challenged to speak by those whom he feels unworthy of his words. The man who stands and listens to the language of stolid ignorance, venomous bigotry, and personal insult, addressed to him in an offensive spirit, and offers no reply, exerts a far greater power upon the minds of his assailants, than he could by words, however powerful. His silence reflects a moral majesty, before which the hearts of his assailants will scarcely fail to cower. Such was the silence which Christ now maintained in the Hall. He knew the utter futility of their charges, He understood their malignant spirit,

He knew the truth they wanted not, and that to reason with men of their animus would only be to "cast pearls before swine." Sublime magnanimity I see in this silence of Jesus. In His bright consciousness of truth, all their false allegations against Him melted away as the mists from the mountains in the summer sun. His Divine soul looked calmly down upon the dark and wretched spirits in that hall, as the queen of the night looks peacefully upon our earth, amid the rolling clouds and the howling winds of nature in a passing storm. And then His speech. "*Thou couldst have no power at all against Me, except it were given thee from above.*" Thus pointing his guilty Judge to the God Who is over all.

Secondly: To sin against conviction is a very *fiendish* work. Satan and his legions pursue their course of wickedness in opposition to their moral convictions. Truly this is the worst class of sinners. "He that knoweth his master's will and doeth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes." What millions here in England are sinning *against* their convictions! Another class of sinners are—

II.—THOSE WHO SIN FROM CONVICTION.

Such were the Chief Priests and officers, and members of the Sanhedrim. "*When the Chief Priests therefore and officers saw Him, they cried out, saying, Crucify Him, crucify Him. . . . We have a law, and by our law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God.*" These men seem to have had a conviction that Christ was a religious impostor, and that according to their law they were bound to put Him to death (Deut. xviii. 20). Thus Saul of Tarsus said when he was persecuting the Church he thought he "ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus." Whilst there is no true religion without sincerity, there is often sincerity where there is no religion. It is not enough for a man to believe he is doing right, he must have sufficient evidence that he is right.

Innumerable heathens, heretics, persecutors, sin from conviction. They believe they are doing right, whilst they are perpetrating the greatest enormities on which the sun has ever shone. On the world's long black roll of crime there are no crimes greater than those enacted from religious convictions. Another class of sinners are—

III.—THOSE WHO SIN WITHOUT CONVICTION.

Such were the soldiers who "*platted a crown of thorns, and put it on His head, and put on Him a purple robe, and said, Hail, King of the Jews, and they smote Him with their hands.*" Such also the thoughtless rabble who led Him to the brow of Calvary and nailed Him to the cross. In these men conscience was dormant; they had no moral convictions; they were the miserable

hirelings of Pilate and the Chief Priests. From sordid considerations they sold themselves to the infernal enterprise. They wove a crown of piercing thorns, and placed it on the tender brow of Jesus, and put on Him a purple robe, and said, "*Hail, King of the Jews! and they smote Him with their hands,*" &c. Besides the *injustice* and *cruelty* of all this, there are two elements of character which the conduct of these soldiers develops, always the most contemptible and ever too prevalent—*ridicule* and *obsequiousness*. Foolish and wicked men! they trifled with the sublimest reality in the universe in order to *please their masters*. These two elements are often conjoined; ridicule is frequently the handmaid of servility. The men who deal most in banter, burlesque, lampoon and satire, have generally masters whom they are seeking to please. They lack manly independence. These soldiers seem to have had no conviction; they did what their superiors told them, and what they knew would please. This class of sinners is very numerous; it comprehends all thoughtless assistants in commerce, who cheat the customer in order to please their Employer; all political officers who perpetrate moral wrong to serve their Sovereign; all soldiers who sell their conscience to their General. The millions in almost every age are like "dumb, driven cattle," mere instruments of their masters; they will work in the most immoral trades, in the most diabolical professions, in the most infernal enterprises in order to please their masters, and to get gain.

CONCLUSION.—Here, then, we have a picture of the wicked world. Here are the three great classes of sinners, to one of which every sinner belongs.

No. CXXXVIII.

THE MORALLY WRONG EVER INEXPEDIENT.

(*Jesus is led away to be crucified—Jerusalem.*—MATT. xxvii. 31—34 ; MARK xv. 20—23 ; LUKE xxiii. 26, 33 ; JOHN xix. 16, 17.)

"Then delivered he Him therefore unto them to be crucified," &c.—xix. 16—18.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Ver. 16.—"*Then delivered he* (R. V. THEREFORE HE DELIVERED) *Him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led Him away*" (R. V. OMITTS THIS CLAUSE). It was not John's intention to give all the details of Christ's crucifixion. He only states those circumstances which the other three biographers have omitted, and thus fills up the narrative. Pilate, in now delivering up Christ, had ridded himself for a time of a difficulty that had been pressing heavily on his heart for

many anxious hours. But in doing this, what a crime he committed, and what immeasurable issues came therefrom! The Jews now had what in their intolerant malignity they had been hungering for, for many a long month, and what they had clamoured for with a vehemency of soul. They led Him as a "lamb to the slaughter." He seems to have made no resistance whatever.

Ver. 17.—"*And He bearing His cross* (R. V. WENT OUT BEARING THE CROSS FOR HIMSELF) *went forth into*

(R. V. UNTO THAT) a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew *Golgotha*." It was called the place of a skull, not because of the executions which took place there, but because of the rounded form and bare aspect of the hill. John does not say anything here of that which the other evangelists inform us, that a great crowd of women followed, and the tears of compassion which they wept at the tragic scene, nor does he say anything about Simon of Cyrene, in Lybia, who was compelled to bear the cross part of the way. "The cross had the form of a T. It was of no great height. The condemned man was raised to the desired elevation by means of cords (*in crucem tollere*), the hands were nailed to the transverse pieces of wood, either before or after he was raised. Keim quotes the following words from a Latin author: '*Patibulo sufficiens in crucem crudeliter erigitur*,' which show that the hands were usually

nailed before its erection to the top of the cross. That they might not be torn by the weight of the body, the latter rested on a block of wood, fastened to the shaft of the cross, and on which the prisoner sat as on horseback. There has been great discussion in modern times as to whether the feet were also nailed. The passages of the ancients quoted by Meyer (see in Matt. xxvii. 35) and Keim are decisive; they prove that, as a rule, the feet were nailed. Luke xxiv. 39 leads to the conclusion that it was so with Jesus. Sufferers lived usually on the cross for twelve hours, sometimes till the third day."—*Godet*.

Ver. 18.—"Where they crucified Him, and two other with Him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst." Why was this? Did the Jews demand that He should die in the midst of two malefactors, in order to enhance the ignominy, or did Pilate do it in order to humiliate them? Who knows?

HOMILETICS.

Our subject is *The Morally Wrong ever Inexpedient*. Here we have—

I.—A DIFFICULTY REMOVED, DESTINED TO APPEAR IN MORE TERRIBLE FORMS.

"Then delivered he Him therefore unto them to be crucified." In this, Pilate, I have no doubt, felt that he had got rid of a difficulty, that had weighed heavily upon him ever since Christ was brought under his notice. How to meet the claims of his Imperial Master, maintain his popularity with the Jewish people, and at the same time satisfy his own conscience, constituted a difficulty that had distracted him beyond measure. Now, handing Him over to the Jews, he would probably feel somewhat relieved, breathe freer, and have nothing more to do with this Jesus of Nazareth. Alas! Pilate, the difficulty is only temporarily shifted, and pushed for a moment out of sight, but not removed, or even lessened in bulk or hideousness, but otherwise becoming more huge and revolting. It only passed out of the region of immediate actuality, into the awful realm of moral memory, where it will appear and reappear in aspects of ever-increasing horror as ages roll on. Thus it is ever, no difficulty can be removed by outraging, or even ignoring the immutable principles of rectitude. Most men have certain difficulties pressing upon them. A desire to remove them is natural, but every effort will prove fruitless, unless accordant with

that everlasting law of Right, which binds the universe together, and on which the throne of the Almighty is settled.

One man has a *financial* difficulty; accumulated debts weigh him down, he knows not how to deliver himself from his embarrassments. He makes himself bankrupt, or forges a bill, and foolishly fancies that he has ridded himself of his difficulty. Not so. Another man has a *social* difficulty. By amorous impulses and reckless vows, he has committed himself to some one whom he comes to loathe as an intolerable infliction. In an evil moment, he does, what is being done almost every day,—uses the razor, or administers the poison, foolishly supposing that the difficulty is got rid of. But the old tormentor, though buried under the earth, is alive in memory to haunt him for ever. Another man has a *moral* difficulty; he is oppressed with the sense of his guilt, his conscience is a torment, he seeks to remove this difficulty by resorting to the inebriating cup, and revelling in scenes of gaiety and debauch. His moral nature gets benumbed, remorseful sensations are gone. But is his difficulty removed? No. That sleeping conscience shall break in thunder, and flash in flame. Believe me, there is no getting rid of any difficulty, by any effort, however skilful and earnest, in deviating one iota from the right. No means in such cases can sanctify the end, but frustrate the end and overwhelm with confusion the doer. Pilate, He Whom thou hast delivered up to the Jews must come back to thee! Here we have—

II.—A CONQUEST ACHIEVED WHICH MUST OVERWHELM THE
VICTORS IN ULTIMATE RUIN.

“*And they took Jesus, and led Him away.*” The Jews were now triumphant, they had gained what they had been seeking for many months. How earnestly they had wrought to “get a case against Him!” With lynx eyes they had watched Him, they had employed spies and suborned witnesses. At last they had gained the day. He was in their ruthless hands, and law was on their side. The cross on which He was to be executed was on His shoulders, and Golgotha was in sight. With what fiendish exultation they wended their steps onward to the scene of torture and death. But of what worth to them was this conquest? How transient their exultations! Their very conquest would rebound on their own heads and overwhelm them with ruin.

Even in this life they felt the *temporal* rebound. A very few years on, not more than forty, and the Roman battalions led on by Titus and Vespasian would ravage their country, flood their city with human blood, set their temple in flames, break up their commonwealth, and scatter their survivors as vagrants over the face of the earth. Truly the “triumphing of the wicked is short.” History abounds with instances of conquests reversed, and

conquerors conquered. "He that taketh the sword shall perish by the sword." In modern times the anti-slavery reformer in South America is a remarkable illustration. The slaveholders martyred that noble man, John Brown, thereby foolishly imagining that they had dealt an effective blow against all slave-liberating forces in the United States. But in the course of one brief year or two, that hellish deed rebounded on their own heads. The whole slaveholding system was shivered to atoms, and every bondman was made free. The principle is this, that whatever is wrongfully achieved must lead to ruin. A man struggles for a fortune, he achieves it, but how? Struggles for senatorial, or perhaps regal power. He gains it, but how? The *how* is the question. All the produce of human labour, however valuable and magnificent, if unrighteously obtained, the justice of the universe turns into stone that will grind the possessors into powder. Here we have—

III.—AGONIES ENDURED, TENDING TO IMMEASURABLE GOOD.

"*And He bearing His cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha, where they crucified Him.*" Who shall depict the agonies of the crucifixion! All nature seemed to groan in sympathy with the mysterious Sufferer. The heavens darkened at high noon, the solid rocks rent asunder, the buried dead started to life. But the good issuing from all this anguish will brighten the universe with joy, and fill the ages with rapture. "Worthy the Lamb that was slain."

All the streams of happiness that flow through human souls, quickening them into life, and clothing them with beauty, issue from the deep, dark fountain of the Redeemer's anguish. "These are they that have come out of great tribulation, but have had their robes washed," &c. &c.

In truth, no man can really be happy without enduring personal sufferings of some kind or other. But they must be endured in the spirit of the Cross. Trials tune our hearts to music, tribulation fits us for the skies. "Our light afflictions which are but for a moment," &c.

"Oh, let me suffer, till I know
 The good that cometh from the pain,
 Like seeds beneath the wintry snow,
 That wave in flowers and golden grain.
 Oh, let me suffer, till I find
 What plants of sorrow can impart,
 Some gift, some triumph of the mind,
 Some flower, some fruitage of the heart.
 The hour of anguish passes by ;
 But, in the spirit there remains
 The outgrowth of its agony,
 The compensation of its pains.

In meekness, which suspects no wrong,
 In patience, which endures control,
 In faith, which makes the spirit strong,
 In peace and purity of soul."—*Thomas C. Upham.*

Here we have—

IV.—A SIMILARITY OF CIRCUMSTANCES, BUT CHARACTERS
 UNSPEAKABLY DIVERSE.

"*They crucified Him, and two other with Him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst.*" Here are three men condemned as criminals by their country, side by side, each nailed to a cross and enduring, apparently, the same kind of physical torture. They are enduring the most inglorious and excruciating death that the most malignant spirits could devise; their whole weight is suspended by rugged iron driven through the most exquisitely tender nerves of the system. There above the heads of a fiendly maddened crowd they hang in agony to die. There is a great *outward* similarity; they all appear to be dying the same kind of death. But how *different* are they in their *souls*! Each mind has a world of its own. He, Who is in the midst, in being and character, stands at an infinite distance from the other two. He is the God-Man. Invisible worlds pause and wonder at His sufferings, the material universe vibrates with His groans. Of those on His side, one of them is a stricken penitent, struggling his way up to a virtuous and a happy life in the future, and will soon be in the Paradise of the blest; the other is a hardened wretch, ripe for destruction, and will soon fall into the nethermost hell. Characters so diverse, where circumstances are so alike, should—(1.) Guard us from the error of making external circumstances the test by which to determine our spiritual position. And—(2.) Show us the native power of each soul over the external circumstances in which it is placed.

No. CXXXIX.

THE SUPERScription ON THE CROSS.

(*The Crucifixion.*—*Jerusalem.*—MATT. xxvii. 35—38; MARK xv. 24—28;
 LUKE xxiii. 33, 34; JOHN xix. 18—24.)

"And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross," &c.—xix. 19—22.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Ver. 19.—
 "And Pilate wrote a title, and put it
 on the cross. And the writing was
 (R. V. THERE WAS WRITTEN), *Jesus of
 Nazareth the King of the Jews.*" The
 "title" which John here tells us was
 placed over the Cross of Christ, was
 an inscription to give information of
 the crime for which the malefactor
 was sentenced. Matthew calls it the
 "accusation;" Mark and Luke the

"superscription;" but the word "title"
 or *τίτλος* was the customary term.
 Some suppose that the "title" which
 Pilate wrote was borne on the person
 of Christ on His way to execution,
 and then, when He was suspended,
 was fastened on the Cross.

Ver. 20.—"*This title then (R. V.
 THEREFORE) read many of the Jews:
 for the place where Jesus was crucified
 was nigh to the city: and it was*

written in Hebrew,"—that is, Syro-Chaldaic, the language of the country; "and Greek,"—the current language; "and Latin,"—the official language. "These were, then, the chief languages of the earth, and this secured that all spectators should be able to read it."—*Dr. Brown.*

Ver. 21.—"Then said the Chief Priests of the Jews (R. v. THEREFORE SAID) to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that He said, I am King of the Jews." This request of the Chief Priests shows that the superscription was odious to the Jews; they could not endure that the men of Jerusalem and Judæa should be

informed, as they looked upon the Sufferer on the Cross, that He was their King; and they virtually say to Pilate, do not let the people be informed that He was King, but that He merely pretended to be a King.

Ver. 22.—"Pilate answered, What I have written I have written." He had yielded already too much to them. By their importunity he had acted contrary to his conscience in pronouncing the sentence of death; but no longer would he be pliable, but inexorable, and with all the haughtiness of an imperious Roman he says, "What I have written I have written." Thus he wreaks on them his revenge.

HOMILETICS.

Our subject is *The Superscription on the Cross*. The incident under our notice presents several objects which deserve most thoughtful attention. Here is—

I.—A GLORIOUS FACT UNCONSCIOUSLY PUBLISHED TO THE WORLD.

The royalty of Christ is here proclaimed. He is a "King;" the "King of the Jews." This poor dying Man on the Cross, this Jesus of Nazareth, is a Royal Personage. This is one of the most glorious truths in the Bible of God; He is "King of kings, and Lord of lords." All worlds, systems, beings, and forces, are under His almighty sway. Pilate did not mean this, did not believe that there was even any political royalty about Christ. On the contrary, he writes,—"*King of the Jews*" in sarcasm and scorn, to wound the pride of the Jewish people, especially the ecclesiastics. How often men, even worthless men, unconsciously utter the highest truths! Some event strikes on the soul and brings out truths, as steel brings fire from the stricken flint. An old writer says, "The venerable eulogy and epitaph set upon our Saviour's Cross, proclaimed Him King of all religion, having reference to the Hebrews; of all wisdom to the Greeks; of all power to the Latins."

The universal spirit of Truth flows through all moral beings, and hence the utterances even of ungodly men may repay attention, inasmuch as in them some hidden truth may be discovered. What a wonderful subject for study is the human soul!

In this incident there is another fact that deserves attention, viz. :—

II.—A REVENGEFUL PASSION GRATIFYING ITSELF BY FRAUD.

The Jews, as the preceding verses show, had by their importunity urged Pilate to pronounce sentence of death upon One, Whom in

his conscience he regarded as innocent and just. This must have stung him with many a remorseful thought and ghastly foreboding. Now that it was over, revenge on his tempters breaks into passion. How does he gratify it? By writing such a falsehood that would strike torment into the instigators of his crime. He called Him "*King of the Jews.*" He did not believe He was "*King of the Jews,*" or King of any class, but he knew this would insult and degrade the Jews. Thus he sought revenge by fraud, and fraud, perhaps, is more frequently the instrument of revenge than violence.

No passion in the human breast is more malignant than revenge, more ravenous for satisfaction. Fraud, in the form of slander, chicanery, and poisonous innuendo, is, in these days, more the weapon of revenge than the pistol or the poignard. The revengeful man, though he does not carry with him the stiletto as in days gone by, and in other lands, carries with him the lying tongue and the libellous lip.

Another fact in this incident that deserves attention is—

III.—A WICKED TRANSACTION BRINGING ITS OWN PUNISHMENT.

These Chief Priests, who sought an alteration in the superscription, were guilty of the greatest wickedness in causing the death of the Son of God. They crucified the Prince of Life, and no sooner was the act accomplished than punishment, to some extent, overtakes them. What a poignant sense of humiliation these proud ecclesiastics must have experienced, when they saw written over the cross of a malefactor, exposed in the most public position, for men of every language to read, that this was the "*King of the Jews!*" "We, the descendants of the illustrious patriarchs, over whose sires the greatest monarchs of the world swayed their sceptres, to be represented as having been ruled by a malefactor!" How intolerable the insult! How bitterly, too, would they feel the haughty reply of Pilate to their request, "*What I have written I have written.*" As if he had said, "I have been pliable towards you in working out your malignant designs, but now I am inexorable. Say no more to me, I scorn you." Thus a small instalment of their retribution came at once.

Evermore sin brings with it its own punishment. "Be sure your sin will find you out." The other fact in this incident that deserves attention is—

IV.—A MORAL OBLIQUITY WHICH ESTIMATES WHAT IS TRULY GLORIOUS A DISGRACE.

These Chief Priests felt themselves disgraced and degraded by this superscription, but had they seen things in a right light they would have gloried in it. That Malefactor was "the glory of His people Israel." As a Sage, a Saint, a Hero, a King, there never

had been in all Israel, and never would be again, any approaching Him. Instead of feeling themselves humiliated, they should have felt exalted. Depraved men are, alas, ever acting thus; ever estimating the most glorious realities as worthless and contemptible; and the reverse. Sinners see degradation where there is nobility, shame where there is glory, worthlessness where there is value; and the reverse. If men saw things as they are, they would often see pauperism in mansions, affluence in huts, ignominy on thrones, and royalty in the beggar's cot.

No. CXL.

ONE EVENT WITH MANY REVELATIONS.

"Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments," &c.
xix. 23, 24.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Ver. 23.—*"Then the soldiers* (R. V. THE SOLDIERS THEREFORE), *when they had crucified Jesus.*" Chronologically this passage ought to have succeeded verse 30, inasmuch as the account of His crucifixion follows. *"The soldiers."* These were the executioners of Pilate's sentence, who acted no doubt under the command of the Centurion. Mere hirelings, they were to perpetrate crimes which their masters had planned. *"Took His garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part."* John was an eye-witness of the scene, and no doubt describes it

with literal accuracy. It would seem that by the Roman law the "garments" of the executed malefactor were allowed as perquisites to the executioner. The term "garments" describes the outer loose garment or cloak worn in the East. "It is a long piece of cloth thrown round his shoulders, sometimes fastened at the neck, and used also as a covering for the night. Here it is spoken of in the plural as we speak of one's robes for robe."* It has been remarked that "between this full statement of John and the briefer one of Mark, there is variation but no contradic-

* *Holy Coat of Trèves.*—This relic is alleged to have been the seamless coat of our Saviour, and to have been discovered in the fourth century by the Empress Helena (mother of Constantine the Great), and by her deposited at Trèves, at that time the capital of Belgic Gaul, and residence of later Roman Emperors. Concealed in a crypt, from the Normans, in the 9th century, it was re-discovered in 1196, and then exhibited; not exhibited again till 1512, when Leo X. appointed it to be exhibited once in every seven years. The Reformation and wars prevented the observance for some time, but the celebration was attended in 1810 by a concourse of 227,000 persons, and by a large number in 1844, when Archbishop Arnoldi announced a centenary jubilee. Not only were miraculous cures asserted to have been wrought by this relic, but this celebration is otherwise memorable for the reaction which it produced, leading to the secession of Johann Rouge, and the German Catholics from the Church of Rome. The dimensions given on an engraving published at Trèves, in 1844, are, from the extremity of each sleeve, 5 feet 5 inches; length, from collar to lowermost edge, 5 feet 2 inches. In parts it is tender or threadbare; and some stains upon it are reputed to be those of the Redeemer's blood. It is a loose garment, with wide sleeves, very simple in form, of coarse material, dark brown in colour, probably the result of age, and entirely without seam or decoration.

tion." Mark says, "They parted His garments, casting lots upon them what every man should take." Here the garments are viewed in a mass as being "*parted*," and as "*casting lots*" upon them. Whether the "*cast lots*" affected the whole, or only a part, is not said. Still less is there a contradiction of Matthew, who says they "*parted His garments, casting lots*." This only affirms that there was a casting lots, more or less in the process of division. These two statements are indefinite, but John's precise. "*Also His* (R. V. THE) *coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout*." This was the under-garment or vest, called the tunic. It was generally woven of linen or wool, like Aaron's vest, as described by Josephus. It was made of two pieces, a front and a back, with two sides open, fastened with clasps or laced with cords. *Webster* and *Wilkinson* regard it as a garment denoting considerable skill and labour, and fabricated by one or more of those women who ministered such things to Him (Luke viii. 3).

Ver. 24.—"*They said therefore among themselves* (R. V. ONE TO ANOTHER), *Let us not rend it, but*

cast lots for it, whose it shall be." Perhaps each man's name, token, or lot, was placed in some receiver, such as an urn, or a helmet, and the receiver was either to shake out the lot, or the lot was fortuitously drawn. "*That the Scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted My raiment* (R. V. GARMENT) *among them, and for* (R. V. UPON) *My vesture they did* (R. V. DID THEY) *cast lots*." "*Fulfilled*" here must mean one of two things; either that the passage quoted in the Psalms was an inspired prediction of this very event, or that it was a suggestion to the soldiers as to how they should divide the garments. There are many difficulties in the way of entertaining the former idea. (1.) There is no certain proof of any reference whatever to the history of Jesus of Nazareth, and (2.) Those Roman ruffians who seem to have uttered these words were not likely either to know or respect the Divine application. The probability is that the words had somehow got into the minds of these men, and that the dread transaction in which they were now engaged brought them up fresh to the memory.

HOMILETICS.

We have entitled our subject *One Event with Many Revelations*. This event reveals—

I.—THE SPOLIATION OF DEATH.

Christ is crucified. Death has completed its work. There was nothing more for it to do in His case. What had it done?

(1.) It had *not destroyed His existence*. He had gone in the full personality and plenitude of His powers to His God and our God.

(2.) It had *not destroyed His character*. Christ, during His stay on earth, like all men, had formed a moral character—a character, however, unlike that of ordinary men—Divinely perfect in all its elements and proportions. Death cannot rob us of our character. This indeed is the only property we have. We have formed it ourselves. It is our own production, and we have an absolute right over it. Death cannot deprive us of it. It is the only property we can carry with us out of this world, over the river, and into the *Æons* before us. What then does death take from us?

First: Our material *frames*. Here was Christ's body torn from

Him, the body through which He looked out at the universe, through which He received His sensations, and by which He delivered His sublime doctrines, and wrought His marvellous deeds. A precious thing to every man is this body, and yet death takes it from every man. However much we appreciate it, we must lose it. It must go back to the dust from which it came, and take its part in the sublime chemistry of nature. It takes from us—

Secondly: Our material *property*. The garments of Christ were His only *earthly* property, but of them He was stripped. No doubt He valued them, not merely on account of their utility, but on account of those hands of love and tenderness that had woven and presented them.

Such is the *spoliation of death*. "We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out." "Naked came we into the world, and naked must we return." All of the earth which men struggle for and gain, they must lose. This event reveals—

II.—THE DESECRATIONS OF AVARICE.

What avarice is displayed in the gambling of these Roman soldiers over the garments of the Son of God! If aught of this earth were sacred, the garments worn by the Son of God were; yet avarice seizes them, gambles over them, and turns them to its own sordid ends. Avarice has ever traded in the *sacred*, and does so now more than ever. It not only trades in coal, corn, metals, and manufactures, but in philanthropic and religious institutions. Preaching has become a trade; temples, houses of merchandise; charitable societies, organs of worldly greed. Avarice, perhaps, makes more money by trading in the Gospel, by preaching, printing, publishing, building, and by authorship, than any other commodity, &c. A thing this to be wept over by all thoughtful souls!

"Canst thou tell what is insatiable?
The greedy eye of avarice!
Were all the universe a loaded table,
It never, never could fill this!"

This event reveals—

III.—THE CULMINATION OF WICKEDNESS.

Here, in this scene, you see human wickedness ripened, crowned, and achieving all it could. Beyond this point it could not go.

Where can you see baser *ingratitude* than in putting to death One Who "went about doing good?" More outrageous *injustice* than in putting to death One "Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth?" More appalling *impiety* than in striking down God's own Son, the Prince of Life? More savage *malignity*

than in torturing One Who was exquisite in tenderness and overflowing with mercy for all? Truly the Crucifixion of Christ is sin's culmination. Wickedness could not go beyond it. In it, its tree is fully and completely developed, it is full of the poisonous fruits of retribution. And yet it is marvellous that the most consummate production of human wickedness should be made, by God, the instrument by which to banish it from the world. By the Cross of Christ the world is to be converted. Thus sin frustrates its own purpose and destroys its own existence. This event reveals—

IV.—THE REPETITIONS OF HISTORY.

“*That the Scripture might be fulfilled.*” It might be inferred from this, that concerning the conduct over the “*garments*” of Christ there had been similar transactions aforetime. History, it has been said, repeats itself; so it has ever done, so it does. The reasons are obvious—

First: That all men, of all climes and lands, are, in the main, actuated by the same class of motives. Another reason is—

Secondly: That similar circumstances will cause these motives to take similar forms. Hence no wonder that we run in circles, and “that which hath been is now,” and what is now will be again until the old class of motives becomes extinct. When the world's corrupt motives are consumed by the fire of Gospel Truth, then a new system of things will appear, “a new heaven, and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.”

No. CXLI.

A MANIFOLD REVELATION OF LOVE.

(*The Jews mock at Jesus on the Cross.—He commends His mother to John.—*
 MATT. xxvii. 39—44; MARK xv. 29—32; LUKE xxiii. 35—37; 39—43;
 JOHN xix. 25—27.)

“Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas,” &c.—xix. 25—27.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Ver. 25.—
Now there stood (R. V. BUT THERE WAS STANDING) *by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister.* This tenderly touching and suggestively significant incident in the biography of Christ is recorded only by John, the other evangelists take no note of it. The reason of this, perhaps, is that John alone was present on the occasion. “*Mary the wife of Cleophas* (R. V. CLOPAS), and *Mary Magdalene.*” “This Clopas is usually

identified with Alpheus (comp. Matt. x. 3; xxvii. 56). The question arises, Are there three or four women mentioned? *i. e.* is ‘*Mary the wife of Clopas*’ sister of Mary the mother of our Lord? or does St. John mean by ‘*His mother's sister,*’ an unnamed woman who may not improbably be his own mother, Salome, whom he nowhere mentions? The question cannot be answered with certainty, but, upon the whole, the balance of evidence inclines to the view that we

have four persons here mentioned in two pairs,—“His mother and His mother’s sister; Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. As early as the second century the Peshito-Syriac version adopted this view and inserted ‘and’ after the word sister.”—*Dr. Ellicott’s Commentary.*

Ver. 26.—“*When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple standing by, whom He loved.*” It is clear from chapter xiii. 23 that the disciple here referred to was John himself. “Now there was leaning on Jesus’ bosom one of the disciples whom Jesus loved.” “*He saith unto His mother, Woman, behold thy son!*” This “*woman*” was Mary, His mother; she was now standing by His Cross. Already her husband had departed,

and she was a widow, and now her Son was leaving the world. With tender compassion He directs her to John, who henceforth would care for her as a son.

Ver 27.—“*Then saith He to the disciple, Behold thy mother!*” This is addressed to John. He commends the dearest object of His heart, His mother, to that disciple whom He loved best of all. “*And from that hour that (R. V. THE) disciple took her unto his own home.*” Though he seems, from verse thirty-five, to have been at the Cross after the soldier had “pierced His side,” John probably took Mary away at once from the scene of agony, and left her somewhere near, in order that he might return to see the end of the tragedy.

HOMILETICS.

In these verses we have a *Manifold Revelation of Love*. We have here a revelation of Moral Heroism in love, Parental Distress in love, and Christian Obedience in love. Here we have—

I.—A REVELATION OF MORAL HEROISM IN LOVE.

The presence of the mother of Jesus, and the other women, together with John, now at the Cross, strikingly reveals the Heroism of Love. Scarcely could they have placed themselves in a more perilous position. To stand by One Whom the nation abhorred, and against Whom it was launching its fiercest thunders of indignation, displayed a grand invincibility of soul. *Love is the soul of courage.* On this earth there is no power for magnanimous endurance and fearless achievements, equal to calm, tender, womanly affection. Such love you can trust. The thing that is called love, which comes out in florid utterances, in spasmodic effort you cannot trust; it is all sound and show. It is the quiet love like that of contemplative John and of these unassuming women you can trust. Such love clings to its object as the ivy to the old castle; holds on to it midst the scorchings of summer and the blastings of winter; survives even the ruin of its object, and spreads a beauty over its grave. It is said that a woman has more nerve than a man; it is love that steels her nerves and makes her heroic in trial. The man with a giant frame, if he have not love in him, will be a moral coward. Love is the root of true heroism. Here we have—

II.—A REVELATION OF PARENTAL DISTRESS IN LOVE.

What must have been the feelings of Mary as she now witnessed the agonies of her wonderful Son! Now in her experience was

fulfilled the prophecy of old Simeon, who, when he took her child in his arms, said,—“This child is set for the rising of Israel; yea, and a sword shall pierce thine own heart.” There are few, if any, trials in life more poignant than the sufferings of an affectionate mother in the death-throes of her child. Rachels, the world over, weep for their children and refuse to be comforted.

But there are circumstances which sometimes mitigate the distress. Should, for instance, the child die in unconscious innocence, or should he be one of a large number of children, or should he gradually die in maturity amongst his friends, the distress would not approach in intensity the circumstances connected with Christ's death. Mary's Son was now in the prime of life; He was dying a violent death amongst malignant foes and by their hands. It is said of Socrates that he spent his last hours amongst his friends, and that even his executioner was touched with sympathy when he gave the fatal cup of hemlock into his hand. But Christ died amongst His enemies, and by their hand. Then, too, perhaps He was Mary's only Son; no one could take His place. Besides all this, her husband Joseph was sleeping in his grave. Truly here is parental distress in love. Love has its agonies. Here we have—

III.—A REVELATION OF FILIAL COMPASSION IN LOVE.

“*Woman, behold thy Son!*” As if Jesus had said, I am leaving the world, but John My beloved disciple will supply My place, he will be a son to thee. These words must have been as a gleam of unearthly sunshine to Mary, calming the fury of the tempest. From them we may infer four things—

First: That no sufferings, however great, can quench love. The sufferings of Christ at that moment in intensity and aggravation surpass all conception. Every nerve of His frame in torture, a mysterious load of sorrow on His heart, yet all this did not drown the memory of His Mother. Her uplifted, tearful, loving face met His eye and pierced His heart. He seemed to forget His sufferings in the tears of His mother. Children, learn a lesson from this! Plead no personal inconvenience as a reason for neglecting your parents. We infer from the words—

Secondly: That no engagements, however vast, can justify the neglect of domestic duties. How vast were Christ's engagements now! He was fighting the moral battles of the universe. Earth, heaven, and hell were interested in His position. It was “*the hour.*” A crisis in the history of moral creation. Notwithstanding this, He was alive to His domestic duties. He attended to the needs of His aged mother. Let none plead—statesmen, ministers, or reformers—the vastness of their engagements as a justification for neglecting home duties. We infer from the words—

Thirdly: That no legacy, however precious, is equal to the

Legacy of Love. Christ could have made His mother the mistress of an empire; but He bequeathed to her what was better—Love; the affection of a noble and a loving soul. What is equal to this? Give me cities, empires, continents: what are they compared to the friendship of one loving soul? We infer from the words—

Fourthly: That no argument, however plausible, can justify us in regarding Mary as an object of worship. The mothers of Paul and Luther, or of any great men, I hold in high veneration. Albeit, ought I to regard this poor destitute, desolate woman whom Jesus commended to the care of John as the Queen of Heaven? Here we have—

IV.—A REVELATION OF CHRISTIAN OBEDIENCE IN LOVE.

“*From that hour that disciple took her to his own home.*” Tradition says that John never forsook the dear trust which his dying Saviour had bequeathed to him, and that he never went beyond the borders of Palestine until the mother of his dying Lord had breathed her last. His obedience was prompt and full. “*From that hour.*” He felt the sanctity of the dying request.

There are only three admissible reasons supposable for not attending at once and fully to Christ’s commands, as John did now. (1.) If the command is found to be inconsistent with the eternal principles of right. Or (2.) If there are such difficulties in the way of obedience which procrastination is certain to remove. Or (3.) If there is good ground to expect an amount of help in the future which is not obtainable now. Such reasons, though admissible, do not exist, and therefore, like John, we should at once commence obedience.

No. CXLII.

THE MODEL DEATH.

(*Darkness prevails.—Jesus expires on the Cross.—Jerusalem.*—MATT. xxvii. 45—50; MARK xv. 33—37; LUKE xxiii. 44—46; JOHN xix. 28—30.)

“After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished,” &c.—xix. 28—30.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Ver. 28.—“*After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished* (R. V. FINISHED), *that the Scripture might be fulfilled*” (R. V. ACCOMPLISHED). It would seem that Christ had a programme of His life; understood it well; knew the last item; and now He was conscious that He had fully realized it. There is a Divine programme for every life, but Christ, of all the men that ever lived, knew of that programme, and none but He

have ever filled it up—fully “*accomplished*” it. “*I thirst.*” He had refused the usual stupefying draught at Crucifixion (Matt. xxvii. 34—38). Now that all is finished He seeks relief for His thirst.

Ver. 29.—“*Now there was set* (R. V. THERE WAS SET THERE) *a vessel full of vinegar.*” “This vessel of the ordinary sour wine drunk by the Roman soldiers was placed near, in order to be given to those who were crucified. Thirst was always an ac-

companiment of death by crucifixion, and that the vessel of wine was prepared for this purpose, is made probable by the mention of the sponge and hyssop." "They filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it (R. V. SO THEY PUT A SPONGE FULL OF THE VINEGAR) upon hyssop, and put (R. V. BROUGHT) it to his mouth." "This detail is peculiar to St John. *Bochant* thinks that the plant was marjoram, or some plant like it, and he is borne out by ancient tradition. The stalks, from a foot to a foot and a half high, would be sufficient to reach to the Cross. The plant is named in another passage of the New Testament (Heb. ix. 29), and is frequent in the Greek of the Old Testament. The Hebrew word is *ezau*, and the identification must always be uncertain, because we cannot know whether the Greek translation is based upon an identification of the plant, or upon a similarity in the

sound of the names."—*Bishop Ellicott's Commentary.*

Ver. 30.—"When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, He said, It is finished: and He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost" (R. V. HIS SPIRIT). "The order of the seven words of the cross will be—(1.) 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.' (Luke xxiii. 34.) (2.) 'Verily I say unto thee, this day shalt thou be with Me in paradise.' (Luke xxiii. 43.) (3.) 'Woman, behold thy Son.' (John xix. 26.) (4.) 'Eli, Eli, Lama Sabachthani?' (Matt. xxvii. 46; Mark xv. 34.) (5.) 'I thirst.' (Ver. 28.) (6.) 'It is finished.' (Ver. 29.) (7.) 'Into Thy hands I commend My spirit.' (Luke xxiii. 46.)"—(*Ibid.*) "It is remarkable," says *Dr. Brown*, "that while we have this glorious saying only in the fourth Gospel, we have the manner in which it is uttered in the first three and not in the fourth."

HOMILETICS.

Though all men must die, all do not die in the same way. Over the *fact* of death man has no control, die he must; but over the *mode* of dying he has power. Man's life shapes his death. Hence he may die virtuously or wickedly, nobly or ignobly, happily or miserably.

In these verses we have the *Model Death*. Four things are to be noticed in this, the end of our Saviour's life—

I.—LIFE ENDING WITH A CONSCIOUSNESS OF HAVING REALIZED ITS MISSION.

"After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, . . . said, It is finished."

(1.) All life has a mission. The most insignificant ephemera is not made in vain, but has some part to play in the great drama of being. To every man that appears on the stage of life there is a Divinely allotted work, something that he has himself to accomplish. (2.) The form in which the mission is wrought out differs with different men. (*a.*) No two men have exactly the same class of *faculties*. Some are distinguished by the imaginative, some by the metaphysical, and some by the logical faculty, &c. They cannot do the same kind of work, or in the same manner. (*b.*) No two men are under exactly the same class of *circumstances*. Hence the needs, motives, and opportunities of work will be necessarily varied to some extent. (3.) The accomplishment of the mission is not in

the kind or amount of work done, but in the *spirit* which inspires and guides it. Hence two men may perform a work, identical in *appearance* but different in *essence*,—essentially distinct. In the one case the life of the man shall be accomplished, "*finished*;" in the other it will be a miserable failure. All depends on the spirit.

Now Christ's work was *peculiar* to Himself; His faculties were peculiar to Himself. The conditions under which He had worked those faculties were peculiar, consequently His mission in form varied from that of any other man. What was the work given Him to do? Who knows all? None but Himself. We shall only mention two things which we can anyhow partially comprehend.

First: He had to work out a *moral character* which imperatively demands the *imitation* of mankind. Man's destiny depends upon his character; out of it blooms his Paradise or flames his hell. Moral character is evermore formed on the principle of imitation. But mankind never had a character worthy of *complete* imitation, and therefore demanding it, until Christ gave it. Every man now looking at the character which Christ wrought out, is bound to feel that in it his highest ideal is realized, and that in conformity to it, his highest happiness is secured. When He said, "*It is finished*," He had rounded, completed, and burnished a moral character, that must command the admiration of ages, and by which all men's destinies must ultimately be determined.

Secondly: He had to demonstrate a *Divine love* that would bring the *heart* of mankind into sympathy with God. Men, the world over, are morally estranged from their Maker; this estrangement is at once their sin and their ruin. How is this estrangement to be overcome? Only in *one* way, and that is by convincing men that the God Whom they hate, loves them with a deep, tender, incomparable love. This Christ *demonstrated* on the Cross, and belief in this is that which will "draw all men unto Him;" hence "God is in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself."

This is the work, then, that Christ accomplished which we can understand. When we are told by theology that His work was to appease the wrath of God, to render it possible for the Almighty to pardon, and that He suffered as a Legal Substitute for the sins of men, we can only say we cannot understand this, and what we cannot understand we had better not talk about. Notice here—

II.—LIFE ENDING CALMLY IN THE MIDST OF PHYSICAL TORTURES.

"*I thirst.*" This is the cry of anguish, poignant, deep, inexplicable. "Thirst is a deeper suffering than hunger. After the bloody sweat of Gethsemane, the sleepless night of His trial, the scourgings, the loss of blood, and the unknown mental agonies, the fluids of His system became exhausted." But notwithstanding this how sublimely calm He is in soul! "*He bowed His head, and*

gave up the ghost." That such a life should end in such suffering is—

First: A distracting perplexity. Antecedently one might have thought that in proportion to the perfect excellence of character, and usefulness of life, would be the painlessness and calmness of the end; that every signally good man would be, if not translated like Enoch, freed from all the pains attendant on dissolution. But here we find the best Man that ever lived, dying in the midst of physical sufferings. That such a life should end in such suffering is—

Secondly: A Christian encouragement. Who has not had friends and dear relatives whose dying agonies have racked the heart? But inasmuch as Christ endured the same, they are no indications of moral delinquencies. Nor when our end comes, if it be given to us to endure great suffering, let us conclude that we are not approved of Heaven. "What son is he whom the father chasteneth not?" But in the midst of all may we be blest with that calmness of soul, that repose in God, which our Great Example now manifested when "*He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost!*" Notice here—

III.—LIFE ENDING IN A SURRENDERING OF THE SPIRIT TO THE FATHER.

"*He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost,*"—Spirit. This utterance throws light on three things.

First: On the nature of His existence. "*He gave up the ghost.*" The language indicates that—(1.) He had a Spirit independent of His body. In this respect He resembled all men. (2.) His Spirit would survive the body. The body was all but extinct, the last spark was all but gone out, but He felt that His Spirit would live. (3.) His Spirit was destined for the Eternal. The body "must return to dust, but the soul to God Who gave it." "Into Thy hands I commit My spirit." The words throw light—

Secondly: On the voluntariness of His death. "*He gave up.*" The spirit was not wrested from Him, it was not snatched away by force, He *gave* it up. He had "power to lay down" His life and power to "take it up." The words throw light—

Thirdly: On His confidence in God. What unbounded confidence do these words express! (1.) Confidence in His *Presence*. He feels that God is near Him, in immediate contact with Him—so close that He could put His Spirit at once into His hands. (2.) Confidence in His *Power*. He feels that He has that Almighty capacity necessary to guide, to guard, and bless His immortal spirit through all the future of its wondrous history. (3.) Confidence in His *Love*. His trust in His Fatherly affection is as strong as His trust in Almighty power. Hence He yields Himself into His hands. In His death He makes the Eternal the Trustee of that which is

of infinitely more value than worlds and systems—Himself. Such confidence as this in God is the characteristic of the highest piety, and the philosophy of an easy death. Piety is this self-dedication to God, not in death only, but in life as well; and when this is done in life, there will be a calm and triumphant death.

No. CXLIII.

A FRAGMENT OF A WONDERFUL HISTORY.

(*The taking down from the Cross.—The Burial.—Jerusalem.—*MATT. xxvii. 57—61; MARK xv. 42—47; LUKE xxiii. 50—56; JOHN xix. 31—42.)

“The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath day,” &c.—xix. 31—37.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Ver. 31.

—“*The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath day*” (R. V. SABBATH). The day of the crucifixion is described by all four evangelists as “*the preparation*,”—that is, as we imagine, the preparation for the passover. In John xix. 14, it is so represented. By the Jews here, we are to understand the rulers of the Jews. The passover was on the Saturday, which was the Sabbath of the Jews, and Christ was crucified on the Friday. “*For that* (R. V. FOR THE DAY OF THAT) *Sabbath day was a high day.*” The Sabbath was now dawning, and it was a “*high day.*” It was the first Sabbath of the feast of the unleavened bread, the most sacred season in the whole of the Jewish year. The Mosaic law required that the body of one hanging on a tree, for any sin worthy of death, should not remain all night on the tree, but should be buried that night, “*for he that is hanging shall be moved, that thy land be not defiled*” (Deut. xxxi. 21—23). These hypocrites who, in crucifying Christ, perpetrated the greatest crime on which the sun ever shone, were afraid of ceremonial defilement. “*Besought* (R. V. ASKED OF) *Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.*” “The breaking of the legs by means of clubs was a Roman punishment, known by the name of crucifragium, which sometimes accompanied crucifixion, and appears also to have been used as a separate

punishment. It is not otherwise clear that its purpose was, or that its effect would be, to cause death, but this is the impression we derive from the present context” (verse 33).

Ver. 32.—“*Then came the soldiers* (R. V. THE SOLDIERS THEREFORE), *and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with Him.*” This act of barbaric atrocity was usually done with clubs or iron mallets. Crucifixion was a very lingering death, and this act was employed to hasten it.

Ver. 33.—“*But when they came to Jesus, and saw that He was dead already, they brake not His legs.*” He seems to have died sooner than the rest. “There were,” says *Dr. Brown*, “in His case elements of suffering unknown to the malefactors, which would naturally hasten His death, not to speak of His exhaustion from previous care and suffering, all the more telling on the frame now from its having been endured in silence. ‘*They brake not His legs.*’ This is a fact of vast importance, as showing that the reality of His death was visible to those whose business it was to see to it.”

Ver. 34.—“*But* (R. V. HOWBEIT) *one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side.*” It does not appear that they pierced the sides of either of the other two malefactors. In Christ’s case, probably, they did it to make sure of His death. Medical science has attested that He could not have lived after this piercing. “*And forthwith* (R. V. STRAIGHTWAY) *came*

thereout blood and water." There does not seem to be anything miraculous in this, for physiology teaches that this was the lymph of the pericardium, or the watery blood of the pleura which follows a mortal wound. "The infliction of this death-wound," says a modern expositor, "was an important point of evidence for all time as to Christ's death and resurrection. There were those in this apostle's time who held that Jesus was only an apparition, and had not a real body. This testimony may have been intended also for them."

Ver. 35.—"And he that saw (R. V. HATH SEEN) *it bare record* (R. V. HATH BORNE WITNESS), and his record (R. V. WITNESS) *is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might* (R. V. YE ALSO MAY) *believe.*" "This solemn way," says *Alford*, "of referring to his own testimony in this matter was at least intended to call attention both to the fulfilment of Scripture in these

particulars and to the undeniable evidence he was thus furnishing of the reality of Christ's death, and consequently of His resurrection; perhaps also to meet the growing tendency in the Asiatic Churches to deny the reality of our Lord's body, or that 'Jesus Christ is come in the flesh.'" (1 John iv. 1—3.)

Vers. 36, 37.—"For these things were done (R. V. CAME TO PASS), that the Scripture should be fulfilled, *A bone of Him shall not be broken.*" "The Israelites ate the paschal lamb in haste as if on a journey, and, therefore, broke not its bones. The evangelist quotes the Scripture as illustrative of the fact that the bones of Jesus were not broken. (Ex. xii. 46; Num. ix. 12.)" "And again another Scripture saith, *They shall look on Him whom they pierced.*" "Another quotation after the same method of accommodation. (Zech. xii. 10.)"—*Livermore.*

HOMILETICS.

There are three subjects suggested by this startling *Fragment of a Wonderful History*.

I.—THE IMMORALITY OF TECHNICAL SAINTHOOD.

The Jews here, the members of the Sanhedrim, were, in a conventional and ceremonial sense, very great saints: such they esteemed themselves and felt themselves to be. They were strict in all religious observances, and in their charitable distributions,—they gave alms to the poor, &c. Referring to the mere *letter* of duty they could say with the young lawyer who sought Christ, "All these things have I kept from my youth up." Verily, great Saints were these men! They lived in their doctrines and their ritualities. Albeit they were utterly destitute of genuine morality; they would lie and cheat, rife their fellow-men of their rights, devour widows' houses, and, in heart, utterly disregard every precept of the moral decalogue.

It has ever been so. There is a close connection between a mere technical sainthood and an immoral life, hence inquisitions and persecutions. Even Calvin could murder Servetus. There is a pietism that eats out the heart of humanity, and turns men into bigots and persecutors. Show me the man who regards himself as a saint above the rest, and you will show me a man whose morality I could not trust. "Many will say to Me on that

day, have we not prophesied in Thy name, and done many wonderful works?" &c. Another subject here presented is—

II.—THE SERVILITY OF STATE HIRELINGS.

Those soldiers who nailed the Son of God to the cross, and now plunged the spear into His side, had sold themselves to the State. Like all soldiers they had sold their whole individuality, and given up their will and independency to their employers. They had no higher idea of duty than to obey their masters. The spirit of true manhood was extinct within them; they became machines, nothing more,—machines to plunder and to kill. Alas! how are we fallen! "The crown is fallen from our head," &c. The spirit of servility is the disgrace of humanity and the curse of nations. In proportion to the servile spirit of a people is the strength of tyranny amongst them, and their utter inability to break their fetters and become free. Fawning sycophancy paralyzes true patriotism. Ah me! how rampant is this even in our England! It steams everywhere and fills our social atmosphere with an aroma abhorrent to all honest souls. Another subject presented is—

III.—THE CERTITUDE OF THE GREATEST FACT.

"*And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe.*" Observe—

First: The greatest fact in history is the death of Christ. To it all past events pointed, and from it all future take their rise and have their date. It is the supreme epoch in the world's history. It has created moral influences in the world, whose rivers multiply, widen, and deepen every day. It will become "a sea of glory, and spread from pole to pole." Observe—

Secondly: The most competent witness of that fact was John. "*His record is true.*" No one amongst men was—(1.) More *intellectually* competent. No one was so much with Christ, no one was so intimately acquainted with Him. No one was—(2.) More *morally* competent. He was incorruptibly honest and incontrovertibly disinterested. Another subject presented is—

IV.—THE PHILOSOPHY OF EVANGELICAL PENITENCE.

"*And again another Scripture saith, They shall look on Him Whom they pierced.*" There is here a reference to a passage in Zechariah xii. 10, which reads thus: "They shall look upon Him whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him." If John had finished the quotation, the idea of penitence would have been the point of his reference. He who looks with the eye of faith on Christ upon the Cross, as the demonstration of human wickedness, and the mighty expression of God's compassion for sinners, is in a way to have his heart broken with contrition on account of his sins.

Professor Plumtre's Explanatory Notes on

THE CRUCIFIXION OF OUR LORD.

As given by Rev. F. Watkin, M.A.

(1.) The narratives of the First Three Gospels, and that of the Fourth agree in the statement that on the night that immediately preceded the betrayal or the Crucifixion of our Lord, He and His disciples met together at a supper. As to what that supper was, they seem at first to differ. The first Three agree in speaking of it as the first day (Matthew and Mark), or *the day* (Luke) of the feast, known as that of unleavened bread, the day when "the Passover must be slain" (Mark, Luke). The disciples ask where they are to prepare the Passover. They are sent to the owner of the upper room, where they are met with the message that their Lord purposes to eat the Passover there. When they arrived they "made ready the Passover" (Matthew, Mark, Luke). As they begin, He tells them that He has eagerly desired to eat that Passover with them before He suffered (Luke xxii. 15). At a certain stage of the meal, which corresponded with the later ritual of the Paschal Supper, He commands them to see in the bread and the cup which He then blessed, the memorial feast of the New Covenant. The impression, *primâ facie*, left by all the Three, is that our Lord and His disciples partook, at the usual time, of the Paschal Supper. In St. John, on the other hand, there is no record of the institution of this memorial feast. The supper is introduced as "before the feast of the Passover" (John xiii. 1). When Judas leaves the room the other disciples think that he is sent to buy what is needed for the feast (John xii. 29). When the priests are before Pilate they shrink from entering into the Prætorium, lest they should be defiled, and so be unable to eat the Passover (John xviii. 28). The impression, *primâ facie*, left by St. John's Gospel is, that our Lord's death coincided with the sacrifice of the Paschal lamb; that left by the Three is that the Paschal lamb had been sacrificed the previous evening.

(2.) The difference has been regarded by many critics as altogether irreconcilable, and conclusions have been drawn from it unfavourable to the authority of one or both the narratives. Those who look on the Gospel of St. John as the work of a writer of the second century, see in this discrepancy a desire to give a sanction to the local usage of the Church of Ephesus, or to force upon his readers, as in his relation of "a bone of Him shall not be broken" (John xix. 36), the correspondence between the Passover and the death of Christ. Those who accept the Gospel as St. John's, wholly or in part, see in his narrative a correction, designed or undesigned, of the narrative of the Three, and look on that narrative accordingly as more or less untrustworthy. Some even of those who shrink from these conclusions have been content to rest in the conviction that we have no adequate *data* for the solution of the problem. Some minor difficulties gather round the main question. It was not likely, it has been urged, that on the very night of the Passover the high priests should have taken the counsel and the action that led to the capture in Gethsemane; nor that on the day that followed, "a day of holy convocation" (Ex. xii. 16), they should have sat in judgment and appeared as accusers before Pilate and Herod; nor that Simon of Cyrene should have come from the country (Mark xv. 21); nor that Judas should be supposed to have been sent, if it were the Paschal Supper, to make purchases of any kind—as if the shops in Jerusalem would on such a night be open (John xiii. 29).

The day of the crucifixion is described by all four Evangelists, as "the preparation," which, it is assumed, must mean "the preparation for the Passover." In St. John (xix. 14) it is definitely spoken of as "the preparation of the Passover."

(3.) Some solutions of the problem, which rest on insufficient evidence, may

be briefly noticed and dismissed. (a.) It has been supposed that our Lord purposely anticipated the legal Paschal Supper, and that the words, "With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer" (Luke xxii. 15), were an intimation of that purpose. Against this, however, there is the fact that the disciples, who could have no such anticipatory purpose, ask the question where they are to prepare, and then actually prepare the Passover as a thing of course, and that the Three Gospels, as we have seen, all speak of the Last Supper as being actually on the first day of the feast of unleavened bread, which is the Passover. (b.) It has been conjectured that the Galilean usage as to the Passover may have varied from that of Judæa; but of this there is not the shadow of evidence; nor is it likely that the priests, who had to take part in the slaying of the Paschal lambs, would have acquiesced in what would seem to them a glaring violation of their ritual. (c.) Stress has been laid on the fact that in the later ritual of the Passover week a solemn meal was eaten on the day that followed the sacrifice of the Paschal lamb, which was known as the *Chagigah* (festivity, or festive meal). This also was a feast upon flesh that had been offered in sacrifice; and it has been thought by some who seek to reconcile the four narratives, that this was the feast for which Judas was supposed to be ordered to make provision, that this was "the Passover," the prospect of which led the high priests to keep clear of entering under the roof of the Prætorium. In many ways this seems, at first, an adequate solution of the difficulty; but there is no evidence that the term, "the Passover," which had such a strictly definite significance, was ever extended to include this subordinate festivity.

(4.) It remains to examine the narrative somewhat more closely, and with an effort to realize, as well as we can, the progress of the events which they narrate. As a preliminary stage in the inquiry, we may note two or three facts which cannot well be excluded from consideration. (a.) The narrative of the first Three Gospels, probably independent of each other, represents on any assumption, the wide-spread tradition of the Churches of Judæa, of Syria, and of Asia; of St. Matthew, St. Peter, and St. Paul. It is antecedently improbable that that tradition could have been wrong in so material a fact. (b.) The Fourth Gospel, whether by St. John or a later writer, must, on any assumption, have been written when that tradition had obtained possession of well-nigh all the Churches. It is antecedently improbable either that such a writer should contradict the tradition without knowing that he did so, or that, if he knew it, he should do so silently and without stating that his version of the facts was more accurate than that commonly received. It is at least a probable explanation of his omitting to narrate the institution of the Lord's Supper, that the record of that institution was recited whenever the disciples met to break bread at Ephesus as elsewhere (1 Cor. xi. 23—26); and that he felt, therefore, that it was better to record what others had left untold than to repeat that with which men were already familiar. If he was not conscious of any contradiction, then his mode of narrating, simply and without emphasis, noting facts as they occurred, was natural enough.

(5.) It remains to be seen whether there is, after all, any real discrepancy. Let us picture to ourselves, assuming for a time that the Last Supper was the Paschal meal, what was passing in Jerusalem on the afternoon of that 14th of Nisan. The Passover lamb was, according to the law (Ex. xii. 6; Lev. xxiii. 5; Num. ix. 3, 5) to be slain "between the two evenings." The meaning of the formula is not certain. If, some have supposed, it meant between the evening of the 14th and that of the 15th of Nisan, it gives a space of twenty-four hours within which the lamb might be slain and eaten, and then the whole apparent contradiction between the two narratives disappears. It was open to the disciples to eat their Passover on the 14th of Nisan; to the priests to eat theirs on the 15th. The occurrence, however, of the same expression in the rules as to the daily evening sacrifice (Ex. xxix. 39, 41; Num. xxviii.

4), excludes this interpretation; and it seems more probable that it covered the period that preceded and followed the setting of the sun. (Comp. Deut. vi. 2.) Looking to the prominence given to the ninth hour (3 P.M.) by the connection with the evening sacrifice and prayer (Acts iii. 1), it would be probable enough that the slaughter of the Paschal lambs would begin at that hour; and this conclusion is expressly confirmed by Josephus, who states that they were slain from the ninth to the eleventh hour, *i. e.* from 3 to 5 P.M. ("Wars," vi. 9, 3). It is clear, however, that the process would take up the whole of the time, and would tend to stretch beyond it. Josephus (*ut supra*) reckons the number of lambs that had to be sacrificed at 270,000. Some were certain to begin their Paschal meal two hours before the others.

(6.) Everything indicates that the disciples were among the earliest applicants for the priests' assistance. The Galileans abstained from work, as a rule, on the feast-day more rigidly than the dwellers in Judæa, and this would naturally lead to their making their preparations early. Peter and John are accordingly sent to prepare "when the day came." They get the room ready. They hasten, we may believe, to the Court of the Temple with the lamb. They sit down to their meal "at evening," *i. e.* about sunset, or 6 P.M. (Matt. xxvi. 20; Mark xiv. 27; Luke xxii. 14). It was in the nature of the case certain that the priests would be the last to leave the courts of the Temple, where they had to wait till the last lamb was offered, to burn the fat and offer incense, and cleanse the Temple, and purify themselves by immersion from the blood of the sacrifices; and that their Paschal meal would therefore be the latest at Jerusalem. They could scarcely expect in any case to eat their Passover before 9 or 10 P.M.

Now let us turn to the upper room, in which our Lord and His disciples were assembled. At a comparatively early stage of the meal, before the fourth, or possibly before the third, of the four cups of wine which belonged to the ritual of the feast, Judas leaves to do his traitor's work. He has reason to believe that his Master will go out that evening, as was His wont, to Gethsemane. He goes at once to the priests, say about 8 or 9 P.M., with the welcome tidings. The urgency of the case, the sacred duty of checking the false and blasphemous Prophet Who called Himself the Son of God, the urgency of the policy which sought to prevent the tumult which might have been caused by an arrest in the day-time, are all reasons for immediate action. *The Paschal meal is postponed.* They will be able, by-and-by, to comply with the rule that it must be consumed before the morning (Ex. xii. 10). The guards are summoned and sent on their errand, as they had been once before on the "great day" of the Feast of Tabernacles (John vii. 37—45). Messages are despatched to all the members of the Sanhedrim (or at least a sufficient number for that purpose) to the hurried meeting, which was held before dawn. Assume these facts, and all runs smoothly. When Judas leaves, the disciples, looking forward to the usual festive *Chagigah* on the following day, the *feast*, as distinct from the *Passover*, suppose that he is gone to prepare for that; and there is no ground for thinking that at that hour the markets would be shut; or that lambs, and bread and wine might not be purchased, or at least ordered, for the following day. When the priests, on the other hand, refused to enter into the Prætorium, "lest they should be defiled," it was because they, and they alone, perhaps, in all Jerusalem, had still to eat the Passover, which had been eaten by others on the previous evening. Had their meal been due on the evening that followed the Crucifixion their scruples would have been needless. They had but to wash and wait until sunset, and they would have been purified from all defilement. With them the case was more urgent. Probably even the pressure of hunger made them anxious to finish the untasted meal of the previous evening. It was then "early," say about 4 or 5 A.M. When Pilate gave his sentence it was "about the sixth hour," *i. e.* assuming St. John to use the Roman reckoning of the hours, 6 A.M. Then their work was done. As soon as they had left the

matter in Pilate's hands they *could eat their Passover*, turning the supper into a breakfast. This they had time for while their Victim was being mocked by the Roman soldiers and led out to Calvary. When it was over, they were able to reappear between 9 A.M. and noon, and to bear their part in the mockings and blasphemies of the multitude (Matt. xxvii. 41; Mark xv. 31). The disciples on the other hand, who had eaten their Passover, found nothing to hinder them (this is obviously true at least of the writer of the Fourth Gospel) from going into the Prætorium, hearing what passed between Pilate and his Prisoner (John xviii. 33—40), and witnessing, it may be, the scourgings and the mockings. Joseph of Arimathæa was not deterred by any fear of defilement from going to Pilate, for he too had, we must believe, eaten his Passover at the proper time (Matt. xxvii. 57).

(7.) So far then, on this view, all is natural and consistent. St. John omits the fact of the meal being the Passover, as he omits the institution of the Lord's Supper, because these were things that were familiar to every catechumen; and confines himself to points of detail or of teaching which the current tradition passed over. He is not conscious that he differs from that tradition at all, and therefore neither emphasises his difference, nor is careful to avoid the appearance of it. On the other hand, the assumption that the Passover followed the Crucifixion involves the almost incredible supposition that the chief priests could remain by the cross until 3 P.M. and then go to Pilate (John xix. 31) regardless of their previous scruples; that nearly the whole population of Jerusalem, men and women, instead of cleansing their houses from leaven, and preparing for the Passover, were crowding to the scene of the Crucifixion; that Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathæa, and the Maries, were burying the body of Jesus, and so incurring, at the very hour of the Passover, or immediately before it, a ceremonial defilement, which would have compelled them to postpone their Passover for another month (Num. ix. 10). They go, the first at least of them, to Pilate, and both the visits are, it will be noted, recorded by the same Evangelist, who recorded the scruples of the priests, without any explanation of what, on the other theory, is the apparent inconsistency.

(8.) There remains only a few minor points above noticed. And (a.) as to the *Preparation*. Here the answer lies on the surface; the name (*Paraskeüe*) was given to the day of the week, our Friday, the day before the Sabbath, and had absolutely nothing to do with any preparation for the Passover. The Gospels show this beyond the shadow of a doubt (Mark xv. 42; Matt. xxvii. 62; Luke xxiii. 54). If any confirmation were wanted, it may be found in the fact that the name is applied in a Græco-Roman decree, quoted by Josephus, to the week-day which answers to our Friday. Even the phrase which seems most to suggest a different view, the "preparation of the Passover," in John xix. 14, does not mean more, on any strict interpretation, than the "Passover Friday," the Friday in the Passover week, and coming therefore before a Sabbath more solemn than others (John xix. 31). It may be noted further, that the term *Paraskeüe*, was adopted by the Church, Western as well as Eastern, as a synonym for the *Dies Veneris* or Friday. (b.) The supposed difficulty as to Simon of Cyrene is of the slightest possible character. There is nothing to indicate that he was coming from field-labour. And if he had eaten his Passover on the previous day either in Jerusalem or its immediate neighbourhood, there was nothing either in law or custom to prevent his entering the city on the following morning. (c.) The questions connected with the action of the priests, and the thoughts of the disciples as to the meaning of our Lord's command to Judas, have been already dealt with.

No. CXLIV.

A THREEFOLD POWER.

“And after this Joseph of Arimathæa, being a disciple of Jesus,” &c.—
xix. 38—42.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Ver. 38.—
“*And after this* (R. V. THESE THINGS) *Joseph of Arimathæa, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought* (R. V. ASKED OF) *Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body* (R. V. AWAY HIS BODY) *of Jesus.*” An account of the burial of Christ we have also in Matt. xxvii. 57—61; Mark xv. 45—47; Luke xxiii. 50—56. The death of Christ seemed to rouse Joseph to some boldness, so that he went to Pilate and begged the body of Jesus. Nicodemus, too, of a similarly cowardly nature, seemed to be actuated by the same impulse. “The foes of Jesus have gone into the background, and He is now with His friends for evermore. No apostle appears present at the embalming or entombment; but one whose name is hitherto unmentioned but for this act steps forward. So for the just man Providence ever raises new friends. And so may the weakest faith grow strong, and take its proper post at the required hour.”

Ver. 39.—“*And there came also Nicodemus, which* (R. V. HE WHO) *at the first came to Jesus* (R. V. HIM) *by night, and brought* (R. V. BRINGING) *a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight.*” “This myrrh is a gum exuding from a tree found in Arabia, and more plentifully in Abyssinia. It is a very ancient article of commerce among Egyptians, Jews, Greeks, and Romans. It is first mentioned in Exodus xxx. 23. It was celebrated in ancient times as a perfume, and burned for an agreeable fumigation, it was esteemed as a medicine. It was an ingredient used by the ancient Egyptian embalming. In the middle ages of Europe it was held that it would render a man’s body immortal if there were any method of completely imbuing the system with it. The ‘aloes’ here

mentioned are not to be identified with the drug which bears that name in the *Materia Medica*, which is a very bitter and somewhat stimulant stomachic purgative; on the contrary, the article here named is an odoriferous wood, celebrated for its agreeable qualities in ancient literature. Thus in Ps. xiv. 8: ‘All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia.’ The Hebrew word *ahil* became identified both in the Greek and modern languages with the word ‘aloes,’ simply from the verbal resemblance. It is curious that the Malay name of the article is *agila*, which besides bearing a strong resemblance to the Hebrew word has also a resemblance to the word *eajle*, and hence the same article has received the name of *eajle-wood*.”—*Whedon*. “At the funeral of Gamaliel,” says *Livermore*, “eighty pounds of spice were used, and when Herod was buried there was a procession of five hundred servants carrying costly unguents and aromatics. The large quantity which Nicodemus brought, and by which he testified his affection, was not, therefore, incredible.”

Ver. 40.—“*Then took they* (R. V. SO THEY TOOK) *the body of Jesus, and wound* (R. V. BOUND) *it in linen clothes* (R. V. CLOTHS) *with the spices, as the manner* (R. V. CUSTOM) *of the Jews is to bury.*” “In the last two verses John has mentioned Joseph and Nicodemus each in the singular, and adds the part which each performed; the former secured the body, the latter furnished the material for embalming. Now in the plural they both cooperate in the same work. Hitherto they have been strangers; ever after, doubtless, they were brethren.”

Ver. 41.—“*Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre* (R. V. TOMB), *wherein was never man yet laid.*” (Compare xviii. 1.) “St. John’s account makes the choice of

the sepulchre depend on its nearness to the place of crucifixion: the account in the earlier Gospels makes it depend on the fact that the sepulchre belonged to Joseph. The one account implies the other, and the burial, under the circumstances, required that both the sepulchre should be at hand, and that its owner should be willing that the body be placed in it."

—*Dr. Ellicott's Commentary.*

Ver. 42.—"There laid they Jesus therefore (R. V. THERE THEN) because of the Jews' preparation day (R. V. OMITTS DAY); for the sepulchre (R. V. TOMB) was nigh at hand" (R. V. THEY LAID JESUS). "The time was so short," says *Dr. Livermore*, "as the Sabbath was about to commence, that is, at sun-down, that the burial was hastily performed, leaving something to do afterwards (Mark xvi. 1); and the body was

laid in a tomb near at hand, in order to avoid the delay of carrying it to a distance. Thus, in less than twenty-four hours Jesus had been betrayed, seized, tried, crucified, and buried—a concentration of mighty events. To all human appearance His religion perished with Him, and the last ray of hope was quenched in the tomb of Joseph. But to the Sun of Righteousness, as to the natural sun, might the poet's language apply—

'So sinks the day-star in the ocean's bed,
And yet, anon, repairs his drooping head,
And tricks his beams, and with new spangled ore
Flames in the forehead of the morning hour.'

HOMILETICS.

We shall take the conduct of Joseph and Nicodemus, at the burial of Christ, as illustrating a *Threefold Power*—the power of *Worldliness*, the power of the *Cross*, and the power of *Penitence*.

I.—THE POWER OF WORLDLINESS.

Both of these men had opportunities of being convinced that Christ was the true Messiah, and it is highly probable that both had a sympathy with Him and His cause. And yet they seem to have stood aloof from Him up to the hour of His death. Nicodemus was a member of the Jewish Sanhedrim, and yet he seems to have held his peace, whilst nearly all his fellow-members were calumniating the Son of God, and plotting His destruction. He had not the courage to stand up and denounce their conduct, expressing at the same time his own belief that He was the true Messiah. All that we hear him say was on one occasion, and that in a very timid way, "Doth our law judge any one before it hear him, and hear what he doeth?" The same might be said of Joseph, who is here said to have been "*a disciple of Jesus.*" He makes no bold protest against the enemies of his Lord, nor does he make any open avowal of his discipleship. Why was this? There were, perhaps, three elements of worldliness that influenced them in the matter.

First: The Love of Wealth. It would seem that the Jews resolved, that whosoever should confess that Jesus was the Christ, should be cast out of the synagogue, and entirely excommunicated.

Excommunication amongst the Jews involved the sacrifice of civil as well as religious rights and privileges. The rich man, in those days, who followed Christ would lose his wealth. The home of comfort and luxury would have to be exchanged for a state of penury and want. Decision for Christ was always a question, at that time between principle and property, conscience and cash. Hence Christ frequently told His hearers, that if they followed Him they would have to sacrifice their worldly all. Neither Joseph nor Nicodemus had sufficient moral strength to sacrifice their worldly possessions for Christ. Another element that influenced them was—

Secondly: The Desire for Popularity. They were in elevated positions, members of the Sanhedrim, looked up to and honoured by the populace. The desire for power and the love of social approbation, which belong to us all, would be strengthened in them by their exalted office. Now, if they had followed Christ, all this popularity would have gone at once; they would have been execrated instead of praised. This popularity they had not moral strength enough to sacrifice. "They loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." What is popularity? "Popularity," says *Carlyle*, "is as a blaze of illumination, or, alas, of conflagration, kindled round a man, showing what is in him, not putting the smallest item more into him, often abstracting much from him, conflagrating the poor man himself into ashes and *caput mortuum*."

There are three classes of men—(1.) Those who have no moral convictions. This is the largest class. (2.) Those who have moral convictions, but not enough courage to avow them. There are men in Parliament who have moral convictions, but are too cowardly to avow them; they are mute in the presence of their "party." There are men in the pulpit, who are convinced that much that is being preached is theological fiction, and yet they are mute. Another class—the grander but, alas, the few—are—(3.) Those who have moral convictions, and courageously carry them out, regardless of the frowns of men. These are the heroes, the reformers, the saviours of the world. Another element that influenced them was—

Thirdly: The Power of Caste. They were members of a certain class—the highest class in Jewish society. The whole class not only stood aloof from Christ, but cherished and displayed the most malignant hostility towards Him. Class feelings are always powerful. Because "none of the rulers believed on Him," these men were too weak to come out on His side. Such are the elements of worldly power which probably acted on these men, and prevented them from avowing publicly their attachment to the Son of God. And such elements are as strong here as there, now as then. The conduct of these men illustrates—

II.—THE POWER OF THE CROSS.

What was it that now brought forth these timid men, brought them to Pilate to beg the body of him in order to bury Him in the garden? * When Christ was alive, they were afraid to avow their attachment to Him. It was the Cross that nerved them to the effort. There was something about His death that roused them to manly exertion. There were two wonders connected with His crucifixion which would tend to produce this effect—

First: The Material. The rending of the veil, the riving of the rocks, the quaking of the earth, the darkening of the sun at high noon, the raising of the dead, the mysterious quiverings of nature at every point, as if struck with mortal anguish,—these wonders must have produced a deep impression upon the most sceptical spectator. But a much deeper upon those in whose hearts there lurked a latent love.

Secondly: The Moral. To a reflective mind such wonders would be far more impressive. See the moral majesty of Him Who dies between two malefactors, and amidst the furious rage of a maddened populace. Mark His reply to the prayer of the dying thief, the interest He displayed in His mother, the prayers He presented for His murderers, the surrender of His spirit to God, the deep calm and unconquerable love that He displayed. And in all there goes forth “a still small voice”—soul-penetrating withal. All whose spiritual ear could catch the sound must have said, “Truly this was the Son of God.” Undoubtedly these men felt the mystic power of all this. As they now handled the mangled, helpless frame, many a tear of self-reproach fell, we may suppose, as they thought of their past unfaithful and unmanly conduct. Thus the power of the Cross overcame in them the Power of the World. This Cross is evermore the power, and the only power, by which we can overcome the Power of the World.

The conduct of these men illustrates—

III.—THE POWER OF PENITENCE.

Now Christ is dead their consciences are stirred to their centre; and they are, no doubt, deeply stung with remorse, on account of their cowardice. Shame on us, they would probably exclaim, that we should have been so pusillanimous, as to stand aloof from Him during His public ministry! Ah! it is always so with those who have neglected a true friend, when that friend has been taken from them. See now the force of this with these men! Two remarks are suggested concerning this power of penitence.

First: It forced them to a compensatory effort. No doubt this embalming with “*myrrh*” and “*aloes*” was a most costly service. Nothing too good for Him now; even life itself, if needed, might

* See Germ on the next page.

go. What service had they rendered Him during His struggles and His trials? None. But now that He is dead, what are they not prepared to do? All this is the force of moral regret—the force of conscience. Conscience will, sooner or later, drive a man to his duty.

“What conscience dictates to be done,
Or warns me not to do,
This, teach me more than hell to shun,
That more than heav’n pursue.”

Secondly: The compensatory effort came too late. Of what use was all this embalming and burying to Christ, now that He was dead? Had they built His sepulchre of diamonds, garnished it with the choicest pearls of ocean, all would have been nothing to Him. The offering was too late. So it often is. The compensatory effort is *made too late*.

GERMS OF THOUGHT.

No. LXXIII.

THE GRAVE IN THE GARDEN.

“In the place where He was crucified was a garden.”—xix. 41.

The history of sin in the Bible is associated with gardens; the darkest things in the moral universe are associated with the fairest in the material. The first *human* sin that “brought death into the world, and all our woe,” was perpetrated amidst the beauties of a garden. The greatest *spiritual* suffering ever, perhaps, endured in our world, was endured in a garden. It was in the garden of Gethsemane that Christ exclaimed, “My soul is exceeding sorrowful,” &c; and the grave of Him Who is to “swallow up death in victory” was in a garden. It would seem from 2 Kings xxi. 26 that the ancients were accustomed to have sepulchres in their gardens. Amon was “buried in his sepulchre in the garden of Uzza.”

Natural affection would suggest the idea of having the grave in a garden. It is far more in accordance with the dictates of the human heart, to bury our dead in the garden, amongst the flowers and shrubs, than to transport them, as is now the custom, to scenes far beyond the reach of family observation. Religion, too, might have suggested the idea. The grave in the garden, would serve as a monitor to those who owned the garden; it would remind them that whatever may be their pleasures and possessions, they would soon have to resign all for the cold and lonely grave. The subject presents to our notice—

I.—SIN INTRODUCING THE SAD INTO THE MOST PLEASANT THINGS OF LIFE.

Nothing to man is more sad than death, and no scene to him is more pleasant than a well-cultivated garden. But here is death in a garden; and this sin introduced. Because of it Christ Himself died. Here we have the connection of trial with the fairest scenes

of life, and it is ever so. Death in a garden! Let a man be in the most propitious circumstances, he is sure to have something to pain his heart. Naaman was a great captain, but he was a leper; Paul a great apostle, but he had a "thorn" in the flesh. Man looks—

First: To new relationships. He fancies that his husbandhood and fatherhood will be a beautiful garden, and hails the entrance thereinto as a scene on which the sun will shine and the dews descend, the flowers bloom and the trees cluster. But, alas! soon he finds a grave there. He looks—

Secondly: To new departments of business. But there he will find a grave. There is some cloud on every landscape, a mildew on every flower. The words present to our notice—

II.—BENEVOLENCE RETAINING THE AMELIORATING AMIDST THE
SAD SCENES OF LIFE.

Death is a great trial, death is brought into the garden, but the garden is left and still blooms on.

First: There are *constitutional* ameliorations to relieve our sadness. There is a self-healing principle in nature. Sever a branch from the tree, wound the body, cut the flesh, or break a limb, and you see the self-healing power exude and work. It is so in the soul. Thought succeeds thought like the waves of the ocean, and each tends to wear out the impression its predecessor has made.

Secondly: There are *incidental* ameliorations to relieve our sadness. New events, new engagements, new relationships tend to heal the wound.

Thirdly: There are *Christian* ameliorations to relieve our sadness. The assurance of an after life, the hope of a future re-union, &c. Such are the reliefs. These, like the flowers and shrubs of a lovely garden, spring up around our hearts, and cover the grave of our sorrows and trials with the shadow of their foliage. Yes; though we have our trials we have still our gardens, and in our garden there is the Rose of Sharon, the Lily of the valley, and more, the Tree of Life for "the healing of the nations." Young life starts up about our graves.

Life's dreariest path has some sweet flowers,
Its cloudiest day some sun.

No. CXLV.

A MIRROR OF HUMAN ACTIVITY.

(*The visit of the women to the sepulchre.*—*Mary Magdalene returns.*—MATT. xxviii. 1; MARK xvi. 2—4; LUKE xxiv. 1—3; JOHN xx. 1—2.)

(*Peter and John at the sepulchre.*—LUKE xxiv. 12; JOHN xx. 3—10.)

"The first day of the week," &c.—xx. 1—10.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Ver. 1.—*week.*" The Jewish Sabbath was the "The (R. V. NOW ON THE) first day of the last day of the week—Saturday. The

disciples of Christ seem to have adopted the first day of the week for their spiritual devotion. On that day Christ rose from the dead, and they called it the Lord's day. "*Cometh Mary Magdalene.*" Matthew has "Mary Magdalene and the other Mary." Mark, Mary Magdalene and "Mary the mother of James and Salome;" and Luke, "the women which had come with Him from Galilee." These he enumerates as Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James, and the other women that were with Him. John only speaks of the woman, Mary Magdalene. There is no contradiction; but the difference shows that there was no collusion, no fabrication. It might be indeed that the different women were at the sepulchre at different times. "*When* (R. V. WHILE) *it was yet dark.*" The mere glimmering of dawn. "*And seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre*" (R. V. TOMB). This fact is made emphatic in all the accounts, especially in Luke xxiv. 2.

Ver. 2.—"*Then she runneth* (R. V. THEREFORE), *and cometh to Simon Peter.*" Matthew has, "to His disciples." Luke, "to the eleven, and to all the rest." "*The other disciple, whom Jesus loved.*" Thus John describes himself, and with characteristic modesty speaks of himself in the third person. "*And saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre* (R. V. TOMB), *and we know not where they have laid Him.*" It is supposed that the plural here included the other women whom the Synop- tists mentioned. The language is the passionate cry of a woman's heart. As if she said, They have not only crucified the Lord, but have stolen away His body.

Ver. 3.—"*Peter therefore went forth, and that* (R. V. THE) *other disciple, and came to* (R. V. THEY WENT TOWARD) *the sepulchre*" (R. V. TOMB). The details here are peculiar to this gospel. Luke mentions Peter, but no one else. The scene here is pictured with all the vividness and exactness of one who himself saw and took part in it.

Ver. 4.—"*So* (R. V. AND) *they ran both together.*" She ran, and they ran. "*The other disciple did outrun* (R. V.

OUTRAN) *Peter, and came first to the sepulchre*" (R. V. TOMB). "The histories of the resurrection by the Evangelists betray at every clause their fidelity to nature and truth. There is that agitation, that fear, that hope, that joy, which we should expect. There is running hither and thither: the breathless haste of excited, astonished, conflicting feelings. The women ran, Mary Magdalene ran, and Peter and John ran, as if in competition with each other. There were tears, and prostrations of reverence (Matt. xxviii. 9), and glad reports carried to the absent; and every mark in nature of the reality of this stupendous fact that the crucified Jesus had walked forth from the rent tomb a living being, bringing life and immortality to light."

Vers. 5, 6.—"*And he stooping down, and looking in, saw* (R. V. HE SEETH) *the linen clothes lying; yet went he* (R. V. ENTERED HE NOT) *not in. Then cometh Simon Peter* (R. V. SIMON PETER THEREFORE ALSO COMETH) *following him, and went* (R. V. ENTERED) *into the sepulchre* (R. V. TOMB), *and seeth* (R. V. HE BEHOLDETH) *the linen clothes lie*" (R. V. LYING). How like impulsive Peter is this! He rushed into the sepulchre which John, perhaps, either from reverence or dread, did not venture to do, although it would seem that he was first at the sepulchre.

Ver. 7.—"*And the napkin, that was about* (R. V. UPON) *His head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together* (R. V. ROLLED UP) *in a place by itself.*" The napkin, it would seem, lay apart from the other pieces of linen. This minute description indicates a complete personal acquaintance with the incident. *Alford* says, "We seem to hear the very voice of Peter describing to his companion the inner state of the tomb."

Ver. 8.—"*Then went* (R. V. ENTERED) *in also* (R. V. THEREFORE) *that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre* (R. V. TOMB), *and he saw, and believed.*" "*Believed*" what? Evidently, what Mary Magdalene had said, viz.: that they had taken away their Lord. I remember reading, many years ago, a most masterly discourse entitled,

“Unconscious Influence,” founded on this incident, by Dr. Bushnell.

Ver. 9.—“*For as yet they knew not the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead.*” What Scriptures? I am referred by some to Isaiah li.; Psalm ii. 7; xvi. 9, 10; but I find no proof whatever that these passages refer to the resurrection of Christ. There may be some other Scriptures that have not come down to us, but Christ himself plainly predicted His resurrection. (See Luke xxiv. 25—27.)

Ver. 10.—“*Then (R. v. so) the disciples went away again unto their own home.*” “More exactly, of course,

to their lodgings in Jerusalem. They had accomplished the object of their visit to the sepulchre. One, at least, had realized, and he must have told his thoughts to his friend, that the Lord was not to be looked for in the empty grave, and that Mary’s fears were groundless. No enemies had taken the body away. They return, then, with hearts filled with this truth, to ponder over its meaning, or to tell it to others of the eleven, or to wonder and wait until He should come again to them, as He had promised.” — *Bishop Ellicott’s Commentary.*

HOMILETICS.

In this remarkable fragment of Gospel History we have a *Mirror of Human Activity*. Man is necessarily an active being: he lives *in* action and *by* it. Inactivity is virtually death; wrong activity is misery; right activity, alone, is true living. Hence the world is full of labour. In this incident we see Human Activity *Inspired by strong love, Existing under a strong delusion, and Ending in sad disappointment.* Here we see—

I.—HUMAN ACTIVITY INSPIRED BY STRONG LOVE.

What earnest activity we have here in Mary Magdalene, Peter, John, and the other disciples! One hurrying to the other, Peter and John hurrying to the sepulchre, Peter bounding into it and carefully examining the linen. All the faculties of mind and body seem on the stretch. What prompted all this earnest activity? *Love.* Here we see—

First: The Law of Love. What is the law of love? It is a yearning for the presence of its object. Mary Magdalene and the disciples loved Christ. They had lost sight of Him for some days, and their longing for another glance at Him became irrepressible. Love evermore hungers for a sight of its object; it will dare mortal epidemics, cross stormy oceans, visit distant islands and continents in order to see, and if possible, to clasp to its bosom, its object. Hence the great attraction of heaven is that we shall see Him as He is. Here we see—

Secondly: The Courage of Love. It was truly a bold thing for Mary Magdalene, either alone or in company with her small sisterhood, to go forth in the dark, enter Joseph’s garden, where the Roman soldiers had been all night, and where He was buried, Whom the Jewish authorities hated even unto death. It seemed almost a defiance to the whole Jewish people. But strong love is

the spirit of heroism; it will face armies and dare death in its most hideous forms. Here we see—

Thirdly: The Earnestness of Love. On the wide earth could we discover more vehement earnestness, than now around the tomb of Jesus? What strenuous efforts of body, what wrestlings of soul! Strong and sacred love alone is the power to set all the faculties of humanity into vigorous and harmonious action. *Schiller* says—

“Love, only love, can guide the creature
Up to the Father-fount of Nature;
What were the soul did Love forsake her?—
Love guides the mortal to the Maker.”

Here we see—

II.—HUMAN ACTIVITY EXISTING UNDER A STRONG DELUSION.

These disciples hurried forth in the morning, before the break of day, under the delusive impression that they would find Christ in the tomb. For this false impression they were *blamable*, for He Himself had assured them that He would rise the third day. Their ignorance, therefore, was inexcusable. How much of the world's activity, aye, of the activity of every man, is put forth under illusory impressions! Men seem to be led on by phantasms of their brain; they walk in a “vain show,” they act under the influence of day-dreams.

One man runs forth to wealth in search of happiness, another to fame, another to sensual gratification, but when they reach the points whither they direct their efforts, they find happiness is not there. It is all an illusion, and a *guilty* illusion, for they have the means of knowing that the happiness and dignity of humanity can only be found in moral goodness. To the eye of angels, methinks, the tribes of busy men, hurrying hither and thither, appear as so many somnambulists, directed by the wild visions of a disordered brain. Looking around us on all hands, we see men in every department of activity, like Oriental travellers, burning with thirst, hurrying along to what they consider to be lakes of refreshing water, and when they approach the spot they find it is a mere mirage, the whole vanishes into thin air. Each active life is a fiction, and all are pursuing shadows. Why this? Because, like the disciples running to the sepulchre of Christ, they guiltily ignore facts.

Facts tell all men that there is no happiness for them outside of the human soul, that it must well up from within, not stream into them from without. Facts tell men that there is no true honour or dignity to be obtained outside of them, that true greatness, real majesty, consist in noble thoughts, high purposes, and loyalty to the everlasting laws of the universe. That to be

great is to be good, and to be good is to conform to the moral image of the God-Man. Solomon sought, with all the earnestness of his nature, for what he considered would make him great and blessed—in fine buildings, splendid gardens, numerous attendants, great wealth, enchanting music, and distinguished knowledge. In all he was acting under the common delusion, and exclaims, “Behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit.” When will humanity be roused from these dreams? When will men see things as they are, and practically recognize eternal realities, look away from the things that are “seen and temporal,” and pursue those realities that are “unseen and eternal?” When? “Truly,” says *Archbishop Leighton*, “the whole course of a man’s life is but a continual trading in vanity, running a circle of toil and labour, and reaping no profit at all.” Here we see—

III.—HUMAN ACTIVITY ENDING IN SAD DISAPPOINTMENT.

“*Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed. . . . Then the disciples went away again unto their own home.*” Yes; now they saw He was not there, and “*believed:*” knew that all their strenuous efforts to find Him were put forth under a delusion. What sadness and darkness this discovery must have spread over their souls! The outward world was “*dark*” when they came forth; no stars shone on them, and the sun had not skirted the horizon. It was dark too, probably, when they wended their steps homeward, but the outward darkness was only a symbol of the depressing darkness that now enwrapped their hearts—the darkness of a terrible disappointment. They felt that all their exertions had been lost labour. They felt, as *Cowper* expresses it, that they had been—

“Letting down buckets into empty wells,
And growing old with drawing nothing up.”

There are few if any trials in life more distressing than disappointment. But the pain of the disappointment will always be in proportion to the power and influence of the hope that has been blasted. Such experience must be the lot of all who have lived under delusion. As the man in the Gospel, who built his house on the sand, and fully expected a beautiful residence, that would shelter him from the stormy blast and the scorching ray, and just after he had expended much time and great labour to rear it, at the hour when he most required it “the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.”

Ah, what are we all doing in this illusory life, but building houses on the sand, houses that must fall to pieces when we need them most? When the storms of eternal realities, with all their

lurid lights and violent forces, will beat upon us. Ah, then comes the terrible conviction that all life's labour has been lost! "The setting of a great hope," says *Longfellow*, "is like the setting of the sun. The brightness of our life is gone; shadows of the evening fall around us, and the world seems but a dim reflection—itself a broader shadow. We look forward into the coming lonely night, the soul withdraws itself, then stars arise, and the night is holy."

No. CXLVI.

PHASES OF PIETY.

(*Our Lord is seen by Mary Magdalene at the Sepulchre.*—MARK xvi. 9—11; JOHN xx. 11—18.)

"But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping," &c.—xx. 11—18.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—VER. 11.—*"But Mary stood (R. V. WAS STANDING) without at the sepulchre (R. V. TOMB) weeping."* It would seem from this that Mary had ran with the two disciples to the sepulchre, and while they went in she stood "*without weeping.*" "*And (R. V. SO) as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre (R. V. TOMB).*" How earnestly and intently she must have looked, how anxious to know the result of the search, and weeping all the while!

VER. 12.—*"And seeth (R. V. SHE BEHOLDETH) two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other (R. V. ONE) at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain."* This appears to have been a distinct vision to Mary, which she probably related to the author of this Gospel. Though John himself might not have witnessed it, he had such faith in her testimony that he records it. These angels were "*in white,*"—emblem of celestial purity,—"the one at the head, the other at the feet." They were the heavenly watch-guards of that Sacred Body.

VER. 13.—*"And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou?"* A modern expositor says the question was asked, "not because they knew not why she wept, but to open the way to make her know that there was no reason to weep." "*She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him.*" This is the passionate cry of her heart; the sup-

posed loss of Christ was the source of her agony.

VER. 14.—*"And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw (R. V. BEHOLDETH) Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus."* As she appears to have turned away from the angels, another form arrested her attention: it was that of "*Jesus,*" but she failed to recognize Him. Perhaps in figure, feature, gait, and garb, He was not as she had seen Him last.

VER. 15.—*"Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou?"* How different are these words spoken by Jesus, to the same words even spoken by the angels! How different the feelings that prompted them: how different the tones in which they were uttered! "*She, supposing Him to be the gardener.*" Perhaps a servant of Joseph of Arimathea, employed to take care of the garden. "*Sir, if thou have (R. V. HAST) borne Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away.*" Three times she refers to the Lord simply by the pronoun "*Him.*" She has named Him in the previous verse, and, perhaps, thinks that the gardener had heard those words; but the impression formed from her eager words is that her own mind is so entirely filled with the one subject that she supposes it to be in the minds of others. The same passionate eagerness is heard in the words which follow. Devotion such as hers does not weigh difficulties, a

place of safety for that sacred body is the object of her will, and that will neither dreads danger nor sees that the task would be physically impossible, but asserts in the confidence of its own strength,—“*and I will take Him away.*”

Ver. 16.—“*Jesus saith unto her, Mary.*” “This word was, no doubt, pronounced with a peculiar intonation which she recognized at once as that of Jesus.” The sound of that voice thrilled her through and through. “*She turned (R. V. TURNETH) herself, and saith unto Him (R. V. IN HEBREW), Rabboni; which is to say, Master.*” She had heard her own name pronounced in a well-known voice, and it brought back to her memories that flood her with emotions, and in her ecstasy she exclaims in her native Hebrew dialect, “*Rabboni; which is to say, Master.*”

Ver. 17.—“*Jesus saith unto her, Touch Me not.*” The word “*Touch*”

is a Greek word which signifies to cling to, to fasten on to, to clasp. In the ecstasy of her feeling, she cast herself at His feet (Matt. xxviii. 9), and with accustomed reverential embrace, clung to His knees. The reply of our Saviour seems to mean, Do not continue to cling to Me, “*For I am not yet ascended to My (R. V. UNTO THE) Father.*” I am about ascending to our common Father, and we shall meet again. “Where I am, there ye shall be also.” “*But go to (R. V. UNTO) My brethren, and say unto (R. V. TO) them, I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and to My God, and your God.*” This was a grand commission for her.

Ver. 18.—“*Mary Magdalene came (R. V. COMETH) and told (R. V. TELLETH) the disciples that she had (R. V. I HAVE) seen the Lord, and that He had spoken (R. V. SAID) these things unto her.*” She sets herself at once to discharge her mission.

HOMILETICS.

This fragment of evangelic history may be taken to illustrate a *Threefold Aspect of Piety*. Here we have—

I.—PIETY IN SADNESS.

“*Mary stood without the sepulchre weeping.*” * She seemed overwhelmed with sorrow. Notice here—

First: The intensity of her affection. What is that which makes bereavement painful? *Love*. Had we no affection for the departed we should drop no tear into their graves. All the anguish at sepulchres streams from love. Mary’s great distress therefore on this occasion, demonstrated the strength of her affection to Christ.

Secondly: The greatness of her courage. “*She stood without at the sepulchre.*” The grave has with most a power to excite fear. Few of the bravest men enjoy walking through a graveyard in the dark. Explain it how you may, we feel timid amongst the graves of the dead. But in Mary’s case there was something more than this natural fear. To stand by the sepulchre of Jesus was really a perilous position. The Roman soldiers had strict charge to watch the tomb. To show love to Him Who lay there, was to incur the displeasure of the rulers of the country. Yet Mary stood there alone in the dark. Love is courage. Her affection raised her above the fear of the ghosts of the dead and the drawn swords of

* See Prelection at end of volume on the “Words of the Angels to Mary.”

the living. The tears of love are not the expressions of weakness, but the symbols of a force unconquered and unconquerable.

Thirdly: The imperfection of her faith. He, Whose loss she was mourning, was at that moment standing by her side. She supposed "*Him to be the gardener.*" Ah, me! how often, through the lack of faith, we degrade the grandest things in the universe! We only see common labourers, gardeners, etc., where the divinities are present and in action. This lack of faith on Mary's part was very inexcusable; for had she not been told He would rise from the dead on the third day? She wept for the very reason that she ought to have rejoiced. What poor blind creatures we are! We often see nothing but a "*gardener,*" where in reality stands the Divinest messenger of God! O for eyes to see the Divine, even under the humblest form of life, and to detect blessings under the disguise of trials! Thus we weep when and where we ought to rejoice! Like Jacob we say, "All these things are against us," whereas in reality, as in his case, they are for us. Piety has its dark moods; days when the sea of life becomes very rough, and when neither stars nor sun appear. Here we have—

II.—PIETY IN RAPTURE.

"*Jesus saith unto her, Mary! She turned herself, and saith unto Him, Rabboni, which is to say, Master.*" Christ does not condemn the tears. There is no harm in weeping. He Himself wept.

"The very law which moulds a tear
And bids it trickle from the source,
That law preserves the earth a sphere,
And guides the planets in their course."—*Rogers.*

He only suggests the impropriety of the cause. Her exclamation "*Rabboni,*" and the command of Christ "*Touch Me not*" indicate that she had risen into an ecstasy of soul. It would seem that for a moment she was wild with rapture. Two facts are here to be observed—

First: The *Rapidity of our mental changes.* This woman passed, as in a moment, from anguish to ecstasy. To such changes we are ever exposed, at least in this world. We can pass with the swiftness of lightning, from one pole of experience to another. Though clouds of darkest gloom and most portentous shape may overspread the heavens of the soul, *one* thought can sweep them clean away, and make the azure arch blaze with the light of noon. The awful swiftness with which we can pass from mood to mood, urges the necessity of implicitly confiding in that God Who alone can keep us in "perfect peace." Another fact to be observed here is—

Secondly: The *Power of Christ's voice.* What effected this change? One word of His—the word "*Mary!*" He pronounced

it, no doubt, with an intonation which she recognized. She knew the voice; it rang with the old notes of love. Neither the mysterious sorrows of Gethsemane, the agonies of the Cross, the tortures of death, nor the darkness of the grave, had changed that loving voice. It sounded "*Mary*" now as ever. Thus by a word Christ can lift the soul into the highest bliss. It was not the voice of the angels that uplifted her, but that of Christ. Here we have—

III.—PIETY IN ACTION.

"Go to *My* brethren, and say unto them, *I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and to My God, and your God.*" This command she promptly attended to. Notice here—

First: Christ's Merciful identification with His disciples. "*My Father, and your Father.*" The good of all ages are one with Him,—children of the same Infinite Father. This command indicates—

Secondly: The Heavenward direction which her sympathies should take. Look upward—"I ascend." "Seek those things that are above." Notice—

Thirdly: The Right direction of religious feeling. Do not live in mere sentiment; turn your feelings into action. Action will at once *express, and utilize your emotions.* Go and work. Piety in duteous action, is piety in its highest and safest state. Sighs of sorrow and shouts of rapture, are verily worse than worthless, unless they pass into duteous deeds, and consolidate the character. Tears should invigorate the moral heart as rain strengthens the oak.

No. CXLVII.

THE UNEXAMPLED KINDNESS OF CHRIST TO HIS DISCIPLES.

(*Jesus appears in the midst of the disciples, Thomas being absent. Jerusalem.*

—MARK xvi. 14—18; LUKE xxiv. 36—49; JOHN xx. 19—23.)

"Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week," &c.—
xx. 19—23.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—This account of our Lord's appearance to His disciples should be compared with Mark xvi. 14; Luke xxiv. 26—36. It is supposed by some that between the events recorded, immediately preceding, and what we have in this paragraph, there occurred the bribing of the guard (Matt. xxviii. 11—15); and also the conversation on the way to Emmaus (Luke xxiv. 13—25; Mark xvi. 25).

Ver. 19.—"*Then the same day at evening* (R. V. WHEN THEREFORE IT WAS EVENING ON THAT DAY), *being*

the first day of the week." All the evangelists agree that the resurrection occurred on the first day of the week. The event which John here records took place on the evening of the first day. On this evening the disciples had gathered together no doubt for study, conference, and devotion. "*When the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled* (R. V. OMITTS) *for fear of the Jews.*" Their Shepherd was stricken down, and they were left now as wandering sheep, exposed to the ravenous wolves that surrounded them. Our Lord had told them the danger and

persecution that awaited them (chap. xv. 18). "*Came Jesus and stood in the midst.*" Now whilst they were in this room, with the doors closed, Christ appeared. How did He gain admission! Not by force, breaking in the doors. No! His resurrection body was independent of the laws of gravitation. "*And saith unto them, Peace be unto you.*" The same salutation is recorded in Luke xxiv. 36. What words are these falling on their ears in heavenly music midst the darkness of the grave!

Ver. 20.—"*And when He had so said* (R. V. SAID THIS), *He shewed unto them His hands and His side.*" Luke says, "His hands and His feet." None of the other evangelists refer to the piercing of the side. "*Then were the disciples* (R. V. THE DISCIPLES THEREFORE WERE) *glad, when they saw the Lord.*" They were satisfied as to His corporeal identity, and enraptured at having once more in their midst the presence of their loving Lord.

Ver. 21.—"*Then said Jesus* (R. V. JESUS THEREFORE SAID) *to them again, Peace be unto you: as My* (R. V. THE) *Father hath sent Me, even so send I you.*" Here He identifies Himself with them, in the same Divine mission. He is an Apostle of redemptive love; so are they. The Father sent Him; He sends them.

Ver. 22.—"*And when He had said this, He breathed on them.*" "The word rendered '*breathed*' occurs nowhere else in the New Testament, but was familiar from its use in the Greek (LXX) of Gen. ii. 7. St. John, to describe this act of the risen Lord, uses the striking word, which had been used to describe the act by which God breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life. He writes as one who remembered how the influence of that moment, on their future lives, was a new spiritual creation by which they were called, as it were, out of death into life. It was the first step in that great moral change which passed over the disciples after the Crucifixion, and of which the day of Pentecost witnessed the accomplishment." "*And saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.*" "These words," says Pro-

fessor Watkin, "are not, on the one hand, understood as simply a promise of the future gift of the Holy Ghost, for they are a definite imperative, referring to the moment when they were spoken; nor are they, on the other hand, to be taken as the promised advent of the Paraclete (chap. xiv. 16), for the gift of the Holy Ghost was not yet, because Jesus was not 'yet glorified.' The meaning is, that He then gave to them a sign which was itself to faithful hearts as the first-fruits of that which was to come. His act was sacramental, and with the outer and visible sign there was the inward and spiritual grace. The very word used was that used when He said to them, 'Take, eat; this is My body' (Matt. xxvi. 26; Mark xiv. 22). It would come to them now with a fulness of sacred meaning. The Risen Body is present with them. The constant spiritual Presence, in the person of the Paraclete, is promised to them. They again hear the words, '*Receive ye,*' and the very command implies the power to obey."

Ver. 23.—"*Whose soever sins ye remit* (R. V. FORGIVE), *they are remitted* (R. V. FORGIVEN) *unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.*" (Matt. xvi. 19; xviii. 28.) (See my "Genius of the First Gospel" on these passages.) "The medium by which they were to remit sins is the Gospel committed unto them, for the efficient ministration of which they are now empowered by the Holy Ghost breathed upon them by their Divine Master. Through that Gospel they would remit the sins of all who accept it by faith. Our Lord in these words declares the efficacy of the Gospel for this purpose. By the same Gospel the true minister condemns the rejecting sinner. The apostolic hand holds the instrument by which it is enabled to dispense release from the power and guilt of sin to all those who are penitent, and to retain under its condemnation those who are incorrigible. Thus with it in their hands, apostles would go forth discharging the souls of men from sin, or confirming them under its condemnation."

HOMILETICS.

The great subject which this fragment of evangelic history presents to us is *The Unexampled Kindness of Christ to His Disciples*. Observe—

I.—HE GRANTS THEM HIS PRESENCE, AND IMPARTS TO THEM HIS BENEDICTION.

First: He grants them His Presence. "*Jesus came and stood in the midst.*" Though the doors of the room where they were assembled were shut, He entered and stood in the midst of them. No granite walls, no iron bolts or bars, can exclude Him from His genuine disciples. He has pledged His presence to all such. "I will come to you," &c. "I will not leave you comfortless," &c. "Lo, I am with you alway."

Secondly: He imparts to them His Benediction. "*Peace be unto you.*" This was just what they wanted. They must have been at this time in a wild tumult of anxious thought, memories, and apprehensions. All men want this "*Peace*," for they are like the troubled sea whose waters cannot rest. They are at war with their Maker, and consequently with themselves, society, and the universe. Christ came to give Peace. "*Peace on earth*" was the burden of the anthem, which the herald angels carolled over Bethlehem, on the morning of His birth. Observe—

II.—HE DISPELS THEIR FEARS, AND ESTABLISHES THEIR FAITH.

First: He dispels their Fears. They were not only afraid of the Jews, but His appearance also at first greatly alarmed them. Luke says, "They were terrified and affrighted, and supposed they had seen a spirit." This utterance implies their belief in the existence of disembodied spirits; in the possibility of these spirits appearing to them; and that these spirits were not friendly towards them.* Men have always been afraid of spirits. To allay this dread of spirits Christ not only shows them "*His hands and His feet*," (but according to Luke) says, "Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?"

(1.) Here He implies that Spirit may exist apart from Matter, and in that state may appear to Living Men; (2.) Here He demonstrates the materiality of His body, and urges on them an inquiry into the cause of their superstitious fear. "Why are ye troubled?"

Secondly: He establishes their Faith. "*Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord.*"† In Luke it is said that at first "they believed not for joy," a state of mind which we can appreciate. At the first moment of good news the mind often

* See Prelection at end of volume.

† See Germ, p. 181.

says to itself, It is too good to be true. He established their faith not only by exposing His resurrection body to their view, but also (as we find from Luke) by eating with them. Observe—

III.—HE GIVES THEM A COMMISSION, AND QUALIFIES THEM FOR ITS DISCHARGE.

First: He gives them a Commission. "*As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you.*" What the commission was we find in Luke xxiv. 46, 47. "Repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." They were to preach "repentance and remission of sins," preach that to "all nations," and to preach it in a certain order—"beginning at Jerusalem."

Secondly: He qualifies them for its Discharge. "*He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.*"

(1.) He inspires them with the Divine Spirit. Rightly to carry out a *new* enterprise, a man must be put into possession of a new *spirit* equal to it. And to discharge this new enterprise of preaching the Gospel through the world, nothing less than the Spirit of God Himself is required. Christ now gives this new inspiration.

(2.) With this new inspiration they became invested with the highest Authority. "*Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.*" It is noteworthy that this Authority was not given to Peter, or to any one of the disciples, but to all alike.

CONCLUSION. How transcendent the privileges of the genuine disciples of Christ! He grants them His presence, and imparts to them Peace; He dispels their fears, and establishes their faith; He gives them a commission, and qualifies them for its discharge.

GERMS OF THOUGHT.

No. LXXIV.

CHRIST'S APPEARANCE TO THE DISCIPLES.*

"And as they thus spake, Jesus stood in the midst of them," &c.—xx. 19—23.
(Luke xxiv. 36—48.)

This is Christ's *fourth* appearance to His followers after His resurrection; and there are five things in the incident of great practical significance.

* This is one of a Series of Ten Discourses on "Christ's Appearances after His Resurrection." (See "Homilist," Vols. x. and xi.)

I.—HE DECLARED HIS BENIGNANCY, IN ORDER TO TRANQUILIZE
THEIR HEARTS.

“As He stood in the midst of them, He said unto them, Peace be unto you.”

First: His glorious benediction expressed the great Want of Human Nature. The disciples now gathered together specially required this benediction of *Peace*; for their excitement must have been intense. Agitating thoughts about Jesus of Nazareth, His Crucifixion, and His empty grave, must have surged in violent succession through their hearts; within them “deep called unto deep,” and the commotion was furious. They required a voice which would bid the tumult cease, command the storm to be still. But what they in this special sense wanted, human nature everywhere requires; and the more wicked, the more deep the necessity. “The wicked are like the troubled sea, whose waters cannot rest.” Men are alienated from their Maker; and because of this, they are at war with *themselves*, at war with *society*, and at war with the *universe*.

Secondly: His glorious benediction expressed the great Design of Christ’s Mission. He came to give “*Peace*.” He came to reconcile man to his Maker, to Himself, and to the Creation. He came to reproduce in humanity that Supreme Sympathy with God, which is the essential and unfailing security of spiritual tranquillity in all worlds.

II.—HE APPEARED TO THEIR REASON, IN ORDER TO ALLAY
THEIR FEAR.

His appearance amongst them roused their superstitious fear. “They were terrified and affrighted, and supposed they had seen a spirit.” Their fear implied three things—

(1.) Their belief in the existence of Disembodied Spirits. (2.) Their belief in the Possibility of these Disembodied Spirits appearing to them. Men have always believed in this; hence they have peopled every sphere of the world with ghosts. (3.) Their belief that Disembodied Spirits were not Friendly to them. Else why fear them? “Why are ye troubled, and why do thoughts arise in your heart?” Why should they be afraid of a spirit? Were they not themselves spirits, members of the spiritual universe, and soon to be introduced into a conscious connection with its unearthly tenants? Is not the Infinite Father a Spirit? And the prophets, patriarchs, and the saints of departed ages, whom they honoured, were *they* not Spirits? Why then fear a Spirit? The Spirit-Fear is the symptom of a *guilty* conscience. A guilty conscience urges men to forebode messengers of insulted justice from the invisible. In Christ’s appeal to them in order to allay their fear—

First: He assures them that spirits may exist apart from matter, and in this state appear to living men.

Secondly: He demonstrates the materiality of His own resurrection body. "*Behold My hands.*"

Thirdly: He throws upon them an inquiry into the cause of their superstitious fear. "Why are ye troubled?" Inquiry into our mental phenomena will soon expel superstition.

III.—HE GAVE THEM EVIDENCE, IN ORDER TO ESTABLISH THEIR FAITH.

"*And while they yet believed not for joy.*" Here is one of those developments of simple nature with which Scripture records abound. The state of mind here expressed is common to humanity; when we say that the news is too good to be true, we express the feeling. Observe two things in relation to the evidence He now presents of His Resurrection—

First: Its Nature. It consisted of two things.

(1.) *A palpable exhibition of the reality of His body.* "He said unto them, Have ye here any meat?" &c. He eats before them, showing them that He was Jesus of Nazareth, with Whom they were accustomed to eat, previous to His death. (2.) *A clear showing that His resurrection answered to the predictions of the Scriptures concerning the Messiah.* "All things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses." We are not told all that He said, but the conclusion He thus states: "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day."

Secondly: Its Effect. "Then opened He their understanding." He thus assured them of His resurrection.

IV.—HE PROPOUNDED HIS SYSTEM, IN ORDER TO INDICATE THEIR DUTY.

In Luke we have these words, "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."

First: He here propounds the *great doctrine* of His system. "Repentance and Remission." Just the two things indispensable to the well-being of man everywhere.

Secondly: He here propounds the *world-wide aspect* of His system. "All nations," &c. It is not for a sect or class, but for all.

Thirdly: He here propounds the order of *propagating* His system. "Beginning at Jerusalem."

V.—HE ENDOWED THEM WITH EXTRAORDINARY POWER, IN ORDER TO FIT THEM FOR THEIR EXTRAORDINARY WORK.

The account of the event informs us that, "*He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose soever sins*

ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." In endowing with the Holy Spirit, Christ does two things—

First: He performs a symbolical act. "*He breathed on them.*" The old prophets often set forth their message by emblematic acts. (See Jer. xiii., xvii.) And Christ here symbolizes the descent of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, by breathing on His disciples. The same Greek word means *wind* and "*spirit.*"

Secondly: He endows them with an extraordinary authority. He gave them authority to "*remit*" the sins of men—power of absolution.

No. CXLVIII.

THE HONEST SCEPTIC.

(*Jesus appears in the midst of the apostles.—Thomas present.—Jerusalem.—*
JOHN XX. 24—29.) *John 20:29*

"But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came," &c.—xx. 24—29.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Ver. 24.—"*But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus.*" Both words mean twin. The Jews often had two names, one in Hebrew, the other in Greek or Latin. Thomas is the Jewish, and Didymus the foreign appellation. "*Was not with them when Jesus came.*" Why he was not at that meeting we are not told. Did the Crucifixion destroy all his faith, or did the panic of the Crucifixion drive him too far off to be present?

Ver. 25.—"*The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust (R. V. PUT) my hand into His side, I will not believe.*" He rejects entirely the testimony of the disciples, and demands the testimony of his own senses. This is at once unjust and unreasonable. Yet this seems to be in accord with his mental habit. We find in chapter xiv., when our Lord referred to His departure, Thomas says, "Lord, we know not whither Thou goest,

how can we know the way?" "*I will not believe,*" which means I will by no means believe.

Ver. 26.—"*And after eight days again His disciples were within, and Thomas with them.*" We are not to suppose from this that they had not met in the interval, but this meeting was special, it was on the Lord's day. "*Then came Jesus (R. V. JESUS COMETH), the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you.*" He again entered preternaturally, and He salutes them as before.

Ver. 27.—"*Then saith He to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold (R. V. SEE) My hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust (R. V. PUT) it into My side: and be not faithless, but believing.*" He knew Thomas's state of mind, and specially addresses Himself to him, condescending to present him with the kind of evidence he required.

Ver. 28.—"*And Thomas answered and said unto Him, My Lord and my God.*" A confession of resuscitated and re-invigorated faith.

HOMILETICS.

This fragment of evangelical history presents to us—

I.—AN INTERESTING RELIGIOUS SCEPTIC.

“*But he said unto them, Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe.*”

Observe—

First: His scepticism was negative, not positive.

Secondly: His scepticism was intellectual, not moral.

Thirdly: His scepticism was candid, not clandestine.

Fourthly: His scepticism was convincible, not obstinate. Here is—

II.—AN EXEMPLARY RELIGIOUS GUIDE.

How did Christ treat this sceptic? Did He denounce him, or ignore him? No; He finds him out, speaks to him with exquisite tenderness, and condescends to give him the very evidence he required,—“*Reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into My side: and be not faithless, but believing.*” Observe—(1.) The *promptitude*; (2.) The *speciality*; (3.) The *exquisite considerateness*; and (4.) The *moral success* of His treatment of this sceptic. Christ won him. “*Thomas answered, My Lord and my God.*”

III.—A SUPER-EMINENT RELIGIOUS FAITH.

It is implied,—

First: That it is possible for those who have never seen Christ to Believe in Him. “*Have not seen, and yet have believed.*” It is implied—

Secondly: That those who believe in Him without seeing Him are Peculiarly Blest. “*Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.*” (1.) Faith without sight is more *praiseworthy* than faith by sight. (2.) Faith without sight is more *accurate* than faith by sight. (3.) Faith without sight is more *enriching* than faith by sight. (4.) Faith without sight is more *invigorating* than faith by sight.*

No. CXLIX.

THE PARTIALNESS AND THE PURPOSE OF THE EVANGELIC RECORD.
(*The Ascension.—Bethany.—Mark xvi. 19, 20; LUKE xxiv. 50—53; JOHN xx. 30, 31.*)

“*And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of His disciples.*”—
xx. 30, 31.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Ver. 30.— THEREFORE) *did Jesus in the presence of*
“*And many other signs truly* (R. V. *His* (R. V. THE) *disciples.*” The Greek

* For an amplification of these points, see Prelection at end of volume.

here for "*signs*" is often rendered miracles, for the miracles of Jesus were all signs indicating the Divinity of their Author. The signs were not merely those referring to the resurrection, but included, no doubt, all the manifestations of His power both before and after His resurrection. They refer to His whole work. "*Which are not written in this book.*" The evangelical record then of Christ's life is only partial. It is said in the last verse of the next chapter: "There are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written." "This," says *Dr. Brown*, "is to be taken as something more than a merely parabolical expression which would hardly comport with the sublime simplicity of this writer. It is intended to let his reader know that even now when he had done, he felt his materials so far from being exhausted, that he was still running over, and could multiply gospels to almost any extent within the strict limits of what Jesus did. But in the

limitation of these matchless histories, in point of length and number alike—there is as much of that Divine wisdom which has presided over, and pervades, the living oracles, as in their variety and fulness."

Ver. 31.—"*But these are written, that ye might* (R. V. MAY) *believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might* (R. V. MAY) *have life through* (R. V. IN) *His name.*" This "*ye*" addresses every reader, to the end of the world. It speaks from John to the person that now reads the words, inviting him to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and have life through His name. Jesus is *the* Christ, the Messiah. Christ lived, His apostles preached, and His evangelists wrote, that the world might shape its conceptions to the true idea of the Messiah, not as the Emancipator of the nation, but as the Saviour of the world." We have in these two verses what the best scholars of modern times consider to be a proper summary and ending of the book. The chapter which follows has been considered a later addition.

HOMILETICS.

The subject of this passage is *the Partialness and the Purpose of the Evangelical Record.*

I.—ITS PARTIALNESS.

"*Many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this Book.*"* Christ was a Worker; an earnest, diligent, unflinching, and unremitting Worker. He had a wonderful mission to discharge within a brief space of time. "He went about doing good." "The works," He said, "which My Father gave Me to do." "I must work the works of Him that sent Me, while it is day; the night cometh when no man can work." Every day of His life was crowded with deeds, and these deeds were "*signs.*"

First: They were "*signs*" of His Preter-natural Might. The works ascribed to Him in the Gospels transcend all human power. No man could do the works that He did.

Secondly: They were "*signs*" of His Matchless Philanthropy. All His works were inspired and directed by a love for man that was disinterested, self-sacrificing, and unconquerable.

* See *Germ*, p. 187.

Thirdly: They were “*signs*” of His Immeasurable Possibilities. The works He did were only specimens of His Infinite productiveness. His works were but the “Hiding of His Power.” But though the works recorded were only a miserably small portion of what He accomplished—

(1.) They are sufficient for our purpose. They reveal Him as the All-loving and Almighty Saviour. (2.) They suggest a wonderful history for future study. Will not all the unrecorded deeds of His which He wrought on earth, as well as all His works since He left the world, be unfolded for our study in the future? Into these things “the angels desire to look.” Concerning this Evangelical Record observe—

II.—ITS PURPOSE.

“*These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.*”*

First: The facts of His life are written in order to reveal Him. They are revelations of (1.) His power, (2.) His love, (3.) His transcendent excellence. The works of a man are the *Revelations of himself*. “By their fruits ye shall know them.”

Secondly: The facts of His life reveal Him in order that men may Believe in Him. How could they believe in Him of Whom they have not heard? Faith in Him is at once—(1.) The most essential and (2.) The most practicable of all faiths. It is easier to believe in a Person than in a Proposition; easier to believe in a Transparently Good Person than in any other.

Thirdly: Men are to believe in Him in order that they may have the highest life. “*That believing ye might have life through His name.*” What is the highest life? *Supreme Sympathy with the Supremely Good*. Men lost this at their fall, and the loss is their guilt and ruin. The mission of Christ is to resuscitate this lost *sympathy*, and to fill souls with the love of God. This is the great Moral Resurrection that is going on in the world, and which comes, and comes only, out of faith in Him Who is the “Resurrection and the Life.”

GERMS OF THOUGHT.

No. LXXV.

THE QUICKENING WORKS.

“And many other signs truly did Jesus,” &c.—xx. 30, 31.

Every man in his life may be compared to a book; and every day adds a fresh page to the book. Notice—

I.—THE RECORD.

“*These are written.*” The subjects of the publication are the wonderful works and sayings of our Lord. His deeds were such

* See Germ, p. 189.

as no human power could accomplish. The miracles of Christ were performed for three special purposes. (1.) As acts of Humanity. (2.) As proofs of His Divinity. (3.) As illustrations of the works of Salvation. Their *publicity* is particularly noticed in the text. These "*signs*" were done in the *presence* of His disciples. Imposture seeks concealment; works in the dark. But "*these things* were not done in a corner," but openly,—on the stage of public society. The miracles said to every doubter, "Come and see." The *number* of these miracles is also noted. "*Many other signs,*" &c. Not only are the miracles of Christ recorded, but also His *sayings*. With what dignity, authority, and power, does He speak! &c. "*These things are written.*" The way by which the Divine Will has been revealed to mankind, has^d been by directing and inspiring certain persons to record it in *writing*. Many advantages are derived from this method.

(1.) There is the advantage of *Universality*. A man's writings reach further than his voice.

(2.) There is the advantage of *Appeal*. "To the law and the testimony," we appeal. This is the judge that ends strife.

(3.) There is the advantage of *Security and Permanence*. The word uttered perishes; the letter written remains. Everything of consequence we desire to have in *writing*. What do we know of ancient history, but by streamlets that have flowed down to us in books and writings? Let us be thankful, then, for two great blessings; for the Book; the book written in our own tongue—and for an ability to read it. Let all possess the Bible, read it, love it! Notice—

II.—THE REASON.

"*These things are written, that ye might believe,*"—

First: In the *Real Existence* of Jesus. Some have been so sceptical as to doubt whether such a Person as Jesus Christ ever appeared in the world. They never doubt the historic existence of such men as Julius Cæsar or Mahomet. But have we not much higher proof of the existence of Jesus Christ? "*These things are written, that ye might believe,*"—

Secondly: In the *True Character* of Jesus. "*That Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.*" He came to "redeem men from all iniquity," &c. The great object is more especially noticed in the next clause of our text, which is—

III. THE RESULT.

"*And that believing ye might have life.*" Some write books for pecuniary ends. But the Evangelist wrote without any view of temporal benefit to himself, but to bring men to Christ and Heaven. That "*ye might have life.*" Not of course animal or even

intellectual life, but Spiritual and Eternal Life. We may, however, form some idea of this spiritual life, by thinking of signs and evidences of animal life. There are at least five signs of life—*sensibility, activity, appetency, appropriativeness, superiority to gravitation*. Have we these signs spiritually?

Take this Record; thank God for it. Christ is the Substance of it. He is the Gospel, so believe in Him, that you may “*have life*” Spiritual, ever Growing and ever Blessed Life.

No. LXXVI.

THE SON OF GOD.

“The Son of God.”—John xx. 31.

God has many sons. The children of Israel were called His sons, the judges in the theocracy were called His sons, angelic existences are called His sons; but Christ is called “*The Son of God*.” Why this? He must be a Son in a sense which does not apply to any other being in the universe. Wherein is His *uniqueness* as a “*Son of God?*” He was—

I.—UNIQUE IN HIS AGE.

He was “set up from everlasting.” He was in the “beginning with God.” He is the “first-born.” The oldest of God’s other sons are young compared with Christ. He was—

II.—UNIQUE IN HIS CONSTITUTION.

He was God in a Human Personality. He was not merely Man, not merely God, but *God-Man*. God is in all intelligences, in all creatures; but He was in Christ in a sense in which He is in no other being, giving Omnipotence to His arm, Omniscience to His intellect, Ubiquity to His presence. He was—

III.—UNIQUE IN HIS MISSION.

He is the Mediator between God and man. He is the only Saviour. “There is no other name given amongst men,” &c. There is good reason, therefore, why He should be singled out from all other sons of God, and be called “*The Son of God*.”

No. CL.

THE RELATION OF CHRIST TO THE SECULAR LIFE OF HIS DISCIPLES.

(*The Apostles go away into Galilee.—Jesus shows Himself to seven of them at the Sea of Tiberias.—Galilee.—*MATT. xxviii. 16 ; JOHN xxi. 1—24.)

“After these things Jesus shewed Himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias,” &c.—xxi. 1—14.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Because the last two verses of the preceding chapter seem to close the whole book, some have supposed that John is not the author of this chapter. But the thought, the spirit, and the style seem to stamp it as the production of his pen.—*Westcott* says that “This chapter is evidently an appendix to the gospel which is completed by chapter xx. It is impossible to suppose that it was the original design of the Evangelist to add the incidents of chapter xxi. after chapter xx. 30, which verses form a close to his record of the great history of the conflict of faith and unbelief, in the life of Christ. On the other hand, it is equally clear that it was written by the author of the gospel. The style, character, and contents of the chapter are peculiar to John. The occasion of the addition is probably to be found in the circulation of the saying of the Lord as to John xxi. 23.”

Ver. 1.—“*After these things.*” The expression may not indicate immediate succession, but rather an interval during which other events had transpired. “*Jesus shewed* (R. V. MANIFESTED) *Himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias.*” On the lake of Galilee. Seven of the apostles had returned to their native lake and to their former employments.

Ver. 2.—“*There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two other of His disciples.*” “It is probable,” says an able modern expositor, “that we have here the names of all in the group of seven who were apostles, and that the two remaining persons were disciples in the wider sense in which the word is used by John. (Chaps. vi. 60, 66 ; vii. 3 ; viii. 31 ; xviii. 19.) If they were Andrew and Philip,

which has been supposed from chap. i. 40—43, it is not easy to understand their position in the list, or the absence of their names. Thomas is not named by the other evangelists, except in the list of the apostles. (Compare chaps. xi. 16 ; xiv. 5 ; xx. 24.) Nathanael is named only by St. John. He is, probably, to be identified with the Bartholomew of the earlier gospels, the latter name being a patronymic. The descriptive note ‘*of Cana in Galilee,*’ is added here only. The sons of Zebedee are not elsewhere given by St. John as a description of himself and his brethren, but this is the only place in which he names himself and his brother in a list with others. In St. Luke’s account of the earlier draught of fishes, the sons of Zebedee are named as partners with Simon (chap. v. 10). Their position here agrees with the Johannine authorship of the chapter. In the lists of the other gospels, and the Acts of the Apostles, James and John are uniformly prominent in the first group.”

Ver. 3.—“*Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing.*” Literally, I am going to fish. They had no longer a common purse, no longer any reason to believe that they would be fed as they had been by the miraculous interposition of their Master. They were now thrown upon their resources for a livelihood. “*They say unto him, We also go* (R. V. COME) *with thee.*” How often the determination of one man stirs others to action ! Peter’s resolve moves the whole circle of the brotherhood. “*They went forth, and entered into a ship* (R. V. THE BOAT) *immediately* (R. V. OMITTS) ; *and that night they caught* (R. V. TOOK) *nothing.*” All their efforts, although, probably, most strenuous, proved fruitless.

Ver. 4.—“*But when the morning was now come* (R. V. DAY WAS NOW

BREAKING), *Jesus stood on the shore* (R. V. PEACH): *but* (R. V. HOWBEIT) *the disciples knew not that it was Jesus.*" The distance and the dimness of the early morning light might account for their not knowing Him.

Ver. 5.—“*Then Jesus* (R. V. JESUS THEREFORE) *saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat?*” (R. V. AUGHT TO EAT). *They answered Him, No.*” “The word rendered ‘Children’ (or as the margin has it, *Sirs*) is used in addressing others only by St. John, among the New Testament writers (1 John ii. 14, 18). It is not the word used in chap. xiii. 33, where we have an expression denoting His affectionate tenderness for the disciples which would not have been appropriate here, for He does not at once reveal His identity to them. It is a word which indeed may express His love for them (compare iv. 49), but which appears also to have been used as an address to workmen or inferiors, not unlike our own words—boys or lads. They seem to take it in this sense, as though some traveller passing by asked the question because he wished to purchase some of their fish. The word rendered ‘meat’ occurs here only in the New Testament. It means anything eaten with bread, and was used as equivalent to the fish, which was the ordinary relish.”—*Watkin*.

Ver. 6.—“*And He said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship* (R. V. BOAT), *and ye shall find.*” They knew not which side the fishes were; He did, and He directs them to fling the net on that side. “*They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes.*” In the eighth verse they are described as dragging the net to the shore.

Ver. 7.—“*Therefore that disciple* (R. V. THAT DISCIPLE THEREFORE) *whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord.*” Here the beloved disciple recognized the mysterious stranger as his Master. Sympathy with a person is the quickest eye with which to see him. “*Now* (R. V. SO) *when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher’s* (R. V. OMITTS) *coat unto* (R. V. ABOUT) *him, (for he was naked,) and did cast* (R. V. AND CAST) *himself*

into the sea.” Instantly, true to his enthusiastic nature, Peter fastened his fisher’s tunic about his loins, plunged into the sea, and swam, some hundred yards or more, into the presence of Jesus, and fell at His feet.

Ver. 8.—“*And* (R. V. BUT) *the other disciples came in a little ship* (R. V. THE LITTLE BOAT); *(for they were not far from land* (R. V. THE LAND), *but as it were* (R. V. ABOUT) *two hundred cubits,*) (R. V. OFF) *dragging the net with* (R. V. FULL OF) *fishes.*” The words ship and boat are interchangeable. The distance was about three hundred feet.

Ver. 9.—“*As soon then as they were come to* (R. V. SO WHEN THEY GOT OUT UPON THE) *land, they saw* (R. V. SEE) *a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread.*” Who kindled that fire on the bleak shore? Who laid the fish and the bread thereon, and thus prepared a breakfast for the hungry and exhausted ones? Jesus, undoubtedly, and no one else.

Ver. 10.—“*Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught*” (R. V. TAKEN). It is implied that they did so, and thus they supplied a part of the meal of which they were to partake.

Ver. 11.—“*Simon Peter went* (R. V. THEREFORE) *up, and drew the net to land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three: and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken*” (R. V. WAS NOT RENT). The net was full of great fishes. They were not tiny and valueless, but large and precious, an hundred and fifty and three.

Ver. 12.—“*Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine* (R. V. COME AND BREAK YOUR FAST). *And none of the disciples durst ask* (R. V. ENQUIRE OF) *Him, Who art Thou? knowing that it was the Lord.*” Probably they desired Him to declare Himself, although from what John had said, they had the impression that it was the Lord.

Ver. 13.—“*Jesus then cometh* (R. V. JESUS COMETH), *and taketh* (R. V. THE) *bread, and giveth them, and* (R. V. THE) *fish likewise.*” Thus He proves at once the fact of His resurrection, His condescending love, and His tender regard for His disciples.

Ver. 14.—“*This is now the third time that Jesus shewed Himself* (R. V. WAS MANIFESTED) *to His* (R. V. THE) *disciples, after that He was risen from the dead.*” “That is, was manifested

to His disciples, that is, His assembled disciples, for if we reckon His appearances to individual disciples, they were certainly more.”—*Dr. Brown.*

HOMILETICS.

The narrative illustrates *The Relation of Christ to the Secular Life of His Disciples*. There is nothing but Secularity in the whole of these fourteen verses. They contain no reference to the soul, spiritual objects, immortality, moral redemption, or the Eternal Spirit. All is *Secularity*. The passage is not the less religious or Divine on this account. Man is material as well as spiritual; he lives in a material home, and amidst material influences has to form his character for eternity. There are four thoughts here suggested—

I.—CHRIST DOES NOT RELIEVE HIS DISCIPLES FROM THE NECESSITY OF SECULAR LABOUR.

Several of His disciples we here find busily engaged all night on the Sea of Tiberias, in fishing. To this work they had undoubtedly resorted as a means of subsistence: they felt themselves the subjects of that law which saith, “He that does not work shall not eat.” Christ does not relieve a man from this obligation when he becomes His disciple. The duty of Secular Labour continues to rest upon him in all its original force. In truth, a release from this necessity would be an injury rather than a blessing to men. Secular labour is one of the primary conditions of *Physical health, Intellectual vigour, and Moral development*.

Inaction, where there is the power of action, is a crime. Heaven’s plan is “that man should go forth to work and to labour until the evening,” and if he labours not he sins. He hides his talent in a napkin, and his retribution must come. Non-working is a positive injury. Since the Infinite Lawgiver is infinitely benevolent, what is contrary to His will, and therefore morally wrong, must be injurious. Indolence is an injury to the individual himself. Muscular inactivity enfeebles the body; mental inactivity enfeebles the intellect; moral inactivity enfeebles the soul. Look at the men and women who stand “all the day idle” in the vineyard of life! What are they? They are, it may be, graceful in their movements, elegant in their attire, gentle and pleasing in their manners. But have they, as a rule, any robustness of health, any vigour of intellect, any force of character? They are your feeble mothers and delicate sisters, your nervous fathers, insipid and lackadaisical sons, your simpering women, and your moody men—the greatest patrons of medicine, and the greatest grumblers in life. But idleness injures *others* as well as the individual. The

idle person is a social thief. He is constantly living on the produce of others. The case seems to me to stand somewhat thus: The All-bountiful Creator has fitted the earth to produce an ample provision for every human being, on the condition of a certain amount of a right kind of labour. So much labour will produce so much of the necessaries and comforts of life and no more; the measure of the agency put forth will determine the amount which nature yields for the supply of human wants. If the supplies, therefore, are not equal to the demands of a population, the scarcity, as a rule, must be referred not to a deficiency in nature's bountihood (for she liberally responds to every touch of proper agency), but to deficiency in human labour. The idle, therefore, must stand responsible for the destitution. He is sinning against the natural and revealed law of God; he is eating without working, consuming without producing. He is dishonestly appropriating the product of other men's labours. We denounce and punish deeds of larceny when brought under our notice, and we do well. But the idler's life is a life of larceny. His bread is not the bread of honest labour. The men and women who take food and raiment from society, without giving back some kind of honest labour in return, live—unconsciously to themselves, it may be—lives of cruel dishonesty, cruel because the energies of others are overtaken to make up for their idleness. They make "bread so dear, and flesh and blood so cheap." Let us not talk of *Providence* as an excuse for indolence. God is good, and He will provide. He has provided richly, but He only grants the provision on condition of the right employment of our powers. There is an inheritance for the good, but only on the condition of their working. There is a heaven of knowledge, but only for the student; there is a harvest of blessedness, but only for the diligent husbandman; there are scenes of triumph, but only for the victorious warrior.

II.—CHRIST ALLOWS THE POSSIBILITY OF FAILURE IN THE SECULAR ENDEAVOURS OF HIS DISCIPLES.

These disciples toiled all night and "*caught nothing*." A different result, perhaps, might have been expected. Reason, perhaps, would have suggested the belief that the secular labour of Christ's disciples would never prove futile. It is not so in fact. The crops of a godly farmer fail, the plans of a godly merchant break down, the vessels of godly mariners are wrecked.

The settled laws of nature pay no particular deference to Piety. Exemption guaranteed from *secular failure*, however much we may desire it, would be no blessing. It would tend to nourish worldliness, self-sufficiency, and religious neglectfulness. Liability to secular failure is a spur to industry, and a motive for prayerful

dependence on Heaven. Let not, therefore, any unfortunate tradesman who righteously conducts his business, conclude that Christ has deserted him. Let not society conclude that such a man is ungodly because he has failed. The disciples toiled all night and "*caught nothing.*" Observe—

III.—CHRIST IS DEEPLY INTERESTED IN THE SECULAR CONCERNS OF HIS DISCIPLES.

First: His eyes are ever on them in their work, though *they may be unconscious of Him.* Whilst their little ship was tossed on the sea, and they were toiling with their net, Jesus stood looking at them from the beach, though they did not know it. "*Jesus stood on the shore: but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus.*"* So it ever is. When you, His disciples, who are absorbed in your secular undertakings, battling with difficulties and struggling, it may be, even for the means of subsistence, His all-seeing, yet benignant eye is on you, though you may be unconscious of it. "He knoweth the way you take."

Secondly: He sometimes so signally interposes for their help, as *demonstrates His presence among them.* When they had no meat, Jesus commanded them to "*cast the net on the right side of the ship.*" † They did so, and they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes. "*Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord.*" The knowledge, the power, and the mercy displayed in this act of Christ, struck home to their hearts the delightful conviction that Christ was amongst them. Peter, with his wonted enthusiasm, was so excited with rapture, that he girt his fisher's coat about him, and cast himself into the sea in order to approach Christ more quickly than the little vessel would bear him. Thus it has often been and still is. He signally appears to His disciples in troubles, and manifests Himself to their delight.

IV.—CHRIST OFTEN MAKES THE SECULAR TRIALS OF HIS DISCIPLES THE MEANS OF A CLOSER FELLOWSHIP WITH HIMSELF.

When the disciples had come to shore with their extraordinary quantity of fish, "*Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine.*" ‡ Here we have a display of—

First: His Merciful Condescension. The narrative gives the impression that He kindled the fire for them on the beach, and prepared their fish and their bread for food. It gives the impression, also, that He ate with them, and thus condescended to identify Himself with them in the necessities even of their physical nature. Here, too, we have a display of—

Secondly: His Remedial Wisdom. His eating with them, not

* See Germ, p. 195. † See Germ, p. 195. ‡ See Germ, p. 196.

only demonstrated His real corporeity and settled the question of His resurrection, but did more,—enlisted at the same time the social sympathies and heart confidences of their nature. The man who attempts to elevate his race in the true sense, and descends not to a level with their hearts, enters not their social affections, and enlists not their confidence, will inevitably fail. We must clothe ourselves with the infirmities of the men we would redeem. Thus Christ acted here, and in this has left us an example. What Christ did now with the disciples He ever does, seeks to make the secular trials of His people the means of a more intimate connection with His heart.

GERMS OF THOUGHT.

No. LXXVII.

THE LONELY WATCHER ON THE SHORE OF LIFE.

“Jesus stood on the shore.”—xxi. 4.

On the shore of Galilee Christ now watched His disciples as they were plying their oars on the sea. Christ is the Watcher of Christly men wherever they are and however engaged.

I.—HE KNOWS ALL ABOUT THEM, ON THE SEA OF LIFE.

Every gust of wind, every violent surge; every success and defeat He knows.

II.—HE IS DEEPLY INTERESTED IN THEM, ON THE SEA OF LIFE.

There He stands on the shore. Whoever is absent, He is there; whoever comes and goes, He remains looking on with intense interest.

III.—HE IS READY TO HELP THEM, ON THE SEA OF LIFE.

He stood now ready to help the disciples. So He ever is *willing and “able to save to the uttermost.”*

No. LXXVIII.

OLD INSTRUMENTALITIES, BUT NEW METHOD, AN EMBLEM OF CHRIST'S REDEMPITIVE METHOD.

“Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find.”—xxi. 6.

Christ here commands the disciples to cast in the *old* net in a *new* way, in order to catch the fishes. Thus He ever does in redeeming souls.

I.—HE EMPLOYS OLD INSTRUMENTALITIES.

Christ employs many instrumentalities by which to redeem men, but they are all *old*.

First: The same old Natural Facts. He employs the phenomena of nature to quicken, educate, and elevate souls. We have nothing *more* of nature than what men of remotest generations had.

Secondly: The same old Gospel Principles. Biblical truths are His great redemptive forces, but these are *old*; the youngest of them is eighteen hundred years.

Thirdly: The same old Mental Faculties. In regenerating men Christ does not give them new faculties, a new intellect, memory, or imagination. He employs the old. Hence He brings out the new moral creature with the old mental idiosyncrasies.

II.—HE EMPLOYS OLD INSTRUMENTALITIES IN A NEW METHOD.

“*Cast the net on the right side of the ship.*” He directs men—

First: To a new method of studying Natural Facts. *Thoughtfully, inductively, devoutly*—regarding them all as mirrors of the Divine.

Secondly: To a new method of studying Gospel Truths. Not desultorily, speculatively, controversially, but *inductively, systematically, and practically*.

Thirdly: To a new method of employing Mental Faculties. Turning the mental powers away from the temporalities of time to the spiritualities of eternity, from the creature to the Creator. Brothers, use the old rightly; cast the old “*net*” in a new direction.

 No. LXXIX.

THE DINNER ON THE GALILEAN SHORE.—AN EMBLEM OF REDEMPTION.

“Come and dine.”—xxi. 12.

The context presents a wonderful scene, sublimely romantic and Divinely significant. This dinner which Christ provided, may be looked upon as an emblem of His great Redemptive System.

I.—THE TIME WAS OPPORTUNE.

The disciples had tried all their resources for means of a livelihood that night, and had failed. “They had toiled all night, and had caught nothing.” They were no doubt tired and dejected, and knew not what to do. The dinner came just at the right time. It is just so with the Redemptive System. After the world had tried everything for its salvation—tried poetry, philosophy, religion,

civilization, and grew worse—Christ came—“came in the fulness of time.”

II.—THE PROVISIONS WERE DESIRABLE.

The fish they caught they had been toiling to obtain all night. They were craving for such food. The provisions of the Gospel are both exquisitely fitted for man's needs and urgently required. They are (1.) Soul *renovating*, (2.) Soul *cleansing*, (3.) Soul *developing*, (4.) Soul *harmonizing*, (5.) Soul *perfecting*. In Isaiah xxv. 6 we have a description of the Great Spiritual Banquet. How rich, how varied, how abundant the viands!

III.—THE HOST WAS CONDESCENDING.

What a sight, the great Son of God sitting down on the Galilean shore preparing a feast for the poor fishermen, and dining with them! Thus He has done in spiritual redemption. He descended into the “lowest parts of the earth,” into the lowest Social Grades. “Made Himself of no reputation,” &c. He came down to a level with the creatures. He came to save. He came in the likeness of sinful “flesh.” He clothed himself with our infirmities.

No. CLI.

THE REALM OF LOVE THE SPHERE OF RELIGION.

“So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me more than these?” &c.—x xi. 15—17.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Ver. 15.—“So when they had dined (R. V. HAD BROKEN THEIR FAST), Jesus saith to Simon Peter.” During the meal, perhaps, silence reigned supreme. There was the hush of reverent amazement. “Simon, son of Jonas” (R. V. JOHN). It is noteworthy that Jesus does not call him Peter, which means rock, the high title which He had conferred upon him before his fall; but by his natural name. “Lovest thou Me?” “There are two Greek words alike rendered ‘love’ in our translation, but which have a different force. The love of this question *ἀγαπᾶς* signifies the love of will, of judgment, or of moral feeling; nearly our English word to prize. The other is *φιλῶ* which is simply affectional love, springing from the natural sensibility. In His question Jesus

uses the former word; in his answer Peter uses the latter.” “More than these.” Some say that Christ points to the fishes, or the boats, nets, &c., that is, his worldly calling; others, which is more probable, to the disciples, who were present. Peter had said, in a somewhat boastful spirit: “Though all men shall be offended because of Thee, yet will I never be offended” (Matt. xxvi. 33). Our Lord might here imply the question, “Art thou of the same opinion now, Peter? Dost thou love Me more than these other disciples?” “He saith unto Him, Yea, Lord; Thou knowest that I love Thee.” That is, with the love of affection and tenderness. “He saith unto him, Feed My lambs.” More exactly, “little lambs.”

Ver. 16.—“He saith to him again the (R. V. A) second time, Simon, son of

Jonas (R. V. JOHN), *lovest thou Me?*" The same word for love ἀγαπᾷς that Christ used before He uses here, which is the moral term for love, the love of purpose, judgment. In the reply, Peter uses the other term representing tender emotions. Christ says, "Prizest thou Me, Peter?" Peter says, "*Thou knowest that I love Thee.*" "*He saith unto him, Feed* (R. V. TEND) *My sheep.*" Be a shepherd of My sheep. He is now restored to the commission which he received before his fall, after his noble confession.

Ver. 17.—"*He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas* (R. V. JOHN), *lovest thou Me?*" Here Jesus uses the term for love which Peter had used, the more affectionate and tender word. True, it does not represent love of such a high form, but it is love of a tenderer kind. They are intimately associated. "*Peter was*

grieved because He said unto him the third time, Lovest thou Me?" Was he grieved because of the demand now made on him, or because his Master deemed such a question necessary? The latter is the reason, I trow. Thrice he had declared, "I know not the Man:" and now, thrice he is required to say, "I love the Man." "*Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee.*" The question cut to the very quick, and in the agony of the heart, smarting beneath the wound, he appeals, in more emphatic words than before, to the all-seeing eye that could read the very inmost secrets of his life. "*Jesus saith unto him, Feed My sheep.*" Some read, "little sheep." Here Jesus restores him to the high commission he had forfeited, on the dark night of the trial.

HOMILETICS.

The subject of these words is the *Realm of Love the Sphere of Religion*. There are some who put religion in the realm of *Sensuousness*. The mere excitement of the senses by paintings, sculpture, music, gorgeous rites, and tragic anecdotes, is regarded as *Piety*. Tears of mere animal sympathy are regarded as the expressions of godly sorrow, &c. Some put religion in the sphere of *Logic*. It is in some system of human thought, which men call orthodox, and nowhere else. Unless your intellect, however large it may be, will make its home in some little catechism or creed, you are more fiend than saint. And some put religion in the realm of *External Performances*. If you attend your place of worship, pay all secular debts, subscribe to charities, you are a religious man. From these verses we learn that *the deep moral love of the heart is the seat of true religion*. The question is, therefore, what is this Love? From the passage we infer—

I.—THAT IT IS A SUPREME AFFECTION FOR CHRIST.

"*Lovest thou Me more than these?*" That is, more than these disciples love Me?—aye, "more even than thou iovest aught besides?" Observe—

First: Religion is a Paramount Affection. It is not a common sentiment flowing in the ordinary current of emotions, sometimes rising into fervour and force, and then passing away. It is either the master passion of the heart—the all in all—or it is nothing.

Love never becomes religion until it grows into Supremacy, and becomes the Monarch of the heart. Observe—

Secondly: Religion is a Paramount Affection for Christ. "*Lovest thou Me?*" Not merely My *ideas*. It is almost impossible for men of intellect not to be ravished with Christ's ideas. Not merely My *works*. Who could fail to admire Christ's stupendous works of beneficence and compassion? Not merely My *heaven*. Christ's heaven, the house of His Father, where there are "many mansions," men may long for. But it is love for *Himself* that He demands. But why should Christ be loved supremely "*more than these?*"—more than father, mother, houses, lands, even these wonderful works of nature?

(1.) Because it is *Right in Itself*. Ought not the greatest Benefactor to have the most gratitude? The most perfect Character to have the highest admiration? The sublimest Royalty to have the most absolute devotion? What Benefactor is so great as He Who gave Himself? What Character so holy as He Who died to "put away the sins" of the world? What authority so high as His? He is the "Prince of the kings of the earth." "He is exalted far above all," &c.

(2.) Because it is *Indispensable to Man*. Man's destiny and his happiness depend upon the object of his love. The object of his love becomes either the wing of a seraph to bear him to the highest heaven, or a millstone to crush him to the deepest infamy and woe. Hence the mighty reason of this Paramount Affection. From the passage we infer concerning this Love—

II.—THAT IT MUST BE A MATTER OF CONSCIOUSNESS WHEREVER IT EXISTS.

Both our Lord's question and Peter's reply indicate this. A man cannot be ignorant of his supreme affection; it is the spring of his activities, the central fact of his experience. Here are the criteria. The object of supreme affection is ever—

(1.) The chief *thought* in the *intellect*. (2.) The chief *theme* in the *conversation*. (3.) The chief *end* in the *design*; and (4.) The chief *object* of the *desire*. All the laws of mind must be reversed before it can be otherwise. Concerning this Love observe—

III.—THAT IT IS THE QUALIFICATION FOR OFFICE IN THE EMPIRE OF CHRIST.

After Peter's confession, which was sincere, solemn, and thrice repeated, Christ gave him a commission in His kingdom, and that was to feed His sheep. "*Feed My lambs.*" There are three things implied in this commission—

First: That Peter would meet with the Spiritually Needy in his

future course. He would meet with hungry sheep and feeble lambs. The world abounds with those young, inexperienced, undisciplined, hungry souls.

Secondly: That Peter would have at his disposal Suitable Supplies for the needy. He could not feed them without food. The doctrines he had received from Christ would be the food.

Thirdly: That Peter had the capacity so to Present the Supplies as to Feed the Needy. Here was his work, and love to Christ was the qualification for it. Nothing can qualify a man properly to help souls but love for Christ. Learning, genius, eloquence—all will not avail without this. This is the only true inspiration.

Hast thou this Supreme Love, not for the theological or conventional, but for the Personal and Living Christ, friend? Is He Who trod the shores of Galilee and climbed the mountains of Capernaum, Who died upon the Cross and ascended to heaven, the central point of thy soul? Is He the home of thy spirit? Dost thou live in Him? Art thou in Christ?

No. CLII.

THE TRUE SERVICE OF CHRISTIANITY TO MAN.

(Conclusion of John's Gospel narrative.—JOHN xxi. 11—25.)

“Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest,” &c.—xxi. 18—23.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Ver. 18.—“*Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest.*” Peter’s whole life is here included, reaching from youthhood to the verge of old age. In young life there is freedom and force. At this time, perhaps, Peter was in middle life. “*But when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not.*” “This seems to point to his death, which, tradition says, was by crucifixion. Then is Peter girded by the hand when he is stretched forth on the cross.”—*Tertullian*. It is supposed by some that the expression “*Stretch forth thy hands*” points to his personal surrender previous to being girded by another.

Ver. 19.—“*This spake He* (R. V. NOW THIS HE SPAKE), *signifying by*

what death (R. V. MANNER OF DEATH) *he should glorify God.*” This is not a mere prediction of the manner of his death, but of the honour to be conferred upon him by dying for his Master. “*And when He had spoken this, He saith unto him, Follow Me.*” “It may be, and the next verse makes it probable, that our Lord withdrew from the circle of the disciples, and by some movement or gesture signified to Peter that he should follow Him; but these words must have had for the Apostle a much fuller meaning. By the side of that lake he had first heard the command, ‘*Follow Me.*’ (Matt. iv. 19.) When sent forth on his apostleship he had been taught that to follow Christ meant to take up the Cross. (Matt. x. 38.) It was his words which drew from Christ the utterance, ‘If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.’

(Matt. xvi. 23.) To his question at the last supper came the answer, 'Whither I go, thou canst not follow Me now; but thou shalt follow Me afterwards' (chap. xiii. 36); and now the command has come again with the prophecy of martyrdom; and it must have carried to his mind the thought that he was to follow the Lord in suffering and death itself, and through the dark path which He had trodden, was to follow Him to the Father's Home."—*Ellicott's Commentary*.

Ver. 20.—"Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following." This was the beloved disciple John. He was now in the rear pursuing Peter and his Master, hence the expression, "Peter turning about."

Ver. 21.—"Peter (R. V. PETER THEREFORE) seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do?" Or, how shall it fare with him?

Ver. 22.—"Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou Me." "From the fact that John alone of the Twelve survived the destruction of Jerusalem, and so witnessed the commencement of that series of events

which belong to the last days, many good interpreters think that this is a virtuous prediction of fact, and not a mere supposition; but this is very doubtful, and it seems more natural to consider our Lord as intending to give no positive indication of John's fate at all, but to signify that this was a matter which belonged to the Master of both, Who would disclose or conceal it as He thought proper, and that Peter's part was to mind his own affairs. Accordingly in 'Follow thou Me' the word 'thou' is emphatic. Observe the absolute disposal of human life which Christ claims."—*Dr. Brown*.

Ver. 23.—"Then went this saying abroad (R. V. THIS SAYING THEREFORE WENT FORTH) among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall (R. V. THAT HE SHOULD) not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" This was the inference drawn from the words of the Saviour. Strange that the disciples of Christ should thus misinterpret the meaning of their Master; but with the best men there is no infallibility of judgment.

HOMILETICS.

These words are part of an interesting conversation which Christ had with Peter, after His resurrection from the dead. In verse 14 we are told that this was the "third" time of His appearing to His disciples. He had appeared before to the women, to Cephas, and to James, and to the two disciples on the way to Emmaus. The Sea of Tiberias was the scene where He now displayed Himself; a sea this whose restless surface and whose silent shores had often felt His presence and witnessed His miracles.

I shall use the incident before us to illustrate *The True Service of Christianity to Man*. Perhaps there is no question so generally discussed in such a variety of forms, and for such different purposes, and upon which such a diversity of opinion prevails, as this: "Of what real service is Christianity to man?" There are three classes, I conceive, who are grossly wrong on this question—

First: Those who maintain that it is a Positive Injury. There are many who aver, by significant and plausible insinuations, as well as by broad and bold statements, that Christianity has injured rather than benefitted the race. They tell us how it has warped

the judgments of men, and nurtured morbid sentimentality: how it has sectionized society, reared the throne of spiritual despotism, and served the ends of superstition, priestcraft, and tyranny. They point us to the inquisitions, prisons, and stakes of past ages, and to the property that in its holy name is now wrung from the blood and sinews of the toiling population.

Secondly: Those who maintain that it is one of the many Elevating Forces at work in Society. They say it has done some good as well as much evil; that it is generally of service to men in a low stage of civilization; and that, like the theories and superstitions of old times, it has its mission, which it will fulfil; and then, like them, become obsolete, to be left behind as the race advances in intelligence and manly virtue.

Thirdly: Those who maintain that it does Everything for Man. These say, there is nothing good in the world but Christianity. No good in nature, no good in science, no good in the feelings of man without Christianity; that if a man has Christianity, he needs nothing more; it does everything for him.

Now these conflicting sentiments suggest the propriety, and urge the necessity, of raising the question: "Of what *real* use is Christianity to man?" The incident before us will supply a twofold answer—NEGATIVE and AFFIRMATIVE. Let us look on—

I.—THE NEGATIVE SIDE.

First: The incident suggests that Christianity does not Counteract the Natural changes to which man's Physical Life is subject. "*When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee.*" Peter, notwithstanding his defects, was a genuine disciple of Christ. Christianity had penetrated, fired, and transmuted his nature. Yet, notwithstanding this, Christ foretells that he should experience the natural decay of old age; He tells him that the *Christianity in his soul would not prevent time wearing out his body*. It is difficult to conceive of a more solemn idea of the effect of age than that which our Saviour here represents. Christ teaches that *age incapacitates man from executing his volitions*. This is slavery. To have a strong desire to do a thing, without the executive power, is the veriest vassalage. If a man is bound in chains, and enclosed in a prison, yet has no *desire* to walk abroad, he is no slave. The paralytic that was brought to Jesus is the true picture of a slave. He had the will to ply his members and muscles; but he could not. This, Christ here teaches, is the effect of age upon us. "*When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest.*" Thou couldst ply the oar on the water, roam the fields, and scale the hills; there was an energy in thy limbs, a flexibility in the move-

ments of thy young frame, by which thou couldst readily execute thy desires. "*But when thou shalt be old,*" &c. Age leaves the will in vigour, but steals away the executive power. Now, Christianity will not prevent this natural effect of age. It will not prevent the bloom fading from the cheek, the brightness passing from the eye, the strength dying out of the limb. It allows nature to take its course. Christianity neither offers resistance to the regular course of nature, nor any atonement for her violations. This fact shows three things—

(1.) *It shows that physical sufferings are no criteria for individual moral states.* Some of the best men are the greatest sufferers. Some of the most useful die in the zenith of life, and in the midst of beneficent labour. A rankling "thorn in the flesh" is consonant with the Piety of an Apostle.

(2.) *It shows that Christianity respects the ordinances of nature.* However deeply you may drink into you the Spirit of True Religion, however consecrated you may be to its service, if you rebel against nature you must suffer.

(3.) *It shows that if the disciples of Christ would be physically happy, they must attend, like other men, to physical laws.* If you are in want of physical comforts, it is of no use for you to sing, "The Lord will provide," and sit down in indolence and sloth.

Secondly: The incident suggests that Christianity does not guard a man from the Social Oppressions of Life. "*When thou shalt be old,*" &c. It is here foretold that Peter should die of crucifixion. His hands would be stretched forth, his arms would be extended on a cross, and he would be led to a death of violence, at which his nature would revolt. About forty years after this, Peter died a martyr. His Christianity did not deliver him from the *malice of men*, the storm of persecution, and the agonies of a martyr's death. Christianity promises us no escape from the opposition of wicked men; indeed it teaches us to expect it. It teaches us that they who live righteously, "must suffer persecution." "Marvel not if the world hate you." The world has ever persecuted its best men. This fact shows—

(1.) That Christianity *can do without the favour of the world.* It does not require or authorize its disciples, in the slightest degree, to compromise their principles in order to gain the patronage of mankind; but to carry them out in all their fulness and force, even though it cause the world to be in arms against them.

(2.) That Christianity *can do without the lives of its most devoted disciples, rather than without their fidelity.*

Thirdly: The incident suggests that Christianity does not solve the Speculative Problems of Life. Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, "*Lord, and what shall this man do?*" As if he had said, "Why am I thus to be dealt with? What is to become of him (John)?—is he

to be crucified also?—or will he be allowed to live the natural term of life?" To this question Jesus replies: "*What is that to thee?*" There are many questions which the events of life force upon us to which Christianity offers no response. Why are we in such suffering, whilst others, who contemn our principles, and despise our God, are exempt from trials? Why are our lives cut short while we have so much work to do? Why are we allowed such scope and faculties for working in this world when we have so little time? Why are our principles so tardy in their progress? Why are events allowed to spring up which check their advancement? Such questions as these arise, and to them Christianity makes no reply. The only words she says to the querist are: "*What is that to thee?*" There are good reasons why Christianity is silent upon such questions:—

(1.) *The encouragement of these questions would strengthen the speculative tendency, rather than improve the heart.* One answer would lead to another question, and so on interminably.

(2.) *An answer to such questions would create emotions that would paralyze moral action.* Suppose we knew what would happen to us and our children in coming years; where we should spend our eternity; who would go to perdition, &c. Would not the feelings that such knowledge would create, be likely to check all the fire and healthy action of the soul?

(3.) *An answer to such questions would multiply the forces that divert us from practical godliness.* They would lead us into the realm of boundless speculation.

Fourthly: The incident suggests that Christianity does not invest us with an Infallible Judgment in this Life. "*Then went this saying abroad among the brethren,*" &c. The disciples fell into a wrong interpretation of our Saviour's meaning. Christianity does clear and strengthen the human judgment, and furnish it with certain great truths to guide it in its investigation; but it does not render it infallible.

The dogma of human infallibility in the Church is a wicked invention, and a withering bane. The clergy who claim it grow heartless tyrants; the laity who bow to it become bondsmen and serfs. The "BRETHREN" made this mistake.

But whilst the incident suggests that Christianity DOES NOT ensure any of these things, it also suggests much that it does do. Let us look now on—

II.—THE POSITIVE SIDE.

First: The incident suggests that it enlists Christ's Interest in the History of His Disciples. What an interest did Christ display in the history of His disciples, both before and after His resurrection! He even sought to impress upon their minds, that there was the

closest spiritual relationship subsisting between them and Him, that He was vitally identified with them. He calls them His “*brethren*,” and teaches that kindness shown to them He regards as shown to Him. And what an interest did He show now in foretelling the events of Peter’s life, and preparing him to meet them! No truth in the New Testament is more manifest than this—that Christ feels the greatest interest in His disciples. His conversation with them, the night on which He was betrayed, shows how deeply His heart was with them. *Is not this something? Is it nothing to enlist the interest of the Governor of the universe in our history?*

(1.) Having His interest you have the interest of One *Who knows the whole of the present, past, and future of your inner and outer life.* He knows everything which is *now* connected with your being and circumstances; all that ever *has* been, and all that ever *will* be. He sees you now as you may be in some other world ten thousand years to come.

(2.) Having His interest you have the interest of One *Who has ample power, so to control the events of the outward life, and supply the aspirations of the inward, as to crown your existence with perfect blessedness.* “He is able to do exceeding abundantly.” If Christianity gives us the interest of such a Being as this, is it not an infinite boon? What thought can be more soul-inspiring and uplifting than this—that He “Who formed the earth by His power, and garnished the heavens with His understanding,” has His Heart on me?

Secondly: The incident suggests that it brings Glory to God in the Death of His Disciples. “*This spake He, signifying by what death he should glorify God.*” Ecclesiastical history testifies that Peter suffered martyrdom by crucifixion at Rome, in the reign of the Emperor Nero—probably in the year 65. It is added that this death, and the torture connected with it, were endured by the venerable apostle with marvellous patience and fortitude; and that deeming himself unworthy to die in precisely the same manner and posture as his Lord, he asked and obtained permission, to be crucified with the head downwards; a posture which could not fail greatly to aggravate the tortures of the cross.

But how does the death of a true disciple of Christianity “*glorify God?*”

(1.) It illustrates *the Mercy of God.* Visit the deathbed of a genuine disciple of Christ; mark the unruffled calmness, the gratitude, the resignation, and sometimes the triumphant rapture, which are displayed in the midst of physical anguish the most poignant. What are the attributes in such circumstances but glorious illustrations of Divine mercy? It is mercy that thus raises and sustains the spirit, amidst the mysterious sufferings of dissolution.

(2.) It illustrates the *Fidelity of God*. He has promised to be with His people in the last hour; and when you see all this heavenly composure and triumph, you feel that He is as good as His word—for He is there. Now, is this nothing? To “*glorify God*,” to illustrate His perfections, is the end of creation; the general duty of all intelligent beings; the supreme aim of the holy in all worlds. Is it nothing for Christianity to enable poor, depraved, guilty men to do this, even in the agonies of death—to do in death that which is the highest aim of the highest seraph—to “*glorify God?*”

Thirdly: The incident suggests that it gives a Definite Unity and Attraction to all the Duties of His Disciples. What theories of human duty ethical sages have propounded! How voluminous is the code of human laws! But Christianity reduces *all* duties to these words: “*Follow thou Me.*” “To cherish My spirit, tread in My footsteps, copy My attributes, constitute the totality of human duty, and the perfection of human character.” Christianity gives you duty, not in dry propositions, but in a fascinating Life; not in the life of an angel, but in the life of a Man. In Jesus Christ we see it in the most *perfect*, the most *attractive*, and the most *practicable* forms. Is this nothing? Is it nothing to have all our moral problems thus solved—to be freed from cumbrous codes and endless speculations—to have “the whole duty of man” thus brought to us in the Life of One Man?

No. CLIII.

THE REVEALED AND THE UNREVEALED IN CHRIST'S BIOGRAPHY.

“This is the disciple which testifieth of these things,” &c.—xxi. 24, 25.

EXEGETICAL REMARKS.—Ver. 24.—“This is the disciple which testifieth (R. V. BEARETH WITNESS) of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony (R. V. WITNESS) is true.” There are many different opinions as to who is the writer of these two last verses. In any case the meaning is, that what has been stated in this Gospel is true.

Ver. 25.—“And there are also many

other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen” (R. V. OMITTS). “Writings might be added to writings without end to describe the glory of the only begotten Son; this indefinite series of writings would never exhaust such a subject.”—*Godet*.

HOMILETICS.

The subject of these verses is the *Revealed and the Unrevealed in Christ's Biography*.

I.—VERY MUCH HAS BEEN REVEALED OF HIS BIOGRAPHY.

His four biographers have said very much about Christ. Each has presented Him in some fresh aspect.

II.—MUCH MORE MIGHT HAVE BEEN REVEALED.

“If they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books.” What volumes it would have taken to contain all the words uttered, all the deeds wrought during three years of One Who never spent an idle hour, Who “went about doing good,” &c.

CONCLUSION. (1.) We should fully appreciate the amount revealed. It teems with truths, and pulsates with inspiration. A larger amount, perchance, would have been obstructive rather than helpful.

(2.) We may anticipate wonderful studies. All the Unrevealed in Christ's Biography will yet be brought under our observation, and for our devoutest study.

PRELECTIONS.

CONSISTING OF DISCOURSES ON THIS GOSPEL, THAT HAVE BEEN DELIVERED
AT DIFFERENT TIMES IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF ENGLAND AND WALES.

No. I.

THE SPIRITUAL UNIVERSE.*

MAN'S RELATION TO IT MADE RIGHT BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD.

"Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh, is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit, is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."—iii. 5—8.

(For Exegetical Remarks, see Vol. I. page 65.)

Both the Hebrew word "*ruach*" and the Greek "*pneuma*," translated "*spirit*," have no less than four different significations in the Bible: their meaning, therefore, in any given place is to be determined by the connection in which they stand.

Sometimes the word in each language stands for *wind*. Thus in Amos, "He that formeth the mountains, and createth the wind;" and in this passage, "*The wind bloweth where it listeth.*"

Sometimes the word in each language stands for the *vital principle*. Thus in the Psalms, "His breath goeth forth;" thus in Ecclesiastes, "Yea, they have all one breath;" and thus in Luke, "His spirit (life) came again, and he rose straightway."

Sometimes the word stands for the *mental disposition*. Thus in Numbers, "The spirit of jealousy came upon him;" thus in Deuteronomy, "Full of the spirit of wisdom;" and thus in Romans, "Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but the spirit of adoption." Hence the meaning of the expressions, "spiritual man," and "spiritually minded."

Sometimes the word in each language stands for the *rational nature*. This is evidently the import in Luke, "For a spirit hath not flesh or bones, as ye see Me have;" in Job, "There is a spirit in man;" in Isaiah, "The Egyptians are men, and not God, and their horses flesh, and not spirit."

* This discourse is one of a Series delivered at Stockwell on "The Spiritual Universe."

The subject of these words is—

THE MAKING OF MAN RIGHT IN RELATION TO THE
SPIRITUAL UNIVERSE.

Man is, as I have said, SPIRIT:—as truly in the Spirit-World, a member and tenant of it now, as he will ever be. But he has lost his normal moral position. His original relations in it are not only disturbed, but dissolved. Like a star that has broken from its centre, the centripetal force of Divine Love has lost its hold on him. He is rushing through darkness on a career of ruin. How to bring him back, and link him to the great Primordial Centre of “light and life” in the Spiritual Universe, is the greatest problem that has ever risen in the history of human inquiry. A problem, whose solution is not in the researches of science, nor in the philosophies of the world’s great thinkers, but in the History and Doctrines of Jesus of Nazareth. The text gives us four facts in relation to this problem—

I.—THAT MAN’S WELL-BEING IN THE SPIRITUAL UNIVERSE DEPENDS
UPON HIS NOW ENTERING “INTO THE KINGDOM OF GOD.”

Jesus speaks of entering “*into the kingdom of God*” as that which He supposed Nicodemus would regard as the Chief Good; and of that which He Himself evidently regarded as such. He represented in His teaching, introduction to the kingdom of God as that which men should supremely strive after, and for which they should be prepared to make any sacrifice. The hand, the foot, the eye;—better even to sacrifice these than not to “enter into the kingdom of God” (Mark ix. 43—47). The question arises, What is meant by entering into the “*Kingdom of God?*”

(1.) It does not mean merely *being under the absolute government of God*. In this sense we are in His kingdom, and out of it we can never go. There is no wing to waft us beyond the boundaries. “His kingdom ruleth over all.” The animate and inanimate, matter and mind, instinct and reason, physical movements and spiritual operations, agents and actions, intellect and its thoughts, heart and its emotions, will and its efforts, Paradise and Hades, are all under the dominion of God. Our connection with His kingdom in this sense, is independent alike of our choice or conduct. Whether we are freemen or serfs, loyal citizens or rebels, tread the fair fields of immensity with the joyous step of liberty, or sigh in dungeons with the “spirits in prison,” we are in His kingdom, and bound indissolubly to His throne.

(2.) It does not mean merely *being under the Gospel dispensation*. It is true, the expression “*kingdom of God*” is sometimes used to designate the Gospel economy. Thus John the Baptist used it

when he said, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand;" thus Mark used it when he speaks of Joseph of Arimathæa as "waiting for the kingdom of God;" and thus Jesus uses it when, at the commencement of His ministry, He said, "I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also." But this cannot be the meaning here. For in this sense the "*kingdom of God*" comes to every man to whom the Gospel is preached.

What, then, does it mean? The general meaning, I think, may be expressed thus:—*The reign of God over the individual soul with its hearty concurrence.* God's kingdom over souls may be divided into two provinces. The one He rules *without* the concurrence of the subject; and the other *with its hearty wish and choice.* Wicked men and fallen angels belong to the former; true Christians and celestial intelligences belong to the latter. The latter is the reign spoken of here. And in other places where the "*kingdom of God*" is represented as being "within;" as coming "not with observation;" as being not "in word but in power;" as consisting "not in meat and drink, but in righteousness, and peace, and joy, in the Holy Ghost;" as being that which Christ states to be the duty of every man to "seek first." It means, having God as the chosen Monarch of the soul; to marshal all its faculties, direct all its operations, and turn the whole current of its thoughts and sympathies into the channel of His own will. Now that this entrance into the "*kingdom of God*"—this cordial, spiritual obedience to the Divine will—is indispensable to man's well-being, will appear from the following considerations—

First: Without it there is no true Liberty of Soul. Liberty and slavery may both be expressed by one word—*subjection*. Subjection to the senses, the opinions, the passions, the caprice, either of ourselves or others, is serfdom. Physical slavery is but a very faint image of spiritual; and civil despots are but the shadows of those enthroned in a corrupt soul. But, whilst *subjection* will represent slavery, it will also represent Liberty. Absolute submission to God, the adoption of His will as our law in everything, the surrendering of self and all to Him, are the eternal conditions of true liberty in a moral creature. His will alone affords scope for the full and everlasting play of all our powers. A supreme sympathy with that will is the only inspiration, that can set and keep the soul in the enchanting music of harmonious action. Philosophically, men may as well strive for physical vigour without obedience to the laws of health, as strive for liberty without submission to the will of God. His will is the universal, inflexible, and absolute law of the creation; opposition to it is necessarily confusion and slavery; a loving submission to it is harmony, freedom, and bliss.

Secondly: Without it there is no true Peace of Conscience.

A *feeling* that the Supreme Will should be obeyed, underlies all our consciousness, and baffles all the attempts of scepticism to obliterate. Men, everywhere, whatever their theological views or measure of intellectual culture and development, *feel* that the will of their Deity is the supreme law which they are *bound* to obey. Conscience will own allegiance to no sovereign but the ABSOLUTE. Other lords may usurp the throne, and obtain mastery over it, but it will never *peacefully* submit to their rule. No time or force can crush its instinct of rebellion against all authorities but the Supreme. It will shake every fibre and faculty of the soul, with the terrible roar of the artillery which it hurls against all potentates but God. Our moral constitution renders peace of soul impossible under any reign but His. But where He reigns all is blessed serenity. Like the noiseless stars, every faculty moves peacefully in a sphere made luminous by the rays it borrows from the central fires. Like the channel of a majestic river into which a thousand streams have flown, the underlying purposes of the soul bear on in calm and mighty flow all the complex tendencies and the sympathies of the heart.

Thirdly: Without it there is no true Growth of Soul. By the growth of soul, I mean, not the growth of any particular faculty, principle, or power; but the growth of the whole—the growth of all its parts: as the tree grows simultaneously and in symmetrical proportions. As *Bacon* says, in relation to moral culture, “We must not proceed as a statuary proceeds in forming a statue, working now on one part and now on another; but we must proceed, and it is in our power to proceed, as nature does, in forming a flower or any other of her productions; *Rudimenta partium omnium simul parit et producit*; she throws out altogether, and at once, the whole system of every being, and the rudiments of all the parts.” I mean growth in *holy, moral* force. Force to subordinate the outward to its will. Force to tread the path of duty with a firm and dauntless step, looking foes the most ruthless and terrible in the eye, and bidding them stand aside. Force to bear the spirit buoyantly over the mountain billows, and under the midnight storm. Force to resist the evil and pursue the good, to subordinate the senses to the intellect, the intellect to conscience, and the conscience to the majesty of Right. Force to meet death with triumph, and, like Stephen, cleave the heavens in the mortal hour, and catch an uplifting glance of the glories of the spiritual world. This is the true Force of the Soul. A force without which, what are we? Machines! Yes; machines worked by external influences; “reeds shaken by the wind;” slaves under the iron yoke of circumstances—feeling ever the lash of remorse for the past, and of terror for the future. But this Force belongs to no soul where the Moral Monarch is not God. Under every other sovereignty the spirit, in

a moral sense, becomes more and more feeble ; the victim not only of outward, but of inward, evils ; scared by the demon ghosts of its own morbid fancies. But under the genial and benign reign of the Eternal Father, the soul strikes its roots deep beside the fountain of life ; and grows pure and beautiful as the lily, and strong and majestic as the cedars of Lebanon.

Sufficient, I presume, has been stated to show the truth of this first proposition, which I deduce from the passage under review, namely, that *man's well-being in the spiritual universe depends upon his now entering into the "kingdom of God."* We must "*enter*" His kingdom ; come at once under His rightful and gracious reign ; have His will done *in* us as it is done in heaven, before we can, from the very necessity of our nature and relations, be happy. And to be thus in His kingdom, is to be in heaven *now* as truly, if not as perfectly, as patriarchs and apostles are there. To have this "*kingdom of God*" within, is to have all the splendours and felicities of the apocalyptic heaven without.

I infer from the text—

II.—THAT INTRODUCTION INTO THIS "KINGDOM OF GOD" INVOLVES A GREAT MORAL CHANGE.

"*Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*" Nicodemus being a Jew, a Pharisee, and a member of the great council of the nation, ought to have known what the expression "*born again*" meant. It was a phrase applied to designate the change which took place in a Gentile proselyte, when he renounced his paganism and identified himself with the Jewish religion. So great was the importance which the Hebrew Rabbis attached to this change, that they regarded the proselyte as no longer akin to his Gentile father or mother ; and he might marry, without committing incest, within the proscribed degrees of physical relationship.

But great as was the change, which the expression was used to designate in relation to the proselytes to Judaism, Jesus employed it to represent a far greater change. It is a *moral* change—moral in contradistinction to all physical, theoretical, or institutional changes. It is a change of heart. But *what is a change of heart ?* It is a CHANGE IN THE SUPREME OBJECT OF LOVE.

Now, that an introduction into this kingdom involves a great moral change, will appear evident from two considerations,—

First : That the object of Supreme Love is evermore the Monarch of the Soul. The real sovereign is that which rules the soul. Monarchs, whose pageantry dazzles the eyes of the populace, whose names ring through obsequious courts and servile crowds, and whose authority is supported by mighty fleets and triumphant

armies, are powerless, compared with those unseen potentates that Rule Within.

And who are these? The objects of your *chief* regard. It is a law of being, *that whatever you love the most, rules you most absolutely.* There are, therefore, as many moral empires on earth, as there are objects which men hold in supreme regard. PLEASURE is the sovereign of the sensual; GAIN is the sovereign of the avaricious; POWER is the sovereign of the ambitious; DISPLAY is the sovereign of the vain; and GOD is the Sovereign of the Good. What "principalities and powers" there are even in earth's department of the spiritual universe! Into how many petty provinces is the empire of human souls divided! Another consideration is—

Secondly: That at the outset of man's history, God is *never* the Object of his Supreme Love. To offer illustrations, or evidences of a fact so patent to all, would be unnecessary and tedious; and to explain the various theories which have been set forth to account for it, is neither essential to the argument nor in keeping with my plan. I simply note the fact because, viewed in connection with our first consideration under this head, it shows that to enter into the "*kingdom of God*" involves a great moral change. We are not "*born*" into this kingdom;—"other lords have had dominion over us." As the monarch of the soul is the object of supreme love, and as the object of our chief affection, at first, is not God; if we would come under His Empire—if we would have Him enthroned within us, we must withdraw our hearts from other objects, and set them entirely upon Him. We "*must be born again.*" If the old potentates of the soul are to be deposed, and God have the kingdom within us, the heart must change its chief object of love; *and this is Regeneration.* For a change in the object of supreme love, leads inevitably to a change in all our principles, purposes, and pursuits. It makes us new moral men.

Here hinges our fate. This is *the crisis.* There are other great crises in the history of man. *Birth* is a great crisis. To be ushered, a helpless infant, into this wonderful creation; to breathe a breath of perhaps deathless inspiration; to receive impressions that the rolling current of ages cannot wear away; and to form a character out of which shall spring a Paradise or flame a Gehenna, is a stupendous event. *Death* is a great crisis. To leave the world, to detach ourselves for ever from the scenes of our first impressions and activities, to surrender the body to the noisome worm and the gloomy grave, to leave for ever the stage of probation and the means of spiritual discipline, and to enter the ghastly scenes of retribution, and to go we know not where; this is indeed a Tremendous Crisis. But great as is the crisis of birth and death, this crisis of *Regeneration* is, for many reasons, more important

than either. It gives our birth a value, and our death a glory. It introduces us, *even now*, into the "kingdom of God"—a kingdom whose sphere is the holy universe, whose citizens are the great and good of all worlds, whose law is love, and whose duration is eternity.

I infer from the text—

III.—THAT THE GREAT CHANGE, THUS INVOLVED IN AN INTRODUCTION TO THE "KINGDOM OF GOD," IS EFFECTED BY THE DIVINE "SPIRIT."

"*Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*" The expression "*of water and of the Spirit*" does not refer to two agents, but to one. It is a *Hebraism*, meaning Spiritual Water. John, the illustrious herald of Jesus, had already spoken of *fire* in connection with the Spirit's renovating operation. "I indeed," says he, "baptize you with water unto repentance: but He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." As John did not mean material fire there, neither does Christ mean material "*water*" here. Jesus may have spoken of the Spirit in connection with "*Water*" for one or two, or both, of the following reasons—

(1.) *To represent the renovating effects of the Divine Agent.* His great aim in all His benign operations upon the human soul, is to cleanse it thoroughly from all the filthiness of erroneous thoughts, corrupt feelings, and perverse volitions, and give it a new and ever-growing life. His action on the human spirit is like that of "fire" and "*water*"—it renovates and purifies. Fire and water, the mightiest forces in the material world, whose incessant action gives every moment new forms to nature, are assuredly the most striking emblems of the operations of the Divine Spirit upon the human soul. Moreover, Jesus may have spoken of the Spirit in connection with "*Water*"—(2.) *To represent the insufficiency of "water" itself to effect this Regeneration.* Jesus was speaking to one who knew, or ought to have known, what a *new birth* among the Jews meant. He knew washing or ablution was the necessary process through which this change was effected; that no Gentile came over to the Jewish religion who was not washed with material water. Jesus, therefore, might have used the expression to intimate to Nicodemus that the new birth which he required was not like the new birth of the Jewish religion, which required material water. But it was that which required the Spiritual Water—a something that must act purifyingly, not on the body, but on the soul. In the light of this interpretation the passage, instead of affording the slightest support, either to those who hold the absurd dogma of baptismal regeneration, or those who attach so much importance to baptism as to make it a badge of denominational distinction, or

a condition of Church membership, throws the ceremony into a very insignificant aspect. The baptism connected with the new birth of which Christ speaks, is a spiritual, not a material, baptism—a baptism that cleanses the soul, and not the body. “Neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.”

The language of Jesus here suggests two thoughts in relation to the Spirit’s agency in this work of Regeneration—

First: The Indispensable Necessity of the Spirit’s agency to effect this Change. Jesus most clearly intimated this. It is a doctrine so evident, both from Scripture and the difficulties of the work, that it is a settled article in the creed of all orthodox Churches. Were it inquired, wherein does the Necessity of Divine agency in the effectuation of this work appear? I would answer in the very *nature* of the work. What is the work? Recur to the definition already given. IT IS A CHANGE IN THE OBJECT OF SUPREME LOVE. Before the human mind can make God the Object of Supreme Love three things *must* take place. (1.) *A supremely attractive revelation of Him.* Who can love an unknown object? And God, to be known must be revealed. (2.) *Clearness of moral vision to see Him.* He may be revealed, but if our eyes are so dim and filmy that we cannot see Him, His revelation will answer no practical purpose. What impression does the finest landscape, or the most glorious sky, make on the heart of the blind? (3.) *A practical determination to direct the eye fairly to Him.* He may be fully and gloriously unfolded to the vision, and the vision in itself may be good; but if we will not look, no impression can be produced. The Spirit is necessary for these *three* things. Who but the inspiring Spirit, could have given us such a soul-attractive Revelation of God as we have in Christ? Who but He can so clear the spiritual vision—so scatter, by His refreshing breeze, those clouds and mists of impure feeling that darken the moral horizon, and enable it to see Infinite beauty distinctly as “the pure in heart” alone can see? Who but He can overcome that strange reluctance of the soul to approach its Maker, and fix its gaze on Him? Verily, the nature of the work indicates, that if we are “*born again,*” it must be by the “*Water and the Spirit*”—the renovating energy of God. The necessity of the sun and shower, to the production of vegetable life, is not more *reasonably* obvious, and more generally recognized by true Christians, than are the operations of the Spirit to the generating of spiritual life in the souls of men. All good, moral as well as natural, is from God; all life, of every species, is from one primal Source. The possessors of this new moral life, whatever their theological views may be, will evermore involuntarily, and by a necessary law of their religious nature, gratefully and

adoringly refer it to the "Father of Spirits." Another thought suggested is—

Secondly: There is much in the manner of the Spirit's Operation in effecting this change that is very Mysterious. "*The wind bloweth where it listeth,*" &c. Several ideas have been attached by divines to these words; which, judging from the context, were evidently not intended to be expressed by Christ. For example, they have been supposed to teach the *Sovereignty* of Divine influence. That God works upon men according to His own "good pleasure" is an undeniable doctrine; for it is absurd to suppose that if the Almighty acts at all, He acts from any force but the spontaneous impulse of His own nature. But the idea, however true, is not taught here. They have also been supposed to teach the *Irresistibility* of Divine influence. It has been said that as the "*wind*" is beyond man's power,—as he cannot arrest its course or control its operation, neither *can* he effectually resist the spiritual influence of God. But this idea is *untrue* in itself. It is contradicted by the doctrine of human responsibility, and the consciousness of every regenerated man. All that Jesus intended to teach was, evidently, that it could not be fully traced in all its *modes* of action. *How* does the "*wind*" act? You see the waters lashed into billows, forests bend, fleets tossed in confusion, and all nature struck with wildness, by an invisible agent. But how? How does that invisible agent produce these effects? Aye, how? This is the question. Perhaps a gust of wind swept o'er the scene, where Jesus and Nicodemus now stood; and the Divine Teacher, as *was His wont*, seized the incident to illustrate His doctrine. We cannot explain all about the manner of Divine influence, but though you cannot tell "*whence it cometh,*" nor "*whither it goeth,*" you hear the sound, and you witness the effects.

I infer from the text:—

IV.—THAT THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN THUS INTRODUCED INTO THE "KINGDOM OF GOD," ARE DISTINGUISHED NOT BY THE SENSUOUS, BUT BY THE SPIRITUAL.

"*That which is born of the flesh, is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit, is spirit.*" What is the great distinction here intended by Christ? It is not, of course, *physiological*. The man before regeneration has "*spirit,*" and the man after has "*flesh.*" The spiritual powers and the material organs remain intact. It is no sin in the good man to have "*flesh;*" it is no virtue in the bad man to have "*spirit.*" Both flesh and spirit are the primary constituents of humanity, and the precious gifts of God. The distinction is *moral*, and refers to a change in the relative influence which these two parts of the man exert over his life and conduct. It is a question of ascendancy. The unregenerated man, whom

Jesus says is "*flesh*," and whom the New Testament generally designates as carnal or fleshly, is the man who is *ruled* by the flesh—whose spiritual powers are in utter subjection to the body—"carnal, sold under sin." He is in all his experiences, purposes, and pursuits, "*flesh*." Matter is the centre of his being, the scene of his constant action, the fountain of his pleasures, the source of his motives. His impulses to action are "fleshly lusts," his mind is a "fleshly mind," his wisdom is "fleshly wisdom." He may possess mind of a high order, and educational attainments, and embellishments of the first class, and still, in the Saviour's sense, be only "*flesh*." He may be merchant, artist, author; but the inspiration of his business, the glow of his genius, the tinge and form of his thoughts will be "*flesh*" rather than "*spirit*." Nay, he may be a Religionist, and that of the most orthodox stamp, but his creed and devotions will "be after the law of a carnal commandment." More than half the religion of Christendom is the religion of "*flesh*." Its inspiration is fleshly feeling, its forms of thought are fleshly; its rules of life are fleshly; its Christ is "known only after the flesh." It "judges after the flesh," "walks after the flesh," "wars after the flesh;" it is altogether sensuous and gross. Wherever the *body reigns*, be it in the halls of science, the councils of cabinets, at the altars of devotion, or in the pulpits of Christianity, the man is "*flesh*" and not "*spirit*." He lives in the realm where nothing but forms are valued or seen; the sensuous realm bounded above, beneath, and around, by matter. His atmosphere is animal feeling—an atmosphere too hazy and thick to transmit the effulgent rays of the spiritual universe. "HE IS FLESH."

But—"That which is born of the Spirit, is spirit." The spirit has regained its rightful sovereignty, and the man "minds spiritual things." Principles are dearer to him than property; the claims of the soul are to him more imperative than those of the body; the invisible is greater to him than the visible; the "unseen" has a more potent influence over him than the seen. "HE IS SPIRIT." Spirit, in the sense of *vivacity*. He is not sluggish and dull, but agile and blithe. All his faculties are instinct with a new life; the life of conscience, the true life of man. The eye of intellect is brightened, thought is active, imagination is always on the wing. He is "*spirit*," in the sense of *social recognition*. He is not known as other men are known, as "men of the world," men who seek fleshly distinctions, fleshly wealth, and fleshly pleasure. But as a spiritual man he is known—as a man distinguished by spiritual convictions, sympathies, and aims. He is "*spirit*" in the sense of *Divinity*. He is "*born*" of the Divine Spirit, and has a resemblance to His Eternal Father. He is a partaker of "the Divine nature." His sympathies centre in the Divine, and his life reflects it. From this subject we learn—

First: The infallible Criterion by which to determine our true position in the spiritual universe. Who are now right in the dominion of the Eternal? In harmony of feeling with all holy created intelligences, and one with God? Not the men who are swayed by their senses, and whose chief study is that of appetite; whose highest question is, "What shall we eat, what shall we drink, and wherewithal shall we be clothed?" Not the men who are more interested in the body than the soul—in matter than mind—in the visible forms of goodness than the hidden principles. No, not these, however high their religious profession, punctual their attendance on religious services, zealous and self-sacrificing their efforts to promote their religious views. They are without the pale of the religious kingdom. They are in a sensuous realm. They may denounce materialism as a system of thought, but in it, as a reality, "they live, and move, and have their being." The men who are in the holy, moral kingdom of God, and whose position in the spiritual universe is right *now*, are "spiritually minded" men—men of spiritual insight, aspirations, and fellowship—men who *practically* make matter, in all her combinations and forms, their absolute subject and efficient servant, the means of spiritual growth, and the organ of Divine communion. They are *now* in that transcendental world, of which philosophic Germany has some delightful dreams—a transcendentalism this, not of mere intellect, but of heart; not of mere thought, but of being; not transcendental idealists, but transcendental *men*. Their "citizenship is in heaven." They are "in heavenly places" now.

Our subject shows—

Secondly: The great Agent on whom we are dependent to make us right in the spiritual universe. The celebrated *Fichte*, speaking of his supersensuous philosophy, says: "I now first truly understand the first power that can enable the imprisoned Psyche to break from the chrysalis and unfold her wings; poised on which, she casts a glance on her abandoned cell before springing upward to live and move in a higher sphere." Great sage! I feel with thee the importance of enabling the "imprisoned Psyche" of humanity to "break from the chrysalis" of flesh and "unfold her wings." But I am at issue with thee, mighty thinker, in supposing that thy philosophy, profound, suggestive, and spiritual though it is, is the "first power" to effect this glorious disimprisonment. No; the "first power" is the power of the *Eternal Spirit*. They only that "*are born of the Spirit, are spirit.*" It is the Divine Spirit that must call up the human from its sensual prison-house where it is "carnally sold under sin"—unchain its limbs, lead it out into the open universe of spiritual thought and life, give it eyes to see the spiritual beauties, and wings to follow the flight of angels, under the unclouded sky of intelligence and love.

Blessed Spirit! help us ever to honour Thy work, follow Thy monitions, and adore Thy love!

My brother! Whilst I would have thee gratefully remember that it is the Spirit of God that must introduce thee to this gracious kingdom, if ever thou art introduced; I would have thee remember also, that that Spirit will do it only *in connection with thine own efforts*. He will help thee as the teacher helps the pupils, through the exercise of their faculties; as nature helps the agriculturist, by giving effectiveness to all the adapted processes of cultivation; as the winds help the mariner on his watery way, by filling the skilfully hoisted canvas with their breathing force. Wait not for miracles. The kingdom of heaven cometh not "with observation." It comes not like the noisy cataract dashing from the hills, but like the silent dew, full of life; it comes not as ocean billows come to the shore, under the furious blast of the storm, but like the deep river it rolls unheard at your feet, and gives life to all who drink; it comes not as the lightning flash, but as the morning sun, silently touching the fields into new life and melting clouds into luminous ether. The Spirit speaks not in the roar of thunder, or the crash of earthquake, but "in the still small voice" of thought, conscience, and truth.

No. II.

CHRIST "ABOVE ALL" AS A TEACHER.

"He that cometh from above is above all : he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth : He that cometh from heaven is above all. And what He hath seen and heard, that He testifieth ; and no man receiveth His testimony. He that hath received His testimony hath set to his seal that God is true. For He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God : for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto Him. The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His hand. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life : and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life ; but the wrath of God abideth on him."—iii. 31—36.

(For Exegetical Remarks, see Vol. I. page 77.)

These verses set forth in the most striking and sublime manner, *The Pre-eminence of Christ as the Great Teacher of humanity.* So exalted is the view here presented of Him as a Teacher, that some critics have concluded that the words could not have been the utterance of John the Baptist ; that they transcend his conception of the Messiah. With such a conclusion I cannot agree, for elsewhere the views of the Baptist concerning the Messiah chime in with those set forth in the text (Luke i. 29, &c.). As the Teacher of humanity Christ is "ABOVE ALL."

The text teaches that—

I.—AS A TEACHER HE IS "ABOVE ALL" IN THE SUBLIMITY OF HIS ORIGIN.

John speaks of Him, as "*He that cometh from above*"—from heaven. All other teachers, from Enoch down to Malachi, were "*of the earth.*" They came into existence in the natural order of generation ; offspring of depraved parents, receiving from earliest childhood a bias to error and to wrong ; and though called in their manhood by God to the high office of teaching, they never lost entirely their *earthliness*. On the contrary, Christ came down from the pure heavens of God, from regions free from all ignorance and error. He had a pre-incarnate existence. (Prov. viii. ; John i.) He saw God. He lived with God. He communed with God. "He was in the bosom of the Father." During His existence here He received no taint of moral earthliness. Whilst here He was

morally "above all." To use the language of one of the greatest thinkers of this age (and one of my oldest acquaintances), the late *Dr. Bushnell*: "We notice the perfect originality and independency of Christ's teaching. We have a great many men who are original, in the sense of being originators, within a certain boundary of educated thought. But the originality of Christ is uneducated. That He draws nothing from the stores of learning can be seen at a glance. The impression we have in reading His instructions justifies to the letter the language of His contemporaries when they say, 'This man hath never learned.' There is nothing in any of His allusions or forms of speech that indicates learning. Indeed there is nothing in Him that belongs to His age or country—no one opinion, or task, or prejudice. The attempts that have been made, in the way of establishing His mere natural manhood, to show that He borrowed His sentiments from the Persians and the Eastern forms of religion, or that He had been intimate with the Essenes, and borrowed from them, or that He must have been acquainted with the schools and religions of Egypt, deriving His doctrine from them—all attempts of the kind have so palpably failed, as not even to require a deliberate answer. If He is simply a Man, as we hear, then He is most certainly a new and singular kind of man, never before heard of: One Who visibly is quite as great a miracle in the world as if He were not a man. We can see for ourselves, in the simple directness and freedom of His teachings, that whatever He advances is from Himself. Shakspeare, for instance, whom we name as being probably the most creative and original spirit the world has produced—one of the class, too, that are called self-made men—is yet tinged in all his works with human learning. His glory is, indeed, that so much of what is great in history and historic character, live and appear in his dramatic creations. He is the high-priest, we sometimes hear, of human nature. But Christ, understanding human nature so as to address it more skilfully than he, never draws from its historic treasures. He is the High Priest, rather of the Divine nature, speaking as One that has come from God, and has nothing to borrow from the world. It is not to be detected by any sign that the human sphere in which He moved imparted anything to Him. His teachings are just as full of Divine nature as Shakspeare's of human." The text teaches that—

II.—AS A TEACHER HE IS "ABOVE ALL" IN THE CHARACTER
OF HIS DOCTRINES.

What does He teach? The passage replies—

First: Realities of which He Himself is Conscious. He teaches that which "*He hath seen and heard.*" That which to Him was not a matter of speculation, but of experience, consciousness.

What had Christ "*seen and heard?*" Ah, what? What are all the forms and voices of eternal truth? What did He teach?

Secondly: Realities which are Moral in their Influence. I use the word *moral* here to signify that which stands opposed to that which is *irresistible* in its influence. Mathematical truths are irresistible. They force their way into man's conviction irrespective of his choice. Not so with the truths which Christ represented. Some did not accept His doctrines. "No man (comparatively few) received His testimony." He spoke eternal realities. But through the pride, the prejudice, and the carnality of His hearers they were rejected. Some, on the contrary, "*believed.*" "*He that hath received His testimony hath set to his seal that God is true.*" When His truths are received in faith, the receiver of them is assured in his own consciousness that "*God is true.*" Christ's doctrines are so congruous with man's sense of right, consciousness of need, feeling of God, desire for immortality, that the believing soul sees them as Divine reality, and admits no more reasoning against them.. What did He teach?

Thirdly: Realities which are Pre-eminently Divine. "*He Whom God hath sent, speaketh the words of God.*" The realities are concerning God Himself, His words, His very thoughts, feelings, purposes. Christ does not teach what men call *sciences*. He teaches God Himself, the Root and Branch, the Centre and Circumference of all science. The text teaches that—

III.—AS A TEACHER HE IS "ABOVE ALL" IN THE AFFECTION OF HIS FATHER.

"*The Father loveth the Son.*"

First: No Teacher Shared so much of the Divine Love as Christ did. The Father loveth all. He is Love. All the true teachers of the world participate in His affection, but He loveth the Son *pre-eminently*. He is His "well-beloved Son." He loves Him with an infinite complacency, and because He is His well-beloved Son, He says to the world, "Hear ye Him."

Secondly: No Teacher Deserved so much of the Divine Love as Christ did. He never offended the Father in His conduct. He never misrepresented the Father either in His spirit, actions, or teaching. "He did no sin, neither was guile found on His lips."

Thirdly: No Teacher gave such Demonstrations of Divine Love as Christ did. "*He hath given all things into His hands*"—the administration of all spiritual blessings; all authority over souls. The text teaches that—

IV.—AS A TEACHER HE IS "ABOVE ALL" IN THE EXTENT OF HIS ENDOWMENTS.

"*For God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto Him.*" The other inspired teachers had the Spirit in a limited degree. But

Christ had that Spirit *fully*. That Christ was thus fully endowed with the Divine Spirit is clear from the fact that "He knew what was in men," and also from the stupendous miracles He performed. But that He had *more* of the Divine Spirit than any of the old prophets had, is manifest by comparing—

First: Their Theology with His. How narrow, material, and one-sided their views of God often appear to be, as compared with Christ's! Their God seemed no more to them at times than a Local, Vindictive, Passionate Divinity. Christ's God was an *Infinite* Spirit and an *All-Loving* Father. By comparing—

Secondly: Their Spirit with His. They shun sinners and pray for their destruction. "Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth, and let the wicked be no more." Language breathing this spirit, frequently occurs in their address. Christ loved His Enemies, mingled with Sinners, came to "call them to Repentance." By comparing—

Thirdly: Their Lives with His. The best of them often displayed great moral infirmities. Moses lost his temper; Elijah lost heart in duty; Jeremiah grew sulky, saying, "I will speak no more in Thy name." But through the whole life of Christ not a shadow of defect! He challenged His enemies to "convince" Him of sin.

There is no teaching like *Life* Teaching. All mere verbal and professional teaching is as the tinkling cymbal to this true trump of God. It is the most *intelligible* teaching. The language of the lip is different in different countries. It requires in some cases years of study to understand it. The language of the *life* men interpret by the instinct of their nature. The eye, the tone, the smile, the gait: the spirit of the man leaps out to light in these. It is the most *undebatable* teaching. Verbal teaching is frequently so hazy as to provoke discussion. Words are addressed to the understanding, and the understanding will criticize. But what life teaches is unmistakable. A noble deed strikes right to the hearts of men. A real true life is a Divine poem which sets men to music rather than discussion. Men reason against your Paleys; but they cannot reason against those whose lives commend themselves to "every man's conscience in the sight of God." It is the most *constant* teaching. Letter and logic teaching are only occasional. Sometimes they are expressions of the teacher's life, and sometimes they are not. But *life* teaching is constant. Its light streams through all the acts and events of every day life. It is not the brooklet that rattles after the shower, and is silent in the drought, but it is the perennial river rolling in all seasons, skirting its pathway with life and beauty, and reflecting on its bosom the heavens of God. The text teaches that—

V.—AS A TEACHER, HE IS "ABOVE ALL" IN THE NECESSITY OF HIS MISSION.

Trust in Him is *essential* to man's eternal well-being. "*He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.*" Here are suggested two points which show Christ's pre-eminence as a Teacher—

First: The Faith which He requires as a Teacher is Faith in Him. It is not merely faith in the facts of His history, or in the truth of His propositions, but *in Himself* as the Son of God and the Saviour of the world. We are not called upon to put unbounded trust in the character even of inspired teachers. Nowhere are they held up as an example. Indeed, were we to trust even in the best of them we should be ruined.

Secondly: Faith in Him determines the destiny of the soul. Those that believe *in Him* "*hath everlasting life,*" *i. e.* life without any evil in connection with all good, and life without end—" *everlasting life.*" *Hath* it; not shall have. They that believe in Him *hath* this life now. "*This is life eternal,*" &c. Heaven is not something then and yonder, but now and here. What of those that believe not? "*The wrath of God abideth on him.*"* *Wrath* in God is not like wrath in man—passion, revenge, malignity. It is opposition to all that is unjust, irreverent, malignant, wicked in His universe. God is against bad men as the morning sun is against the burglar and the assassin—checking, baffling, exposing, and confounding them.

CONCLUSION. Christ is our MORAL monarch. "One is your master, even Christ."

* See next page.

No. III.

WRATH IN GOD.

“The wrath of God.”—iii. 36.

(For Exegetical Remarks, see Vol. I. p. 77.)

THE word ὄργη, translated “*wrath*,” occurs about twenty-five times in the New Testament. It is sometimes rendered “anger,” “vengeance,” and “indignation.” The Bible is a book for men: it speaks after the manner of men, in order that men may reach its meaning. Hence it presents even the Infinite in human forms, ascribes to Him attributes that are purely human. The Eternal is spoken of as seeing and hearing, going and coming, working and resting, loving and hating. Much mischief has been done by such a literal interpretation of all this as to humanize the Deity. The word “*wrath*” as applied to God has been thus treated.

It may be useful as well as suggestive briefly to compare the Difference and Agreement of “*wrath*” in God and “*wrath*” in man.

I.—THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WRATH AS IT IS IN GOD AND AS IT IS IN MAN.

First: In man it is an *Exciting* Passion. How wrath excites a man! It shakes him to the very centre of his being. It is seen in his countenance, sometimes in a ghastly pallor, and sometimes in scarlet fire. The eyes, ever true to the soul, flash out the fury. The joints tremble, and the blood boils and quivers. Wrath in man is a most agitating passion. Not so in God; it makes no ripple on the infinite river of His being. In Him it cannot be a state of mind that ever had a beginning, or that will ever have an end. He is ever of one mind. There is no succession of feeling in the Infinite heart.

Secondly: In man it is a *Malignant* Passion. It is rancorous, spiteful, and resenting. It burns with a desire to make miserable its object. But there is no malevolence in the heart of God. “Fury is not in Me.” He Who alone understands His own nature thus declares Himself. “God is love,” says John. The whole construction of the universe confirms this. Had the Creator been malevolent, what a different universe we should have had! All

His other attributes are but so many forms of His Love. All His commandments are but Love speaking in the imperative mood. All His threatenings are but Love, raising its warning voice to prevent His creatures from falling into ruin.

Thirdly: In man it is a *Painful* Passion. Wrath in man is a tormenting fiend. So long as it exists there is no inward rest or pleasure. Hence the man who treasures anger gives his enemy an advantage over him, inflicts a greater injury on himself than he can on the object of his hate. But nothing can disturb the peace of the "ever blessed God." He knows no pain. He is the God of Peace; He is eternally tranquil.

Fourthly: In man it is a *Selfish* Passion. Man's wrath is excited because something has occurred which he supposes injuriously affects himself in some way or other: his reputation, his influence, his interests. Wrath raises him up to defend himself. There is nothing of this kind in the wrath of God. No creature can injure Him. "If thou be righteous what givest thou Him, or what receiveth He of thine hand?" "Thy wickedness may hurt a man as thou art, and thy righteousness may profit the son of man." Some speak of human sin as something challenging the Almighty to efforts as to how best to defend His character, reputation, and government. Blasphemy this! Notice—

II.—THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN WRATH AS IT IS IN GOD AND AS IT IS IN MAN.

There must be some things common to both which warrant the application of the same word. What are they? There are at least two things—

First: Repugnance. Wrath in man raises his whole nature against the offences, or the offender, or both. There is at once a recoil and an antagonism. All friendly connection and amicable intercourse are at end. Is there nothing answering to this in the Wrath of God in relation to sin?

(1.) Wickedness is repugnant to His *Nature*. He is essentially holy, and moral evil in all its forms must be necessarily disagreeable to Him. Solomon specifies seven things that are an abomination unto the Lord (Prov. vi. 6). But *all* things contrary to the ineffable purity of His nature must be abhorrent. This His Word declares over and over again. "O do not the abominable thing which I hate."

(2.) Wickedness is repugnant to His *Procedure*. The construction of the universe, the moral constitution of souls, the essential conditions of happiness, personal, social, and national, show that God's whole conduct as Creator and Governor is opposed to sin. As wrath in man separates him from his offender, Wrath

in God detaches Him from wickedness. He has no fellowship with wrong. The other point of agreement is—

Secondly: Retribution. There is in the wrath of man an *avenging* instinct: something that craves for the punishment of the offender. Its cry is,

“O that the slave had forty thousand slaves.
One is too poor, too weak for my revenge:
I would have nine years a killing.”—*Shakspeare.*

There is this Retributiveness in the Wrath of God. Not as a Passion, but as an Eternal and unalterable Principle. The principle of Retribution runs through the whole universe, so that the wrong never fails to meet with punishment. Retribution as it runs through the judiciary arrangements of our own country, is an imperfect expression and form of it as it runs through the great universe of God. Retribution even in our Law is too well organized to be a tumultuous passion: it is a calm, all-pervading principle, having its administrators everywhere. The constable that lays hold of the culprit, and takes him to his cell, has no passion for revenge. The judge who tries his case maintains the utmost calmness. The jury pronounces the verdict without any personal feeling. The final executioner acts as emotionless as a machine. It is somewhat thus, but in a far more quiet and effective way, that God's retribution runs through all life. The Nemesis steps closely on the heel of the transgressor, dealing out retribution for every single sin. Thus the wicked now and here are “going away into everlasting punishment.” Every sin is a step adown. Every sinful heart is a nest where the Furies hatch their swarming brood.

CONCLUSION. This subject—

First: Corrects a Theological Error. This error is, that Christ's death was an appeasement of Divine vengeance. Popular hymns are full of this abhorrent and execrable sentiment.

“Thus saith the Ruler of the skies,
Awake, My dreadful sword,
Awake My wrath, and smite the man
My fellow, saith the Lord.
Vengeance received the dread command,
And armed down He flies;
Jesus submits t' His Father's hand,
And bows His head and dies.”—*Watts.*

Though I venerate the author of these lines, and class some of his compositions amongst the choicest productions in the hymnology of Christendom, I condemn such utterances as these as repugnant to every rational idea of God, and to the whole tenor

of Gospel-Teaching. Christ's Mission was the Effect, not the Cause, of God's Love. This subject—

Secondly: Supplies a Terrible Warning to Sinners. "Be sure your sins will find you out." There is wrath! Beware! Wrath in the heart of God. Wrath running through all the Laws of the universe. Wrath that must inevitably fill the wrong-doer with misery. Have I stripped His wrath of terrors? By no means. Of all wrath it is the most distressing in its effects upon its object.

Suppose a man suffering the penalty of having committed some great offence against his brother man. What the offence is it scarcely matters: it may be defamation, robbery, wounding, manslaughter, or even murder. He is in the cell, at the wheel, or in the convict settlement, enduring the punishment which the law had righteously attached to the crime. Now, will not the bitterness of his misery greatly depend upon the state of his mind in relation to the man against whom he had committed the offence? If he regards him as a man of *malevolent* nature, ever ready to cause misery to his fellow-creatures, will he not feel almost an inner satisfaction that he has inflicted upon him the wrong for which he is suffering? But if, on the other hand, he regards him as a meek and kind-hearted man, ready ever to render service to his fellow men, the bitterness of remorse will greatly enhance the painfulness of his punishment. It will be thus with the impenitent sinner when judgment overtakes him. He will feel that he has wronged not a *malevolent* God Whose rancorous wrath is a curse to the universe, but a God of Infinite goodness. That the wrath under which He is suffering is not the wrath of a malicious nature, but the wrath of Love—the "wrath of the Lamb." It is the wrath that sets Him in antagonism, not to the rights, the interests, or to the happiness of His creatures, but which raises Him in resistless hostility to all that is opposed to their holiness, their liberties, and their everlasting progress in intelligence, goodness, and bliss. This is the terrible wrath, this wrath of Love. To endure it is the hottest and deepest hell of souls. The wrath of malicious persons you may resent; you may struggle against its savage fury, and even die under its severest tortures with a moral satisfaction. But, O Heavens! who can stand against the wrath of Love! An ocean of oil in flames! This subject—

Thirdly: Urges the Necessity of Regeneration. The only way to avoid this Wrath is to avoid sin; the only way to avoid sin is by Repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

"Unless ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." "Marvel not that I say unto you, Ye must be born again."

No. IV.

TRUE WORSHIP.

“Our fathers worshipped in this mountain ; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. Jesus said unto her, Woman, believe Me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what : we know what we worship : for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth : for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is a Spirit : and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.”—iv. 20—24.

(For Exegetical Remarks, see Vol. I. p. 87.)

Man is constitutionally a Worshipper. There is an element within him, which prompts him to seek, qualifies him to recognize, and compels him to render homage to, a God. This element I regard not as a something transmitted to him by education, or attained by any effort on his part, but as an essential constituent of his spiritual being. It is the incorruptible germ of his manhood, which no power can uproot, no catastrophe destroy. It lives through all ages, and develops itself in every part of the globe, and in every stage of civilization. Man by the necessity of his nature is a worshipper ; his being “crieth out for the living God.” This worshipping element is the proof of a God. Where this element is, there is no need of logic ; it is a matter of consciousness, and where it is not, the soul of the man is gone, and there is no power to appreciate any argument on the subject. The existence of a Supreme One is a fact inscribed on the ever-unfolding page of man’s consciousness. The man who endeavours to prove to you that there is a sun, at the moment when its rays are penetrating your eyeballs and surrounding you with its brightness, acts wisely compared with him, who essays to prove to you the existence of God whilst His existence is implied in the very structure, as well as in all the operations of the soul.

“Where’er I turn my restless eye
Wandering from earth to heaven, from sphere to sphere,
Great God ! I feel Thy present Deity,
Everywhere feel Thee—Thou art everywhere.

Yes! Thou art here—above the empyrean high
 Veiled all in light:
 Filling creation with Thy presence bright;
 With the proud splendour of Thy majesty.
 The little flower that grows
 Beneath me; the gigantic mountain steep
 Whose brow is covered with eternal snows,
 Whose roots are planted in the deep;
 The breeze that murmuring blows
 Among the green leaves, rustling in the sun,
 And yonder glorious star advancing on,
 Gladdening earth, heaven, and all things as he goes:
 These tell me that 'tis Thou
 Who givest that sun that brightness;
 And that the flower which breathes and blooms alone,
 Breathes, blooms all in Thy pure sight."—*Melendez.*

The *Perversion* of this instinct of worship is the Ruin of Humanity. If this is wrong, the mainspring is disordered and every part of the machinery is out of joint. If this is wrong the very fountain of our being is poisoned, and all the streams are pernicious. Its misdirection, alas! is general; and hence the disorder and misery of the world. False worship lies, perhaps, at the root of all the evils that afflict our race.

The great world of false worshippers may be divided into three classes:—*Those who worship a wrong God; those who worship a right God in a wrong way; and those who worship the right God in a right way from a wrong reason.*

There are those who worship a *Wrong God*. History tells us that no less than thirty thousand Divinities were embraced in that vast system of idolatry which prevailed in Greece and Rome. In ancient Egypt a similar system prevailed; the meanest and most contemptible creatures in nature, receiving the religious homage of human souls. The less enlightened races of antiquity, were of course not less idolatrous. The Phœnicians, the Syrians, the Canaanites, the Babylonians, the Arabians, the Ethiopians, the Carthaginians, the ancient Gauls and Britons, were even more deeply sunk in idolatry than classic Greece or Imperial Rome. Nor in this age are false gods less numerous; for the heathen world is crowded with them. The prevalence of idolatry throughout all ages is awfully significant. It argues the strength of man's religious nature. What are idols but the idea of human souls personified; outward symbols of man's deep craving and tremendous capacity for worship? It argues, too, the dense moral darkness that shrouds the spirits of men; and it teaches the lesson which every philanthropist should learn; namely, that to improve the human race effectively, to raise it from its savagism, its depravities, and its miseries, you must take hold upon the religious nature, pour light into it, and "turn it from

dead idols to serve the living God." Unless you take hold of man's religious element you can never raise him.

There are *false* worshippers, too, who worship the right God *in a Wrong Way*. There are thousands who profess to worship the One True and Living God, but whose methods of worship are false. There are those who employ a *wrong mediation* in their worship, such are those who approach Him through priests, human merit, and sacrifices. And there are those who employ a *right mediation in a wrong way in their worship*;—such are mere nominal Christians—those who recognize the atonement only theoretically and formally in their devotions.

There are also false worshippers who worship the right God in a right way, from a *Wrong Reason*. Thoughtless multitudes repeat Christian Creeds in Christian temples, bow before Him in the attitude and with the language of devotion, because it is the fashion of the country in which they live. Others kneel before Him with crouching terror and servile alarm, as slaves before a tyrant, hoping to appease His wrath and escape His fierce displeasure. Wrong motives in religion are, it is to be feared, prevalent where there are the Right God and the true method of worship.

If, then, the misdirection of this worshipping element in man is man's ruin, and this misdirection is so general in false worship, the all-important question is, What is True Worship? Worship we must; it is a *necessity* of our nature. But how shall we do it rightly? Will nature instruct us? Far am I from disparaging nature as a religious revelation. But the idolatry of ages has demonstrated its insufficiency rightly to direct the human soul. Christ is the Infallible Teacher on this question. In these few words with the woman of Samaria He throws out a theory of worship, which the greatest sages of the ancient world had never reached, and which agrees at once with our reason and our heart.

I.—HE REVEALS THE TRUE OBJECT OF WORSHIP.

In these words He reveals that glorious One, Whom the human soul was made to worship with supreme love and adoration. The view here given of the great Object of worship is exactly fitted to the reason and heart of humanity. He teaches—

First: That the Object is a Person. "*They that worship Him.*" Christ gives no pantheistic idea of God: does not speak of Him as the underlying substance, the eternal *All*. Nor as the Eternal River of which all other existences in the universe are bubbles, made of it, rising from it, and breaking into it, in an unending succession. Such an idea is but a dream; a splendid dream, it is true; still, only a dream. It may interest a highly speculative

intellect and charm a poetic imagination, but it does not satisfy the reason or meet the cravings of the heart. Christ says, "*They that worship Him*"—not *it*;—a Being Who has personal attributes;—(1.) Affection, (2.) Will, (3.) Freedom, (4.) Power to recognize and to reciprocate our love. He teaches—

Secondly: That the Object is One. "*The Father.*" There is but *one* God, "the Father of all, and by Whom are all things." The One Whom the old patriarchs worshipped, and the apostles worshipped, and Jesus worshipped, and Whom the good in all ages worshipped, and all in heaven worship, we are to worship. There is but *One*.* Then in our worship let us give Him our *undivided* hearts; let there be no restraint in our affections; let the whole soul flow forth in Supreme love towards Him. He teaches—

Thirdly: That the Object is a Spirit. What is a Spirit? No philosopher has yet been able to answer that question. We attach certain ideas to spirits: such as indivisibility, invisibleness, intelligence, affection, unbounded power of thought or action.† "*God is a Spirit.*" The universe echoes this; creation develops plan; plan implies Spirit. Man's nature teaches that God is a Spirit. Instinctively we believe in spirits. What we admire in art are the attributes of spirit; what we admire in nature are the attributes of spirit. "*God is a Spirit;*" an all-seeing, all-present, all-powerful, all-loving Spirit. We have to worship a Spirit. He teaches—

Fourthly: That the Object is Paternal. "*The Father.*" "*Our Father.*" We have His *Nature*; for children participate in the nature of their parents. The human soul is the fairest image of God. The magnanimity of Moses, the genius of Isaiah, the zeal of Paul, the flight of Milton, the reasoning of Butler, and the philanthropy of Howard, give to me a nobler idea of God, than I can get from the finest sceneries of earth or the brightest orbs of heaven. They are rays from the Father of lights. But as a Father we have not only His nature, but His *Love*. A paternal relationship is a relationship of love. "As a father pitieth his children," &c.

Christ taught us to worship God, not as an insulted Sovereign, but as a Loving Father. He taught His disciples to address Him as a Father. (1.) When Christ tells us to worship God, as a Father, we have an *intelligible* idea of worship. The relationship of a Creator to the creature, who can understand? The relation of an Infinite Sovereign to the universe is also too vast for our comprehension; but the relation of a parent to a child we can all appreciate. Our first look of reverence, our first emotion of love, our first feelings of obligation, were directed to parents—they were the first gods we worshipped. When Christ tells us, therefore, to worship God

* See Prelection on Monotheism.

† See p. 211.

as a Father, we can understand something of what worship is. (2.) When Christ tells us to worship God as a Father we have an *attractive* idea of worship. Men have been taught to regard God with superstitious fear and trembling. They have been taught to approach Him rather as a tyrant requiring flattery and tears to obtain His favour, than as a Father full of love, delighted with the approach of His erring children;—running to meet the prodigal son “when a great way off.” Let men feel that the God to be worshipped is a Father, and then they will hasten to His presence: they will say with an old Hebrew: “I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord.”

Such, then, is the Glorious Object of Worship as presented by Christ. He has *Personality, Unity, Spirituality, and Fatherliness.*

II.—HE REVEALS THE TRUE METHOD OF WORSHIP.

“*They that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.*”

First: “*In Spirit,*” in contradistinction to *Ritualistic* Service. Under the law there was a great deal of ritualism in connection with worship.

(1.) There were rites referring to the *Body* in worship. There were ablutions, fastings, and feastings;—there was much bodily service required. Bodily service now in worship profiteth but little; nothing, in truth, except as it expresses and propagates the devout feelings of the soul.

(2.) There were rites referring to *Place* in worship. The Temple of Jerusalem was the appointed place of worship; thither the tribes were to repair to celebrate their religious devotions; and worship became identified with that place. An idea this too prevalent still; an idea, alas! encouraged by a priestly consecration of places. But Christ teaches that place has little to do with worship; that all places are equally sacred. The mountain on which the Temple stood for ages; the brow of Calvary stained with the blood of the world’s High Priest; the marble sepulchre where the mighty Redeemer slept, and whence He rose as the “Conqueror of death and the Captain of human salvation”—are no more consecrated to worship than those rude hills which the foot of man has never trod, and from which a breath of worship has never ascended. “*Neither in this mountain nor that,*” but in the spirit now.

(3.) There were rites referring to *Time* in worship. There were certain days specially appointed for worship—holy days;—but now all days are equally sacred for devotion. We bless God that we have a seventh portion of our time devoted to the purpose; but the proper use of this day is to enable us to make all days equally devotional and Sabbatic.

(4.) There were rites referring to *Officers* in worship. There were men set apart to appear in the presence of God on behalf of the people; but that age is over. Worship now is an individual act; each man is to be priest for himself—to go to God on his own behalf. We are to “*worship Him in Spirit.*” It matters not in what form as to the body, in what attitude, or in what language; it matters not in what place—in the conventicle, or in the cathedral, in the pauper’s cottage, or in the monarch’s palace, on the seashore, or on the mountain brow. It matters not as to *time*—what day of the week, or what hour of the day; it matters not as to those who may *conduct* our devotions. The hour of sacerdotalism is gone. “*God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in Truth.*” The Eternal Father’s Spirit is everywhere; everywhere can we worship Him.

Secondly: “*In Truth,*” in contradistinction to *Hypocritical Service*. There has always been an immense amount of hypocrisy in connection with religious worship. Every word uttered in prayer or praise, not true to our convictions and aspirations, is an act of hypocrisy.

“He asks no taper lights on high surrounding
 The priestly altar and the saintly grave;
 No dolorous chant, nor organ music sounding,
 Nor incense clouding up the twilight nave.
 For he whom Jesus loved hath truly spoken,
 The holier worship which He deigns to bless;
 Restores the lost, and binds the spirit broken,
 And feeds the widow and the fatherless!
 Types of our human weakness and our sorrow,
 Who lives unhaunted by his loved ones dead?
 Who, with vain longing, seeketh not to borrow
 From stranger eyes the home-lights which have fled?
 Oh, brother man! fold to thy heart thy brother,
 Where pity dwells the peace of God is there;
 To worship rightly is to love each other—
 Each smile a hymn, each kindly deed a prayer.
 Follow with reverent steps the great example
 Of Him Whose holy work was ‘doing good:’
 So shall the wide earth seem our Father’s temple,
 Each loving life a psalm of gratitude.
 Then shall all shackles fall, the stormy clangour
 Of wild war music o’er the earth shall cease;
 Love shall tread out the baleful fire of anger,
 And in its ashes plant the tree of peace!”—*Whittier.*

III.—HE REVEALS THE TRUE REASON OF WORSHIP.

“*The Father seeketh such to worship Him.*” This is the Reason. We are to worship the Father thus,—not because such worship is recognized by the institutions of our country and the religious

customs of our age as a proper and a desirable thing; not because it may be a means of averting Heaven's just displeasure on account of our misdoings, escaping the miseries of perdition, and securing the joys of Paradise. Such reasons for worship, however specious to the judgment of the selfish, palatable to the tastes of the vulgar, and prevalent in the devotions of mankind, must be deprecated as foreign to the essence of true worship. The reason for this worship is, the "*Father seeketh*" it. Why does He seek it? Shall ignorant mortals dare moot such questions? Ask! Can they avoid doing so when they think? Do not such queries oftentimes start within us, without, if not against, our consent? Reverently I suggest as an answer—

First: The "*Father seeketh*" such worship because it is *Right*. Where does the rightness appear? On the ground of the *relationship* which He, the ever-blessed One, sustains to us His intelligent creatures? Are we bound to worship Him because He is our Creator and absolute Proprietor? Not entirely so. Mere relationship, apart from *moral excellence* of character, would not make worship right; nay, would not make true worship even *possible*. Were He, the Almighty Creator and absolute Proprietor of the Universe, *untruthful, unjust, malevolent*, could we worship Him? No. Through that moral constitution of nature which He has given us, we should recoil with loathing and horror from Him—did His moral attributes clash with the spiritual intuitions of our being. He might command us to worship Him: He might threaten us with the tortures of eternity if we disobey: yet if His moral character agree not with our native sense of goodness, we could never feel the command to be binding, nor attempt to obey it as practicable.

Worship is *Supreme Gratitude*, and there must be sovereign kindness; worship is *Unbounded Confidence*, and there must be absolute truthfulness; worship is *Self-Surrendering Adoration*, and there must be transcendent excellence. We look, therefore, at His infinite moral excellence, in connection with the *relation* He sustains to us as our Almighty Creator, and *feel* at once He has a right to the undivided and incessant worship of the soul. Another answer I suggest to the question is—

Secondly: The "*Father seeketh*" such worship because it is *Necessary*. Necessary, I mean, to the well-being of the soul. Why does He require us to worship Him? Not because our poor devotions can be of any service to Him. He is neither to be "worshipped with men's hands," nor with men's souls, as though He "needed anything," seeing He giveth to all "life, and breath, and all things." He requires us to worship Him, because it is the *necessary* condition of our happiness. He has so formed us that we cannot be happy without such worship of Him. Worship is

the vital air and sunbeam of the soul; worship is the highest end of our being; it is not the means to a higher end, there is no higher end for creature spirits. Worship is not the way to Heaven, *it is Heaven*; and nothing else is Heaven. If you choose happiness, you must worship—there is no alternative. Worship is the heaven of the soul. Hence the loving Father in love “*seeketh us*” to “*worship Him in Spirit and in Truth.*”

CONCLUSION. “O come let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.” Let us worship Him, not as some transcendent impersonality, the essence of all things, a mystic something—

“Blowing under foot in clover,
Beating over head in stars;”

but as a Being having *personal* attributes, ever cognizant of our existence and conduct, and ever ready to reciprocate our love. Worship Him, not as one out of many divinities, claiming the adoration of our spirits, but as the *only One* demanding the undivided love and homage of our natures. Worship Him, not as an Absolute Sovereign before Whom we are to crouch with terror, and Whose clemency we are to gain by servile cries and tears, but as a Father, from Whose tender and unbounded love all the affection of His creatures is derived; and to which the greatest love of the most loving earthly parent is but as a dim spark to the central sun of the universe. Let His Fatherly love draw us with a rapturous affection into His “presence with thanksgiving, and into His courts with joy.” Worship Him, not as a corporeity, however majestic its proportions and sublime its attitudes, but as a Spirit Whose presence is everywhere, and Whose eyes, like a “flame of fire,” penetrate the profoundest secrets of our existence. Worship Him, not with a mediation of mere human invention, but through the mediation of Him Who is “the Way, the Truth, and the Life.” Worship Him, not in the mere forms of custom, or the rites of ceremonialism, or in the unfelt utterances of devotion, but in “*Spirit and in Truth.*” Let it be soul-work and real. Worship Him, not because others do it, or to appease His wrath, nor for any selfish ends, but because He “*seeketh*” it; and He “*seeketh*” it because it is right in itself, and indispensable to thee. Worship Him, not here or there, now or then, in this action and department of life or that, but everywhere, and at all times, and in all the functions and phases of every day existence. Let every spot of earth be trod by thee as “holy ground,” every deed wrought by thee as religious; let every act, and word, and thought of thy life, form one unbroken psalm, instinctive and melodious with the true spirit of worship. Let worship be the constant attitude and

vital atmosphere of thy spirit. "O come let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord our Maker." What is life without worship?

"What were men better than sheep or goats, that nourish
A blind life within the brain; if knowing God
They lift not hands of prayer, both for themselves
And those whom they call friend?
For so the whole bound earth,
Is every way bound by gold chains about the feet of God."

Tennyson.

No. IV.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF A SOUND THEOLOGY.

“My judgment is just ; because I seek not Mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent Me.”—v. 30.

(For Exegetical Remarks, see Vol. I. p. 131.)

THE querulous and meddling spirit of the mere verbal and turgid religionists of our day, true to its history, is arrogantly projecting on public notice the heterodoxy of independent students of the Holy Book. As this miserable spirit is now constantly ringing in our ears, it will not be untimely, and I trust not unprofitable, to devote a little quiet thinking to the subject of the *Essential Condition of True Theology*.*

I shall make my way to the subject by a few consecutive remarks on the points naturally arising out of the text—

First: There is a Moral Difference in the “*judgment*” of men concerning Divine truth. There are “*just*” and unjust judgments. There is no sphere of study into which man enters, where opinions are so various and even contentious as that of theology. In astronomy, geology, and the physical sciences in general, students are comparatively agreed. But in theology there is an incessant, and frequently a violent collision of sentiment.

The fierce battles that have been fought on the arena of the Bible, make up no small portion of the history of Christendom. Chapters, too, of terrible depravity are found in this voluminous history.—Would, for the honour of our nature, they could be blotted out! This diversity of theological sentiment is *remarkable*. Antecedently, it might have been expected that in whatever other branch of study men differed in judgment, in the science of the God of Love and the common Father of us all, our souls would meet in holy affection, and blend in sweet harmony of thought. Nor is this diversity merely remarkable; it is *moral*. It implies *evil* somewhere. Man is a moral being, and all his judgments must be either “*just*” or unjust. Thoughts have a moral character. The Omniscient penetrates the deepest secrets of the mind, marks its thoughts as they rise from their invisible source, and registers them either as good or bad. Thoughts being either virtuous or otherwise, their influence must be either advantageous or

* This discourse was delivered at the time of the “*Lynch Controversy*.”

pernicious. They are not mere visions that flit before the mind for a moment, and then pass away for ever, making no more impression upon the heart than the feathery clouds of a summer's sky upon the granite hills. They are for the most part germs. The most light and unsubstantial of them are like those tiny seeds that float in their downy bed on the softest zephyr; they drop into a soil where they may germinate and grow. Or, to change the figure, the thoughts that rise in the soul are like the exhalations from the earth, they form clouds in the over-arching heavens—clouds that discharge themselves either in fructifying showers or devastating storms.

Another remark arising out of the text is—

Secondly: The diversity of "*judgment*" on Divine truth is dependent upon our Moral Conduct. Jesus here intimates that if He had been a Self-Seeker, His "*judgment*" would not have been "*just*." It is a fact, patent to every reflective observer of human nature, that our religious creed is rather the outcome of our general life, than the result of intellectual investigation; springs rather from the proclivities of the heart than from the deductions of the head. In moral questions, life rules logic; feeling sways judgment, conduct grows the creed. The ancient philosophers recognized this fact. Aristotle considered a man unfit to meddle with the grave precepts of morality, till the heat of youthful passions and the violence of youthful impulses had passed away. Intellectually we look at moral truth through our lives. Self is our medium of moral vision; the glass through which we look at God and His holy laws. If our moral lives, the medium through which we view Divine doctrine, be coloured or dimmed by sin, all within the sweep of our vision will appear unnatural, unbeautiful, and without truth. You may as well expect to see a green landscape and an azure sky through a crimson glass, as to see truth in its native beauty through a depraved life. The fact is, you must have moral truth in you, as a feeling, before you can see it outside. Could any philosopher impart to you the conception of the taste of a fruit the like of which had never touched your palate, or the fragrance of a flower, the like of which you had never smelt, or the form or colour of an object, the like of which you had never seen before? Impossible. Equally impossible for you to understand the doctrines of love if you are not benevolent; the principles of justice if you are not just. Spiritual things are only spiritually discerned. It is not enough to have the competent intellect. In order to form a "*just judgment*" upon the truth, you must have a pure life. Holy habits are indispensable to the formation of right theological opinions. "The truth as it is in Jesus" is to be reached and realized only by the *spirit* that was in Jesus.

In the moral doings of men, then, you have, as the Heavenly

Teacher intimates, the philosophy of the diverse judgments on Divine doctrine which prevail amongst men.

Another remark arising out of the text is—

Thirdly: Man's moral condition is resolvable into one of two grand principles of action,—Self-Seeking or God-Seeking. "*My judgment is just; because I seek not Mine own will, but the will of the Father.*" Regarding Christ as speaking merely as a Man, three thoughts are here suggested:

(1.) *That man has a Will concerning himself.* He is endowed with the power of free action. He is by nature constituted the sovereign of his own activities. In other words he has a *will*. This will he uses;—he rejects this and chooses that, pursues this in preference to that, because he has a will. He has a *will* concerning his own pleasures, interests, pursuits, self;—an individual purpose in relation to his own life. It is here suggested—

(2.) *That God has a Will concerning man.* "*The will of the Father.*" The Almighty did not make us and leave us to ourselves to live and act as we list. He has a purpose as to how we should employ our powers, regulate our conduct, and spend our lives. It is, moreover, here suggested—

(3.) *That man's Will and God's Will are not always in agreement.* It is implied that the doing of our own will would not be the doing of our Father's. True, Christ's own individual Will was ever in perfect and unbroken harmony with the Will of His Father. But of mankind, as depraved, their will is antagonistic to the will of God. In one respect indeed, the will of depraved man and that of the Great God agree. Both are directed to man's happiness. Man's will is bent on his own happiness, and the will of the Infinite Father concerning us is our well-being. It is not His will that any, not even the "least of the little ones, should perish." The difference, however, is in the *method* of obtaining the happiness. Man aims at it as the *end* of his existence. He holds all things cheap in comparison to it: would subordinate the universe to his own gratification. The Almighty, on the other hand, wills that man should be happy, not by selfishly seeking happiness as an end, but by obeying universal laws, going out of himself, losing the very idea of his own interests in the grand idea of universal good; not by striving to appropriate all to himself, but by giving himself to all, and co-operating with the loving Creator, like stars and suns and holy angels, for the good of the great creation. Which is the wiser of the two methods? The laws of mind and the experience of humanity unite in answering—God's. Hence, to pray as Jesus taught us, for the universal doing of the Divine will, "on earth as it is in heaven," is the same as to pray for the happiness of the human race the world over. To "glorify God" is to do His will, and to do His will is to

promote universal happiness. God's glory is in diffusing His own blessedness through all the districts of His immeasurable creation. There is yet another remark which arises out of these words, and it contains the pith of the utterances, and the point on which I am especially anxious to fasten your attention. Another remark arising out of the text is—

Fourthly: The adoption of the Divine Will is the essential condition of a True Theological Faith. Christ avers that His "*judgment*" was "*just*," because *He did not His own will, but His Father's*;—which really means that He was not under the sway of selfishness, but of benevolence. Every mind in the universe is under the domination of one of these two moral dispositions. He is either selfish or benevolent, either doing his own will or "*the will of the Father*." Now the grand point on which I am desirous of fastening attention in this homily is—

That THIS BENEVOLENCE, THIS DOING THE DIVINE WILL, IS THE ESSENTIAL CONDITION OF A SOUND THEOLOGICAL FAITH. The truth of this will further appear both from the nature of the case, and the testimony of Scripture.

I.—LOOK AT THE NATURE OF THE CASE.

The Selfish Principle gives a False Medium of Vision. Selfishness is a sense which reduces to the smallest point the truly great, and magnifies to the greatest proportions the mere puerilities of existence. It throws all in the moral domain, into false shapes and fictitious proportions, and tinges all with hues untrue to fact. Can a man, for example, who looks at himself through his selfishness, form any truthful idea of himself? Will he not exaggerate his own excellencies and overlook his own defects? Whilst to other men he may appear truly contemptible, to his own eye there is no one so worthy of love and admiration. Selfishness precludes the possibility of self-knowledge. Nor will he be more able to form a "*just*" judgment concerning other men. The noble order of souls, who act on the principle of self-sacrifice, he will not understand, but attribute to them the same self-seeking motives that sway his own life. The great world itself, moreover, he will misinterpret. He will regard it rather as a market for the obtaining "*filthy lucre*," than a temple for the worship of the Infinite; as a scene for mere animal gratification and sensual indulgence, rather than as a school for spiritual study and moral training. The character of Christ will also be shrouded in impenetrable mystery to him. The selfish eye cannot reach the springs of self-sacrificing love. His judgments, too, of the ABSOLUTE ONE will be to the last degree "*unjust*;" He will think the Almighty such as himself. He will judge of His procedure, by the miserable principles of policy that rule himself.

(1.) *Benevolence is the true Medium of Moral Vision.* Through it things appear as they really are; and nothing seems great but God. The man who looks at truth through a selfish heart, is like the man in some dreary wilderness, with the mists of the mountains hanging over him, whilst looking out upon nature. His horizon is contracted and clouded; the azure roof above, and the meads and the mountains around, are shut out from him by the shadows of the wilderness and the haze of the atmosphere. And even the few things which fall under his eye are but dimly perceived; they appear not in the just proportions of nature, nor in the blush of beautiful life. On the contrary, the man who looks at truth through the other moral medium, "*the will of the Father,*" is like the man who, on some cloudless day, looks forth on nature from some Alpine height. The horizon is vast, and all things stand out in just proportion, and form one magnificent landscape to entrance the soul. Not only does "*the will of the Father*" furnish the only true medium of vision, but—

(2.) *Benevolence supplies the healthful Organ of Moral Vision.* Selfishness impairs the intellect, dims its eye, enfeebles its muscles, and fetters its operations. It twines around the reflective faculty as ivy about the oakling, drinking up its vital sap, and tying it down to its own dimensions. Not so with benevolence. Under the influence of godly love, the intellect grows in energy and bounds in freedom. It is to it what the sun is to the eagle—warming its impulses into stimulus and action, and revealing the bright and boundless for the sport of its pinions.

II.—LOOK AT THE TESTIMONY OF SCRIPTURE.

So full is the *Oracle* of utterances confirmatory of this doctrine that I hesitate what to select as the fairest specimen.

Here is one:—"With the merciful, Thou wilt show Thyself merciful; with an upright man, Thou wilt show thyself upright; with the pure, Thou wilt show thyself pure; and with the froward, Thou wilt show Thyself froward." What mean these words but this—That the character of man's heart conditions the character of God's revelation to him? Man's heart is the mirror of his Maker. Here is another:—"The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him, and He will show them His covenant." Does not this mean, that the fear of God—reverential love—is the condition of Divine teaching; that where the heart is right, those great ideas of God will come which are secrets or hidden mysteries to the world? Here is another:—"If any man do His will, he will know of the doctrine whether it be of God." This version, I think, gives not the idea with its full force. The idea is not, that we must *actually perform* the Divine Word before we shall understand the Divinity of the doctrine; but that we must *will* its performance,

be in thorough sympathy with it, and heartily resolve to live it out. It means this:—"If any man *willeth* to do His will, he shall know of the teaching."* This rendering gives even a stronger attestation to the truth of the *position* we are discussing.

Here is another:—"The carnal mind discerneth not the things of the spirit, neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned." What is the carnal mind but the selfish mind? And the selfish mind can never discern Divine things. Here is another:—"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things that God hath prepared for them that love Him." What are those "things" but Divine truths?—and what is the idea therefore but this: That those truths cannot be conveyed to man through eye or ear, or mere natural heart, but only through the organ of a loving soul? Here is another:—"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." And to another and another, and yet another, I might proceed for hours; but I select one more to crown the whole. It is this:—"HE THAT LOVETH NOT, KNOWETH NOT GOD; FOR GOD IS LOVE."

We have reached, I trust, the meaning of Christ in these words, and feel something of their deep philosophy and spiritual significance. "*My judgment is just; because I seek not Mine own will, but the will of the Father.*" As if He had said, "I am influenced by no mere personal considerations; I have no partial system to advocate, no selfish interests to promote; I am wedded to no class interest, nor swayed by any class prejudices or associations; I am ruled by the principles of absolute right, and the spirit of universal benevolence. The "*will of the Father*" is everything to Me. By this I test every doctrine, measure every institution, and determine the true worth of every man. What accords with this, I love and encourage. What is contrary to this I loathe and repudiate."

The subject serves several important purposes—

First: To account for the perversion of the Bible by its avowed disciples. There are views enforced, and institutions advocated, by professed believers in the Bible, and in the Bible's name, which I cannot but regard as essentially incompatible with its genius—as a libel on its teaching, an insult to its authority. Why do men, in

* "You are to observe," says the *Rev. Archer Butler*, in a magnificent discourse on this text, "that an appeal to the original language of this Gospel at once determines, that the declaration is *not*, that if any man will *ac'tually* perform, or continue to perform, the will of God, he shall know the doctrine; but that if any man *sincerely wish* to perform that will, he shall discover the Divine original and descent of the doctrine. The knowledge in question is not, in the first instance, suspended upon the cordial voluntary performance of God's will, but purely, upon the purpose to perform it when once discovered; a qualifying condition for this great gift of knowledge, much more merciful because much more *limited*."

the name of the Bible, preach an *Avenging Deity*? Present the Infinite Governor of the universe to men, as burning with a wrath which never can be appeased, without the infliction of tremendous suffering either on the sinner himself or his Substitute? The answer is, they see Him through their own revengeful nature. Why do men in the name of the Bible preach a *Commercial Atonement*, and represent the ALL-LOVING ONE as consenting to save a certain number of souls, on the condition of a certain amount of suffering being endured on their behalf? The answer is, they see Him through their own sordid feelings and prudential calculations. Why do men in the name of the Bible preach the utter *Impotency of the Human Will*, and represent men as having no more *natural* power to do the right thing than the corpse itself? The answer is, they look at Him through their own morally forceless natures. They are men of feeble purpose, men whose wills have been all but paralyzed by natural impulses and indolent habits. Ultra-Calvinism is the product of intensified selfishness, an impious arrogance, and a powerless will. Why did men in the name of the Bible represent *Slavery as a Divine Institution*? The answer is, They were interested in upholding the accursed system. The fact is, men act from the heart, and then employ the intellect to formulate a theory that shall justify their conduct. This explains all the theological and ecclesiastical corruptions of Hebrew Scripture. The subject serves—

Secondly: To indicate the method in which the Gospel should be preached. If the condition of the heart is thus so fundamentally important; if it so controls the intellect that men cannot form a "*just*" judgment, if they are sordid and self-seeking; then manifestly the grand object of preaching should be to open the heart to right perceptions. But what preaching is suited to this; suited not merely to excite the sensuous sensibilities, but to dispose the moral heart towards truth? Why, the philosophy of your nature as well as experience answers, it must be the preaching not of mere ideas, abstractions, and theories, however true and sublime, but of the heroic deeds, the lofty character, and the stirring inspirations of a morally grand *Individual Life*. *Individual* life, I say, for the heart is always affected more by particulars than generals; more by one member than the whole species. The *Personal* Christ is the Divine power rightly to influence the heart. The true method of Gospel preaching is to preach HIM; manifestly set HIM forth, as crucified in the midst of sinners. Set HIM forth, not as the Purchaser of Divine love, but as its sublimest Exponent, its highest Type, and mightiest Organ. Set HIM forth, not as a model whose features are to be copied, but as an Example Whose inspiring spirit is to be imbibed and cherished. If you would become a great painter, do not slavishly copy the productions of

your master, but seek to catch his genius, and you will produce pictures of your own, that may give you imperishable fame, and inaugurate you as the founder of a new school. Thus let us exhibit not merely the productions, but mainly the genius, of our Heavenly Master—bring out that self-sacrificing benevolence which is the very soul of His history, and make it flash as heaven-purifying fire upon the selfish heart, melting it into love. Set HIM forth; do not babble about your dogmas, parade not your own abilities, keep far in the background your sect. Humanity wants Christ, not you or yours; the Christ, not of your dry creed and dead Church; but the Christ of the Evangelic Record, the Christ of Bethlehem, Capernaum, and the Cross. Our subject serves—

Thirdly: To supply a test to determine a man's fitness for the work of the Gospel ministry. Heaven knows, we do not want less Intellect in the modern pulpit, nor less Learning; but we want more *noble-heartedness*. We want men of broader sympathies, wealthier natures, and more self-denying impulses. For as self-seeking souls cannot even form a "*just judgment*" of the Gospel, how can they preach it? For my part, I would not encourage a young man to enter the ministry because he has a clever intellect, a ready tongue, an irreproachable reputation, a pietistic spirit and gait. An opulent, genial, self-sacrificing nature, seems to me fundamental to the holy office. Love alone can interpret love. Nor would I have in our Theological Chairs men of mere mental ability, biblical learning, and religious reputation. Power to inspire the heart of the student with the true spirit of the office; to breathe into him thoughts that will expel all that is mean, selfish, and sectarian, and make him glow with the benign enthusiasm of the heavenly mission, seem to me essential qualifications for training young men for the ministry of a love that "passeth knowledge." Men of the highest type we want; men of the noblest intellects, swayed by the noblest hearts. The subject serves—

Fourthly: To indicate the necessity of Divine influence. If a certain state of heart is necessary in order to form a "*just judgment*" of the truth, it is absurd to suppose that the truth of itself can do all that is needed. Must there not be some influence to clear the eye of the soul that it may rightly *perceive* the truth? So it seems to me. Paul evidently thought so, when he averred that the Divine truths which the "eye could not see," nor the ear hear, nor the heart conceive, had been revealed unto the Corinthian Christians by the Spirit of God. The heart of Lydia was "*opened*" before she could understand the Apostle's words. There is no way by which the Spirit can affect the soul but through truth, says one of your Sapient Theologues. Poor mortal! What dost thou know about the laws and modes of spiritual influence? Do not all created spirits float in the immeasurable sea of Divine

influence, and breathe in it as their vital atmosphere? Has not the Almighty direct access to souls, and can He not touch at His pleasure every spring of their being? Still more; is not the universe to me according to my mental mood?—And is not that mood dependent on a thousand outward things? Even the atmosphere rules it. If I am depressed, and gloomy, and indisposed to look at truth or God, let Him but increase a little of the oxygen in the air I breathe, and my mind will grow bright and buoyant at once, and I shall look at all with a grateful and gladdened nature. In such, and in countless other ways, can He not influence me apart from truth? Avaunt! all dogmatism about the methods of Divine Spiritual Influence, and welcome the practical impression of our dependence upon the living God for all good. “Not by might, nor by power,” &c.

CONCLUSION. Brother, let us seek, then, this unselfish, God-loving, and God-obeying heart. This love will make all things clear: it will enable us to see the Holy One “face to face.” It is “the unction” by which we shall “know all things.” Love is the eye-salve of the soul; it restores the organ of spiritual vision, and makes all things appear in a new, true, and entrancing light. Waken within me a strong love for an artist, and then his picture, which perhaps I saw yesterday in the Royal Academy without much interest, will, if viewed to-day, entrance me with its new-discovered beauties. Oh, let me look at the universe through love, and I shall see beauties and sublimities which are veiled for ever from unloving hearts! The same with the blessed Gospel itself. Let me study it through the medium of a loving affection, and all the hidden mysteries will be revealed. Love breaks open the sealed apocalyptic book, and leads all the powers of the soul to join in their hallelujahs.

In the language of *Archer Butler*, I exhort you, in conclusion:—“Feel and know that the only way to feel and know Christ is to be Christ-like. Be assured that every step you rise in inward holiness, you are obtaining a nearer vision of that God, Who is holiness itself; and that no other organ than purity of heart can ever behold Him. Burst, therefore, the shackles of a mere dogmatic religion, a religion of phrases and periods! Can you be saved by a proposition in Euclid? Believe me, you can just as well be saved by a proposition in theology! Creeds are valuable only when our hearts sway them! Love God and love each other as the children of God; and the God of Love will teach you Divinity.”

No. V.

THE DUTY OF FRUGALITY.

“Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.”—vi. 12.

(For Exegetical Remarks, see Vol I. page 143.)

FRUGALITY is the lesson which Christ attached to the marvellous Work He had just wrought. This deed teaches, amongst other things :

First: That His compassion extends to our Physical Wants. He not only loves souls with a boundless, ever-working, all-conquering love, but takes a deep and practical interest in man's physical needs. This is shown in the ample provisions He has made in nature, as well as in the deeds which He wrought for the relief of man's body while on this earth. It teaches—

Secondly: That His compassion for our Physical Wants is suggestive of His Divinity. It is said: “Then those men, when they had seen the miracle Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world.” In the light of this marvellous deed, they seemed to catch a glimpse of the great Moral Deliverer, the Hope of the Ages. Divine deeds in nature are spiritual revelations; they are flashes that light up the invisible. Matter is the creation—the organ and revealer of mind.

Admitting that what men called His miracles were not evidences; that they had no power to prove either the Divinity of His Person or the truth of His Doctrine, they nevertheless served high spiritual ends. They attracted men's attention to the truth. *John Foster* somewhere speaks of miracles as bells which Christ rang, in order to call men's attention to the new doctrines which He propounded. They also symbolized truths. The restoration of bodily organs—eye, ears, feet—symbolized the restoration of lost spiritual feeling and faculty. The hushing of storms figured His power over the tempests and passions of the human heart. Moreover, they generally had a lesson attached to them. Christ usually introduced or finished His miracles by a lesson. Sometimes His lessons seemed to be very naturally connected with the incident; at other times, very remote, and what could not have been expected.

This is the case with the lesson He attaches to this miracle, namely, *Frugality*. Who would have thought that He Who had

just shown power enough to increase "five barley loaves and two small fishes" into an amount of provision that not only satisfied the five thousand, but left twelve baskets full unused, would have inculcated economy? One might rather have expected that He would have said: "Heed not the fragments; do not be careful about these temporal matters: rather be lavish in their use, for I can create abundance for you in a moment. I can rain on you oceans of material supplies." But this He did not say, but the opposite. "*Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.*"

This is just like Him in nature. He is bountiful everywhere, but most frugal. He allows nothing to run to waste. We see this in the *inorganic* world. "Denudation is the inseparable accompaniment of the production of all new strata of mechanical origin. The formation of every new deposit by the transport of sediment and pebbles necessarily implies that there has been somewhere else a grinding down of rock into rounded fragments, sand, or mud, equal in quantity to the new strata. All deposition therefore, except in the case of a shower of volcanic ashes, is the sign of superficial waste going on contemporaneously and to an equal amount elsewhere. The gain at one point is no more than sufficient to balance the loss at some other. Here a lake has grown shallower, there a ravine has been deepened. The bed of the sea has in one region been raised by the accumulation of new matter; in another its depth has been augmented by the abstraction of an equal quantity. Nothing whatever is annihilated. For 'matter,' says *Roucher*, "like an eternal river, still rolls on without diminution. Everything perishes; yet nothing is lost."* We see this in the *vegetable* world: landscapes wither, flowers decay, forests rot, but nature allows not a particle of their dust to run to waste. It turns their smallest fragments into instruments for new life, and makes their very gases contribute to the healthfulness of the atmosphere. In the *animal* world it is the same. Generations of birds, beasts, fishes, men, die and rot, but frugal nature gathers up all their fragments. All that belong to our own bodies will go to make the blood, the bones, the muscles, the limbs, and the brain of the men of coming times. Christ's Doctrine of Frugality here, therefore, is quite in accord with nature.

"Each moss,
Each shell, each crawling insect holds a rank
Important in the plan of Him Who framed
This scale of beings: holds a rank, which lost,
Would break the chain, and leave behind a gap
Which nature's self would rue."—*Thomson*.

* From an admirable book, which every public speaker should possess, just published by Dickenson, Farringdon Street, entitled, 'Scientific Illustrations and Symbols, Moral Truths mirrored in Scientific Facts,' intended for the use of the Senate, the Bar, the Pulpit, the Orator, and the Lover of Nature.

The Duty of Frugality here inculcated, we may look at as binding on men in the two great departments of life, viz. the *Material* and the *Spiritual*.

I.—FRUGALITY IS THE DUTY OF MAN IN HIS TEMPORAL CONCERNS.

First: Every man should be frugal in the use of *his own secular resources*. The good that Providence has put into your possession you should use, as the steward of God, with a prudent economy. Nothing should run to waste; the smallest fragment should be turned to a proper use. Why should you do so? In order that you may have wealth, and gratify avarice? Christ never meant this. There are men who do this, and damn themselves thereby; they are always gathering up. They cringe to any patient, client, or customer, if they can only sweep from their very feet that which will enrich their coffers. Why, then, should there be frugality? Two good reasons may be suggested—

(1.) To prevent us from becoming *burdens* on society. Every man is bound so to manage his temporal affairs, and to husband his resources, as to prevent him from becoming a burden on his contemporaries. Self-respect, as well as social benevolence, will always urge a true man to this. Extravagance is one of the most prolific sources of pauperism as well as crime. It is constantly supplying our courts with bankrupts, our workhouses with paupers, and our gaols with prisoners.

“Thy Spirit, Independence, let me share,
Lord of the lion heart and eagle eye;
Thy steps I follow with my bosom bare,
Nor heed the storm that howls along the sky.”—*Smollett*.

(2.) To enable us to *help* society. There is a wrong hoarding and a right hoarding. The man who is hoarding up his wealth for his own aggrandizement, to gratify his own vanity and miserly propensities, is one of the most contemptible characters on the face of the earth; he is an offence to all generous natures, and an abomination in the eyes of heaven.

Such men have abounded in every age; and their ravenous greed has brought starvation and nameless woe on millions of our age here in our England. The “*Land-grabbers*,” as they are called, have appropriated to themselves the greater portion of the earth which God gave to “the children of men.” They are those men whom Shakespeare represents:

“I can compare our rich misers to nothing so fitly as a whale: 'a plays and tumbles, driving the poor fry before him, and at last devours them all at a mouthful.”

Albeit, the man who is hoarding his property, laying it by from day to day, in order to give to benevolent and religious objects regularly, as God prospers him, is a noble man, and a true philan-

thropist. Frugality should be a servant to fill the hands of generosity. St. Paul teaches us that we ought to work in order to give (Acts xx. 30—35).*

Secondly : Every man should be frugal in the use of that which *others have entrusted to his care*. There is, in the sight of God, as great a sin in a servant or assistant wasting the property or time of his employer, as there is in an actual theft. Indeed such wasting is theft. He who idles away the hours that his employer pays him for, is a thief, whether the employer be an individual, a company, a corporation, or a state. This is true even of Rulers, who receive countless thousands a year from their employers, and yet waste their time, not only in absolute indolence, but in extravagant sensualities. "Obey those which are over you in the flesh, not with eye service as men pleasers, but with singleness of heart, fearing God: Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily as to the Lord, and not as to men." *Employés*, whether princes or peasants, should "*gather up the fragments*" of the property with which they have been entrusted, and the time for which they are paid; allow nothing to be lost, turn all to the advantage of their employers.

II.—FRUGALITY IS THE DUTY OF MAN IN HIS SPIRITUAL CONCERNS.

First: This duty will apply to the Revelation of Truths contained in the Bible. The various tracts which make up this book contain undoubtedly many great truths, but they are only the fragments of those which God in past ages made known to man. There is every reason to believe that many books, having as much claim to inspiration as the old Hebrew Scriptures, have been lost; gone down irrevocably into the sea of oblivion. And even in relation to that which is the very substance of the Bible, the Life of Christ, we are assured that we have but a "*fragment*." "Had all His mighty works been written in a book, the world itself would not have contained the books." It is for us to "*gather up the fragments*," and allow nothing to be lost. Gather up every precept, promise, doctrine, fact; study them well, and turn them to a right account. Fragments though they be, they are wondrously precious. "More precious than gold, yea, than fine gold." Fragments though they be, millions have fed on them, and found them to be the bread of eternal life. Fragments though they be, all the libraries of the world are contemptible in their presence.

Secondly: This duty will apply to the Memory of Holy Impressions. On all hearts many sacred impressions have been made in times that are past—made by parents, teachers, ministers of the Gospel, made by providential events, and books. Many of

* See my Commentary on Acts of the Apostles, *in loco*.

those impressions have, alas! been obliterated for the time; we cannot call them up at present by any effort of will, but they will come up one day; their graves will be opened, and they will start into terrible reality.

“Forgotten? No, we never do forget:
 We let the years go, wash them clean with tears,
 Leave them to bleach out in the open day,
 Or lock them carefully, like dead friend’s clothes,
 Till we shall dare unfold them without pain:
 But we forget not, never can forget.”—*D. M. Mulock.*

But, thank God, we have memories of a few now. True, these are but mere fragments, still let us now gather them up, that they may not be lost. Let us dwell upon the mercies we have received in the past, that gratitude may fill and fire us. Let us think upon our sins, that we may fall down before the great Father and implore forgiveness.

Thirdly: This duty will apply to the Remainder of our Time. How much of our time is gone! Some of us have only fragments left; a few years at most; it may be only a few days, or even less. There is no waste so criminal, so ruinous, as the waste of time. The man who wastes time does not only waste his income, he wastes his capital whence his income springs, and his pauperism is inevitable.

John Foster says: “If a person were so foolish as to throw away a valuable piece of money into a pit, or in the sea, he would not *literally* throw away anything but the metal: but *virtually* he would throw away whatever best thing it would have purchased; as bread, clothing, refreshments, medicine for the sick, instructive books, &c. Even so a person wasting time throws away, not the time itself only, but the opportunities and the privileges which that time represents.”

CONCLUSION. “*Gather up the fragments*” of your Sacred Memories and Remaining Opportunities, turn them to a right account, and do not let them be lost. If they are lost, all will be lost—the world lost, heaven lost, God lost, your soul lost. “*Gather up the fragments.*”

No. VI.

THE OBJECT OF SOUL-REDEEMPTIVE FAITH : A PERSON—NOT A
PROPOSITION.

“This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent.”—
vi. 29.

(For Exegetical Remarks, see Vol. I. p. 156.)

VOLUMES have been written explanatory of Faith, yet no sane man requires one single word in order to understand it. He knows it as he knows love, hope, fear, and every other natural state of mind—by his own consciousness. What inner feeling reveals to the soul, logic clouds rather than illumines. Intuitive sentiments burn brightly as stars in the firmament within. From childhood up, man's every day life is a life of faith, and it is too real and vital a thing with him to require explanation. If there be a soul that has it not, the study of all the explanatory works of the world's ablest theologians would never reveal it. The grand work, therefore, of the Christian Teacher, is not to give a philosophic exposition of its nature, but to direct it to the true *Object*—the object on which the well-being of humanity depends.

What is that *Object*? Is it a *Proposition* or a *Person*? Not—I venture to assert—a *proposition*, though representing the greatest facts, and the Divinest principles, no, not even such propositions. It is a *Person*, and the Person no one less than the God-Man. My doctrine is, that faith—faith in the sense of trust exercised in Him—is the only genuine Christian faith, the only faith that will effectuate the Moral Redemption of the Soul. A man may believe in all the facts of Christ's life, and in all the doctrines of the Christian system, and yet not have the faith which Christ urges, and the spiritual restoration of man requires. I admit, nay, I proclaim with conviction, that Faith in such propositions concerning Christ, is necessary to bring Him in a life-like form to the eye of the human soul; but such faith is no more Christian faith than industry is wealth, or study scholarship. Many labour industriously for riches who die paupers; many study earnestly for the honours of scholarship who die without such

distinctions; and many believe in propositions revealing Christ, who have *no* faith whatever *in Him*. In illustration of this doctrine, I submit the following remarks—

That faith in the *Person* of Christ, rather than in any *Propositions* concerning Him, is—

I.—THE MORALLY TRANSFORMATIVE POWER.

That a moral transformation of soul is essential to the true freedom, dignity, and blessedness of man, is demonstrated by universal experience, attested by our own consciousness, and declared with remarkable force and frequency in the Word of God. We must be “born again,” “renewed in the spirit of our mind,” “changed into the image of the Lord.” A new heart, life, and character, are involved in the change demanded—nothing less. Now faith, neither in a Proposition nor in a system of propositions, neither in a fact nor in a series of facts, can effect this moral supreme revolution.

For what is essential to this Transformation? The *Generating in the Heart of a Love for Goodness*. Our loves are our masters. They inspire our activities, they work our faculties as they please. The strongest love is evermore the monarch of the soul, and the moulder of the character. The love of sin, in the form of carnal pleasure, self-aggrandizement, and gratification, is the sovereign passion of depraved hearts. To dethrone this despot, and to expel him from the soul, there must be generated within, and fostered an all-conquering passion, a love of goodness. Can faith in *Propositions* about virtue and holiness ever accomplish this? Never. The soul must have goodness incarnated and bodied forth in a living Personality; must see its radiant countenance, feel its warm breath, and listen to the thrilling music of its lips, in order to feel its heart captivation. In Christ it has all this, and nowhere else. In Him you have the “Beauty of the Lord.” Love the tenderest, the deepest, the most universal and unconquerable, blended with a purity radiant with the effulgence of the Godhead. He is “The Truth.” This is His title. He is “The Truth” respecting man, embodying in His life the Ideal of humanity; embodying what God intended all men to be. He is “The Truth” respecting God, the “brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person.” In Him you have what Divinity *really* is, what humanity *really* should be. The aroma of all virtues in the universe stream from His robes. The accents of heaven tone their music in all His utterances. The spirit of all goodness is His very life. It is as the eye of faith looks at Him that the soul sees what sin is, and loathes it; what goodness is, and loves it. Here is the process. “Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the same image,” &c.

The living Christ, not a dead creed, is the magnet to draw, and the power to transform, the fallen souls of men. The heart wants heart, not dogma. Heart alone can touch heart. No power can change heart but heart. The true creed for man is the Christ of God; the Bible for man is not letter, but life; not parchments and papers, but the Biography of Jesus.

I observe, moreover, that Faith in the *Person* of Christ rather than in *Propositions* concerning Him is—

II.—THE SOUL-SATISFYING CONDITION.

There are certain elements in unregenerate souls, such as sense of dependence, consciousness of wrong, and cravings for objects of love, that keep them in restless anxiety. What can answer and allay these? What can satisfy the soul's *sense of dependence*? Our sense of dependence is deep, ineradicable, and ever-operative. Constant, and often terribly painful, is man's consciousness that both his being and his well-being depend every moment upon what is outside of himself. Every day he feels that he has been leaning on objects external to himself that have failed him. All on which he is depending, he sees floating away on the resistless tide of destiny. His soul craves some *permanent* resting-place; some rock on which to stand amidst the surging sea of change; some object on which to centre his soul in implicit confidence. Without this, all inner satisfaction is an impossibility. What will give it? Will faith in *propositions* give it? Never. The soul cannot feel itself secure in words. Words, however true, are but cold statuary; the heart cannot repose on marble. Trust in Christ meets the want. Trust in Him means confidence in Infinite Love, Unerring Wisdom, and Almighty Power. What, again, can allay the soul's *sense of guilt*? Man has not only sinned, but he is *conscious* of it, and the consciousness is universal. It is felt by the strong as well as by the nervous, by the cultured as well as by the rustic, by men of genius as well as by men of the humbler type of mind. This consciousness is connected with restlessness and distress of soul. In it is the serpent of remorse, and before it lowers the thunderstorm of punishment. What will remove this? Will faith in any *proposition* do this? No. What is wanted is a new consciousness, which in its rising flow will submerge the old; and this can only come through a new life, with its new affections, purposes, and aspirations. This new life is in Christ, and faith in Him is the instrument of conveying it into the soul. "He that believeth in Me, out of his belly—his being—shall flow rivers of living waters." These rivers of new thoughts and loves and hopes and aims will drown the old. The man who comes to love Christ—and love for Him can only come through faith in Him—gets his sense of guilt removed, the threatening clouds of his soul dispelled, and his heavens brightened

into hope; believing in Him, he rejoices with "joy unspeakable, and full of glory." What can satisfy man's craving for objects of love? The deepest hunger of man is the hunger of the heart for some object on which to centre his affections. But what object can do it? The laws of our nature show that there is no object under the sun on which the soul can settle its affections with unbroken repose. All history shows that it has never done so. Men are nowhere fully satisfied with their loves. Christ meets the case, and He only; on Him the heart can centre its affections. As the bee searches the flowers of nature for honey, the soul is ever in quest of some object on which to settle its love. Hearts find no true repose in words. Syllables cannot satisfy souls. As the mariner's needle quivers in restless motion until it finds the pole, so the affections of the heart will heave in agitation until they find infinite excellence embodied in a Living Personality. Faith in the Personal Christ, then, is essential to soul-satisfaction. When souls are brought to faith in Him, they exultingly exclaim, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him." What, too, will meet the *sense of distance from God* which is so soul-disturbing? Men are separated from God, not of course in a physical sense: this is impossible. Nothing but annihilation could detach us essentially from the Infinite. We are in Him, and He in us; and this by the necessity of being. The estrangement of which we speak is moral—an estrangement of sympathy, and heart, and life; and of this we all are conscious. This separation is the very essence of sin and the font of woe. Its consciousness is universal, and terribly distressing. Separate the stream from the fountain, and its existence ceases; cut a branch from the root, and it dies; detach a planet from its centre, and it rushes into chaos. God is the Fountain, Root, and Centre of the soul; and if detached from Him, its ruin is inevitable and complete. What can bring the wandering spirit back into fellowship with the Great Father? What keeps it away? Indifference, fear, enmity. What can remove these? Faith in *propositions*? Never. Christ, not doctrines, is the "Way." Christ, not doctrines, is the "Mediator" to reconcile. God in *Him*, not in propositions, is "reconciling the world to Himself." Faith in the *Person* of Christ brings the soul and God together, and the twain become one again. Men must come to Christ, not to theological systems or ecclesiastical ritualities, if they would come back to God. He is "the Door" into the loving home of the Great Father of souls. I observe again that Faith in the Person of Christ rather than in *Propositions* concerning Him is—

III.—THE GRAND DEMAND OF THE GOSPEL.

It has been said by a very able modern theological writer, that in more than thirty passages of the Gospel of St. John, we find

with reference to Christ, the expression, *trusting to Me, or trusting to Him, or trusting to the Son*. The same language is employed by the other Evangelists, and also by Peter and Paul. Faith in Him is represented as the great demand which God makes on men. "*This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent.*" Faith in *Him* is represented as the grand condition of Salvation. "He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life." "He that believeth in Him is not condemned; he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." Faith in *Him* is also represented as the means of usefulness. "He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do." Faith in *Him* is represented, moreover, as the great source of spiritual comfort. "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in *Me*." And, furthermore, *He*, not doctrine, is represented as the grand subject of religious commemoration. On the night on which He was betrayed, He turned the minds of His disciples away from the old subjects of religious commemoration and centred them on Himself. Taking the elements used in the Pass-over, He said, "Do this in remembrance of Me," as if He had said, "This is the last night of Judaism; My people, henceforth, must remember *Me*, a Person, rather than things." He rang the knell of letterism and ritualism that night—the religion of humanity hence on, had to do with a PERSON. And again, *He*, not doctrine, is represented as the grand Subject of the Christian Ministry. "Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus."

Sufficient has, I conceive, been advanced to show, that the true faith of the Gospel means *Trust in Christ*, and not belief in *Propositions*, whatever the character and amount of faith or doctrine such Propositions may represent.

CONCLUSION. This subject explains—

First: The complaints of Religious Professors concerning their faith. "We feel that our faith is very feeble—how difficult it is to believe! Oh, how weak our faith is! We cannot take hold upon the promises." Who has not heard expressions like these in every religious circle? Such complaints are prevalent. What do they indicate? This:—That the faith is directed to *propositions* rather than to the *Person*. Do you ever hear the child of noble parents—parents whose love is genuine, and whose honesty is incorruptible—say, "I have a great difficulty in believing in my father or my mother, a great difficulty in laying hold upon their promises?" Do you ever hear a wife say in relation to a husband, who has always appeared to her incapable of doing a wrong act, "I am distressed that I cannot have stronger faith in him?"

Such things would be the greatest of social anomalies in this anomalous world. Who feels any difficulty in believing in a person of *undoubted* goodness and integrity? If the faith of religious people were directed to *Christ*, the Incarnation of all Excellence, rather than to *creeds*, we should not hear all this sentimental jargon. What is there in Christ to prevent you believing in Him? Is there not everything to enlist your cordial and implicit trust? In truth, if you believe in Him, you will accept His doctrines, even though you cannot understand them, and acquiesce in His procedure although you fail to appreciate or even to discern its wisdom. If I believe in a man, I take his word. If I believe in Christ, I accept His revelations. Belief in Him is in fact necessary in order—(1.) To believe the truth of His Word, and (2.) To appreciate the meaning of His Word.

This subject explains—

Secondly: The Weakness of the Church in its endeavours to Christianize the World. The nominal Church in all its branches, is confessedly active, and has been active for ages. It does a great deal of a certain kind of work, but not much, I trow, of the work Christ demanded, the work the world wants, which *is to cast out its devils*. The fiends of selfishness, carnality, pride, hypocrisy, avarice, unbelief, practical atheism, are they not as rampant in the world as ever, notwithstanding all the trials of the Church to expel them? Civilization has given them more attractive costumes and more delicate instruments than they had in barbaric ages. But their power is as great and their aims as deadly as ever. Why has not the Church succeeded? When Christ descended from the Mount of Transfiguration, He found that His disciples had been trying to cast out the devil in a man, but had failed; and on their asking Him the cause of their failure, He said, "Because of your unbelief; for verily, I say unto you, if you had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence unto yonder place, and it shall remove, and nothing shall be impossible to you." The weakness of the Church is its Lack of Faith in Christ. The Church, in truth, has talked a great deal about its faith; has fought for its faith; has bled for its faith; aye, and more, has even *persecuted* for its faith; but what has been its faith? Faith in some verbal articles: in some cases "thirty-nine," in others more, and in others less, rather than in the living, loving, Personal Son of Man and Son of God. This subject explains—

Thirdly: The Cause of all Divisions in the Nominal Church. The Sect life in the Church, whatever may be said to the contrary, I hold to be one of the greatest evils of the world. It is one of the chief devils of Christendom. It narrows the sphere of charity, it nurtures a heartless bigotry, it obstructs the progress of universal

truth, it misrepresents the Spirit of Christ. This evil is begotten of a certain faith in certain propositions; propositions in some cases relating to metaphysical theology; and in other cases referring to some ceremonial observance. Even an idea about *water* creates sects; and the smaller the idea that creates a sect, the more *venomous* that sect becomes. If all the members of all the Churches, believed with a Living Faith in the One Personal Christ, such miserable divisions would cease. Christ would become the Centre. Diversity of opinion must ever exist so long as mind is mind; but diversity of opinion is the charm of *genuine* fellowship. Does diversity of opinion amongst brothers and sisters in the same family lead to separation, when all hearts centre in their parents? Never. Where a common love rules, diversity of sentiment heightens the harmony. Diversity of opinion may be one of the great charms in celestial conferences.

This subject explains—

Fourthly: The True Method of Religious Teaching. If Christ is the great Object of faith, the grand work of the religious teacher should be so to present the *Personal* Christ as to inspire the loving confidence of men. The Biography of Christ must be our Bible. In truth, what is all that is written in the tracts of that wondrous volume that we call the Bible, apart from Christ? Nothing of any vital value. The casket without the jewel, the royal robes without the monarch, the body without the soul. Our every text should be from the Biography of Christ, our every subject Christ *Himself*. The "truth as it is in Jesus," as a *Person*, the world wants, not as it is in the books of theologians, or even in Moses and the prophets; but as it is in Jesus—a loving, symmetrical, Divine, soul-attractive, soul-satisfying thing.

Brothers, let us preach, not traditional doctrinism, or the Christianity of the sects, but the Christ of the Bible—the Christ, not as He is caricatured in portraits, taken in the murky studios of theologians and ecclesiastics; but as He appears livingly photographed on the pages of the Evangelic Records.

No. VII.

THE GENIUS OF THE GOSPEL WORLD-EMBRACING.

“All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.”—vi. 37.

(For Exegetical Remarks, see Vol. I. p. 162.)

I TAKE the words as illustrating three things—

I.—THE UNBOUNDED CONFIDENCE OF CHRIST IN THE GOVERNMENT OF HIS FATHER.

Faith in the Character and Procedure of the Father, is the perfection of piety, and the condition of a happy existence. Everywhere in the Bible, the great Father seeks to awaken in man the most loving and unshaken trust in Himself and in His procedure. The strength of the old saints was in this. Their heroic lives, as celebrated in Heb. xi., are ascribed to their loyal trust in the wisdom and the love of Heaven. Those illustrious worthies felt one with Job, who said, “Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him.” No Being ever possessed or exhibited this trustfulness as did Christ. In Him it had its most perfect development and force. It buoyed Him up amidst the surges of anguish that rolled over His holy soul. It never deserted Him. In Gethsemane it was as strong as ever, when He said, “Not My will, but Thine, be done.” It comes out in the text. He had been speaking to the multitudes, who had followed Him for the sake of the “loaves.” He had been exhorting them “to labour for the meat that endureth unto everlasting life.” He had represented Himself as the “Bread of God which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.” But notwithstanding this, they believed not. Such heartless infidelity amongst those whom He had laboured so self-denyingly to enlighten and convince, had a tendency to sadden His spirit and oppress His heart as a Man. Still His trust in God bears Him up. He looks to heaven and says, “*All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me.*” As if He had said, “My Father overrules the world; all men are at His disposal; I acquiesce in His arrangements; I bow to His will.”

This is the spirit of the passage. What is called Calvinism has laid special claim to this text; and Calvinism in some of its vulgar and corrupter forms has sadly marred and mangled these wonderful words. But they have nothing to do with any of your *isms*. Their *Divine* genius overflows the logical boundaries of the most expansive creeds. The text is not uttered as a Theological Dogma, but in a Sublime Spirit of trustful devotion and unbounded philanthropy.

“*All that the Father giveth Me.*” There are certain ideas attached to these words by a certain class of men that they do not necessarily contain; and some of which are certainly inconsistent with the dictates of unsophisticated reason and the whole tenor of Biblical truth.

(1.) The words do not necessarily convey the idea that the Father has given any Men to Christ. It is remarkable that the word “all,” *πάν*, in the text is neuter, whilst the word *τὸν ἐρχόμενον*, “him that cometh,” is masculine. As if the passage meant, that all things were given to Christ by His Father, and therefore there would be the greatest certainty that no man who came to Him would be, or could be, “cast out.” When Christ gave His commission to His disciples after His resurrection from the dead, He said, “All power is given Me in heaven and on earth.” The words of the text might have been spoken in anticipation of this glorious event. If so, the words may be thus paraphrased:—“All things (universal dominion) that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me after My resurrection, and consequently the men that come to Me, whoever they may be, I will on no account ‘cast out.’”

(2.) Nor even if the words include the idea of men being given to Christ are they so given,—that the Father has surrendered any of His claims upon their being or services. Literally, when we give anything to another, we cease to have any claim over it. A father when he gives his child to another, surrenders his parental claims. With a miserable perversity of judgment, there are some who propound the monstrous idea, that in what they call the “counsels of eternity,” there was a contract entered into between God the Father and His beloved Son, by which, on certain conditions, a certain number of souls were made over to Christ. They became His. He bought them, paid for them with His blood; and they are no more amenable to the moral claims of the Great God, as the Creator and Governor of the universe. Such an impious notion clashes with the consciousness of every Christian man, who *feels* evermore his allegiance to the Everlasting One; clashes also with the obligations which God in the Bible enjoins upon the disciples of Christ; and clashes with the fact that the redeemed in heaven ascribe their all to the Almighty Author of all things. Indeed Christ Himself everywhere enforced, with the utmost earnestness, the obligations of His disciples to love, serve,

and worship His Father. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." This He taught was the "FIRST AND GREAT COMMANDMENT." And again: "The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him." The word "*given*" therefore, in the text, must not be taken in its literal and current sense.

(3.) Nor must the words be regarded as conveying the idea that, supposing men are "*given*" to Christ, they are *compelled to go to Him*. Some have laid wonderful stress upon the "*shall*," as if to express the idea that, whether they will or no, they *shall* come;—come irrespective of their own choice. The word ἤξει, however, has no imperative meaning, but merely expresses what will happen in time to come. The Father does not act upon His children as upon machines. He treats all creatures in accordance with the nature He has given them. Moral beings He moves by moral means. He does not, to use the language of *Luther*, "draw sinners to the Saviour as a hangman draws a culprit to the gallows." He does not either drag or drive. He draws—draws with the "cords of a man." Indeed in verse 44 the Saviour speaks of the Father as "drawing" men, and also explains the nature of the "drawing." "Every man, therefore, that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto Me." The fact that the Almighty presents the strongest inducement to men, and charges those who yield not to them, as *grieving, resisting, quenching* His Spirit, is proof sufficient that there is no coercion; and that in all cases He treats men as moral agents in the matter. In His last prayer (chap. xvii.) Christ speaks of His disciples as being *given* to Him by His Father, and yet did they not freely follow Him? Did He not say to them on one occasion, "Will ye also go away?" As if He had said, "You are free agents: the matter must rest with you."

(4.) Nor even supposing that the words imply the idea of men being "*given*" to Christ—they do not mean that they are so given that they *must necessarily be saved*. Christ speaks of Judas as being *given* to Him by the Father—"Those that Thou gavest Me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition." God gave Judas to Christ;—that is, He induced Judas to follow, and to listen to His teaching. But "Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place." God giving men to Christ, then, does not necessarily involve salvation, for (the same word δίδωσι is employed) Judas was *given* to Christ.

(5.) Nor must the words be regarded as conveying the idea *that the Father is not disposed to give all men to Christ*. Christ had been representing Himself to the multitude as the "Bread of life," and inviting them to come unto Him to participate in the blessing. But they avail not themselves of His kind invitation. Whereupon,

He gives utterance to these words—"All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me." Language which, in this connection, seems to me to convey but this one idea—that "all that the Father giveth to feel their need of Me, as the bread of Life, shall come to Me." The appetite of hunger awakened within them will prompt them to do so. *Tholuck*, quoting *Theophylact*, observes, that "as the magnet does not attract everything, but only iron, so also to be connected with Christ there must exist a certain frame of mind,—the feeling of what we should be, and what we are not." This state of mind the Father seeks to give, not to one but to *all*. God, by His Providence, by the human conscience, by His blessed Word, seeks to make men so feel their need of Christ that they may go to Him. He says to all, "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto Me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness." "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of a sinner." "Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die?"

Whilst these words, then, contain no such theological notions as these;—notions which some men have substituted for the "glorious Gospel of the blessed God," they do express what I have already said—the *Unbounded Confidence of Christ in the Rule of His Father as the Disposer of Mankind*. It was His habit as the Great Exemplar of piety to trace everything to the hands of His Father. When He stood in the court of Pilate, He recognized the power of that temporizing worldling as a power *Given* to him of His Father;—"Thou couldst have no power except it were *given* thee from above." As He lay prostrate under the mysterious agonies of Gethsemane, He regarded His very sufferings as His Father's gift. "The cup which My Father hath *given* Me, shall I not drink it?" And as on the eve of His crucifixion He looked upon the few poor men who had been disposed to receive instructions from His lips, He felt that their discipleship was the *gift* of His Father;—"I have manifested Thy name unto the men whom *Thou gavest* Me out of the world: Thine they were, and *Thou gavest* them Me." Indeed, as He looked upon the great universe above and about Him, He felt that all things to Him were the gift of His Father. "The Father," said He, "loveth the Son; and hath *given* all things into His hand."

Be it ours to cherish that spirit of Unbounded Confidence which our great Master expresses in the words,—"*All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me.*" Heaven forbid that we should content ourselves, in getting from these words some little dogma for the brain, and strive not after that spirit of sublime trust in God for the heart which they breathe, and are intended to enkindle! Let us bear our trials with the feeling that all that the Father

“giveth” even of afflictions shall come to us, and no more: that “our times are in His hand.” Let us prosecute our labours with the consciousness that all the success that the Father “giveth” us shall come unto us. I shall take the words as illustrating—

II.—THE SETTLED CONDITION OF A SINNER’S WELL-BEING.

What is it? Coming to Christ. “*Him that cometh to Me.*” Such language is of frequent occurrence in the New Testament. “If any man thirst, let him come to Me,” &c.

What sermons have been delivered, and what tracts have been written, on “coming to Jesus!” But how few understand the meaning of the words! Can we attach any intelligible and practical meaning to the expression—*coming to Christ*? We can. There are different ways in which we are constantly coming to the distant and the dead.

First: By taking into us their Ruling Ideas. We come to men intellectually when our general ideas approximate theirs. We feel one with them in intellect as we mingle with them in thought. Thus modern men come to the great thinkers of past ages. Socrates and Plato, Shakespeare and Milton, and other illustrious intellects, we meet in the quiet realms of thought. In the ideas of Jesus of Nazareth, we can thus come to Him. Though His great thoughts transcend them all;—in their spotless purity, in their unerring truthfulness, in their immortal freshness, in their unbounded sweep, in their soul-quickening and soul-uplifting force, they stand alone. The greatest ideas of others are but the reflected beams of the cold moon; His the bright rays of day, touching the world into life. Let us “learn of Him,” and thus “come to Him,” through His great thoughts. We come to Him in His biography, which is living and life-giving. We come to men—

Secondly: By heartily sympathizing with their Spirit and Aim. We are one with those who love the same objects, and sympathize with the same pursuits. Congruity of feeling welds hearts together. The patriot *comes* to Cromwell, the philanthropist to Howard, the missionary to Xavier, because their sympathies are one. Thus by loving the objects that Christ loves, and sympathizing with the pursuits of His heart, we come to Him. Talk of patriotism! Was there ever patriotism like that which overflowed His great soul, and rolled down in tears, as He beheld the doomed metropolis of His own country? Talk of philanthropy! Was there ever philanthropy like that which He displayed, Who died “the just for the unjust,” to bring sinners to God, and Who employed His expiring breath in praying for His murderers? “Father, forgive them, they know not what they do.” You must come to Christ in these Sympathies. “He that hath not the spirit of Christ, is none of His.” We come to men—

Thirdly: By appropriating their Moral Temper. In morals like draws like. We are drawn to those who are like ourselves in temper and in aim. Similarity of character is always a magnet. The good attracts the good. Thus we must come to Christ. We must "learn of Him, Who was meek and lowly in heart, and we shall find rest unto our souls." He is our Model; "He has left us an example that we should follow in His steps." We must imitate Him, not by servilely copying particular acts, but by in-breathing the genius of His Glorious Life. In these respects you must come to Christ. This is the condition of your well-being. There is no happiness for the sinner where Christ is not followed as the Guide to goodness. "There is no other name given under heaven among men, whereby we must be saved." If, then, Soul-Fellowship with the great Father is the only True Happiness of an intelligent being, and if coming to Christ in the sense indicated is the only condition,—what follows? This,—that Christ is the Supreme Necessity of human souls. If we are to be happy, it is not a question as to whether we will come to Christ or not; we must come, or we shall be lost. If you are to see you must have light, if you are to breathe you must have air, if you are to live you must have food, and if you are to be *Happy you must have Christ*.

Here, then, is the *Settled Condition of a Sinner's Well-Being*. He must come to Christ, in order to be brought into loving fellowship with the everlasting Father. Who that admits the existence of a Supreme Being can hesitate to conclude, that a loving fellowship with Him is essential to the well-being of all created spirits? But who can be brought into this sublime state of being who comes not to Christ? None. He alone removes the three great obstructions that keep the human soul away from, Him the Source of Human Blessedness. (1.) *Indifferentism*. The mighty millions of the world are dead to God. They have no more feeling about a God than the beasts of the field or the birds of heaven; they are "without God." Christ, through His incarnation, brings the Great Father within the sphere of their Senses, their Conceptions, their Sympathies. Those who come to Him are no longer destitute of interest in the Great First Cause. A series of questions start within them that have a tendency to conduct them into His ineffable presence. He removes—(2.) *Terrorism*. By a law of depraved mind, thoughts of God awaken terror. "I heard Thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid." Terror drives men away from God. Dread of God is the parent of all soul-crushing superstitions, all blasphemous theologies, and atheistic theories. Dread of God is a centrifugal force in depraved souls; it drives men away from the true centre of being. Now he who comes to Christ will have the dread expelled. He brings the dreaded One to them in the most winning aspects of

tenderness, compassion, and moral loveliness. Through Him, the Infinite says to all, of every age and land, "It is I; be not afraid." He removes—(3.) *Antagonism*. If a man dread another, he will come to hate him. The object of his dread, his imagination will make so hideous in feature and form, as to be loathed and hated. Hence men's dread of God has invested Him with jealousy, wrath, vengeance, and they hate Him. "The carnal mind is at enmity with God." We shun those we hate, hence men shun God.

Now how can this enmity be removed? Suppose the existence of a man you hate, and have hated for years; so hated that you have always shunned his presence, and glowed with indignation at the mention of his name. The question is asked, how to quench that flame of enmity towards the man in your mind? There is only one way in which that can be done. And that is, by working into your soul, a strong and unquestioning conviction, that he whom you have been hating all these years has never done you any harm, has always been your faithful friend, has always endeavoured to serve you, and stood up for you when your character has been defamed, and has defended your interests; nay, has made sacrifices for your benefit. Moreover, that he is one of the grandest of human characters. The very moment that conviction is worked into your soul, not only will every spark of your enmity be extinguished, but you will feel a burning shame for your past feelings, and there will come into your heart such a strong current of love to that man, that hence on his name will be as music in your ears. Thus Christ removes men's enmity to God. He comes and gives you a demonstration, that however much and long you have hated Him, He has never had one unkind thought towards you; but, on the contrary, has loved you with an everlasting love; so loved you that He has given "His only begotten Son" to bless you with everlasting happiness. Hence, coming to Christ is the Settled Condition of your Loving Fellowship with the great Father.

Notice—

III.—THE AMAZING MERCY OF CHRIST IN HIS TREATMENT OF SINNERS.

"*Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out.*" The idea is; "he that applieth to Me for Spiritual Life and Blessedness, whoever he may be, I will on *no account reject.*"

There are at least two general *accounts* on which the best of us do sometimes reject the requests of an applicant.

First: On account of something in connection with Ourselves. (1.) There may be a *Deficiency in our Benevolence*. An individual may apply to us for a favour, and we may have the *power* to render it, but lack the disposition. Our benevolence may be at fault. It is a sad fact that through the ingratitude, the dishonesties,

the hollow pretensions of the world, the fountain of kindness even in the most benevolent natures, gets well nigh dried up sometimes. Many a generous heart has grown misanthropic through intercourse with a hollow and heartless age. When our benevolence is at a low ebb, we may turn away from the request of even a deserving applicant. But will Christ ever "cast out" one on this ground? Does He lack benevolence? He has given the world the highest conceivable demonstration of His love; He has given Himself to a death the most excruciating and ignominious. "Scarcely for a righteous man will one die," &c.

The height, depth, breadth, length, of His love, "passeth knowledge." It is an ocean that no line can fathom, no shore can bound. It is infinite; and you cannot exhaust the infinite. Could the wickedness of men have exhausted it, there would have been none after His crucifixion. But lo! soon after His resurrection, just before His ascent to heaven, He commanded His disciples to go and preach *Forgiving Mercy* even to His murderers at Jerusalem. Christ, therefore, can "in no wise cast" a man out on account of any lack of benevolence in His own loving heart.

Or sometimes, where our benevolence is not at fault—

(2.) There may be a *Deficiency in our Resources*. We may not be able to entertain the request. Many a generous man is obliged to say No! whilst in his heart he feels Yes! This is one of the greatest trials of truly benevolent natures in this world. Still it is better, a thousand times better, to have the disposition to give and not the means, than to have the means and not the disposition. He who has the one is a pauper in the universe; he who has the other, a prince. The one is a grub moving through his earthly possessions; the other a seraph, on joyous pinion winging his way through regions as rich as love, as beautiful as Paradise, as vast as immensity, as blessed as God. But though our resources fail us, however benevolent we may be, Christ will in "no wise cast" a man out on this account. His resources are *Inexhaustible*. Paul speaks of them as "unsearchable riches." Whereunto shall I liken the Redemptive Resources of Christ? To a Feast? If so, then, not a feast implying limitation—providing for so many, and no more. But rather it is like that banquet which Jesus spread out upon the mountain of Capernaum, "of which all the thousands did eat and were filled," and stores of fragments still left unused. I scarcely know to what to compare the "Unsearchable riches of Christ." I think of a Masterpiece of Music, every note suited to touch some of the deepest chords in human nature. It has awoken rapture in the men of past generations, and seems as potent in its stirring impulses now as ever. Still it may be exhaustible. The time may come when our Handels, Haydns, and Beethovens will be outgrown, and left behind as relics of the past, All that is human

has its limitations. I think of the great Sun, which has been giving out his beams for I know not how many thousand years, in quickening and gladdening the unnumbered tribes of life that teem in air, and earth, and sea; in annually robing our world with forms of beauty, ever fresh and affluent, and causing the earth "to bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater." As I think of this royal orb I am impressed with the vastness of its resources. But though vast, I feel it is not inexhaustible: it is finite. Its beams will grow dim, its fires die out, and the period may dawn when not a vestige of its existence shall be found throughout the districts of immensity. There is nothing that I can think of to which I can compare the Resources of Christ. There is nothing in fact in the creation, for the creation itself is limited. But Christ, the "Sun of Righteousness," although He pours His soul-saving beams on millions of generations, and will light up the heavens of God with blessedness through unnumbered ages, must remain as bright and warm as ever. Christ, then, on the ground of the lack of Resources, "*will in no wise cast out.*"

The other general reason on which the best of men do sometimes reject applications is—

Secondly: On account of something in Connection with the Applicant. Either of the three following circumstances connected with an applicant, would wondrously tempt us to expel him and his requests from our presence.

(1.) *If his character were unusually vile.* Should a man, deeply sunk in the mire of intemperance and licentiousness, or characterized by systematic dishonesty and daring blasphemy, make application to us for a favour, we should scarcely tolerate his presence, still less entertain for a moment his case. If we spoke to him, it would be in the language of severe reproof, if not indignant denunciation. We should say, "You deserve more than the misery you are in; starvation is too good for you." But Christ will "*in no wise cast out*" on this account. Take two cases out of many. Christ is at a feast in Simon's house. While there, a woman, notorious as a Sinner in the city, entered into the room where He was, "stood at His feet weeping, and began to wash His feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head." This woman was probably known as the corruptest character in the city; odious in depravity. She had turned, perhaps, many a youth from virtue, and stained many an innocent nature with her vice. There she kneels before Christ; she has intruded into His presence. What does He say to her? Does He scathe her with a look of indignation? Does He cast her from His presence? No. He first reproves Simon the Pharisee, who seems astounded at His allowing one so depraved to remain near Him even for a moment;

and then, with a heart overflowing with compassion, He turns to her and says, "Thy sins are forgiven: go in peace." Take another case. On one side of Him on the cross hangs a malefactor in the last agonies of death. Society has cast him off as a wretch unfit to live. Even corrupt humanity could no longer tolerate his presence, or allow him a place amongst the living. He himself owns that his doom is just. But in this, his last hour, he turns imploringly to Christ, saying, "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom." What answer does he receive? Does Christ say, "My sufferings are too great to attend to thee; every nerve of My frame is on the rack, and a mountain of anguish is on My soul; I can think of nothing but My own condition?" No. Does He say, "Wretch, why appeal to Me in this the last moment of thy life? Thou hast spent the days which Mercy has given thee, to cultivate thy spirit, and to find acceptance with thy Maker, in depravity and crime. Away with thee to thine own place!—the place for which thou art fitted, and to which justice dooms thee!" No. With unutterable tenderness and love, He says, "To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise." He "*will in no wise cast out.*"

Let not the sins of any man, however aggravated, however enormous, keep him away from Christ. Stand up before me, Sinner of the greatest enormity, and tell me thy sad tale.

"My character," sayest thou, "is too dark for description. My iniquities, like a thick cloud, roll over my soul, obstructing the light of heaven, and threatening to destroy me with their brooding tempests. I was the child of godly parents; I had a Mother, who, in my early days, taught me to lisp the name of Jesus, and read His holy life; a Father, who by his example and his speech, sought to guide me into the way of virtue and of peace. I had Religious Teachers in early life, too. I listened to a faithful and an impressive ministry, received deep impressions and made solemn resolutions. But *they are all gone*. My parents, whose hearts my corrupt conduct had broken, are long since in their graves. The ministers I first heard are no more. The companions of my youth, too, are gone. I am left alone, an old man tottering on the verge of the grave. Fifty years at least, I have spent in a career of wickedness and blasphemous impiety. The thought of the injuries I have done to my species by my depraved conduct and influence appals me. 'I have sat in the seat of the scorner.' I have endeavoured to shake men's faith in God; I have scouted the Bible as a cunningly-devised fable; I have denounced Christ as an impostor, and His disciples as hypocrites; I have made many laugh at sacred things; I have rifled many of their virtue; I have turned many an innocent youth into the paths of scepticism and profligacy. Many a wife has cursed my influence over her husband, and many a mother has recoiled with horror at the

mention of my name. The memory of my enormities appals me. Here I stand worn out with sin. I feel tottering as on a tremendous precipice. Above me there is a tempest about to break in fury on my hoary head; beneath me there is a yawning retribution. Talk not to me of Mercy. Mercy has exhausted herself on me. She has made her last overture; she has taken her wings and gone for ever!"

Oh! Brother, terrible is thy tale. It is a wonder that thou art not in hopeless perdition! Still I would not leave thee, even *thee*, in despair. "The mercy of the Lord reacheth unto the clouds." Avail thyself of this, thy departing hour of life, and go to Christ, and thou wilt find that He will in "*no wise cast out*" (1 Cor. vi. 10, 11). Again, we reject a man's request—

(2.) *If he has sought to injure us.* Were a man to apply to us for a favour, whom we knew had been acting the part of an enemy towards us for years; endeavouring to stain our reputation, thwart our plans, and injure our interests, should we not be likely to expel him with severe reproof? Perhaps we should say to him, "We wonder how you could have the audacity, knowing as you do the villainous way in which you have acted towards us, to ask for a single favour!" But Christ will not repel on this account. Look at Saul of Tarsus. Lived there ever a man who hated the name of Jesus of Nazareth more than he, who laid himself out with greater determination and force to blot His memory from the minds of men, and to annihilate His influence? Like a furious beast breathing out slaughter, he hastened to Damascus, having "received authority and commission from the chief priests," in order to persecute the men who dared to profess their attachment to this Christ. He said, "I verily thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth." And he did so. To use his own language: "I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities." He was indeed a hater of Christ, and he proved his hatred. Yet one day, struck with the heavenly light of moral conviction, he prostrates himself before this Jesus of Nazareth, and says, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" And how was he received? Did He Whom he had thus hated and opposed, Whose disciples he had persecuted and destroyed, drive him from His presence? No. To the poor prostrate soul He says, "Stand upon thy feet; for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose; to make thee a minister and a witness, both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles; unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them

from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Me." Paul, having met with this wonderful reception of unexpected mercy, leaves this testimony to after ages, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief."

Still again we reject a man's request—

(3.) *If, after having once granted his application, he has persisted in doing us wrong.* Suppose a man, to whom you had rendered a great favour in answer to his application, and who afterwards disowned you, and displayed the most shameful ingratitude, were again to apply to you, would you not be tempted to drive him from your presence, whatever might be his expressions of sorrow, and promises for future improvement? But Christ "*will in no wise cast out*" on this account. There is Peter, to whom He had shown many special favours, whose applications He had often graciously granted. This Peter denies Him;—denies Him in the hour when friendship was most needed,—denies Him with impious oaths,—thrice denies Him. Yet did not Christ cast a gracious look on him, that stirred his heart and melted him to tears? Far enough am I from encouraging backsliding. It is a dreadful sin. A step backwards is of all actions the most daring and hazardous. But having done so, do not be afraid to make another application to Christ. See how He found this Peter out, and treated him on the Galilean shore immediately after His resurrection! "Come and dine," He says. "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me?" &c. Come! He "*will in no wise cast out.*"

CONCLUSION. I feel well nigh overwhelmed with sadness, when I reflect upon the base and pernicious uses to which this text has been degraded. It has been used as a battle-ground for bigots, instead of an exhaustless field fertile with all that is enchanting in beauty, and choice in fruit. "ALL THAT THE FATHER GIVETH ME." "Here is Calvinism," says one narrow Sect. "HIM THAT COMETH TO ME I WILL IN NO WISE CAST-OUT." "Here is Arminianism," says another Sectlet. Thus the first clause and the last, are taken up by two contending parties, the one snarling and howling at the other throughout Christendom. But the passage is not a Theological divisibility, it is a grand Moral unity. It does not articulate an idea for the brain, but glows and beats with a spirit of love vital and universal as the sun. Whilst narrow sectarists use it as a fœtid pool, in which they stir up the offensive vanities of their own foul hearts, let us regard it as an immeasurable lake, clear as crystal, reflecting on its bosom the Infinite Mercy of God.

The grand question for each to ask is, What is our relation to Christ? Have we come to Him? Are we now through Him enjoying friendship with the Holy One, and blessed intercourse with Heaven? Is He our Moral Guide, leading us on to a higher acquaintance with His doctrines, a closer identification with His sympathies, and a more perfect assimilation to His character? If so, let us gratefully adore the everlasting Father for thus *Giving* us to Christ. The work of the Spirit, by Providences and Gospel ministries, is to *Give* human souls to the ever-blessed Son. Take heed that you "resist not the Spirit." For He has said, "My Spirit shall not always strive with men."*

* This Discourse was delivered in Churches in different Towns in England and Wales, where the congregations were known to be extremely Calvinian in their theology.

No. VIII.

SOUL-ADJUDICATION.*

“Judge righteous judgment.”—vii. 24.

(For Exegetical Remarks, see Vol. I. page 193.)

ADJUDICATION is one of the many avocations of civilized man. There are *Commercial* adjudicators. In almost all departments of action, where men ply their energies for a livelihood, there are those who are recognized as authorities; men whose judgment upon the value of commodities, properties, and productions are accepted and acted upon. There are *Literary* adjudicators. Men who for the most part constitute themselves as authorities on literary productions. In their various journals they arraign our authors at their tribunal, examine their works, and pronounce upon their excellences or defects. Although it comes not within my purpose to discuss the value of such functionaries, or to criticize the way in which their duties are generally discharged, I cannot but express my profound regret, that so many of them are utterly disqualified for the position they have assumed. There are *Legal* adjudicators. Men who preside in our courts of justice, who sift evidence, balance probabilities, and always in the name, if not always under the sense of justice, pronounce upon the merits of the case before them. There are *Theological* adjudicators. Men who profess to know the whole truth of God, pronounce judgment upon the religious opinions of their fellow-men, and at whose feet sit weak-minded religionists, who accept their dictates and call them Rabbis. The true, the honest, and the independent searchers after the Truth, repudiate their authority, and denounce their arrogant and impious assumptions.

Whilst, however, there is a great deal of Adjudication going on in the Commercial, the Legal, the Literary, and Theological departments of human life, there is an Adjudication which transcends all others in importance, and which devolves not upon any

* This is one of a series of articles, on “Emblems of Soul-Work,” that appeared in the “Homilist,” Vol. xxiii. The remainder of the series will re-appear in a subsequent volume.

particular class of men, but upon each man as the most urgent obligation of life. I mean the Adjudication of those subjects which are vitally connected with our *Spiritual* and *Undying Interests*, subjects concerning which each must form his own estimate, and where the judgment of one can never become the substitute for that of another. Subjects concerning which Heaven commands us to "*judge righteous judgment*"—to "prove all things, and to hold fast that which is good." What are those subjects? I shall mention only a few of the most important, and they may be comprehended under four general heads:—MAN, THE GOSPEL, RELIGION, and PROVIDENCE.

We should "*judge righteous judgment*" concerning—

I.—MAN.

It is of paramount importance that men should form a "*righteous judgment*" of themselves. "To know thyself," is at once the condition and guarantee of all true knowledge.

"By all means use sometimes to be alone ;
Salute thyself—see what thy soul doth wear ;
Dare to look in thy chest, for 'tis thine own,
And tumble up and down what thou find'st there."—*Wordsworth*.

What is a "*righteous judgment*" of man's *Nature*? What is man? Widely different estimates are given and circulated. The thoughtless millions *practically* declare that he is corporeity, and nothing more; that the body, with its limbs, appetites, organs, sensations, constitutes the entirety of his being. Hence for mere animalism they live. Their grand question is, "What shall we eat, what shall we drink, and wherewithal shall we be clothed?" The sciential materialists agree in this. They say, "The body is everything; man is nothing more than organized matter. Dust, and nothing else. All are of the dust, and all return to dust again." Here, then, is a subject of which it becomes every man to form a true estimate. For myself, my judgment is formed. My philosophy, such as it is, and my Bible, as I interpret it, assure me that man is a *Spirit*; that the body is no more him than the house is the tenant, the telescope the astronomer, the harp the lyrist. When I say Spirit, I mean *Responsible Spirit*. There may be spirits existing that have neither the attributes nor the sense of accountability. Such is not man; he is not an engine, moved hither and thither by the force of another; a mere spoke in the wheel of the universe; a mere log of wood tossed about on the black surging sea of destiny. He is a Responsible Agent, Self-Moving, Self-Directing. I have no debate upon the point; my reasoning, my consciousness, and my Bible, have placed for me the question beyond the pale of discussion long, long ago. I *feel* that I am free. The sense of

responsibility permeates my nature, throbs in every pang of remorse, and in every thrill of self-approval.

What is a "*righteous judgment*" of man's *Mission*? Wherefore is man here? Wherefore sent into the world? Is there a purpose in his creation? If so, what? The voluptuary says, "I am here to gratify my senses;" the worldling, "I am here to amass wealth;" the intellectualist, "I am here to struggle after the philosophy of things." But are these "*righteous judgments*?" I trow not. They outrage reason, they clash with conscience, they contradict the teachings of the Holy Book. Brothers, it seems to me that we are here in order that, by searching after truth, and struggling after holiness, we may form a character that will qualify us for the Fellowship and the Service of God, through all the *Æons* that await us.

What is a "*righteous judgment*" concerning man's *Chief Needs*? What are his primary necessities? Men have come to call food and raiment, with emphasis, "the necessaries of life." But are they so? Cannot man live without them? Does he not so exist in the other world? To me the chief needs of man appear to be freedom from sin, purity of heart, moral nobility, harmony with the universe, and unbroken peace with Heaven.

Form, then, a true estimate of *Man*. You can never exaggerate his importance. "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" The *World is great*. All men, though for very different reasons, are impressed with its greatness. It is great to the *Poet*, whose imagination glows in the presence of its scenes of enchanting beauty, and aspects of stirring grandeur. It is great to the *Philosopher*, who in every step of his research, is amazed with the subtlety of its elements, the regularity of its operations, the fitness of its means to its ends, and the boundless variety of its combinations and its life. It is great to the *Christian*, who feels its moral significance, regards it as vocal with the thoughts, overflowing with the goodness, filled with the Presence, and radiant with the Majesty, of the Great Father of all. It is great even to the miserable *Worldling*. He navigates its oceans, traverses its shores, cultivates its soil, and works its mines, in order to appropriate to himself its treasures. But great as the world is, the Soul is Greater. The world cannot think of its Creator; the Soul can. The world cannot act contrary to the will of its Creator; the Soul can. The world will not exist for ever; the Soul may. As a leaf, this planet shall fall from the forest of existence; as a passing cloud it shall melt into thin air. But the Soul has peradventure an imperishable existence. Who can tell its value? Think of its *Capabilities*! Recall the wonders it has achieved, and is still achieving. Think of the *Influence* which it exerts! One soul can pour into an age, a flood of sentiment that

shall beat through the heart of centuries. The one wrong act of Adam vibrates in all hearts to-day. Think of what has been given for the *Redemption* of a Soul! "Ye are not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold . . . but with the precious blood of Christ."

Another subject on which we should "*judge righteous judgment*" is—

II.—THE GOSPEL.

The great God has submitted the Gospel to our judgment. What is it? This is a vital question—vital to every man. Sadly diversified and even contradictory, are the estimates that men have formed of the Gospel. Some pronounce it a "*cunningly-devised fable*." They consider it a story which, with some amount of historic foundation, was wrought out of the imaginations of the *wily and superstitious* of past times. This is simply absurd. Its *Incongruity* with the popular ideas, spirit, and character of the age and country from which it sprung, and its *Congruity* with itself, with our *à priori* ideas of the Divine character, and with the common intuitions and exigencies of human nature, expose the atrocious preposterousness of such a view. Besides, could a fable have done what the Gospel has achieved? Could it create a Christendom, with its civilization, its freedom, morality, and religion? Could it command the homage and the advocacy, of the greatest thinkers, authors, and sages of all times? If it be a fable all things are fabulous, and we live in dreams.

Others say that it is nothing more than a *Wonderful History*. It is indeed a wonderful history! The advent of Christ to this world—His Teachings, Sufferings, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension, are the grandest and most influential facts that ever occurred in the annals of our race. But the Gospel is more than a history. The history is but its form and manifestation. There is something underlying the facts, producing the facts, throbbing in the facts; that something is the heart and essence of the Gospel. What is that something? We shall see as we advance.

Some say it is a *System of Theology*. But a theology is man's production; the thoughts of poor erring men systematized—nothing more. Our *conception* of the Gospel is not the Gospel itself. The Gospel is as independent of our theology, as the stellar universe is independent of astronomic theories. What, then, is the Gospel? It is a *Revelation of God's Love to Sinners*. This is its essence: "God so loved the world," &c.

You can never over-value this Gospel. It is the *Essential Means of Spiritual Life*. It is to the soul what light and air, food and water, are to the body—that without which there can be no life or growth. The loss of the Gospel, as I regard it, would be

a greater loss to humanity, than if you were to quench all the lights of the firmament and leave the heavens in sackcloth, or seal up the clouds so that the fertilizing showers shall no more visit the earth. Another subject on which man should “*judge righteous judgment*” is—

III.—RELIGION.

What is Religion? Some “*judge*” it to be a *Creed*. I have no words to express the high importance I attach to a well-digested system of truth; but a Creed, however Scriptural, is not Religion; devils have an orthodox creed. What is religion? Some “*judge*” it to be a *Ritual*. I share not the spirit of those who, with the exclusiveness of the bigot and the ignorance of the unthoughtful, indiscriminately denounce all ceremonies in connection with religion. I like the æsthetic in form, the harmonious in song, the graceful in gesture, and the sublime in expression. But this is not religion. When the ritual is the expression of a Divine thing it is beautiful, useful, and good. When it is *Form*, and nothing more, it is utterly worthless. What, then, is Religion? It is the *Spirit of Christ—His Moral Temper—in the man*. “If any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.” His Spirit is the Spirit of True freedom, incorruptible honesty, self-sacrificing philanthropy, and adoring worship. This is Religion, and nothing else. “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this: to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.” You are perhaps ready to exclaim—What, is this all? Is the thing about which a million books have been written, and ten thousand sermons are preached every Sunday, nothing more than a Christ-like Temper? It is reported of a man, that on seeing the sea for the first time, he exclaimed, “What, is this all? Is this the mighty ocean?” It was all that he *saw* of the ocean; but if he could only launch out upon the piece of water he saw, trust himself to it, sail over its billows, it would take him round the world. It is so with the Religious Spirit. It may appear small to your vision, but it extends to everything that is sacred in the universe; it reaches the throne of God. Trust yourself to it; sail forth on the tidal wave, and it will bear you to the calm and sunny shores of eternity. Another subject on which you are called upon to “*judge righteous judgment*” is—

IV.—PROVIDENCE.

By Providence here, I mean that ever-changing world of external circumstances in which we “live and move and have our being.” Circumstances are *vital* things to man; they not only affect his senses, but stir his deepest soul. How do you estimate them?

There are different estimates current and advocated. Some regard them as Fatalistic Occurrences; others, as Divinely ordered. The former declare "that all things come alike to all;" the events of life, like the billows of ocean, break on all shores alike. The latter consider that they are all Divinely directed and come with a Divine purpose. Some regard circumstances as their masters, others as their servants. The former bow to them, and ascribe to them their condition and their character; the latter use them as the horseman his steed, the mariner the winds, the telegraphist the lightning—to carry out their purposes and to do their work. Some regard them as beneficial, only as they tend to the gratification of the body and the amassment of wealth; others as beneficial in proportion as they serve to discipline the character, to spiritualize the affections, and to lead the soul to God. All souls make their own appraisal of circumstances. Which estimate is yours? Do you consider Circumstances as coming by Chance, or as ordered by God? My view is the latter. Not a sparrow falleth to the ground unnoticed by the Great Father. Do you regard them as Tyrants or as Slaves? Are you groaning under them, or are you battling with them, and making them subserve your spiritual good? Do you regard them as serviceable only when they promote your temporal interest?—or as blessings, however painful, if they tend to school you into virtue and to religion? The latter is the right idea. The worldly man, in taking stock, estimates the year as profitable, only as it has served to augment his wealth. He will say, "It has been a good year" if he has prospered; and a "bad one" if his worldly resources have not increased. But this is not a "*righteous judgment*." That is really the good year that has deepened your sense of the spiritual, strengthened your confidence in God, and invigorated your sympathies with the spiritual, the religious, and the Christ-like. The year that has wrecked your fortune, robbed you of your health, bereaved you of your friends; if it has led you into closer fellowship with the Infinite, has been a good year. Thus Paul felt: "What things were gain to me,"—my learning, my social status, my worldly prospects,—"I counted loss for Christ."

CONCLUSION. You see how much the Soul has to do in the great Work of Appraisalment. It has to form a true estimate of *Man*, of the *Gospel*, of *Religion*, and of *Circumstances*. False estimates prevail concerning all these, and false estimates are ever dangerous. "*Judge righteous judgment*," brothers. You have a judiciary function to fulfil in life. No man in ermine requires more scrutinizing thought, more gravity of spirit, than you. The great God is submitting, every day, questions for your decision which are of paramount moment. As one single figure wrong amongst a million in arithmetical sums, will vitiate all the calcu-

lations and give a wrong result, so one mistake upon these vital points, may involve you in a terrible calamity.

What is called Education is valuable only as it stimulates and guides man to a "*righteous judgment*" on these questions. Education of the true type is the supreme want of humanity. By Education I mean the bringing out of all the latent faculties of the soul in harmony with themselves, the laws of the universe, and the Will of Heaven.

This is the Education for which I have lived and laboured for many years, and in which I continue to feel a vital interest.*

* This discourse was preached at Stockwell, when I was deeply interested in a great Educational Scheme for Wales. Some twenty years ago, when I was recruiting my health in the romantic neighbourhood of Caswell Bay, I became so impressed with the sad lack of Education in my native country, as a Welshman, that I made a solemn resolution to do all I could to supply the deficiency. I wrote at once to the "CAMBRIA DAILY LEADER" (the first Daily Paper ever started in Wales, of which my son, David Morgan Thomas, Barrister-at-Law, was the Proprietor) a letter, urging my countrymen to establish a University. When I returned home to London, the late Dr. Nicholas, then President of Carmarthen College, inspired by my appeal, called on me. And in my own library I drew up the first Resolutions on the question, Resolutions which, in the course of a fortnight, were moved and carried at the first meeting held in London on the subject, presided over by my old friend, William Williams, Esq., M.P. for Lambeth, from whom I obtained the first £1000. I continued to work on the committee (whose meetings were held for some years alternately in my son's chambers in the Inner Temple, and in the chambers of Morgan Lloyd, Esq., Q.C. and M.P.,) until £20,000 were obtained, and the splendid building at Aberystwith purchased; and with the late Dr. Nicholas and Hugh Owen went down to the inaugural meeting presided over by the then Lord Lieutenant of the county. This fact is stated here, not merely to show my interest in Education, nor to claim credit for the great undertaking from vanity, but for the sake of historic truth. There are those who, now that it has become a success, claim credit for its origination, who not only stood aloof from it at the commencement, but even strenuously opposed it. (For an account of the movement, see "Homilist," Vol. XL. p. 461.)

No. IX.

BIBLICAL MONOTHEISM.

“There is One that seeketh.”—viii. 50.

(For Exegetical Remarks, see Vol. I. p. 254.)

CHRIST here proclaims the fact that there is One God, and One only. In the old Hebrew Scriptures the Infinite is represented as saying, “I am the First, and I am the Last, and besides Me there is no God.” On this Monotheistic Doctrine I offer three preliminary remarks.

First: It is supported by the Order and Structure of Nature. So far as the universe has come within the sweep of scientific observation and research, it appears as one complete whole. All its parts are beautifully harmonized, all its forces are nicely balanced. Nature has no contradiction in her utterances, no jarring in her orchestra, no deviations from her original habits and ways. Her march is stately and unswerving. The same causes under the same circumstances, produce evermore the same effects. Nature, as a Temple, has endless sections and compartments, yet the whole is manifestly the draft of One Architect, the work of One Artificer. Nature, as a Machine, is wondrously complicated, with wheels within wheels, yet the whole is obviously the invention of One intellect, the arrangement of One mind. On the front of the grand fabric of the universe there appears, in bold, clear, imperishable characters, the declaration, “There is but One God.” Concerning this declaration, notice—

Secondly: It is in direct antagonism to Certain Prevalent Opinions. It is opposed to *atheism*, which declares there is no God; that whatever is, has either always been, or else was produced by chance. It is opposed to *feticism*, the worship of any material object that a capricious superstition may select. Also to *polytheism*, which holds the plurality of gods: and to *pantheism*, which regards nature as identical with Deity, and thus destroys a Divine Personality. The lie is given to all such miserable theories. Concerning this declaration, notice—

Thirdly: It is accepted as a Fundamental Truth in all Evangelical

Churches. There is a class of men professing faith in the Bible, who call themselves Unitarians. They have no more right to assume that name than have Evangelical believers. No orthodox Church believes in a plurality of deities. They believe in One God, and only One. Monotheism is the religion of Christendom. But my object in this discourse is briefly to consider the practical uses of Biblical Monotheism.

I.—IT REVEALS THE GREATNESS OF THE CREATOR.

Survey the wondrous universe. Gaze upon the vast, and examine the minute, in the clearest and broadest light of modern science, and what do you see? *Wisdom?* Yes—manifold wisdom—in every blade and insect, as well as in every intellect, world, and system. All this wisdom is the product of *One* mind. The archetypes of all you see existed once in One Intelligence. He had no “Counsellor to instruct Him:” Do you see *Goodness?* Yes, like an everflowing tide, overflowing all, streaming in every ray of light—breathing in all life, beating in all pulsations, giving a happy glow and a beauteous form to all things. All this goodness is an emanation from One heart, the Eternal Fountain of all life. Do you see *Power?* In rearing the stupendous fabrics, building up the mountains, pouring out the oceans, stretching out the heavens, moulding, adjusting, burnishing, propelling the worlds and systems that fill immensity? The hand of One Being did the whole. It was God Himself formed the earth, and made it: He hath established it. Do you see *Wealth* in all this? If you attach value to one acre of earth, what is the value of the globe? But what is the earth to the universe? A leaf to the forest. A sand-grain to the shores over which all oceans roll. There is but One Proprietor of all this wealth. He can say, “All is Mine: the sea is Mine; the earth is Mine; the Heavens are Mine; all souls are Mine; the souls of the Father and Son are Mine.” Oh, if there be but One God, how great must He be! All nations are nothing to Him—and less than nothing, and vanity. “Thou, even Thou, art Lord alone: Thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host; the earth, and all things that are therein; the seas, and all that are therein, and Thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth Thee.” Another practical use of this glorious fact is—

II.—IT REVEALS THE DEFINITENESS OF MORAL OBLIGATION.

Deep in the souls of all men is the sense of duty. It may be deadened, but it can never be killed, never be eradicated. Hence, thoughtful men in every age have earnestly inquired into the principles of moral obligation, and very numerous and often conflicting theories have come forth as the result. Some have

propounded one standard of virtue and some another. My definition of virtue is this—*Following a Right Rule from a Right Motive.*

From this the question arises what is the *Rule*? Clearly if there be but One God, the will of that One God must be the *Rule*. What is the *Motive*? Clearly if there be but One God, supreme love to that One God must be the motive. Were there a plurality of gods, there would be a difficulty in finding out what virtue is. We should have to determine whose will to obey—the will of each, or some, or all. And we should also have to find out who of all the gods we should love the most. But as there is but *One* God, our duty becomes definite, and clear as day. His Will alone is Supreme law. *He alone demands Supreme Regard.* The Bible urges this argument. “Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. Know, therefore, this day, and consider it in thine heart, that the Lord He is God in Heaven above, and upon the earth beneath: there is none else. Thou shalt keep, therefore, His statutes, and His commandments, which I command thee this day, that it may go well with thee, and with thy children, which the Lord thy God giveth thee for ever.”

Another practical use of this glorious fact is—

III.—IT REVEALS THE FITNESS OF RELIGION TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE SOUL.

There are three psychological facts that scarcely admit of disputation, and that every preacher of the Gospel should ever practically recognize in his discourses.

First: The human heart has a Centralizing Tendency. Deep in our emotional heart is a craving for some *One* object, on which to place entire confidence, and centre the deepest love. The soul, like the planet, is made for a centre; it requires something on which to hang as its chief support; something to circle round as its glory, something to serve by reflecting its attributes, and transmitting its influence. There is not a soul whose love does not point to some *one* object, as the needle to the pole.

Secondly: The moral character of the soul depends upon its Central Object. By a law of our nature we become like that we most love. Love is a transfiguring force. It moulds us to the character of its object. He who loves the character of the devil becomes like him. He who loves God becomes a partaker of the Divine nature.

Thirdly: The soul's happiness is determined by the Character of the Object most loved. All experience shows that most of our happiness and misery come out of our Supreme love. He that

loves supremely a faithless, worthless, suffering, dying object, must inevitably suffer sooner or later. Elsewhere I have shown, that the Object of supreme love, to make us happy, must be supremely excellent, always blessed, ever reciprocating our affection, and continuing with us without end. Here are the eternal conditions of human happiness, and this One God is necessary to the fulfilment. Thus it is that all in every age who have loved the One God supremely, have felt with the Psalmist, who said: "Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee. My flesh and my heart faileth; and God is the Strength of my heart, and my Portion for ever."

Another practical use of this glorious fact is—

IV.—IT REVEALS THE UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD OF SOULS.

"To us," says Paul, "there is but one God the Father of all things, and we in Him." It seems to me that spirits stand in a different relation to God to what material existences do. God is the Creator of matter, God is the Father of souls. We are His offspring: the highest seraph in eternity, as well as the poorest clod on earth. Between souls and God there is an essential resemblance and involuntary reciprocity. Those of His offspring who have always been obedient, feel and recognize their brotherhood, and are banded together with the tenderest feelings of love. They look on each other through their love for their One Father, and feel the vast universe their Father's House. Men, alas! have proved wayward and rebellious children. Humanity is the lost sheep that has gone away from the ninety-and-nine in the great fold; the prodigal that has left the Father's House. Because they have proved disobedient to their Father, they have lost the true spirit of Brotherhood amongst themselves. What a moral anomaly in the universe is war! Children of the same Father burning with mutual malice, and earnest in mutual murder! What shall end this? What shall annihilate all the unkind feelings of men toward their race?—what shall generate the loving spirit of brotherhood? Nothing but a common love for the One Father can do it. He who loves not God as His Father, will never love his fellow-men. Piety is the parent of philanthropy. Genuine religion is the inspirer of human brotherhood.

Another practical use of this glorious fact is—

V.—IT REVEALS THE WONDERFUL IN MEDIATION.

"God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Here is love passing knowledge.

First: What a disparity between Him Who loves, and they who are loved. What a disparity in *Natures!* God, the Almighty,

the All-wise, the Eternal: man, the feeble, the ignorant, and the dying. What a disparity in *Character!* God, the Essence and Fountain of all holiness: man, vile and polluted with sin.

Secondly: What a Manifestation of the greatness of His love! He so loved that He gave What? A World, a system, the universe? No; all this is nothing compared to what He gave—He gave His “only begotten Son.” “Herein is Love.” I see Divine Love everywhere. It rises high, and drowns the hills. It floods the universe. But all I see elsewhere is nothing compared with what is here. “Herein is Love.” Love, free, and unbounded, and unquenchable.

Brothers, is this One God our God? Have we no idols? Is there nothing greater in our hearts than He, nothing that engrosses more of our sympathies, and engages more of our thoughts and powers? Let us look well to this. Away with all idols of the heart! Let Him be the All-in-All of our souls. “For of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things.”

No. X.

MAN'S CRY FOR FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD.

“Shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us.”—xiv. 8.

(For Exegetical Remarks, see Vol. II. p. 12.)

AN accurate and full Delineation of the Fitness of the Gospel to the Spiritual Constitution of Man, would supply an evidence in favour of its Divinity, of a force unequalled in any existing theological literature. Several such Delineations have been attempted, with more or less ability, and, so far as they succeed, they furnish the best book-evidences we have. The congruity of the essential truths of the written Word, with the faculties and sentiments of the human soul, goes a great way towards the demonstration of the Divinity of that Word. Albeit, there is, I think, a more conclusive evidence even than this, which may be reached, and which the sceptical tendencies of the age seem to demand. It is that which will be found in the absolute necessity of the Gospel in order to appease all the profoundest *Cravings of the Human Heart*—cravings which exist in man under all dispensations, in all ages, climes, and stages of human development. I have long watched the more philosophic portion of the Religious Press, awaiting with earnestness the advent of such a production. It is an undoubted desideratum. The adaptation of the Gospel to the Spiritual faculties and sentiments of the soul, is unquestionably an evidence of considerable potency. But the *Necessity* of it to meet those deep and universal *longings* of the heart, which work the mental faculties and sway the emotions, yields an argument whose force is unequalled and well-nigh resistless. The adaptation of a system to humanity is one thing, the *necessity* of it is another. There may be adaptation where there is not Divinity; but where there is a *necessity* to men's spiritual life, a question of its Divinity is scarcely admissible.

It is to an attempt at the development of this Necessity that I shall now give myself.* Though painfully conscious of my

* This is one of a series of Homilies that appeared in the “*Homilist*,” Vols. xiii. and xiv.

insufficiency for the task, my impression of the *need* emboldens me in the effort. Urgency justifies acts of daring, which in other circumstances might be fairly regarded as culpably presumptuous. If I can approximate, in any measure, even to my own ideal of the work required, I may effect something in placing the Divinity of the Gospel, amongst the irresistible evidences of human consciousness.

That there are certain Cravings in Man's Spiritual Nature, wide as the race, deep as the deepest springs of being, and restless as the sea, will become undebateably obvious as we advance in our path of inquiry. The first of these to which I shall call attention is that expressed here by Philip, the disciple of Christ. It is a craving after Fellowship with God; a quenchless thirst for Communion with the Living One. The questions for solution are not those of the *Speculative Intellect*, but of the deep and ever-anxious heart of the world. Of course, the Being of God is implied in this longing—underlies it, is the spring of it. The Being of a God requires no logical proof; it is written in legible and imperishable characters in the constitution of the human soul. "I deny," says *Cousin*, the great French philosopher, "that there are people who have no idea of God." So do I. It is true that the judgments of men differ widely, and have ever differed, as to who the true God is. They figure Him in different images, they ascribe to Him different attributes, and they call Him by different names. But their belief in Him is accordant, and their craving for fellowship with Him is the same the world over and the ages through. The soul-attitude of the race is that of a suppliant. Man is constitutionally prayerful. The heart of the world is on its knees; its face is upturned to the heavens, and its cry is—"Oh, that I knew where I might find Him!" Men, everywhere and for ever, feel after Him, if "haply" they may find Him. The philosophy of all the divinities, temples, and priesthoods of ancient and modern heathendom, is found in this deep longing of the soul for Fellowship with God.

"Humanity," says Edmund de Pressensée, in his 'Religions before Christ,' "taken as a whole, has never erred in its mode of propounding the religious problem. It has ever held religion to be not a mere communication of ideas concerning the Divinity, but a solemn effort to reunite the broken bond between heaven and earth; to establish an effectual union between man and God. The religions of the Ancient World all had presentiments of this union, and strove to realize it. In the East it manifested itself under the form of frequent incarnations; in the West, in the apotheoses. In the East, it is the Divinity that stoops to man; in the West, humanity rises to the Divinity; but neither in India nor in Greece was the real union between man and God effected. In

India incarnation was but illusory, and was, to borrow the expression of *Pouramus*, 'but a kind of mask with which the friendly Divinity invested himself, like an actor who puts on a costume to perform a part.' If we consider attentively, we shall find that those repeated incarnations were striking proofs of the contempt which this pantheistic and ascetic religion, professed for the human individual, which was, in its eyes, but an evanescent form of an absolute being. Brahma of Vishnu alone possesses real existence. The worshippers seek to become merged in them, and to utterly annihilate the human element. In Greece it is the Divine element which is compromised. Humanity in its natural state is declared to be Divine, if adored in its grandeur; it is so likewise in its passions and in its weaknesses. The Olympian god is but a hero placed beside an altar. Thus we see that the religious problem is far from being solved. Efforts were made to simplify it by reducing all to a factitious unit, alternating, ignoring either the Divine or the human side. In India, we find all is one vast divinity, devouring the universe which it creates and destroys at the same time. In Greece we find nothing but one presumptuous humanity, trying to cheat, by adoration of itself, its own infinite wants; and hiding its shortcomings under the graceful veil of Polytheism. Nevertheless, and in spite of these radical imperfections, the aim and endeavour of those religions of the East and the West, even under their grossest myths, was the union of Divinity with humanity."

Now is there anything suited to satisfy this Craving? Or is the longing something—unlike any other creature-desire of which we have any knowledge—left to gnaw the heart and burn the soul without any provision whatever? We can only determine this question, by ascertaining what *kind* of provisions are equal to the demand. I think that the Provisions must involve a threefold Manifestation of God—a *Personal*, a *Benevolent*, and a *Propitiable*.

I.—THE PROVISION TO SATISFY THIS LONGING MUST INVOLVE A PERSONAL MANIFESTATION OF GOD TO THE SOUL.

It is not for some *thing*, though grand and beautiful as the magnificent universe itself, that the soul cries after. It is for a *Person*—for an existence endowed with the personal attributes of Knowledge, Love, Will, Reciprocity. Pantheism may gratify the instinct of the speculative or the sentiment of the poetic; but it meets not this profoundest craving of our nature. It may seem very intellectual and poetic to talk of God as the great Ocean, of which all other existences are but billows, rising out of it and breaking into its abysses again; as the One Life of which the universe is the ever-changing branch and leaf; as the One Underlying Substance, of

which all else is but everchanging vesture. But all this is no more suited to meet the deep cravings of the soul, than the strains of the musician the wants of a hungry man. The soul wants a Personal God; One to Whom it can speak, in Whom it can confide, and Who will reciprocate the deepest sentiments of its nature.

II.—THE PROVISION TO SATISFY THIS LONGING, MUST, MOREOVER, INVOLVE A BENEVOLENT MANIFESTATION OF GOD TO THE SOUL.

The soul will never cry for Fellowship with a being of mere Almighty Force, or of mere All-knowing Intellect; a being without emotions—passionless and heartless. Still less will it crave for fellowship with a *Malevolent* being, one who finds his pleasure in the misery of his creatures. From such an one it would recoil with loathing and with horror. For an *Unemotional* God it has no affinity; for a *Malevolent* one it has a dread. It craves for One kind and loving, One on Whom it can put its supreme affection, and place its undoubted trust. Its cry is for "*the Father.*" "*Show us the Father.*" Nothing else will do.

III.—THE PROVISION TO SATISFY THIS LONGING MUST INVOLVE, STILL FURTHER, A PROPITIABLE MANIFESTATION OF GOD TO THE SOUL.

A sense of sin presses heavily on the race. Even the savage feels that he has offended the Great Spirit, and he is anxious to propitiate Him. "O wretched man that I am!" is the moral groan of all. The sacrifices, pilgrimages, self-inflicted tortures, priesthoods—all express the deep feeling which the world has—that it has offended its Maker. Now a Propitiable Manifestation it must have, in order to satisfy its longing. Mere benevolence will not do. He may be benevolent and yet not propitiable; nay, benevolence in some cases may demand implacability. Would the soul cry for fellowship with an unappeasable deity? It is not possible.

Now, if such a threefold Manifestation of God is *necessary*, to satisfy this deep spiritual craving of humanity, the question is, Does the Gospel furnish such a Manifestation? It would be easy to show that man, by the light of nature, has failed to discover such Manifestations of the Deity. Poor human reason, through the thick mists of depraved passions and moral remorse, has scarcely seen any Personal Deity, save one that is malevolent and unappeasably wrathful. Nay, it has seen not one Divinity, but many, and these Divinities amongst the most vile and contemptible of objects. But my point is, not whether nature supplies the provision, but does the Gospel do so? If so, then it meets the Supreme *Necessity* of human nature.

Does it give a *Personal* God? Take a specimen of its revelations

on the point. "I am the first, and I am the last; and beside Me there is no God" (Isa. xlv. 5). Again: "I am the Lord; and there is none else" (Isa. xlv. 18); "I, even I, am He, and there is no God with Me" (Deut. xxxii. 39). Again: "Of Him and through Him, and to Him, are all things: to Whom be glory for ever. Amen" (Romans xi. 36). "I Am that I Am. This is My name for ever, and this is My memorial unto all generations" (Exod. iii. 14, 15). But it is not in mere *language* that His Personality is announced, it is in a *living history*—the history of Christ. "Great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory" (1 Tim. iii. 16). Christ is the "brightness of His Glory, and the express image of His Person" (Heb. i. 3). The God of the Gospel is a Personal God.

Does it give a *Benevolent* God? Take again a specimen of its revelations on this point. "The Lord is good to all: and His tender mercies are over all His works" (Psalm cxlv. 9). "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him" (Psalm ciii. 13). "The eyes of all wait upon Thee; and Thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest Thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing" (Psalm cxlv. 15—16). "Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless He left not Himself without witness, in that He did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness" (Acts xiv. 16, 17). Again: GOD IS LOVE.

Does it give a *Propitiable* God? Here is the revelation: "And the Lord descended in the cloud, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. . . . The Lord, the Lord God merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin" (Exodus xxxiv. 5—7). Again: "Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones" (Isaiah lvii. 15). And again: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts" (Isaiah lv. 7—9). Again: "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (chap. iii. 16).

Such, then, is the God of the Gospel, the very God after Whom the soul of humanity has been ever craving. "Oh that I knew where I might find Him!" To the millions who utter this question, I hold up the Gospel and say, "Here He is." The very God you seek is here. "*Shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us.*" O! ye wandering prodigals from your Father's house, here is the very Father Whom ye seek, overflowing with love, and Almighty to help you. In this blessed Book you have a solution of the profoundest questions of your nature—a solution which the Zoroasters, the Confuciuses, and the Platos sought, in vain. The Bible meets the deepest longings, and matches the loftiest aspirations of the soul. All who have ever rightly sought for God here, have exclaimed with rapture, "This is our God; we have waited for Him."

No. XI.

THE MIRACULOUS AND THE MORAL.

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto My Father.”—xiv. 12.

(For Exegetical Remarks, see Vol. II. page 16.)

THE question which meets us at the outset is—What is the comparison herein implied?—What are the “*greater works?*” The comparison, I think, must be either between the *miraculous* works of Christ and the miraculous works of the apostles; or between the *moral* works of Christ and the moral works of the apostles; or between miraculous works in themselves, and moral works in themselves. Which of these is the most probable? This is the question which we have now to settle. Is it the First? Does the Heavenly Teacher mean to say that if they, His disciples, believed on Him, they should perform “*greater*” miraculous works than they had seen Him perform? The history of the case precludes this supposition. If you compare the miracles wrought by Christ with those effected by His apostles, you will find that their miraculous achievements were neither so great in their nature nor in number as those ascribed to the Son of God. We are told, in hyperbolic language it is true, that if all the deeds He wrought were written, “The world itself could not contain the books that should be written.” Is it the Second? Is the comparison between the moral works wrought by Christ—works to enlighten the human mind, purify the human sympathies, and emancipate the human will—and the moral works wrought by the apostles? Does the Divine Teacher mean to say that the apostles would excel Him in this the highest department of action;—that their works of this class would be “*greater*” than His? I think not.

I am aware that there is a popular impression that the Spiritual Usefulness of Christ was very limited as compared with that of His apostles; that His ministry of Truth was ineffective as

compared with theirs. I cannot admit this. When I think of the truths which Christ propounded in His ministry,—truths so fresh and powerful, so adapted to meet man at every point of his nature, and quicken his faculties into the higher life; when I think of His method of proclaiming those truths, so natural, so reasonable, so conversational, so earnest, and so devout; when I remember His indefatigable diligence in His work, and call to memory the fact that there was perhaps scarcely an adult in Judæa on whose ear His blessed voice did not fall, pregnant with those soul-quickenings truths; I cannot believe that either of the apostles, or all combined, did anything like the amount of real *Spiritual* work as that which He Himself accomplished. His voice roused the mind of Judæa from the religious slumber of ages. When He came to this earth, there was little or no religious thinking throughout the whole of Judæa. The Hebrew mind was like a stagnant lake; it had no throb of *Spiritual* energy in it; there was not a ripple of independent thought upon its surface. Christ's doctrines, like the winds of heaven, lashed that lake into a tempest, and its billows of fresh thought surge through the world to this hour. Or, to change the figure, when He came the great engine of independent thought in connection with religion had been all but motionless for centuries. He touched its springs, and set it a-going; and its revolutions have been proceeding in an accelerating ratio from that hour to this, and will thus proceed, I trust, under God, until the complete regeneration of our fallen world is realized.

If, then, the comparison is neither between the *Miraculous* works of *Christ* and those of His *apostles*, nor between the *Moral* works of *Christ* and those of His *apostles*, we are shut up to the alternative, that the comparison is between *Miraculous* works in themselves and *Moral* works in themselves. It must be borne in mind that the personal history of Christ on earth seemed to be marked more by the *Miraculous* than the *Moral*; more by the wonderful signs He wrought in such abundance, than by the doctrines He taught. On the other hand, the history of His disciples is distinguished more by the strange facts they propounded, and the sublime doctrines they taught, than by the material miracles they achieved. The meaning of Christ in all probability (I say no more), might be this: "You are struck with My *miraculous* works as great; but if you believe in Me you shall perform *moral* works—and moral works are the greater. Moral works—works connected with the spiritual regeneration of mankind—are greater than *miraculous* works; and these moral works you shall perform if you believe on Me." Supposing this to be the idea, the subject I take for discussion as suggested by these words is, *The Work of Moral Reformation*. Observe—

I.—THAT THE WORK OF MORAL REFORMATION IS A “GREATER”
WORK THAN THAT OF A MIRACLE.

It is implied that to perform a miracle is a *great* work. I do not say that a miracle is a Supernatural event. As Nature itself transcends all human thoughts, it is absurd for us to talk of the supernatural! But whatever definition you give of a miracle—call it a suspension of the laws of nature, or a deviation from the laws of nature, or an infraction of the laws of nature, or the development of an old unknown Law of nature, it matters not. All men *feel* that no being but the Author of Nature Himself, can effect that which they unanimously *consider* miraculous. I do not say that philosophy or logic would conduct the mind to the conclusion, that the Maker of the universe alone could accomplish that which we consider miraculous. All I say is, that men instinctively *feel* this to be the case. The strange in nature, in all lands and times, starts as by a resistless impulse in all minds, both civilized and savage, the belief that God Himself is at work. Account for it how you will, Miracle and Divinity seem indissolubly associated in the instinctive feelings of humanity. It is this *intuitive feeling* that always reaches the highest truths—that grasps those verities that lie high up in those regions of Divine light to which the wing of philosophy has never mounted. To perform a miracle, therefore, is a great work; but great as it is, to *convert a soul* is “*greater.*” Why is this?

First: The Morally Reforming Power works on a Higher Nature. Matter is the theatre of what we consider to be Miraculous Agency. We see it nowhere but outside of us; out on the scenes of Material nature. We see its force arresting the orbs of heaven and mantling all in gloom; heaving the mountains from their foundations, and turning the flinty rocks into refreshing streams; hushing the raging sea and the stormy atmosphere into peace; healing the diseases of suffering humanity; unlocking the flinty graves, and bringing the dead to life again. Such works as these, we have seen miraculous agency accomplish, and they are all in the *Material* realm. But in *Conversion* the work is in a higher sphere—the Spiritual. What is matter to Spirit? What is a dead instrument to a free and living agent? What are a decaying form and a passing shadow to an enduring essence and a deathless reality? “Heap worlds on worlds, one soul outweighs them all.”

Secondly: The Morally Reforming Power achieves a Higher Good. (1.) It is a good *Unmixed*. Miracles, whilst they have been in many instances useful in meeting the wants and alleviating the distresses of humanity, have in other instances been very disastrous. They were what are called miracles that destroyed the old world, engulfed Pharaoh and his host, burnt to ashes the

cities of the plain, swept from the field on one night the mighty army of Sennacherib. But in Conversion there is nothing disastrous; it is good, and good only. Nothing is destroyed but error, and wrong, and misery, that which tends to destroy the freedom, the force, the purity, the grandeur, and the blessedness of the undying spirit. (2.) It is a good in *Itself*. Miracles, even when they were free from everything disastrous, and served the physical interests of men, were only really good as they served to promote the cause of truth and virtue. Though a miracle raise a dead man to life, what avails that new life to him if he spend it in depravity? But conversion is a good in itself. The growth, development, and perfection of Divine knowledge, and true holiness in God's spiritual offspring, constitute the highest end of the creation. The Great One Himself works to make human spirits "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light." (3.) It is a good *Ever-Enduring*. The men who were benefited by miracles did not *permanently* enjoy the good conferred. Those who were fed grew hungry again; those who were healed sank again under infirmities; those who were raised to life, died again. Not so with a Spirit that is thoroughly renewed. The old disease will never crush it again; spiritual death will never seize it any more. When Christ raised Lazarus from the dead, that new life was only temporary. Lazarus would have to descend to his grave again. But when in Conversion a corrupt soul is thoroughly quickened into the Divine life, that soul will not die again; the man thus quickened may reverentially adopt the words of Christ and say: "I am He that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore." (4.) It is a good *Ever Extending in its Influence*. The good conferred by a miracle is limited to the particular sphere in which it is wrought. Thus the manna that descended from heaven, and the water that gushed from the rock, continued only forty years, and were confined to Arabia. Others who lived beyond those districts, or in later times, might have required the heavenly bread and the refreshing streams, yet they had them not. But there is no limit to the salutary influence that springs from the conversion of even one soul. Such an event originates a series of thoughts, sympathies, and actions, that can never be circumscribed by place, nor bounded by time. In every true conversion to God, there is a new fountain of Divine influence opened up in the soul, whose streams extend from district to district in ever-widening circles, until they encompass the globe, and roll down from age to age, until perchance they touch with life the heart of the last man. It achieves, then, a higher good, inasmuch as the good is *unmixed*; is in *itself* a good; a good *ever-enduring* and *ever-widening* in its influence.

Thirdly: The morally Reforming Power requires a Higher

Energy. All the power necessary to perform a miracle is a Divine volition. It is the mere fiat; God has only to will that a certain effect shall be produced in material Nature, and forthwith it is. Not so in Conversion. As a fact His mere volition does not accomplish it, and we see not how of itself it could do so. Take an illustration. I see Christ sailing in a little skiff with His disciples on the Galilean lake; a terrific storm comes suddenly on, and the waters are lashed into fury. The frail bark seems doomed to sink: the disciples, panic-struck, cry to their Master, Who, exhausted with the toils of the day, is asleep in a corner of the vessel. He hears them, ascends the deck, looks serenely out on tempestuous nature, and says, "Peace, be still." The winds and waves obey Him, and there is "a great calm." This same Jesus I see a short time afterwards standing on the Mount of Olives, and looking upon the doomed metropolis of His country, with a soul overflowing with compassion, and tears rolling down His blessed cheeks, exclaiming, "Oh Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often *would* I have gathered thee, as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings; but *ye would not!*" Mark, Christ *willed* that the storm which swept over the Galilean lake should subside; *because He willed* it, the storm passed away. Christ *willed* that the population of Jerusalem should go to Him as their Saviour; that population remained in depravity and sank into ruin. Now why was this? Why did that Will, which took immediate effect upon tempestuous nature prove powerless upon the depraved people of Jerusalem? It was not, of course, that there was more earnestness thrown into the *will* in the former case than in the latter. The reverse is obviously the fact. His whole being seemed to have been imported into that Will which He expressed over doomed Jerusalem. The fact is, there are two things connected with the human soul, that are not found in material nature, and that require something more than Divine volition to influence.

(1.) *The Existence of a Moral Element.* There is a power in humanity enabling it to resist outward appeals—enabling it to say yes or no to the wishes or behests of another. I care not what you call this power. If you dislike the expression, Free Agency, be it so. Give it what name you please, I challenge you to deny its existence. You see it everywhere at work in society. You feel it in your own experience—you are conscious of it as one of the chief elements of your existence. No argument can destroy the consciousness which I have that I am free. This fact links us to Moral Government; this fact makes us men: this fact invests human nature with an importance, before which we may well stand in reverent awe. I look upon a child of five or six years old; and because I see that he has this power, I feel that he is greater

than any object in the material universe. Neither the rolling ocean nor the revolving planets have this power. If God of old really commanded the sun to stand still in Gideon, and the moon on Ajalon, neither the royal orb of the day nor the majestic queen of the night had the power to say "No." They were bound to pause in their career, by a force over which they had no control. But when God says to a little child, "Love Me with all thy heart, soul, and strength," that child can say, "No, God." It does so frequently. In connection with this moral element there is—

(2.) *The Existence of a Depraved Element.* Human nature has not only the power to say "No" to its Maker, but somehow or other it has the *disposition* to do so. The possession of the power is a blessing, but neither a virtue nor a vice. The disposition to employ this power in opposition to God, is the sin and ruin of humanity. Angels have the power to say "No." This makes them free, and makes their actions virtuous. But they have not the disposition; their whole nature goes with the Infinitely Good.

In consequence of these two elements, something more than a mere Divine volition is necessary to rectify and regulate the springs of moral action. In connection with the volition there must be Means—there must be Argument, Suasion, Heart, Example. When God performs a miracle in outward nature He has only to show, as it were, His finger. When He had to spiritually reform a world He had to bow the heavens and come down and show Himself; He had to bring His own great thoughts and loving sympathies into close and vital contact with the depraved heart of the world. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us." It is this moral power—not the miraculous—that is to convert souls.

This fact requires to be brought boldly out and impressed upon the public mind, in order to dissipate fatal misconceptions as to the Divine Influence. I remember some years ago being invited to spend an evening in the house of a sceptic, who was at that time intellectually interested in my ministry. In our conversation the greatest objections that he brought forward to the Bible he stated somewhat thus: "You say that the Bible reveals the fact that God is willing to save humanity?" My reply was: "Yes: as I interpret the Holy Word it seems to me to have but one voice, 'As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of a sinner.'" "Well, then," he said, "how is it that the world is not saved? According to the theology of the sects, generations after generations come and go, and are not saved; the millions in every passing age drop into hell. He, the Great One, has the Will to save all—why does He not do so? All that is required on the part of an agent to accomplish a work is the *disposition* and the *power*. Give me the disposition to

do a work, and an adequate amount of executive energy, and forthwith the thing is done. If there be a God, nature shows that that God is all-powerful—has sufficient power to do whatever He wills. He Who piled up the mountains, spread out the heavens, and poured out the sea, has certainly the power to save whomsoever He wills." "My friend," said I, "your reasoning is plausible, but fallacious, and the root of your fallacy is in your misconception of the *power* required to convert souls." There was a little boy in the room, and I illustrated my meaning by saying, "Suppose I *will* that that little boy leave the room. There are two ways in which I could give effect to that will. I could take him in my arms, and by superior muscular power remove him: or I could take him on my knee, speak lovingly and persuasively to him, in order to induce him to leave the room himself. If I adopted the former I should merely have removed his body; his volitions would be all against me, and he would feel I had done him violence. If I succeeded in the latter I should have influenced his mind, and he himself would use his own little limbs, and with a happy smile depart."

There are, then, obviously, two kinds of power—what is called the Miraculous, and the Moral; and the latter is that by which God converts souls. I find in the New Testament God has employed as much of this Moral Power as it is possible for me to imagine. The elements of moral power are *Truth*, *Rectitude*, and *Love*. The more of these together, the more power. These, stated in the form of propositions, are powerful; these embodied in living examples are more powerful. These, in the example of a child, are powerful; in the example of a man more powerful; in the example of a God are Moral Omnipotence. In this last form the Gospel gives them to me. In Christ these elements of power exist in their highest degree, and come out in their mightiest forms. Christ is not only the Wisdom of God, but the "Power of God." If a man in his deep dark cave of depravity is to be reached, and brought out into the light of holiness, it is not by the great and strong wind that may rend the mountains and break in pieces the rocks about him; nor by the yawning earthquake, nor the raging fires; for there is no way by which coercion can travel into the moral hiding-places of a man's soul. It is the "still small voice" of Truth, Rectitude, and Grace breathed forth by the life of Christ that will reach him, stir his energies, and lead him out to light and duty again. The words teach—

II.—THAT FAITH IN CHRIST WILL QUALIFY ANY MAN TO PERFORM THIS "GREATER" WORK.

"*He that believeth on Me.*" What is it to believe on Christ? Men of different theological schools will of course return different

answers to this question. It is foreign to my purpose to discuss it controversially. It admits of but one true answer, but that answer may be presented in a variety of forms: and I shall therefore give it in the form that will best serve the purpose of my argument. The faith in Christ that qualifies a man to effect this, the greatest of all works, includes at least three things.

First: Faith in Him as the Atonement. What is called the "doctrine of the atonement" has been, of all theological subjects, the most fertile in polemics. It has been a fierce battle-ground for creed-makers and creed-defenders. In no physical campaign have more fiendish passions been displayed. Volumes on the subject have been written; not one satisfactory either to the intellect or heart. The last, perhaps, the least satisfactory of all. The fact is, the Atonement is not a Doctrine at all, it is a Life—the Life of Christ. He, not the mere facts of His history, or the truths of His teaching, but He Himself is the Atonement, the Reconciler; He atones not God to man, but man to God.

The Infinite Father is in Him, "reconciling the world unto Himself." By Him we receive the *καταλλαγὴν*, the thorough moral change of heart in relation to God. He does not appease Divine wrath; He demonstrates and communicates Divine love. He does not expiate human sins; He "puts away sins" by the sacrifice of Himself. The law He satisfies, is not something outside of Himself, but the law of His own Self-Sacrificing Love. He effects no change in the mind of God towards man; such a change, if possible, would be supremely undesirable. The change He effects is a change in the human mind. In this view how absurd the questions of our technical theologues! In what part of Christ's history is the atoning element to be found? Did He die for all, or for some? *He is the Atonement*, and the Atonement for *all*. "He loved us, and gave Himself for us." Another thing included in this faith is—

Secondly: Faith in Him as the Moral Commander. There are those who regard Christ rather as a Victim than a Victor. They wail and weep over His mysterious sufferings in Gethsemane, and His poignant agonies on the cross. The "bleeding Lamb" is the theme of their thoughts and the burden of their songs. This is the murky atmosphere in which their spirits live. *Goethe* somewhere represents what are called Evangelical preachers, as trading in the agonies of Christ, as spreading out those mysterious sufferings of Christ, from which the great sun hid his face. The other view of Christ, methinks, is the most Scriptural, ennobling, and God-honouring,—as the Triumphant Victor, the Captain of Salvation. We are told that as He was bearing His cross on His lacerated shoulders up the brow of Calvary, crowds of women, as

they witnessed His agonies, broke into tears, and poured their wailings into His ears. How did He treat those tender-hearted women? Was He pleased with their compassionate wailings? Did He utter a word of commendation to them on account of the sympathy they expressed? No; on the contrary, He said, "Weep not for Me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children." As if He had said: "You misunderstand Me: I am not here by necessity, but by choice. I am not a Victim in the hands of Necessity. I am a Captain in the battle against sin; if you knew My mission, you would commend rather than compassionate: 'I have power to lay down My life, and power to take it up again.'" Another thing included in this faith is—

Thirdly: Faith in Him as the Efficient Restorer. The soul of mankind although made for freedom is a slave. It is enslaved by passions, by prejudices, by habits, by worldliness, and legions of other inner tyrants. There is One Being in the universe—and only One—Who can break its prison-doors, snap its chains, and bring it into the true liberty of the "sons of God." Christ is a Moral Necessity. Had there been only one man to have been saved, there must have been Christ; and what one man required will meet the wants of all. Had the Almighty Maker intended only one man to have lived on this earth, that one man must have had the glowing light of heaven, the rolling atmosphere, the refreshing waters, and all the gases that work on this planet now. What that one man would have required to make his existence even tolerable, has done for millions that are gone, and will do for millions more, when this generation shall be sleeping underground. So it seems to me with Christ. Had our merciful Maker intended only to have saved one man, that one man must have had the Hero of Calvary. What has done for the innumerable multitudes now in heaven, will do for the countless millions who are yet to come.

Now it is this *Faith* in Christ, as the Atonement, as the Moral Commander of souls, and as the only Efficient Restorer of mankind, that qualifies a man to do these "*greater works*." Practical trust in Him in these respects will equip me for this, the sublimest of missions. It will give me a kind of moral omnipotence; make me mighty through God, to the accomplishment of these "*greater works*." I ascribe all the great achievements of the most distinguished labourers in the interest of souls, of whom we read in history, to simple but earnest faith in these verities. I see the apostles meeting together towards the evening of their active life, and in the language of devout congratulation, saying, "Thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of His knowledge by us in every place." Their brilliant victories I ascribe to this Faith. I see

Luther, rising up a lonely man before a frowning hierarchy; he speaks, and his words fall like a flaming thunder-bolt upon the heart of the papal system, inflicting a wound that never has been healed, and never will. I refer his renowned achievements to his Faith. I see Whitfield leaving the University at Oxford, going through the length and breadth of the United Kingdom, crossing the Atlantic, standing up in every place he visited, and addressing thousands of men with a power that was well-nigh overwhelming, and with results that will gladden the ages. I ascribe his matchless conquests, not to his genius, his logic, his learning, or his eloquence, but to his Faith in Christ. Yes, this is it: "He that believeth in Me,"—not in what men say about Me, not in Church theories concerning Me, but in Me, the living, loving Son of God, and the Saviour of the world,—shall do these the "*greater works*."

Truly wondrous is the difference of the influence of faith in Propositions to Faith in a Person. Faith in Propositions divides men; faith in a Personality unites them. Faith in propositions can never make men heroes; faith in a Grand Personality has and does. The millions who believed in Garibaldi became heroes through their faith. It is said that on one occasion, Garibaldi called for forty volunteers for an operation, in which half of them were certain to be killed, and the other half mortally wounded. The whole battalion rushed forward to offer themselves, and he had to draw lots. On one occasion at Rome, Garibaldi called all well-disposed men to follow him, and it is said that officers and soldiers sprang up as if the ground had brought them forth. On another occasion, at the close of the siege of Rome, when the surrender was voted by the Assembly, he had made up his mind to depart, and he put forth this order: "Whoever chooses to follow me, will be received among my own men. All I ask of them is a heart full of love for our country. They will have no pay and no rest. They will get bread and water when chance may supply them. Whoever likes not this may remain behind. Once out of the gates of Rome, every step will be one nearer to death." *Four thousand infantry and five hundred horsemen* accepted immediately his terms. Faith in Garibaldi made heroes of thousands. Christ, in wisdom, justice, benevolence, moral nobility, is infinitely greater than Garibaldi. Why are the millions who call themselves Christians, weak, morbid, craven, almost entirely destitute of the heroic element? Because the Faith which they have is in human propositions *concerning* Christ: not in *Him*. Because their Faith is in a dying Victim rather than in an All-Conquering Hero.

The words teach that—

III.—THE ASCENSION OF CHRIST TO HEAVEN IS A GUARANTEE OF SUCCESS IN THE PROSECUTION OF THIS "GREATER" WORK.

"*Because I go to My Father.*" "It is expedient that I go away. If I go not away the Comforter will not come;" and when He is come, He will "convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and judgment." In heaven He has the power of sending forth His Spirit to renew the souls of men. His disciples were not equipped for their work until He ascended into heaven. He commanded them to tarry in Jerusalem until He should send them "power from on high." On the day of Pentecost He dispensed that power, and "suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind." Christ in Heaven, then, is a Guarantee of success in the earnest prosecution of this work. Without the Spirit all human labours would be utterly useless.

CONCLUSION. Brother, realize the sublime grandeur of thy work! There is no work in dignity equal to that of endeavouring to convert a soul. Yet worldly men see no glory in it. On a calm Sabbath morning there stood in the street of one of our country towns two men engaged in conversation. As they talked a young female passed by with a New Testament in her hand. "Who is that?" said one to the other. "She is only a Teacher in the Sunday School," was the reply. Only a Teacher in the Sunday School! Who art thou, proud mortal? Mayor, statesman, hero,—I care not who thou art. I tell thee that the young woman who, on the holy day of God, gathers around her a few little children, and seeks to inbreathe into their young natures the living, loving thoughts of Jesus of Nazareth, does a more glorious work for the universe, than any magistrate as magistrate, statesman as statesman, hero as hero ever achieved. Those thoughts shall live and spread and work beneficently in the realm of spirits, long after the most enduring thrones have crumbled into dust, and the most illustrious of earth's magnates have been blotted from the roll of memory. Tell me of a "*greater*" work, my brother! You say Moses performed a great work when with his mystic rod he smote the rock of Horeb, and caused it to send forth living streams to refresh the Israelites for forty long years. But with that old Gospel you can perform a "*greater*" work than that. With this moral rod you can break the rocky heart of humanity, and cause it to send forth vivifying sympathies and life-giving thoughts that shall roll down the ages with a soul-renewing power. You say that Elijah did a great work, when on Carmel's lofty brow he confounded the idolators of his day, by bringing from heaven a Divine fire to consume his sacrifice. You can do a "*greater*" work than that. With this old Gospel you can kindle a fire in the hearts of men, that shall burn up

their depravity, consume their lusts, and transmute their nature into the image of their Maker. You say that Christ did a great work when on the Galilean Sea He hushed the furious storm. I would not say a word to depreciate any work wrought by the Son of God; still I say that you can do a "*greater*" work than that. With this old Gospel thou canst hush more fierce and furious storms. Thou canst go to the poor widow whose spirit is tossed with grief, and say to her, "Sorrow not as those without hope; if you believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also, which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with Him." And under Heaven's gracious influence she will have peace. Thou canst go to the young man whose spirit is being borne hell-ward by the furious tempests of polluted passions, and thou canst say to him, "Acquaint now thyself with God, and be at peace, and thereby good shall come unto thee:" and by God's grace he will have peace. Or thou canst go to the poor sin-convicted one beaten by the tempest of a guilty conscience and say, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," and he shall find "joy and peace in believing."

There is no work in the universe greater than that of enlightening, quickening, enfranchising, and raising to the ever-heightening blessedness and ever-advancing honours of Immortality, souls that are sin-benighted, enslaved, degraded, and lost.

No. XII.

THE GIFT OF THE "SPIRIT" AND THE GIFT OF THE "SON"
COMPARED.

"He will give you . . . the Spirit."—xiv. 17.

"He hath given us of His Spirit."—1 John iv. 13.

"He gave His only begotten Son."—iii. 16.

(For Exegetical Remarks, see Vol. I. p. 66, also Vol. II. p. 17.)

THESE passages present to our mind *God's Greatest Gifts* to mankind. My object in bringing them together is to show, that *There is as much Divine Love displayed in the gift of the Spirit, as there is in the gift of the Son.*

This is a point we are probably prone to overlook. We often think and speak of God's Love in the gift of His Son, and never can we be too much impressed with it. But His Love in the gift of His Spirit does not so frequently engage our attention, nor, it is to be feared, so deeply impress our hearts. I shall endeavour to illustrate the subject by four remarks—

I.—THE "SPIRIT" IS AS INTRINSICALLY GREAT AS THE "SON."

The Son is great—transcendently great. "In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." But the Spirit is *equally* great. The same attributes are ascribed to Him, the same prerogatives belong to Him, and the same Divine words are ascribed to Him. They are in truth One in essence, but multiform in aspect. If you test, therefore, the extent of Love by the Greatness of the gift, you have as much in the one case as in the other.

II.—THE "SPIRIT" IS AS ACTIVELY ENGAGED FOR THE BENEFIT
OF THE WORLD AS THE "SON."

Christ was active when on earth for the world. He seems to have devoted every hour to the great work. "I must work the works of Him that sent Me." But had not the Spirit been active? Did He not strive with the old world? Did He not inspire the men who wrote this Book? Has there ever been a Soul regenerated and saved without His Agency? Has there ever been a conscience

that He has not touched? In *every* solemn thought and expression of every mind, is He not working?

III.—THE “SPIRIT” HAS BEEN AS WICKEDLY TREATED BY THE WORLD AS THE “SON.”

The cruel treatment which the Son received is recorded in this Book, and will be transmitted to all future ages as the most humiliating and astounding exhibition of Human Depravity. But the ill-treatment of the Spirit has been as wicked, and far more *extensive* and *lasting*. The people of Judæa alone *personally* ill-treated Christ; the population of the world “do always resist the Spirit.” About thirty-three years measured the period of our Saviour’s personal ill-treatment. The ill-treatment of the Spirit extends over well-nigh twice that number of centuries.

IV.—THE “SPIRIT” IS AS NECESSARY FOR MANKIND AS THE “SON.”

Two things are necessary to man’s salvation: Deliverance from the GUILT of sin, and from the POWER of sin. Christ was necessary for the first, and the Holy Spirit for the second.

It is sometimes said, in opposition to the doctrine of the *Necessity* of the Spirit’s Agency, that a man wants nothing but sufficient evidence, and the free use of his faculties, to believe. This is readily admitted in relation to every other system of Truth. But why should we make this an exception? Do we find any particular circumstances identified with it antagonistic to faith, which are not found in connection with other departments of truth? If there are none, the exception is not allowable; but if there are such circumstances, then right reasoning justifies us in taking it. Such circumstances exist.

First: There is Moral Habit. The habits which most persons contract before the Gospel comes fairly under their attention, are such as the whole tenor of its truths condemn. Their habits become their ruling principles, and when assailed, they marshal every power of the soul to their defence.

Secondly: There is Servile Fear. The man in business, who feels that the current of events is hastening him to insolvency, frequently develops a great reluctance to go into his accounts. In all the world there is no book to him so fearful as the Ledger. It is repulsive to him; for too well he knows that it will confirm what his foreboding heart suspects; and what he is afraid to look in the face—afraid to believe. Nothing but sheer urgency will ever induce that man to open that book, and to reveal its figured page. Is there not something similar to this in man’s soul, in relation to the Bible? Often has his conscience whispered that he is on the losing side—that he has contracted a fearful debt—and has nothing to pay. He knows that the full assurance

of such a fact would confound him with terror—would fill him with anguish. He quiets his inward Monitor. His delusive peace he retains by persuading himself that the suggestion is not true. Meanwhile, the Bible is presented to him as a book from God. He is told that it will shed light upon the conjectures which have been harassing his brain, and reveal in light to him the whole truth about his state and condition. In such a case, I ask, how is the man likely to regard the document? Would he dread it as an enemy, or would he hail it as a friend? Is it not probable that a fear of being convinced of a truth, whose very suspicion has filled him often with pain, would cause him to shun the book which contained it, would prevent him from giving to it that examination, without which he could not ascertain its truths and therefore could not believe?

Thirdly: There is Social Influence. From the great law of sympathy man is ever influenced by others. The mass of Mankind have no faith in Christianity, and therefore the great bulk of human influence runs directly counter to a belief in the system.

Fourthly: There is Satanic Agency. "The God of this world blindeth the eyes of men." Now, it may be said, We grant that these Moral Habits—this latent Dread of Condemnation—this general current of Social Influence, and this Satanic Agency, are all opposed to faith in Christianity. But are they not found existing in connection with other departments of truth? I think not. Man's moral habits are not generally opposed to physical or mental Truth. Nor is Fear: he is not afraid to look any abstract principle in the face; the fields of general science and literature he can traverse with a buoyant heart and a fearless step. Nor is Social Influence; the more general intelligence he possesses the more respect would he command from society. And with regard to Satanic Agency, we argue that the more knowledge a man obtains, if his heart remains depraved, the more capacity for evil; and therefore the "prince of darkness" has no reason for checking the mere progress of the intellect. One may penetrate the earth's heart, bring up old worlds to life, and add a thousand centuries to our history. Another may walk the starry vaults, weigh the systems in his balance, and gauge them with his Euclidian lines. A third may enter into the Divine arcana of spirit, analyze its operations, and ascertain its laws. What motive could the master spirit of darkness have to check these noble intellects in their striving after knowledge? Does he not know right well, that such knowledge, whilst it has no power to destroy moral depravity, has, nevertheless, a capacity to make that depravity less offensive—to enrobe it in beauty, and to invest it with power? But the case is different in relation to Christianity. Belief in its truths

emancipates the Spirit from his empire, and raises it into the "marvellous light" of holiness and God.

If, then, there are circumstances connected with Christianity repugnant to faith, which you find not associated with the general system of mere physical and mental truth, is it not fair to infer, that whilst, in general, all that a man requires to produce faith is clear testimony and a free intellect, yet that, in relation to Christianity, something else may be necessary? Yes; and unless it has some auxiliary, we may well despair of its ever effecting that moral reformation which it proposes, and which is the great demand of our fallen nature.

When I say that the Spirit is *Necessary*, I mean that He is necessary in a sense *apart from the Truth*. There is, indeed, a sense—a sense not sufficiently appreciated—in which the Spirit is in the Word. His all-living and life-giving inspirations are in the Document. Are there not fountains of quickening thought down "in the deep things of God;" never seen—never tasted yet? But it is something more than the *Book Spirit* that I mean—something that uses this as its instrument—the *Spirit Himself*. The human writer infuses his spirit into his book, and whatever influence his book produces upon the mind of the reader, may be called the influence of his spirit. This is sometimes taken to illustrate the doctrine of Divine influence; but very partial is this representation. So far as the mere influence of the Book-spirit is concerned, there is a parallelism,—but no further. Infinitely short is this, however, of the Bible-idea of God's agency. Let us not be deceived by analogies. God's Spirit is not only *in* the book, but *with* the book. The personal, conscious spirit of a human author goes not with his work. It may enter regions of which he is ignorant, fall into the hands of thousands of whom he knows nothing, and receive a million misinterpretations of which he is happily unconscious. Not so with the Author of the Gospel. He is everywhere. He pervades the soul of every man who takes it into his hand. And there is not a thought which it awakens with which He is not conversant. Am I to suppose that the Infinite Author, Who is thus ever-present with every reader of His Book, cognizant of every thought which it suggests, having at all times His finger upon every spring of the mind, does nothing to facilitate a right impression of His Word? Is He a mere spectator? Has He no interest in the processes and results of the thoughts which His own revelation originates? When the reader is striving after a correct idea of a passage, can He help? Or is He impotent? Will He? Or is He heartless? I confess that the very supposition that in such a case He exerts no personal agency, is repugnant to my instinctive notions of a God—to all my reasonings too. He

paints the lily—He directs the sparrow in its flight—and, oh! Will He not help the struggling soul? The Great Parent, will He not solve the questions of His anxious child? Would any human author be thus present with the mind of his reader, having a power to help—help needed—help, perhaps, sought—and not help? “If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?”

No. XIII.

CHRIST'S ESTIMATE OF DEATH AND PAUL'S COMPARED.

“It is expedient for you that I go away.”—xvi. 7.

“Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.”—Phil. i. 24.

(For Exegetical Remarks, see Vol. II. p. 49.)

BETWEEN Jesus and Paul, when each uttered the words before us, there was a remarkable correspondence.

First: Both were in the immediate Prospect of Death. The words of *Christ* were a part of that tender and consolatory address which He delivered to His disciples in the immediate prospect of dissolution. They were, no doubt, full of sadness at the thought of being separated from Him, Who had changed the whole current of their sympathies and thoughts, introduced a new and glorious era into their experience, and with Whom they had mingled on terms of the most endearing friendship for at least three years. He knew their distress, and condescended in this conversation with them, on the night before His death, to administer the necessary relief. Every sentence is charged with consolation. The expression before us is a sample of the whole. He assures them that it was “*expedient*” for them that He should depart, and bestow upon them a Comforter, that should not only be with them, but *in* them; and that, not for a season, but for ever.

The words of *Paul* are part of an address which he delivered to the Philippian Christians, when he was in the immediate prospect of being separated from them by a cruel and an ignominious death. Death, in forms of horrid torture, was before the eye and heart, both of Jesus and Paul, when they uttered the sentences before us. Both are the utterances of those about to grapple with “the King of Terrors,” and step into the mysterious scenes of disembodied spirits.

Secondly: Both were under the master influence of the same principle of Self-Sacrificing Philanthropy. The strongest desire of Christ when He spoke, was the good of those to whom He addressed Himself, and this was also the strongest desire of Paul. Both

wished well to their race; both were supremely anxious to serve it.

Now the remarkable point to which I wish to draw your attention is this, that Jesus should regard His *departure from the world as necessary to serve the interests of His disciples, and that Paul should regard his continuance in the world as the most necessary to serve the interest of his converts.* Jesus considered His death, so far as the good of the Church was concerned, highly "*expedient.*" Paul, on the other hand, considered his death inexpedient for the Church. The One thought that He could do more good by going to heaven; the other thought that he could do more good by remaining on earth.

Now I think that an inquiry into the *cause* of this difference of judgment between Christ and Paul, concerning Usefulness, will not only be interesting but profitable. I assume, of course, at the outset, that both were correct in their judgment. It would be blasphemy to suppose that the Mediator had not formed a true judgment; nor would it be much else to suppose that the Apostle had not, since he "spake as he was moved by the Holy Ghost." Why, then, should it be *better* for the world for Christ to depart, and for Paul to remain? I suggest two reasons—

I.—BECAUSE MANKIND WOULD LOSE LESS BY THE DEPARTURE OF CHRIST, THAN IT WOULD BY THE DEPARTURE OF THE APOSTLE.

There are three things which men probably lost by the departure of the Apostle, which they did not lose by the departure of Christ.

First: His *Personal Presence.* When the Apostle departed this life, it is probable that his person left all the scenes of his mortal life, so that he had no more connection with the earthly affairs of mankind. At any rate the Bible does not give any reason to believe that, after death, a man continues in any personal connection with this terrestrial state. He passes away to some other world. He returns no more to his house. "His sons come to honour, and he knoweth it not." The places that once knew him, know him no more for ever. The world loses him. Paul, after his departure, would not be found in Corinth, or Rome, in Ephesus, or Philippi, or with any of the Churches which he had planted.

But it is not so with Christ. Death did not take Him from the world. He was as present after His decease as before. "I will not leave you comfortless. I will come to you." Christ is Personally with every section of His Church—with every disciple. "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

Secondly: His *Personal Agency.* After Paul's decease, not only was his person absent from this world, but, of course, his personal

agency. He wrote no more letters, his tongue pronounced no more addresses, his pen was still, and his voice was hushed on earth for ever. When we die, we finish our *personal* agency on earth. We leave our work; we return not to complete any undertaking—not to finish even the education of our children. We leave the work for ever when we die. But it is not so with Christ. He continues to carry on His designs. He works in His disciples “to will and to do His own good pleasure.” The Acts of the Apostles are the acts of Christ through the Apostles; and all the true achievements of the Church are but the operations of Christ.

Thirdly: His *Personal Intercession*. The Apostle, during his mission on earth, prayed earnestly and constantly for the Church;—he “prayed always with all prayer.” But when he died, perhaps this intercession ended; I say *perhaps*—for it does not behove us to speak positively here. Indeed reason would suggest that intercession is the act of all holy souls; and that those for whom we interceded in earnestness here, we shall remember in our aspirations in the heavenly state. The Bible, however, gives us no absolute authority for believing this, and therefore it is, at any rate, a matter of doubt.

But the Intercession of Christ continues. That is a beautiful prayer in chap. xvii.; but it is only a short specimen of His intercession for mankind in the heavenly world. “He ever liveth to make intercession.” “If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father.” His intercession is not Persuasion; that is not needed with Infinite Mercy and Immutable Love. It is the Representation of Mankind in the presence of God and His holy universe. Another reason suggested is—

II.—BECAUSE MANKIND WOULD GAIN MORE BY THE DEPARTURE OF CHRIST, THAN BY THE DEPARTURE OF PAUL.

Humanity would gain more of three things by the Departure of Christ, than by the Departure of the Apostle.

First: More Sanctifying Truth. I know not of any truth that came out in Paul’s death, that we have not in his life and teaching. But oh! what a new flood of truth burst upon this world when Christ died, and rose from the dead! Indeed these facts involved the very essence of the Gospel. What is the Gospel? “How that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures. And that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures; and that He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve; after that He was seen of about five hundred brethren.” Here is the Renovating and Sanctifying Power of Truth. Humanity would gain—

Secondly: More Heavenly Attraction, The departure of Paul,

indeed, increased the attraction of the heavenly world. The members of the various Churches who knew Paul and heard him preach, would assuredly feel drawn toward heaven after his departure. Has not the death of the good ever this power? The celestial world comes with meaning and uplifting power to us when we think of heaven as the home of all the great and good men whom we have known and loved. But how little is this attraction, compared with the attraction which flows from Christ! Christ in Heaven is the magnet which draws the heart of humanity Heaven-ward. "Whom having not seen we love, rejoicing with joy unspeakable, and full of glory." Humanity would gain—

Thirdly: More Secure Guardianship. Were we to suppose, what some hold, that those departed spirits of the good, who loved us most, become our guardian angels; yet what is their guardianship compared with a guardianship secured to us by Christ, in consequence of His departure to the other world? "All power," said He, "is given to Me." All things are under His control;—all elements, laws, beings, agencies, actions, worlds, systems, matter, mind. "Things visible," &c. "He is head over all things to the Church," &c. Humanity would gain—

Fourthly: More Divine Influence. It is true that when a good man leaves the world, the remembrance of the noble deeds he has wrought, and the Christly Spirit he has exemplified will bring some measure of Divine influence to his survivors. This, however, will be insignificant in measure compared with the tide of influence that came down from heaven when Christ ascended on high. The windows of heaven were opened then. A new and mighty power came down. "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost."

CONCLUSION. The subject teaches—

First: That our Privileges are superior to the privileges of those who were the Contemporaries of Christ.

Sentimental saintlets are constantly extolling the privileges of the past. But in these last times "God hath provided some better things for us."

'Twas good to have lived in that old Hebrew land,
 When Thou, our Redeemer, wast there;
 Men stood by Thee then, and were touched by Thy hand,
 Still better, far better, be here.
 'Twas good to have heard from Thine own loving voice,
 Thy words bidding sinners come near;
 Yet reason assures us, and we would rejoice,
 'Tis better, far better, be here.

Peter grew wonderfully in moral energy by the departure of Christ. How weak in "the High Priest's house" when Christ was present! (Luke xxii. 54—62.) How strong when confronting the Sanhedrim a few days after Christ's departure! (Acts iv. 5—12, &c.) (See Exposition on John xvi. 7.) The subject teaches—

Secondly: That the earth is probably the one Sphere in which we can serve our Race. Paul felt this. Whatever you desire to do in the way of spiritually improving your children, servants, neighbours, must be done *now*. What can the mighty hosts that have entered Heaven do for us poor mortals? The subject teaches—

Thirdly: That the death of the good is a real Loss to the World. The death of a good man is the drying up of a well-spring in the desert of life, the quenching of a star in our heavens already too clouded by depravity.

No. XIV.

CHRIST AND THE HUMAN RACE.

“As Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him. And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.”—xvii. 2, 3.

(For Exegetical Remarks, see Vol. II. p. 69.)

As these words now stand before us, the idea is, That the Eternal Father gave to Our Lord a certain number of men, to whom He was to give “*eternal life*,” and to none besides. “Here,” says a popular expositor, pointing to this text, “is the Father making over the elect to the Redeemer, and giving them to Him as His charge and trust; as the crown and recompense of His undertaking. He has a sovereign power over all the fallen race, but a *peculiar* interest in the chosen remnant. And here is the Son undertaking to secure the happiness of those that were given Him, that He would give eternal life to them.” Is this the idea contained in the original Greek? If so, we are bound to accept it. The idea of the Infinite Father, acting on the principle of favouritism, and handing over a certain number of His children to Christ to be saved, leaving the others to be damned, may be revolting at once to our intellectual conceptions and our moral instincts. What of that? Am I a judge of the Infinite? Can I span immensity? “Who am I, that I should reply against God?” But is it contained in God’s *real* Word? If so, I accept it, though it confounds my judgment, and strikes hard against my intuitions.

Whether such an idea as this is contained in other parts of the Scriptures is a question on which I have not to enter now. It may be so, though, to say the least, I have never found it. But that it is contained in the Original of the text, I venture, with all humility, to deny. I have submitted, in my Exposition, the translations of Dean Alford and Dr. Davidson as more faithful than that of our version: “*According as Thou gavest Him power over all flesh, that whatsoever Thou hast given Him, to them He should give eternal life.*”

The idea seems to be this: INASMUCH AS THOU GAVEST HIM AUTHORITY OVER ALL MANKIND, THAT HE SHOULD GIVE TO ALL MANKIND WHAT THOU HAST GIVEN HIM—ETERNAL LIFE.

Taking this as the idea contained in the text, we have, then, several glorious truths brought under our notice.

I.—CHRIST IS THE MASTER OF THE HUMAN RACE.

He has "*power over all flesh.*" The word *ἐξουσία*, here translated "*power,*" is rendered authority in about thirty other places in the New Testament, and this is undoubtedly its meaning here. The word *flesh*, *σαρκός*, which in the Bible sometimes means all animal existences, sometimes a constituent part of the human body, sometimes moral corruption, and sometimes spiritual sensibility, here unquestionably means human nature, as in Luke iii. 6, "All flesh shall see the salvation of God." The text, therefore, asserts that Christ has authority over all humanity; that He is in fact the Master of the Human Race. This is taught elsewhere in the New Testament: taught with great clearness, force, and frequency too. We are told that when He ascended from the grave, He said unto His disciples, "All power is given to Me in heaven and on earth." It is said that He is gone into heaven, and "sitteth on the right hand of God," and angels and authority are made "subject" to Him. And we are also informed that He "hath on His vesture and His thigh a name written—King of kings, and Lord of lords."

Now, as Master of the race, several things are noteworthy—(1.) *His power over all is absolute.* His authority is more than legislative and judicial. It extends to life itself. He kills, and He makes alive. He has "the keys of death and of hell at His girdle." None come into existence but by His bidding; none continue an instant longer than He wills; and not one departs without His permission. As Master of the race—(2.) *He is infinitely independent of all.* He is not on the throne by the suffrage of any. Did men wish Him there? Not they. They struggled hard to confine Him in the dark chambers of mortality. Their cry was, and is, "We will not have this Man to rule over us." They neither placed Him there, nor can they depose Him. He is sublimely independent. The "heathen may rage; the people imagine a vain thing; the kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and against His Anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision." As Master of the race—(3.) *He interferes not with the freedom of any.* Absolute as is His power over them, He exerts no coercion. Each of the millions is left free—free to

obey, and free to rebel. He allows conquerors to deluge continents with blood, and proud ecclesiastics to sit in the place of God. Each is *conscious* of his freedom. As Master of the race—(4.) *He does not value service by its amount, but by its motive.* Men look at the *measure* rather than the *motive* in service: not so with Him. The cup of cold water, and the widow's mite, to Him, are more valuable than cathedrals reared for His worship, or lordly inheritance bequeathed to carry on His cause. As Master of the race—(5.) *He has no misgivings about the results.* He is sitting down, "expecting His enemies to be made His footstool." He has established an agency on earth to work out His mediatorial purposes. He has no fear of failure. He can afford to wait. He has plenty of time. He cannot be disappointed. As He sees the golden autumn creeping through the tempests, snows, and desolation of winter, so, amidst the wreck of kingdoms, the desolations of war, the opposition of infidels, and the revolution of ages, He sees the millennium coming on. Notice—

II.—CHRIST IS THE MASTER OF THE HUMAN RACE BY DIVINE APPOINTMENT.

"*As Thou hast given Him power over all flesh*"—over all mankind. "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His hands." "God hath highly exalted Him." "Thou hast put all things in subjection under His feet." Unto the Son He saith, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever," &c. Thus He reigns by *Divine Right*. The Divine right of human kings is an *impious fiction*, a fiction which for ages has licensed the most ruthless tyrannies, and entailed the most terrible calamities upon the nations of the earth. In the march of general intelligence this fiction is rapidly losing its power; and will, thank God, very soon be buried with the blasphemous absurdities of the dark ages. That Christ reigns by Divine right is, however, no fiction. It is a glorious truth. "God hath highly exalted Him."

First: He being our Rightful Master, *we should obey Him.* "Ye call Me Master and Lord: and ye say well, for so I am." "And why call ye Me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" "Whoso honoureth the Son, honoureth the Father." "Kiss the Son, lest He be angry." Our governments should be moulded by His laws. Our creeds should be founded on His teaching. Our business should be regulated by His principles. Our lives actuated in all by His Spirit. "One is your Master, even Christ."

Secondly: He being our Rightful Master, *we should rejoice in the government under which we live.* He is not only All-wise, All-just, and All-powerful, but All-loving. Blessed be the Great Father for making Christ the Master of our race! He might have

put the world under the government of some Satanic being, who would have gratified his malign nature by rendering our existence a torture, and turning the world into a pandemonium. Or He might have placed us under an inexorable Nemesis, who would have pursued us with the red-hot rod of punishment, and compelled us every instant to eat of the bitter fruits of our own doings. But He has placed over us One Who wears our nature; One Whose love for us is unconquerable, stronger than death itself; One Who died for us on the cross, and now lives on the throne, and works through the universe, in order to bless us with the felicities of His Father and Himself. Notice—

III.—CHRIST IS THE MASTER OF THE HUMAN RACE IN ORDER TO MAKE IT HAPPY.

“*That He should give eternal life.*” Eternal life is the great boon which Christ gives to the world. This is stated with great frequency and explicitness in the New Testament. “The gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.” “Whosoever believeth on Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.” “Thou hast the words of eternal life.” “He that receiveth My word shall have everlasting life.” Jesus said to Martha when her brother Lazarus was in the tomb, “Thy brother shall rise again.” She replied, “I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.” Jesus answered, “He that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and he that liveth and believeth in Me shall never die.”

But what is ETERNAL LIFE? Is it merely *endless* existence? This humanity might have had, had He never interposed; and this is not necessarily a blessing. It might be a curse: a curse even worse than annihilation itself. The germ of this eternal life is *Eternal Goodness*. Goodness is essentially eternal. Finite existence is not so. Finite existence every moment depends upon His will. God can blot out of being in an instant the strongest of His spiritual creatures. To talk of the *essential* immortality of creatures, is a contradiction in true philosophy. But can He annihilate goodness? Never. It is the soul of Himself. Goodness is the true immortal life of souls. “The incorruptible seed,” the perennial river of life, the unfading crown. The immortality of the soul consists *not* in its constitution, but in its *character*. The Divine elements of rectitude, love, truth, godliness—in these are “*eternal life.*” Alas, the converse of this is true. What is death? *Sin* is death. Unholiness is soul-mortality. The spirit in which moral evil dwells and works, dies—dies to all that gives worth and bearableness to existence, dies to God and all the blessings of His happy universe. Christ, then, is made the Master of the

race, *in order to make the race happy.* "I am come that ye might have life, and that ye might have it more abundantly." Glorious truth!

CONCLUSION.

First: This subject furnishes a ground for the Highest Gratitude. Who would have wondered had He been enthroned to wreak vengeance upon the world, and to have rendered human existence an intolerable curse? But not so; He is made Master to hush all the discords, remove all the diseases, and crush all the evils of the world. He is on the throne in order to "wipe away all tears" from all faces, and to make the world happy with the happiness of God Himself. "He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new." A "new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." Love, amazing love, is this!

Secondly: This subject furnishes a ground for the Sublimest Catholicity. He does not work to bless any mere section of humanity, but to bless the race. "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him." The sphere of His redemptive mercy is co-extensive with His dominion; and His dominion is over all mankind. Christ is the Saviour of *all* men. "The Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world." Bigot, cease to look upon all outside thy little sect as the reprobate of God, and cease to exult in the vain and impious thought that thou art a special favourite of Heaven! Thy miserable exclusiveness is a decisive proof that thou art a moral anomaly in the empire of Christ. Christ is for the race, and "if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His."

Thirdly: This subject presents a ground for the Strongest Confidence. Let us rejoice in the authority of Christ. The race for whom in love He died, is now under His control. His love for it now on the throne is as strong as when He bled for it on the Cross. He is using His vast authority for its restoration, and it is getting better and brighter. Its moral agriculture is improving. A layer of loam is being spread over the world, in which the old weeds and thistles wither and die, and new plants of heavenlier climates are springing up in every direction. Governments, religious institutions, and customs, that once grew here luxuriantly, are losing their root-hold and are rotting away. Every plant which His heavenly Father hath not planted He is plucking up. Its moral atmosphere is becoming more salubrious; the lungs of conscience breathe freer; old diseases are gradually disappearing; and souls are getting stronger in resolve and deed. Its moral firmament is growing more luminous, new lights break through the clouds, new constellations rise on the horizon, and fresh rays come

down from the sky of thought, upon regions where mental midnight has long prevailed. Thus, under the Masterhood of Jesus, humanity is advancing. To us, the impatient children of a day, the progress may appear slow. But time to Him is nothing, and He has a far higher estimate of moral achievements than we have. The conversion of one soul is not much to us; but to Him it is a stupendous event, producing a thrill of rapture through His holy universe. "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over *one* sinner that repenteth."

No. XV.

CHRIST'S IMPRISONMENT.

“Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus, and bound him, and led him away to Annas first; for he was father in law to Caiaphas, which was the High Priest that same year.”—xviii. 12, 13.

(For Exegetical Remarks, see Vol. II. p. 109.)

THE word “*prison*,” in Isaiah liii. 8, should not, perhaps, be taken to designate a particular place of incarceration; for there is no evidence to show that Christ was ever confined in any such penal cell. He was, however, a Prisoner. His limbs were bound, and He was held in the custody of the iron-hearted officers of the Roman Government. The verses we have selected contain the first account we have of such Imprisonment. Up to this time He seems to have been free. Though the demon eye of envy and malice was ever on Him, He had, till now, power to move about at pleasure;—no limb was manacled. From this time on, however, He is in bonds. During this imprisonment His enemies seem to have been intensely active: all their faculties were on the stretch from this time up to the hour of the Crucifixion. The closing hours of the Thursday night, and the opening hours of the Friday morning, form a period of *intense* activity. For earnest, concentrated, and strenuous action, they will ever be memorable in the history of the universe. Heaven and earth and hell were all wondrously busy. The devil and his emissaries were all astir. It was the “hour” of darkness. The Scribes, the Pharisees, the Chief Priests, the Rulers, and the Roman officers were straining every nerve, and turning every moment to the infernal end they contemplated—the destruction of the Son of God. Christ Himself was none the less active. He had been busily employed every minute. He had attended the Passover, and there answered the many questions, and corrected the many errors, of His disciples. There, too, He foretold His betrayal; delivered that beautiful discourse to His sorrowing disciples, commencing with the words, “Let not your hearts be troubled,” and offered up that prayer of inexpressible sublimity contained in

John xvii. Having sung a hymn with the disciples, He retired to the Mount of Olives—His accustomed retreat; and soon after we find Him in the mysterious solitude of Gethsemane, in an unknown agony of soul, praying to the everlasting Father for help. Truly, His activity during these few hours was marvellous. It would seem that He compressed the work of unnumbered ages into a few hours.

Our subject is *Christ's Imprisonment*; and we shall look upon it in three aspects—

I.—AS THE MOST THRILLING EVENT IN THE HISTORY OF CHRIST.

Just look at what takes place during His *Imprisonment*! I shall endeavour to give the history in the order in which it occurred, as I gather it from a comparison of the various Evangelical records.

First: He was first taken a Prisoner from Gethsemane to Annas. "*Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus, and bound Him, and led Him away to Annas first; for he was father in law to Caiaphas, which was the High Priest that same year.*" Why was He led to Annas "*first*?" Annas was not in office now, and had not the legal power to deal with the matter. Why, then, was this glorious Prisoner brought first to him? There was a deep, cunning, crafty policy in this. The old man, it is true, was not in office, but in all likelihood he had more real power than any other one man in the Jewish kingdom. For a long time he had been the High Priest himself, and no less than five of his sons had filled that most elevated of Jewish offices. And now it was Caiaphas, his son-in-law, who was invested with its authorities and honours. By taking the Blessed Prisoner to him first, the old man would be so complimented, have his pride as well as his curiosity so gratified, that his great influence in effecting their infernal design on Christ would be assuredly secured. What was the character of this interview,—what words exchanged,—what insults offered? We know not.

Secondly: He was then taken as a Prisoner from Annas to Caiaphas. "*Now Annas had sent Him bound to Caiaphas the High Priest.*" And they that laid hold on Jesus, led Him away to Caiaphas, the High Priest's house, where were assembled all the Chief Priests, and elders, and the Scribes. "The High Priest then asked Jesus of His disciples, and of His doctrine." Here is His reply, "I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing. Why askest thou Me? ask them which heard Me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what

I said. And when He had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by, struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest Thou the High Priest so? Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou Me?" (John xviii. 19—24.) "Now the Chief Priests and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put Him to death; but found none: yea, though many false witnesses came, yet found they none. At the last came two false witnesses, and said, This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days. And the High Priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest Thou nothing? what is it which these witness against Thee? But Jesus held His peace. And the High Priest answered and said unto Him, I adjure Thee by the living God, that Thou tell us whether Thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the High Priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy. What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death. Then did they spit in His face, and buffeted Him; and others smote Him with the palms of their hands, saying, Prophecy unto us, Thou Christ, Who is he that smote Thee?" (Matt. xxvi. 59—68.)

Here, at the outset, the High Priest pressed on Him questions of a general nature, touching His "disciples" and His "doctrine."

The Reply of our Saviour is sublimely characteristic. With the fearlessness and frankness of the highest magnanimity, and with the adroitness of unerring wisdom, He directs them to the multitude around, for any information concerning His disciples and Himself. "I spake openly to the world; ask them that heard Me." He had spoken to multitudes. No One was better known amongst the millions of Judæa at that moment; and He challenged the verdict of public sentiment. With the insolence of base hirelings, who courted the favour of their master, the officer, we are told, which stood by, struck Him, saying, "Answerest Thou the High Priest so?" To this insult the noble Prisoner said, "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou Me?" False witnesses were now sought to convict Him. There seems to have been a great difficulty in finding any; and many of those who were found proved useless on account of the disagreement in their testimony. At last, however, two false witnesses came, who seemed to agree in the testimony, that they heard Him say, "I am able to destroy the temple of God, that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another, made without hands." The High Priest now interposed; he arose and stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying unto Him:

“Answerest Thou nothing? What is it which these witness against Thee?” Christ remained silent. He knew that speech was useless in such a case. Again the High Priest addressed Him: “I adjure Thee by the living God, tell us whether Thou be the Christ, the Son of the Blessed.” An answer to this question would decide the case, and determine His fate. To this appeal Christ could not be silent; it was an opportunity for Him to declare Himself, and He said, “Thou hast said I am; nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.” This declaration was thought to be sufficient; the High Priest rent his clothes, saying, “He hath spoken blasphemy.” *Blasphemy* was the charge brought against Him here, and for it He was now pronounced worthy of death. In this court and at this hour Peter denied Him thrice; and His enemies smote Him, spat on His face, blindfolded Him, &c. Having been pronounced in this court to be guilty of death, the men that held Him, like infuriated monsters, began to insult and torture Him. “And the men that held Jesus mocked Him, and smote Him; and some began to spit on Him, and to cover His face, and to buffet Him; and the servants did strike Him with the palms of their hands. And when they had blindfolded Him, they struck Him on the face, and asked Him, saying, Prophecy unto us, Thou Christ, who is he that smote Thee? And many of these things blasphemously spake they against Him.”

Thirdly: He was next taken a Prisoner from the palace of Caiaphas to the Hall of the Sanhedrim. Notwithstanding the condemnation which had been pronounced upon Him before the High Priest, and in which the people seemed most heartily to concur, the authorities themselves, the authors of the sentence, do not seem thoroughly satisfied with the result. Conscience makes them uncomfortable, and prompts them to seek further evidence to justify their decision. Accordingly they resolve on holding another court, and having another formal trial. Hence they adjourn from the “High Priest’s palace” to the *great hall of Session*, which was one of the buildings of the temple. The morning which succeeds that horrible night is just breaking, when the Grand Council of the nation assemble in that hall. Jesus was conducted by an armed escort up Moriah’s hill into their presence. Can you picture to your mind this court? The hall, we may suppose, was spacious and magnificent, fraught with many heart-awing associations. Seventy-two of the most distinguished men in Israel were there clad in authority. They are the rulers; they form the great Council of the nation—the Sanhedrim. Though night has just broken, they are all there to adjudicate on the charges brought against this Nazarene. The High Priest is the president; next to him sat those who had previously held the higher office;

next to them the representatives of the four-and-twenty classes of the priesthood. Then follow the elders or rulers of the synagogues, and some of the most eminent doctors of the law; men well versed in the laws of Moses and the traditions of the Rabbis. It was to the Jewish people the most august assembly. Here the blessed Prisoner now stands. The inspired biographer gives the circumstances of the trial with a simplicity and brevity alike inimitable. "And as soon as it was day, the elders of the people and the Chief Priests and Scribes came together, and led Him into their Council, saying, Art Thou the Christ? tell us." And He said unto them, "If I tell you, ye will not believe: and if I also ask you, ye will not answer Me, nor let Me go. Hereafter shall the Son of Man sit on the right hand of the power of God. Then said they all, Art Thou then the Son of God? And He said unto them, Ye say that I am. And they said, What need have we of any further witness? for we ourselves have heard of His own mouth. And they took counsel against Jesus to put Him to death." Their cause gained nothing by this second trial. They only furnished posterity with another and fuller revelation of the enormous wickedness which they were capable of perpetrating in the name of law and religion. Truth, however, gained not a little even on this occasion; it received another glorious confession of Christ's Messiahship. "Hereafter shall the Son of Man sit on the right hand of the power of God."

Fourthly: He was next taken as a Prisoner from the hall of the Sanhedrim to Pilate. The morning is advancing, and all Jerusalem is astir. The streets are in commotion, and crowds are moving about with unusual haste. All the members of the Sanhedrim and every officer in the State look and move as if under a strange excitement. "Then led they Jesus from the hall of Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the Passover" (Matt. xxvii. 11—14; Mark xv. 1—5; Luke xxiii. 1—7; John xviii. 28—38). What do we see on this occasion? Outside of that hall there is a strange scene. All the members of the great Council of the nation were there. Christ, the Prisoner, had been thrust into the hall by the force of the Roman officers; but there, His malignant accusers would not cross the threshold. Why? Oh! the base villainy of a sanctionious religion. "They went not in, lest they should be defiled." That judgment hall was not sacred enough for these demons masked in religion. Take care of the men who are afraid to be polluted by places! "Pilate then went out unto them, and said, What accusation bring ye against this Man? They answered and said unto him, If He were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered Him up unto thee." Here again, their foul-

hearted sanctimoniousness comes out. "If He were not a malefactor!" Wickedly assuming that He was, and with an unblushing arrogance declaring their pretended incapability of bringing aught but a malefactor to him for trial. "Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye Him, and judge Him according to your law." What reply did they make to this? Had they the candour to say, "We have tried Him?" No! With their wonted hypocrisy they said, "It is not lawful for us to put any man to death." Rome, it would seem, had deprived the Sanhedrim of the power of administering capital punishment. What charge must they bring against Him, then, in order to get the Roman authority to put Him to death? A religious one?—the same that was against Him before the High Priest? There the charge was blasphemy. No! Rome tolerates all religions; and they could not gain His death on such a charge. With the wiliness of the great serpent himself, their moral master, they say, "We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, saying that He Himself is Christ, a King." This charge, though as baseless as the former, came within the jurisdiction of Pilate. Now he leaves these arch-hypocrites outside, enters the judgment hall again, and summons Jesus into his presence. No sooner had the judge seated himself, and the Prisoner confronted him, than he felt himself embarrassed by another strange and unexpected difficulty.

His own wife despatches a strange and startling message to him, in which she says, "Have thou nothing to do with that just Man, for I have suffered many things in a dream because of Him." The judge, notwithstanding, felt that his position bound him to proceed with the case. He appeals to the Prisoner at the bar, "Art Thou the King of the Jews?" To which Jesus replied by the question, "Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of Me?" Christ perceives the question was asked, not for information, but in the spirit of ridicule; and He shapes His reply accordingly. In this reply He reminds Pilate that the testimony of enemies was suspicious, and that it ought not to influence him in his decision. To this Pilate replies, "Am I a Jew?" That is, "Dost thou suppose me to be a Jew, and to be acquainted with Jewish quarrels? I am a Roman, and disclaim any knowledge of any such miserable squabbles. I am here to do justice—'What hast Thou done?'" Jesus then declares His Kingship. "I am a King. Though poor and miserable in aspect I appear before thee; though thou didst laugh to scorn the idea, yet I am a King; but My kingdom is not of this world," &c. "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness of the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth My voice. Pilate saith unto Him, What is truth?" At this question Christ stood sublimely mute. He knew that explanations

would be useless. Pilate's heart was not in a condition to understand truth. You cannot make truth evident to souls clouded with depravity. The judge is silent. He gets an impression of the innocency of the Prisoner. He withdraws from the court, goes again outside to the Chief Priests and the people, who felt themselves too holy to enter, and He emphatically declares, "I find no fault in this Man." This, instead of satisfying them, only excites them the more in urging their accusations. "The Chief Priests accused Him of many things." Amongst other things they said, "He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place."

Fifthly: He was then taken as a Prisoner from Pilate to Herod. We have seen that the Chief Priests in the charges which they brought against Christ before Pilate referred to His connection with Galilee. "He stirreth up the people," &c. Pilate, strongly desiring to rid himself of a work which he felt repulsive to his nature, when he heard of Galilee, and found that Christ was a Galilean, determined to send the Prisoner for trial to Herod; Galilee being within Herod's jurisdiction, and Herod being now at Jerusalem. This was Herod Antipas, the tetrarch of Galilee, the wretched libertine whom the Baptist reproved; the murderer who put to death that illustrious reformer for charging him with his guilt; that cruel and crafty one whom the Son of God designated a "fox." Before this Imperial monster Christ now stands. "And when Herod saw Him, he was exceeding glad," &c. (Luke xxiii. 8—12.) This meeting was *complimentary* to Herod. "The same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together," for before they were at enmity between themselves. Though, perhaps, Pilate sent Christ in order to relieve himself of a painful duty, Herod took it as a compliment, and was pleased; and thus a friendship was established between them. This very circumstance reflects honour on Christ. Had these men in power felt that Christ was only a common criminal, a religious enthusiast, or an impostor, would Herod have felt the compliment? This meeting was *gratifying* to Herod. "When Herod saw Jesus he was exceeding glad: for he was desirous to see Him for a long season" (Luke xxiii. 8, 9). It seems strange that Herod had never seen Jesus, Who had been so often in Galilee and laboured there. But Herod resided at Tiberias, and Christ, though near to the spot, had never actually visited it. Herod no doubt considered the smallest effort in his own district to see and listen to Christ beneath his dignity. Herod had heard a great deal of Him, and now his curiosity was gratified; "He was pleased." The meeting was *disappointing* to Herod. He hoped to have seen some miracle done; he expected to be interested in some display of the marvellous: but he is mistaken. The mighty

Prisoner could have wrought the most stupendous miracles before him; but He stands passive. The king puts questions to Him; but the Prisoner answered him nothing. Question after question perhaps was pressed, yet sublimely mute stood Christ; "He answered not a word." This silence was profoundly significant; it shows that even the holiest speech is sometimes useless and inexpedient. This meeting was *mortifying to Herod*. He wanted miracles; and will not Christ perform them? Not a finger will He move to gratify his wish. He wanted answers to certain idle questions. Will not Christ reply? No! "Not a word." Herod is therefore enraged. His dignity is wounded. "And Herod with his men of war set Him at nought, and mocked Him, and arrayed Him in a gorgeous robe, and sent Him again to Pilate."

Sixthly: He was then taken as a Prisoner back from Herod to Pilate. Herod "sent Him again to Pilate" (Matt. xxvii. 15—26; Mark xv. 6—15; Luke xviii. 13—35). On this occasion Pilate calls together at the outset the Chief Priests and the rulers of the people, and declared unto them that he had examined Christ touching all things of which He had been accused, "and that he could find no fault in Him;" that he had also sent Him to Herod, and that Herod found nothing worthy of death in Him. He proposes, therefore, to chastise and release Him. He reminded them of the custom of the governor to release at the Passover a criminal, and he leaves them to decide as to who it should be; Barabbas, who was a robber and a murderer, or Jesus Who was called Christ. "Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you?" "Then cried they all again, Not this man, but Barabbas." This seemed to be the verdict of the Jewish people, the verdict of public sentiment, which Pilate had not the courage to withstand. Still he recoils from the idea of putting Christ to death, and appeals to them again. "What will ye then that I should do unto Him, Whom ye call the King of the Jews? And they cried out again, saying, Crucify Him, crucify Him." Pilate seems confounded. Within his heart there is a tremendous battle, between his love of popular favour and the demands of his conscience. He makes another appeal to them, "Why, what evil hath He done? I have found no cause of death in Him: I will therefore chastise Him, and let Him go. And they cried out the more exceedingly, Crucify Him, crucify Him; and the voices of them and the Chief Priests prevailed"—prevailed over the clearest dictates of his own judgment and the strongest protests of his own conscience. Still, though the sentence is pronounced, and Christ delivered up to their will, his conscience is yet asserting her rights. Several efforts after this he seems to have made to conciliate his outraged conscience. *He washes his hands before the multitude*, and says,

"I am innocent of the blood of this just person; see ye to it." He declares again and again that "he had found no fault in Him." In order to touch them into a compassion that should reverse their decision, he brings Christ forth to them, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe, and the reed of mock royalty in His hand, presenting an appearance enough to break the hardest heart—and he says, "Behold the Man!" Still all this is of no avail: the cry, "Away with Him, away with Him; crucify Him, crucify Him," rose louder and more vehement every minute. "Then delivered he Him unto them to be crucified."

Seventhly: He was finally taken as a Prisoner from Pilate to Calvary. "Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto Him the whole band of soldiers. And they stripped Him, and put on Him a scarlet robe. And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon His head, and a reed in His right hand: and they bowed the knee before Him, and mocked Him, saying Hail, king of the Jews! And they spit upon Him and took the reed and smote Him on the head. And after that they had mocked Him, they took the robe off from Him, and put His own raiment on Him, and led Him away to crucify Him" (Matt. xxvii. 27—50). What a view of Him as a Prisoner you have here! Never was there such a journey as that from the hall of Pilate to the brow of Calvary. It was not a long one; but most momentous to the universe. Never was there such a period as that which transpired between Pilate's sentence and the Prisoner's dying cry. Though embracing only three hours, the scenes and circumstances connected therewith, will extend their influence over all minds, and take eternity to study. The Cross is the sublime culmination of the whole.

"At last the word of death is given;
The form is bound, the nails are driven;
Now triumph, Scribe and Pharisee!
Now, Roman, bend the mocking knee!
The cross is reared. The deed is done!
There stands Messiah's earthly throne!
Still from His lips no curse has come;
His lofty eye has looked no doom;
No earthquake burst, no angel band
Crushes the black, blaspheming hand;
What say those lips by anguish riven?
God, be My murderers forgiven!"

Look at *Christ's Imprisonment*—

II.—AS THE GREATEST ENORMITY IN THE ANNALS OF CRIME.

First: His imprisonment combined all the chief Elements of Crime. Here was the foulest *Injustice*. Imprisonment is for criminals; but had Christ ever been guilty of a crime? Had He contravened

any law human or Divine? Had He rebelled against any righteous authority? Had He violated any of the rights of His race? No! He challenged His enemies in full assembly to convict Him of sin, and they were silent. Judas, whom He had admitted into the inner sanctuary of His social life, and who had the best opportunity of knowing His character, and who, to appease his own conscience, would readily have declared any delinquency of Christ if he had discovered it, leaves the world and passes into the dread presence of his Judge, attesting His unimpeachable excellence; "I have sinned," he says, "in that I have betrayed innocent blood." Even the charges that were brought against Him in the various courts in which He was arraigned, if true, could be vindicated on the principles of everlasting right. Was He charged with blasphemy for making Himself the Son of God? He *was* the Son of God. Was He charged with political rebellion in making Himself a king? He was a King—a King by eternal right. How often did Pilate, who, overborne at last by priestly intolerance and popular clamour, condemned Him, declare that "he found no fault in Him!" Truly He was the holy, the harmless, and the separate from sinners; He rendered in His life the highest homage to every righteous law in the universe. O Justice, never, never wast thou so outraged as in the imprisonment and death of this illustrious Galilean! Here, too, is the basest *Ingratitude*. Was there one man in Judæa, or Galilee, or Samaria, who could refer to one single act of unkindness which He had ever committed towards any? Not one. "He went about doing good." His breast heaved and glowed with love for all. How many thousands of the population had been the personal recipients of His kindness! He had given health to many a diseased frame, fed many a hungry one, and brightened many a home. He had injured none; He had blessed thousands and sought to save all. Here is *Astounding Impiety*. The Prisoner was the "Son of God." He was the "Prince of Life." Had these men not heard, had they not witnessed, those stupendous acts of His which attested His Godhead? How astounding their hardihood in daring to lay hands on Him, Who in a moment could consume them with the breath of His mouth!

Secondly: His imprisonment was effected in the name of Law and Religion. The Law they referred to (Deut. xviii. 20) had no just application to the case of Christ, and they must have been conscious of its irrelevancy. Christ was not a "prophet" Who had presumed to speak a word in the "name of Jehovah" which "He had not commanded," nor had He spoken in the name of "any other god," and therefore by the law of Moses He was not guilty of death. Still, knowing as they did its inapplicability, they plead it. Sin is essentially a vile thing anyhow; but its blackness deepens when perpetrated in the name of law. But what, if a law

authorized a morally criminal act, is the act less criminal? In no measure. So depraved is our world that even in States the most civilized, the moral errors and corrupt wishes of men have often been organized into law, guarded by Imperial pomp, and backed by national power. But a crime is not less a crime because law sanctions it. Great professions of loyalty to law, and loyalty to religion, the dark past urges us to look upon with a suspicious eye. Law has sanctioned martyrdom with all its nameless horrors, and war with all its bloody enormities. It is often more virtuous to break a law than to obey it. Have not the greatest benefactors of the world broken laws? Daniel and his three brethren in Babylon, the apostles, and reformers, set the law at defiance—and we bless their memories. But it was in the *name* of Religion as well as law. This makes the crime greater still. The men that instigated the Crucifixion of the Son of God were professedly religious men; they were the religious authorities of the country. Under profession of respect for truth and God, they wrought all the enormities which blackened the page of evangelic history. The greatest outrages on justice, humanity, and religion, have often been enacted by those who have vaunted most their loyalty to civil order and sacred truth. The devil is never so mighty in his rule on earth as when he robes himself in a garb of rectitude, and quotes the words of Heaven. This he did now in Jerusalem, and this the Heavenly Teacher Himself emphatically declared was “his hour”—the hour when he seemed to hold the mind of the Jewish nation in his grasp, and when his empire on earth reached its culmination—

“Hell howled, and heaven that moment let fall a tear.”

Look at Christ's Imprisonment—

III.—AS THE MOST WONDERFUL ENIGMA IN THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD.

I know of nothing more wonderful in the universe than the sight of Jesus in bonds. Three questions start in the mind, to which unaided reason can give no soul-satisfying solution.

Why does Eternal Justice allow unsullied Holiness thus to suffer? Under the rule of a righteous government we should reasonably infer that an absolutely holy Being would be absolutely free from sufferings and trials of every kind—would be absolutely happy. How, then, comes it to pass that here we find not merely innocence, but incarnate virtue and truth in its highest form; the bleeding Victim of a tyranny the most intolerant and the most cruel? How comes it to pass that we have here the purest and loveliest Character on earth the most tried and afflicted of any amongst the sons of men? Where is the justice of the universe?

The justice that often vindicated itself in the ages that were gone? If ever in the history of the race interposition of justice seemed called for, it was now, to crush wickedness at its height, and to help agonizing virtue in its sublimest aspects. But there is no indication of it. Where is it? If it exists, it has shrouded itself in such thick clouds of darkness that human reason cannot penetrate it.

Why does Almighty God give men the power to perpetrate such enormities? All the power wicked men have comes from God. "In Him they live and move." They cannot think a thought or move a limb without Him. Why does the Almighty, Who is so holy as to charge the angels with folly, and to declare the Heavens unclean in His sight, allow these wretches to inflict such torture upon His blessed Son? He could frustrate their designs, paralyze their power, and quench their existence in a moment. Why did He not do so? Why does the Almighty, "Who as a Father pitieth his children, pitieth them that fear Him," not come to the help of His well-beloved Son now in agony and blood?

Why does the All-powerful Emmanuel Himself submit to these enormities? He could have delivered Himself. Is not this tortured Man in bonds He Who had wrought such wonders in Galilee during the last three years? Is it not He Who raised the buried dead, and hushed the furious storm? Why does He submit to these indignities now? By a wave of His hand He could drive them in confusion and dismay from His presence; by a glance of His eye He could scath them to ashes. Why does He allow His *Almightiness* to slumber within Him, and submit to this ignominious and excruciating infliction? Why? Reason has no answer. All the oracles of nature stand mute before these questions. We turn to the Bible; and the blessed oracle responds to our interrogations; and though in its communications on the subject there is much that seems still inexplicable we rest our faith in its teaching.

"Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and give His life a ransom for many."

"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly: For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some will even dare to die. But God commendeth His love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures."

"For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

"Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree,

that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by Whose stripes ye were healed."

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit."

Does not the VICARIOUS principle stand out in these verses in sunny prominence? I profess not to explain this principle, so as to solve all our speculative questions concerning the Sufferings of Christ. In truth when we take it up for discussion in every aspect it starts questions still more perplexing to our poor intellects. I accept the principle, not as it stands in the fog of human theories, but as it stands in the clear light of such Divine utterances as I have quoted. As it stands in such utterances it invests the Sufferings of Christ with a moral significance powerful enough to break the heart into humble penitence and adoring gratitude.

No. XVI.

HUMAN CRIMES REPEATABLE FROM AGE TO AGE.

“Crucify Him, crucify Him.”—xix. 6.

“Crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh.”—Heb. vi. 6.

(For Exegetical Remarks, see Vol. II. p. 137.)

THE Crucifixion was, perhaps, one of the greatest crimes ever perpetrated on this earth.

In the history of this world, which teems with crimes, it stands forth with pre-eminent enormity. Political tyrannies under which empires have groaned, through the round of many centuries; Religious superstition and Priestcraft with their bloody inquisitions, their torturing racks, and fires of martyrdom; War—hell’s chief offspring, which has desolated the fairest portions of the globe, dyed oceans with blood, and hurled millions into eternity—all these are an aggregation of crimes whose enormity no finite intellect can estimate. But great as they are, are they to be compared with the Crucifixion? No! sooner compare atoms in the sunbeam to the cloud-capped mountains that block out the great sun itself. Every sinful passion you can conceive of was brought out and worked to its utmost tension to accomplish this Crucifixion.

The expression in the Hebrews, “Crucifying the Son of God afresh,” proclaims the Repeatability of this crime.

Two remarkable things strike us at the outset, concerning the Apostle’s charge.

First: It was a Charge made against Professed Religionists. The persons who are represented as “crucifying the Son of God afresh” had gone a great way in the religious life.

(1.) They had been *enlightened*. True spiritual ideas had broken in upon the darkness of their minds.

(2.) They had *participated in the Divine*. They had been made “partakers of the Holy Ghost.” The Divine Spirit had come into them.

(3.) They had *relished the truth*. “Tasted the good Word of

God." They had experienced a certain amount of delight in their religion.

(4.) They had been *subject to spiritual forces*. "Brought under the powers of the world to come." Considerations drawn from the invisible, the spiritual, and the eternal, had begun to influence them.

These are the persons of whom the writer to the Hebrews speaks. And are not such persons Christians to a great extent? Anyhow they are as much Christians as the best conventional Christians of our day. The startling point is, that these Christians are spoken of as "*crucifying the Son of God*." Had they been heathens, atheists, profligates, one would not have marvelled. Conventional Christians crucify Christ.

The other remarkable thing that strikes us concerning the Apostle's charge is—

Secondly: It was made against Professed Religionists, thirty years after Christ had left the World.

Where now was Judas, who betrayed Him? He had "gone" to his own place. What had become of Pilate, who condemned Him? He was, no doubt, sleeping in his grave. The rabble who cried, "Away with Him! Away with Him!" where were they? Sleeping most of them in the dust. And the soldiers too? During the thirty intervening years most of them probably had gone the "way of the whole earth."

A Generation of men had well-nigh passed away since the tragedy of the Crucifixion, and yet here is an inspired person charging the crime upon living men who had never seen Christ! How is this to be explained? The *Repeatability* of the crime of the Crucifixion is true of all crimes. The moral spirit of men is transmitted from generation to generation. The criminal act of one man strikes a chord that will vibrate through all the centuries. The souls of past ages animate the men of these times. Adam lives in all unregenerate men to this day. How can this be? The following propositions may contribute to the solution of this fact—

I.—THAT THE ESSENCE OF AN ACTION CONSISTS, NOT IN ITS EXTERNAL FORM, BUT IN ITS SPIRIT.

The moral character of an action, is not in the *muscular exertion*, but in the *mental volition*. "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he." This is Heaven's idea of moral conduct. With what clearness, force, and constancy, did the Heavenly Teacher insist on this! True philosophy agrees with Christ in teaching that a man might be a *thief* who had never taken a fraction of another man's property; a *liar* who had never uttered a word of falsehood; a *blasphemer* who had never given utterance to a profane expression;

a murderer who had never struck a blow. Real moral actions are performed, battles are fought, victories are won and defeats endured, crimes perpetrated and virtues displayed, down deep in regions of the soul into which no eye penetrates but God's. In this way the Apostle regarded men as being guilty of perpetrating the dreadful act of *crucifying* Christ who had never seen Him.

First: This fact agrees with our sense of Moral Propriety. Who does not feel that if his character were to be estimated only by his *overt* acts, without any reference to the inward motives that prompted them, he would be grossly misjudged? Would not the verdict upon the conduct clash with the sense of what is reasonable and right?

(1.) Our outward actions often misrepresent our motives, *either by mistake or intention*. We know, for instance, that outward actions, which often appear good to others, and which have apparently a good tendency, spring from motives that conscience cannot approve, and we know the reverse.

How often, for example, do men from the influence of passion, say or do something that their whole nature disowns the moment after it has been done! From a sudden rush of passion, an expression leaps from the lips which the whole nature of the man disowns, before the echo of the last word has died away; which he disclaims and would recall at once if he could. The man feels, "It is not I that have said this." On the other hand, how often do men perform deeds which society accepts at once as morally meritorious and signally generous, from motives which are unvirtuous, and which the author's own conscience condemns!

For instance, a man may be regarded by public sentiment as a prince amongst the philanthropists of the age, a peer in the realm of benevolence, whose outward charities are inspired and ruled by unworthy motives.

In some cases, *Greed*, love of money, prompts men to what the world consider Munificent acts of charity. A man embarks in a commercial undertaking; his success requires that he should make known as widely as possible his warehouse and his wares. What is the best advertisement? Let him contribute handsomely and persistently to the most popular benevolent institutions; and his name shall be emblazoned in reports, and shouted on platforms. Verily, no advertisement in the "Times" newspaper would be so commercially valuable as this. The beneficiaries of the institutions he patronizes will wend their way to this man's establishment.

In other cases *Vanity*, love of praise, prompts men to what the world considers munificent acts of charity. Vanity, in some natures, grows into a regal passion. There is a hungering for praise. Hence the abounding of fawning sycophants in all

circles. Let a man contribute largely to popular benevolent institutions, and what will be the result? Though he may have no sterling moral character, and but little brains, he shall be voted to the Chair, and be made for the time being the king of the Assembly. Hireling Secretaries will pour into his ear the most fulsome adulations, and audiences will thunder out his name with acclamations. All this Greed and Vanity, therefore, the blind world will credit as sublime philanthropy, whilst the holy Heavens will scowl down upon it as putrescent Hypocrisy and Cant.

Therefore it is just and right we should be tried and judged by our *motives* rather than by our Overt acts.

(2.) Our outward actions are insignificant in number *compared with our volitions*. Outward actions, both good and bad, amount to very little when we consider what their authors would do if they had the capacity and the means. Thank God, there is a *Restraining* power in the Divine government. There are potential Napoleons, and Czars all about us bound in chains. They cannot do what they list. Moreover—

(3.) We instinctively associate the *intention or motive with the outward action*. We condemn the actions of some, and frequently laud those of others, simply because of the character of the intention which we suppose prompted the performance. Our consciences approve not of any act we put forth because it seems good to others, but simply because it was *intended* as good by ourselves. If the whole world condemn our conduct, conscience will smile upon us, if the motives which have controlled us are pure. But should our actions, on the contrary, awaken the hosannas of the age, our consciences will damn us if they have not sprung from motives in accordance with our convictions of the True, the Beautiful, and the Good.

Secondly: This fact urges the Necessity of a thorough Discipline of the Heart. The productions depend upon the soil, the streams upon the fountain. Look well, therefore, to the soil; keep the fountain pure; let the roots be healthy. "Keep thy heart with all diligence." The parts which the actor on the open stage performs with such striking effect before the gaze of applauding thousands, he has many times before acted over and over again in solitude. So with *overt* crimes. Those deeds of atrocity that shock for a time the feelings of a whole age, the perpetrator has acted several times before in the hidden regions of his own foul heart.

Thirdly: This fact suggests unexpected Revelations at the Last Day. Men judge each other here by outward appearances. Hence many great sinners pass for great saints. But it will not be so on the great day of final assize. The hidden things of darkness will then be brought to light. Motives will be everything. We are told that then we are to give an account of things done

"*in* the body." Whether this little preposition was intended to express the idea I am attaching to it or not, the idea itself is undeniably true. What we have done *by* the body is trifling indeed compared with what we have done *in* it. All that each man has done *in* his body will be revealed in the eternal sunlight of retribution. What is the history of your conduct? The mere catalogue of your outward muscular deeds? I tell you, nay; it includes the unexpressed wishes, the inarticulate longings, the unwrought purposes of the heart. And what is the record of the *outward* life to this? What is one short verse of the Bible to the great thousand chaptered book itself? It is for all in that great unsealed book that you will have to answer when called to give an account of "all the things done *in* the body." Great heavens! What revelations will there be in the last day! Notice—

II.—THAT THE SPIRIT THAT ANIMATED THE PERPETRATORS OF THE LITERAL CRUCIFIXION, IS PREVALENT AMONGST MEN AT THE PRESENT DAY.

Now, my point is, that this crowning crime corrupt humanity everywhere is capable of perpetrating.

Who were the Instigators of the crucifixion? "The Chief Priests and the Pharisees" moved the nation to the deed. What was the feeling that stimulated them? ENVY. They were envious of His growing popularity, and grew malignant as they saw the people turning away their attention from them to Christ. The Resurrection of Lazarus from the dead, seemed first to call out this feeling into practical determination. Then from that day forth "they took counsel together for to put Him to death."

Is not *envy* prevalent now? Merchant envies merchant, statesman envies statesman, sect envies sect, even preacher envies preacher, and author envies author. This passion burns everywhere. It is that which a poet represents "as a coal that comes hissing hot from hell." The infernal fire which flamed in the breasts of these Chief Priests and Pharisees smoulders with more or less intensity in the breasts of all.

What prompted Judas to betray Christ? Was it any unkind feeling towards Him? Was it malice? The overwhelming distress he experienced when he heard that Christ was delivered to be crucified, unmistakably shows that it was no malign impulse which inspired his treacherous deed. No; it was simply LOVE OF MONEY. "What will ye give me?" was the question. It was a pure matter of cash. If he could have had a larger sum for protecting his Master, would he not have done so more readily? Supposing that when Judas was making his bargain some one had stepped up to him and said, "Judas, I will give you five more pieces of silver than the priests have offered you, to stand by Jesus and

follow Him to the end." Do you suppose that Judas would not have rapturously accepted the offer, and frowned the other barterers from his presence? He would have stood by the Cross to the last moment, and fronted with a defiant bearing the wild fury of the mob, had sufficient silver been offered.

Is this passion extinct? Extinct! Never did it reign and rage more than now. "What will ye give me?" is the great question. "My time and influence, my mind and muscles," says the Englishman, "are yours for money." The man who neglects duty for gain, who suppresses a truth, or sacrifices a principle for interest, is a modern Judas.

What inspired Pilate to condemn Him? LOVE OF POPULARITY. Did he believe Him guilty? No! Before the Chief Priests, the rulers, and the people, he repeatedly declared that he "found no fault in Him;" and after he had, contrary to his convictions, pronounced the sentence, he called for a "basin of water" in the open court, and thus symbolically corroborated his verbal declaration: "I am innocent of the blood of this *just Person*." Oh, Pilate, Pilate! all the waters of the Atlantic could not wash out that stain! His conscience declared His innocence. It was the fear of becoming *unpopular*. He attended to the voice of the populace, rather than to the voice of his own conscience. He thought more of *popularity* than of *principle*.

Does not this sentiment prevail now? Are not the great bulk of mankind governed more by conventionalities than by convictions?—disposed ever to relinquish what is true for what is popular? The spirit of Pilate is common. Popularity hunters will be found now in every walk of life, not only in the State, amongst the garrulous members of our Senate House, but in the Church amongst our clap-trap pulpiteers.

What induced the people to cry out for the deliverance of Barabbas rather than Christ? A STRONGER SYMPATHY FOR BRUTE FORCE AND COURAGE, THAN FOR SPIRITUAL GOODNESS AND MORAL HEROISM. Did they feel in their consciences that Barabbas was a better man? No. They preferred *brute* force to moral. Barabbas may be considered the type of the one, Christ of the other. Barabbas was a seditious person, a thief, a "murderer," a man of physical daring, violence, and blustering pretence. They voted for him.

Is not this common? Remove the conventional discredit from the weaker thief, exalt him to the majesty of the military despot, and who now will not vote for Barabbas? Let the man who is imprisoned for a *petty* theft, or condemned to be hanged for *one* murder, rifle whole cities and lay ten thousand dead upon the battlefield, and this Barabbas shall receive the loud plaudits of a whole nation.

Is not this common? Two men who have gone out from England to foreign lands each on a mission shall return home the same day. The mission of the one was to indoctrinate the heathen mind with the soul-renovating and ennobling elements of Christly truth and goodness. He has lived and laboured amidst human scenes the most revolting to his moral intuitions and the social decencies of his nature, amidst perils the most alarming, and deprivations the most crushing. He has won converts to truth and rectitude. The other has gone forth on a military campaign. In prosecuting his mission he has rifled thousands of their virtue, enwrapped homes, cities, villages, in conflagration, shed rivers of human blood, covered hundreds of green acres with tens of thousands of the dead and the dying, broken the hearts of thousands of parents, and widows, and orphans. He, too, shall return from his mission. Mark how each is received back to his home!

The one goes to his Mission House, whence he received at first his commission. There, perhaps, are gathered together a few men unknown to fame, who welcome him with a warm shake of the hand, and say a few kind words to him,—and that is all.

How is the other received? Flags float from lofty towers, bells peal out from churches and cathedrals, hundreds of grandees are present to welcome with their congratulation, crowds gather on all hands to shout their hurrahs. The Premier goes to the Senate House, and delivers his panegyric in the choicest language, and in the sweetest tones he can command. Bishops and Archbishops preach, and seek to inspire congregations with gratitude to the "GOD OF PEACE" for the life and labours of such a murderer. The Parliament votes him a handsome fortune and a splendid annuity, and the Sovereign makes him a Baronet or a Lord. What does all this mean? "*Not this Man, but Barabbas.*"

"Honour," says Carlyle, "Barabbas the Robber, thou shalt sell old-clothes through the cities of the world; shalt accumulate sordid moneys, with a curse on every coin of them, and be spit upon for eighteen hundred years. Raise statues to the swollen Gambler as if he were great, sacrifice oblations to the King of Scrip;—unfortunate mortals, you will dearly pay for it yet. Quiet as Nature's counting-house and scrip-ledgers are, no faintest item is ever blotted out from them, for or against; and to the last doit (that account will have to be settled. Rigorous as Destiny;—she is Destiny. Chancery or Fetter Lane is soft to her, when the day of settlement comes. With her, in the way of abatement, of oblivion, neither gods nor men prevail. 'Abatement? That is not our way of doing business; the time has run out, the debt it appears is due.' Will the laws of gravitation abate for you? Gravitation acts at the rate of sixteen feet per second, in spite of all prayers.

Were it the crash of a Solar System, or the fall of a Yarmouth herring, all one to gravitation."

What inspired the soldiers who nailed Him to the cross, and plunged the spear into His side, who wagged their heads and mocked Him? What was the spirit that stimulated them? A MISERABLE SERVILITY TOWARDS THEIR SUPERIORS. They did it to please their masters. This flunkeyism runs through all classes—one class bowing and cringing to those above them; the class next to the throne the most servile of all. Courtiers with emphasis are they. Now do not these feelings run through all modern society, *envy, greed, love of popularity, admiration of brute force, servility, and flunkeyism?* I say that I can find nothing in the breasts of any of those men who were employed in the Crucifixion, that I cannot find now in the hearts of the men about me. Notice—

III.—UNDER SIMILAR CIRCUMSTANCES THIS SPIRIT WILL BE DEVELOPED IN SIMILAR FORMS.

Let a being appear amongst us similar to Christ, and these existing germs of evil would probably develop themselves in an aggravated form as they did at the Crucifixion. Suppose the son of an humble mechanic, from one of the most obscure parts of the country, to appear amongst us. Let him be the very picture of penury and want,—his countenance "marred more than any man's." Let him go through the length and breadth of the land, denouncing in no measured terms the religious leaders of the age, and sapping the foundation of their influence. Let him go into our Temples, and call them his own, and cast out all the "money changers" that are found within their precincts, and turn the heart of the people against their priests. Let him deal as severely with our Magistrates, Mayors, Senators, and ecclesiastics, as Christ did with the various members of the old Sanhedrim. Let him denounce wealth, pleasure, and military glory, and in fact, all the idols of the people. Let him take a firm stand against the flowing tide of popular sentiment, and strike every hour without mercy at the tenderest prejudices and the dearest objects of the people's devotion. And in the Senate House, the market, the judicial Courts, the Exchange, and in the scenes of fashion thunder out, "Woe unto you; woe unto you!" Let him talk about destroying his enemies and setting up a "kingdom" himself, that shall extend over the world and grind into powder all other dynasties. How long, think ye, would such a man be tolerated in England? *Three years?* I trow not. Many months would not elapse before all London, all England, would echo with the cry, "*Away with him!*" Before three months he would be in Newgate, and perhaps hanged on the gallows for high treason.

Do you say the case is not parallel, inasmuch as Jesus of

Nazareth was the Son of God? True. But the Jewish people did not know it; "for had they known it they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." The parallel, therefore, is complete, so far as the feelings of the people are concerned.

I confess that I do not discover a single passion or impulse, in any of the actions in the tremendous tragedy of our Lord's Crucifixion, that I see not pulsating in the bosoms of men around me. In this respect as well as in others, "that which hath been is now." That which raged in hellish riot on Calvary's brow, eighteen centuries ago, is here in England now, speaking essentially the same thing, though in a different language, and working out the same master aims, though by different instruments and methods. The germs of that harvest of appalling crime, which shocked creation's nerves, and made the sun put on his mourning veil, are lying thickly in the heart of our age, under the gilded roof of a Conventional Christianity.

CONCLUSION. The subject teaches us to—

First: Be careful, in denouncing the great Criminals of History, that you are not as bad as they are. Do you denounce the Chief Priests, Judas, Pilate, the populace, the soldiers? I know you do, nor can I blame you. On the world's black roll of crime their iniquities appear in aspects that thrill my nature with a quivering horror. But in condemning them let us take care that we do not foredoom ourselves. The portrait of that criminal which Nathan the prophet held up to the eye of David, woke in the heart of the king the most indignant denunciations. And looking at the demon-figure, he exclaimed, "As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die." But David, "*thou art the man*" that hast perpetrated that moral enormity, and in thy severe sentence thou hast foredoomed thyself! In like manner, the picture of the "Husbandman"—who first killed the servants of the "Householder" and last of all killed his son—which the Heavenly Artist drew, and held up to the Chief Priests and Pharisees, roused their indignation. They declared that such "wicked men" should be "miserably" destroyed. But they *themselves* were those wicked men, and they did not know it. Let us, therefore, be modest in our denunciations of others.

The subject teaches us to—

Secondly: Realize the urgency of Heart-Renovation. Nothing will effectually serve us but a change of heart. "Marvel not; ye must be born again." Embedded in the depraved heart are the seeds of all wickedness, and so thickly cluster those seeds amidst the central fibres of the soul, that the heart itself must be taken away before they can be removed. There is no hope for the world but in a new "heart of flesh," a heart of tender moral

sensibilities, and warm truthful sympathies, in which the "incorruptible seed" of truth and virtue will germinate and grow.

Secular Philanthropist! I give thee credit for purest motives, and I yield to none in my admiration of thy ingenuity in constructing measures for the world's improvement, and of thy zeal in seeking to work them out; but I have no faith in any of thy efforts to make man as man one whit the better. Thou art only patching the rotten garment; thou art only seeking to purify the streams whilst the fountain is filthy in its springs; thou art only lopping off a few branches from the Upas—and thereby strengthening the roots, and striking them deeper in the soil; thou art only anointing with thy salves the few eruptions on the outside of the body, whilst the whole current of blood is poisoned in the veins. Thy work is a quackery, under which I fear our poor humanity is getting worse. "*Marvel not that I say unto thee, Ye must be born again.*" The world wants moral renovation;—nothing less. The subject teaches us to—

Thirdly: Estimate the transcendent value of Christianity. The philosophy of our nature shows, that there is no other instrumentality on earth that is at all suited to effect this *moral renovation*, and all history demonstrates that nothing else seems to have done it. The Cross of Christ is the soul-renewing force.

Herein is a marvellousness of Divine plan. The Cross, which required all the depravity of the world to erect, has in it a power to *destroy* all the depravity of the world. That in which all evil found its climax is that in which all evil shall find its death. That which the "principalities and powers of darkness" in the human heart built up, shall one day "triumph over them all, and make a show of them openly." The blow which the hellish spirit inflicted in the Crucifixion rebounds, and will bruise the very head of the world's serpent. The Cross on which Christ was crucified is to crucify the world unto itself.

"Hail! Son of the most High, Heir of both worlds,
 Queller of Satan! On Thy glorious work
 Now enter; and begin to save mankind."—*Milton.*

No. XVII.

SPIRITS.

“He gave up the ghost” (Spirit).—xix. 30.

(For Exegetical Remarks, see Vol. II. p. 155.)

NOTICE here—

I.—THERE IS A SPIRIT-WORLD.

Two questions arise here—

First: What is Spirit? I confess my utter inability to solve a problem on which the greatest sages of all times have pleaded ignorance. To say that it is a something that is *immaterial*, instead of answering the question, only states it in another form. What is *immateriality*? Or to say that it is a thinking and reasoning principle is as far from a solution: the question comes up again, What is that principle? Yet though Spirit transcends all our definitions, there are certain ideas we attach to it, which mark it off, in broad and clear outline, from all which we consider to be material existences—at least from all the material existence of which we have any knowledge. What are those ideas?

(1.) We attach the idea of *Elementalness* to Spirit. By this I mean that its existence is not made up of parts, but that it is an uncompounded and unmixed entity. All material lives are combinations. All vegetables and animals are compounded of various elements: abstract one of their constituent principles, and they cease to be. Indeed, it is probable, there is nothing that we know of, even in the inorganic world of matter, that is a simple substance. Probably, the next race of chemical analysts will find that oxygen, nitrogen, and such substances, which are now considered elemental, are but compositions. But we think of Spirit as an *Uncompounded Principle*—as something that is not made up of parts—something that you cannot divide, that you can take nothing from, and add nothing to.

(2.) We attach the idea of *Moral Activity* to Spirit. Inertness is a quality of matter. Neither atom nor globe would ever move were it not set in motion by a foreign force. And whilst life in trees and flesh moves, it ever moves by impulses over which it

has no control: and thus in these forms it moves in the beaten track of ages. Each plant moves under the same circumstances in the same way—rejects and appropriates, as did the first parent of its kind which grew in the garden of Eden. Each sentient individual of the various tribes of earth and air and sea, does the same thing, in the same manner, as did its primal sire. But Spirit we consider self-moving and self-controlling; each chooses its own line of action and determines its own pace. Each is a distinct fountain of influences, outpouring streams that never flowed before: a self-acting machine performing evolutions and producing results, the like of which has never been before, and never will be again. No two Spirits have the same history. Each has chapters of thought, feeling, and deed, which find no record in the other. To Spirit, therefore, we attach the idea of an existent which acts, but which acts not *necessarily*: neither from an inward impulse, nor an outward force, but from itself.

(3.) We attach the idea of *Reflectiveness* to Spirit. By this I mean, the power to turn back upon itself, study its own nature, translate its own sensations into ideas, and create a world of thought of its own—a power to rise from the particular to the universal, the discordant to the harmonious,—the creature to the Creator—a power to link the most solitary fact in fellowship with an eternal principle, and bring the wildest and harshest sounds into the scale of intellectual music—a power which, from the facts of its own consciousness, builds up a superstructure for itself in which it can live as an independent monarch, secure from all foreign invaders, and independent of all help: where it can worship as a seraph under the ever-lightening rays of God. A power by which the mind reads the philosophy, feels the poetry, and chants the anthems, writ on creation's hieroglyphic page. Brutes have no such power as this. The universe is nothing but sensation to them: it gives them no idea; they cannot spell a word of meaning from any part of its various and vast revelations.

(4.) We attach the idea of *Religiousness* to Spirit. By this I mean a tendency to, and a capacity for, worship. In the tribes of irrational existences around us we discover no such principle as this. None display any knowledge of a Great First Cause, nor therefore any desire to worship Him. The sunlight of ten thousand days gives to them no idea of their Creator, nor do the blessings which they receive through a long life, filling up every sense with pleasure, and satisfying every appetite and want, awaken in them one sentiment of gratitude toward Him. The mind of the most sagacious of their class is a blank in relation to Him. It has neither the eye to see Him, nor the sensibility to feel His spiritual touch.

But *Spirit* we regard as the offspring of the "Father of Spirits,"

partaking of His essence, possessing the filial element as its primary impulse: and having therefore both a native tendency and a moral obligation to reverence, praise, and serve Him. Spirit feels itself morally related to Him; has its eye wistfully fixed upon Him; and its heart "cries out for the living God." The language of an old Hebrew expresses the experience and attitude of all Spirits in their normal state. "Unto Thee I lift mine eyes, O Thou that dwellest in the heavens. Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their mistress, so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God."

(5.) We attach the idea of *Self-Modification* to Spirit. There is nothing in nature which seems to us to possess the self-modifying attribute but Spirit. The mountains cannot make themselves higher, nor the stars make themselves brighter; the ocean can make itself neither broader nor deeper, nor the earth increase its verdure or fecundity by its own act. Irrational life also seems destitute of this self-modifying power. Brutes change not their condition; their habits are fixed: they seem as incapable of deviating from the laws of instinct as the stars of swerving from their pathway. The birds that warble in our groves are neither wiser nor better perhaps than their first parents, that poured their music into the ear of Adam. But Spirit has a Self-forming and a Self-altering power. No one Spirit is compelled to act like another, nor even to act as it has itself acted heretofore. It has a power to map out new pathways for itself, to widen its own domain, to increase its own energy, and augment its own wealth; to rise through all the stages of glory, or sink through all the degrees of degradation.

(6.) We attach the idea of *Absolute Personal Identity* to Spirit. There is no permanent identity in any corporeal organization. Such organization is composed of particles, all of which are in a state of constant flux. Corporeally the man cannot say that he is the same as he was when a youth: every particle of his frame has changed since then. Since then, perhaps, many of the particles which once belonged to other men, have helped to build his frame, and in their turn gone off to form parts of other frames. The body is like a river, every particle is in rapid flow—in constant circulation, and is the same only in form and function: never a moment the same in all its materials. But we think of Spirit as being the same in Essence; a simple indivisible substance that can never lose a particle of itself, and that can never have any new element wrought into its being. It may change its condition, it may vary its moods, it may alter its realms of action, and new thoughts and feelings may stream through it in endless succession. But in essence it is evermore the same; the everlastingly identical *Ego* of being. Truly does *Dr. Reid* remark,

“that all mankind place their personality in something that cannot be divided, or consist of parts.”

(7.) We attach the idea of *Power* to Spirit. We see power everywhere round us. We see it in the inanimate world, as the effect which one element produces upon another, and in the motion which one body produces upon another. We see it also in the world of life: in the plant that turns to its use and transmutes into its own essence, the elements that play about it; in the beast that drags along the farmer's harvest wain, and in the bird that rises on the wing and chants its victories over the force that binds the earth and links it to the sun. All these powers are manifestly effects, not ultimate causes—are derived, not primal. All true science proves this, and the Bible declares it. Spirit is the fontal force. It was Spirit that gave to the elements the proclivity to act and react on each other, and that so poised the masses of the universe that one should gently press its fellow into lines and ratios of motion, and thus conduce to the harmony and well-being of all. And the forces of life, too, whether in the fibres of plants or the muscles of flesh, are but the breathings of that Spirit which “reneweth the face of the earth.” “He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing.”

I turn now to the question of evidence.

Secondly: What proof is there that there are such beings as Spirits?

(1.) The structure of the visible universe indicates the *Existence of Spirit*. The universe seems to be produced by and designed for Spirit. Matter is essentially inert; but every part of nature is in motion: matter is blind; but every part of nature indicates the most consummate contrivance: matter is heartless; but every part of nature is warm and instinct with goodness. The whole system of creation, so far as it comes within my narrow vision, is a reflection of the ideas I attach to Spirit. In part of its wondrous structure the “invisible things” as from a burnished mirror are “clearly seen.” And then, too, it seems designed *for* Spirit. Does not its exquisite contrivance appeal to thought, its warm and ever-gushing streams of goodness to gratitude, its enchanting realms of beauty to admiration, its infinite grandeur and sublimity to reverence and awe? Indeed the whole system of visible nature seems to me to imply Spirit, and to be incomplete without it. Let landscapes unfold their beauty and oceans roll in grandeur; let the immeasurable dome above display its radiant worlds by night, and its glorious sun by day, all is meaningless without Spirit. Without Spirit there is no eye for beauty, no heart for goodness, no soul for sublimity and grandeur. What is this fair universe without Spirit but a magnificent mansion without a tenant; a theatre disclosing the most enchanting scenes and inspiring plots

without a spectator; a temple filled with the glories of the Shekinah, but containing no worshipper? I infer, therefore, that wherever there is a streak of beauty, a ray of glory, or a note of music, in whatever orb, however far away, there are Spirits to study, adore, and love.

(2.) The *concurrent impressions of mankind sustain the belief in Spirits*. Men, from remotest times, in all places, and in every stage of culture, from the lowest point to the highest, have believed in a spiritual world. The philosophy of the sage, as well as the superstition of the savage, and the fancy of the poet, has peopled the atmosphere with ghosts. The Chaldæans, Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, and Jews, as well as the polytheistic world in all times, regarded every section of nature as filled with Spirits (demons). The gods of the heathen were but the forms which man devised to represent his ideas of mysterious Spirits that tenanted the earth, ruled the elements, and presided over the destinies of our race. Man cannot shake off faith in spiritual existence; the child believes in it without evidence; and the old man who has passed through a life of scepticism, as in the case of Robert Owen, becomes a firm believer in tales of ghostly exploits. Men see Spirits, not only in dim twilight, but in the high noon of civilization. A belief so universal must be intuitive, and an intuitive belief must be true, otherwise there is no truth for man.

(3.) The *Bible most unequivocally declares the existence of Spirits*. They are ascending and descending between heaven and earth—they are ever moving the vast and complicated wheels of Providence, and are ever on the wing to execute the behests of their Sovereign. It tells us that there are legions of such existences; that they exist in various orders and states; and that there is One Infinite Spirit—the Parent, Sustainer, and Judge of all: Who is above all, and in all, and through all, God blessed for ever.

I am bound to believe, then, that the universe is something more than I can see: something more than can be brought within the cognizance of my five senses: something distinct from the terraqueous globe on which I live, and the huge worlds of flame that roll around me, and shed their brightness on my path: something behind all, or rather in all, and above all. Aye, the angels, demons, genii, sylphs, and ghosts, of which all the nations have thought and spoken, are something more than the airy offspring of a superstitious imagination. They are existences answering, in some degree at least, to the notions which humanity has ever attached to such mystic terms.

I am not disposed to pronounce all who have stated that they have seen Spirits—either fanatics or impostors. The *à priori* wonder is, not that they should be seen, but that they are not

more generally perceived. We are related to the material world, and we have senses to discern material existences. We are confessedly more intimately and solemnly related to the Spiritual, and is it not natural to expect that we should have a sense to see spiritual beings? Were such a sense to be opened within us, as the eye of Elijah's servant was opened of old, what visions would burst upon us! The microscope gives us a new world of wonders; but were God to open the spiritual eye, what a universe of Spirits would be revealed! Observe—

II.—MAN IS A MEMBER OF THIS SPIRIT-WORLD.

I say member, for man is but a very inconsiderable section of the great universe. Still he is a part. "There is a Spirit in man." Christ was now parting with this Spirit in the article of death. Man has Spirit in him; or more properly, perhaps he is Spirit. Man has a something in him to which we attach all the ideas we associate with Spirit in general: a something in which he places his identity: a something which originates moral activity, and which turns back upon itself, and reflects upon its own states: a something which points him to God, and fills him oftentimes with a solemn sentiment: a something by which he is constantly modifying his condition: a something which, whether it be *immaterial* in its essence or not—for over the essence of all things there is a veil through which the keenest eye of science has never pierced—is universally felt to be different to all material organizations, and which we denominate Mind or Spirit: a something in which our personality inheres, and which we regard as *Self*.* Let men call it what they please, all have the principle answering in every point to the afore-mentioned ideas which we attach to Spirit. If different phenomena indicate different substances, then Spirit is essentially different from matter: and if Spirit be essentially different from matter, then we have stronger philosophical evidence for its existence than we have for the existence of matter. Three facts duly pondered and estimated will indicate our authority for these remarks—

(1.) All the evidence, either for the existence of matter or Spirit, is *derived exclusively from phenomena*. We have nothing but the operations and appearances of either: the essence of both is alike hidden. It is under the impenetrable shadows of the ever unknown.

(2.) The Essence whose phenomena appeals *most directly to consciousness is the most conclusively proved*. Consciousness is

* Pantheistic philosophy denies this, and teaches that there is but One Substance—the Absolute and the Eternal—in the universe, and that all phenomena, even the most apparently diverse—such as thought and extension—inhere in it.

evermore our ultimate standard, our infallible judge. The senses deceive and so does the understanding, but consciousness never.

(3.) The *phenomena of mind alone appeals directly to consciousness*. We are not conscious of the phenomena of matter; we are only conscious of certain impressions made upon our senses. But the phenomena of mind, thought, emotion, volition, hope and fear, are immediate subjects of consciousness. But the men who theoretically deny to man a Spirit, are few indeed compared with those vast multitudes who hold it in their creed and deny it in their practice: who live as if they had no soul, and as if the body was the all in all of man. I would impress on such three considerations—

First: *They are now in the Spiritual world*. There is a popular idea that man enters the Spiritual world at death, and that he is separated from it now. Let this idea be banished. We are as truly in the Spirit-world now as we ever shall be. Where is the sphere of Spirit? Where is it not? Spirit fills the universe. The body does not separate me from Spirit: it is the residence of Spirit, and its medium of communication. There is naught that separates me from the Spirit-world but my unbelief—and that is my sin. Death perhaps will not take me farther into it: but it will open my faithless eyes and make me see it. Jesus walked the earth as the scene of Spirits, and the apostles wrought their mission under the impression that a “cloud of witnesses” were looking on from the spiritual world. Add to my body another sense, and you will give me a new material world. Give my Spirit an earnest evangelical faith, and I shall look at “things unseen” through the medium of all the palpable and material around me.

Secondly: *They are now amenable to all the laws of the Spiritual world*. One law governs all mankind: and one law governs the Spiritual, and that is Love. “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and thy neighbour as thyself.” This law is as binding upon man now as it ever will be:—as binding upon him here in his degradation and weakness, as it is upon a seraph in the zenith of his dignity and strength. This is the royal law of the Spiritual world.

Thirdly: *They are now forming a character which will determine their lasting condition in the Spiritual world*. What will decide my abiding position and circumstances in the great universe of disembodied Spirit? Things done *in* the body. Material wealth and splendour, however great, will go for nothing there. Earth’s mightiest patricians are there on a level with the poorest plebeians. The hand of death strips princes of all their earthly garniture, and leaves their Spirits bare to the common eye of souls, and to the searching eye of God. Not merely things done *by* the body. It is but a small portion of our life deeds that we perform by the

body; that we allow to take a palpable form. Our works are *really* done before a hand is uplifted or a muscle moved. Heart and brain are our workers: limbs are but our instruments, which we may use or not. Things done *by* the body are but contingent and occasional exhibitions, or specimens of the innumerable and complicated things done *in* it. Volitions, with all their train of thought and feeling and impulse, are the deeds done *in* the body. The theatre of moral action is not the spot of ground on which the actor stands, but the state of the heart he is in:—it is never space, but always soul. It is the unseen things done *in* the body that will determine our destiny *out* of it.

Let us, then, rise to a sense of the greatness of that nature with which the great God has endowed us! We are SPIRITS. Emanations of the Infinite Mind, and members of that Spiritual System, for which matter, in all its functions and forms, was made. Let us assert our Supremacy over the material; use the world as not abusing it. In one sense we can never think too highly of ourselves. “What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?”

NO. XVIII.

THE WORDS OF THE ANGELS TO MARY.*

“But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre. And seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him.”—xx. 11—13. (See also MATT. xxviii. 5—7; Mark xvi. 5—7; LUKE xxiv. 5—7.)

(For Exegetical Remarks, see Vol. II. p. 175.)

AT the outset our attention is called to the *various versions of the same fact*. Matthew and Mark speak of one angel—Mark describing the angel as a young man, clothed in white raiment, sitting at the right side. Luke speaks of two angels; he says, “Behold, two men stood by them in shining garments;” and John also speaks of two angels in white. Then, too, some of the evangelists record words which these angels spoke, which the others have omitted. And as to the women, Matthew mentions two Marys, Mark adds Salome to them, Luke speaks of women generally; he says, “It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and other women that were with them.” In these varied versions there is no *contradiction*. The strange and startling circumstances of the occasion, would strike some spectators in a way that they would not affect others; each would record what came most clearly under his eye, and struck most powerfully on his ear. No two minds are exactly alike; hence it would be impossible for the same objects and events to make exactly the same impression upon different persons. The diversity of their version, being just what might have been expected as *natural*, proves that each was independent in his narrative, and that there was no collusion between them. Had each given the same identical account of this fact, there would have been something like a good reason for doubting their honesty and discrediting the fact which they attested.

* This is one of a Series of articles on the “Words of Angels to Men on Earth,” preached at Stockwell. They will re-appear in subsequent volumes of the Homilistic Library.

The Bible informs us that in the Spirit-World there are innumerable intelligences existing in an immeasurable chain of gradation reaching from man up to archangels. From the representations made of them in the Sacred Record, we are given to understand that they possess attributes which distinguish them from men. They have unusual vitality, hence they are called "living ones;" they excel in strength; they have vast intelligence; "full of eyes;" incalculable celerity; the "speed of angels time counts not." We learn further, that they not only possess attributes that distinguish them from men, but attributes also that distinguish them from one another. They are not all of the same mould, position, rank, or formation. Hence we read of "thrones," "principalities," "dominions," &c.

Sometimes when angels appeared to men, they did their work *mutely*, and dropped no word. Neither the angel that smote the camp of the Assyrians, the angel which walked in the fiery furnace with the three Hebrew youths, the angel that guarded Daniel in the lions' den, nor the angel that smote Herod that he died, seem to have uttered a word. In profound silence each discharged his heavenly mission. On the other hand, the angels that appeared to Hagar, Abraham, Sarah, Lot, Isaac, Jacob, Balaam, Joshua, Gideon, Manoah and his wife, to the kings and elders of Israel, during the three days' pestilence in the time of David, to Orma and his four sons, to the prophets, Elisha, Elijah, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and Zechariah, to Zecharias, father of John the Baptist, to the Virgin Mary, Joseph, to the shepherds watching their flocks, to the disciples as they gazed on their Lord ascending, to the company of Apostles, to Philip the deacon, to Peter in prison, to Cornelius, to Paul on the Adriatic, to John in Patmos, and to the women at the sepulchre—all these spoke—spoke the thoughts of heaven in human language to men on earth.

In reference to the language of the angels here recorded, I notice—

I.—IT IS SUGGESTIVE OF THEIR TENDER CONSIDERATION FOR
THE INFIRMITIES OF GENUINE DISCIPLES.

There are two infirmities in human nature, even in its Christian state.

First: A Tendency to *dread* the Preternatural. "The thought of the supernatural," says *Tulloch*, "abides with man, do what he will. It visits the most callous, it interests the most sceptical. For a time—even for a long time—it may lie asleep in the breast, either amidst the sordid despairs, or the proud, rich, and young enjoyments of life: but it awakens up in curious inquiry, or dreadful anxiety. In any case it is a thought of which no man can be reasonably independent. For so far as he retains his reasonable

being, and preserves the consciousness of moral susceptibilities and relations, in so far will his thought of a higher world, of a life enclosing and influencing his present life—be a powerful and practical thought with him.” We are told, that when the angel descended from heaven, the earth quaked, the stone rolled from the grave, and the Roman guards did shake and become as dead men. These women perhaps participated in the terror, hence the considerateness of the angel in saying to them, “Be not affrighted.”

Secondly: A Tendency to *doubt* the Preternatural. It would seem, when the angel told the disciples that He was not there, but was risen, they were somewhat incredulous, hence he says (according to Matthew), “Come, see the place where the Lord lay;”—“come, look for yourselves. Here is the spot where He lay; but it is vacant, He is gone.” What the angel said to these women, Christianity says to all men—“Come and see for yourselves.” May we not conclude from this tender consideration of human infirmities, that angels are acquainted with the workings of the human soul? And in all the anxieties and sorrows of the genuine disciples of Christ do they not feel a profound and practical interest? Indeed, how else can they succour us? How else can they scatter our doubts, dispel our fears, strengthen our hopes, and nerve our courage? “He shall give His angels charge over thee,” &c.

In reference to the language here, notice—

II.—IT IS SUGGESTIVE OF THEIR REPUGNANCE TO HUMAN ERROR.

Luke says that the angel asked Mary, “Why seek ye the living among the dead?” There is something like reproof in these words, as if the angel had said, “I know that you are seeking Jesus, and that is well; but you are seeking Him in the wrong place, He is not here, He has risen.” The reproof contains—

First: A Glorious Truth. Christ is the “*living*” One. The living, τὸν ζῶντα, Him Who liveth. Christ not only lives, but He is *the* living One. “I am He that liveth, and was dead, and am alive for evermore.” The living One that never changes with circumstances, never decays with time, that never dies, “Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light,” &c. The reproof suggests—

Secondly: A Common Error. Men are everywhere seeking the living among the dead. They do it—(1.) *Socially*. What a tendency is there in all bereaved hearts to think of the loved ones who are gone as *in the grave!* In spirit, if not in body, we repair oftentimes to the sepulchre where sleep the remains of those ever dear to our hearts. We seek them there; but they are not there, they are living elsewhere,—living a holier, happier life, somewhere in God’s bright universe. Heaven says to the mourner bending over the grave of his dead one, “He is not here, He is risen.” They do it—(2.) *Religiously*. The men who seek Christ in the dogmas

of creeds, the ceremonies of Churches, the relics of saints, the ministries of priests, the fellowship of nominal Christians, seek the living among the dead. Christ is not in these. He is not in this Church or that Church, in this theology or that theology, in this society or that society, He is risen. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above."

In reference to the language here, notice—

III.—IT IS SUGGESTIVE OF THEIR INTIMATE KNOWLEDGE OF
CHRIST AND HIS DISCIPLES.

Luke gives the following words of the angels: "*Remember how He spake unto you when He was yet in Galilee, saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.*" A reference is here, perhaps, to Matt. xvi. 21. When Christ thus spoke to His disciples concerning His crucifixion and resurrection, we have no account of angels being present. Anyhow, the Evangelists did not observe them, otherwise we may rest assured they would have taken some notice of their appearance. Albeit they were there, heard, felt, and pondered the conversation. They were always present with Christ, ever attending on Him as His ministers. "I am not alone," He said. He knew that there were legions of angels about Him. Remember the words He spake to you; I heard them, they were memorable words, words never to be forgotten. Christ was the grand subject of angelic study when on earth. "Into which things the angels desired to look," said Peter; and Christ is the Object of angelic worship now in heaven. Though we are not known by our fellow-men—even our nearest friends, and though we are ignorant of ourselves, there are intelligent creatures in the universe who know us, who from infancy up to the present hour have attended us, who have never by day or night been absent from us, who have marked our every act, and peered into our very hearts. The fact that we do not see them is no proof that they do not exist. The surrounding atmosphere teems with existences too small for the keenest unaided eye to detect. Each is busy working out its little destiny, playing its little part in life's universal drama. They encompass us in untold millions. Albeit we see them not. Put to your eye a microscope sufficiently powerful, and you will feel yourself present with the innumerable legion,—you have a new universe.

"Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth
Unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep.
All these with ceaseless praise His works behold
Both day and night. How often from the sleep
Of echoing hill or thicket have we heard
Celestial voices to the midnight air,
Sole, or responsive each to other's note,

Singing their great Creator ! Oft in bands
 While they keep watch or nightly rounding walk
 With heavenly touch of instrumental sound
 In full harmonic number joined, their songs
 Divide the night, and lift our thoughts to heaven."—*Milton.*

In reference to the language here, notice—

IV.—IT IS SUGGESTIVE OF THEIR DESIRE TO HAVE MEN RIGHTLY
 AND QUICKLY DIRECTED TO CHRIST.

Matthew says that the angels said to Mary:—"And go quickly, and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead; and, behold, He goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see Him: lo, I have told you." He is gone into Galilee, where He had spent most of His public life, and Matthew (xxviii. 16) informs us that upon a mountain of Galilee, Christ, according to appointment, met with eleven of His disciples. And some suppose that on that occasion the five hundred referred to by the Apostle (1 Cor. xv. 6) also met Him. "Go quickly, and tell His disciples He is risen from the dead." Remove their anxieties, dispel their doubts, by meeting Him according to His appointment on a mountain in Galilee. Why should angels be so anxious for men to know Christ?

First: Because, of all the Beings in the universe, He is the *Most Worth Knowing*. He is the "Image of the invisible God," the Fountain of all intelligence, the Root from which all the branches of science break forth, live, and flourish.

Secondly: Because, of all the Beings in the universe, none is so *Necessary for Man* to know. A knowledge of Christ is essential to restore man to the image, the fellowship, and the enjoyment of God.

In reference to the language here, notice—

V.—IT IS SUGGESTIVE OF THEIR COMPASSIONATE INTEREST IN
 THE SORROWS OF EARNEST SOULS.

"*And they (the angels) said unto her, Woman, why weepest thou?*" Mary was in tears. Her tears were perhaps those of disappointed hopes, bereaved love, sad apprehensions. Piety is often found in tears. "*Why weepest thou?*" "*They have taken away my Lord.*" We mourn our losses. What does this angel know about human tears? Had he ever wept for the dying or the dead? Had he ever wept the tears of pain, bereavement, or moral regret? "*Why weepest thou?*" Thy tears mean unbelief, for did He not tell thee He would rise again? Thy tears are the tears of ignorance, for didst thou know the fact thou wouldst rejoice. He is not dead, but living.

CONCLUSION. The subject addresses itself to Four classes of men.

First: To the Enemies of Christianity. It says to them, All your efforts to suppress truth must prove futile, and in all you will be baffled and confounded. The Sanhedrim and the Jewish people so hated Christ, that they put Him to death. They buried Him in a grave, they sealed the stone of His sepulchre, and set Roman guards to watch it. Having done so no doubt they concluded that His voice was hushed for ever, and His influence gone; but lo, on the third day, the God of Truth despatched a messenger from the skies. The approach of that messenger made the earth quake and the guards fall as dead men to the ground. Christ arose, invested with a power to spread His truth through the world and His influence through the universe. Infidels try to suppress truth; they may apparently succeed for a short time. They put a stone on its grave, seal the stone, guard it with civic power; but, like Christ, it shall rise. "The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against His anointed. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision." The subject addresses itself—

Secondly: To the Worldly-Minded. To those whose spiritual natures are so thoroughly materialized that they "walk after the flesh," and are influenced only by the things that are seen and temporal,—I would say, There are beings and things about you that you do not see and hear, that are more real and lasting a thousand times, than all the objects that come within the realm of your senses. Wherever you are, there is a ladder by your side reaching to heaven, a ladder which the angels of God are ascending and descending. If the eye of your soul was truly opened, you would exclaim, "Surely God is in this place, and I knew it not." Angels crowd about us, and we know it not. The subject addresses itself—

Thirdly: To Conventional Christians. What thousands there are in this country and throughout Christendom seeking the living among the dead, seeking Christ in hoary systems, Church ceremonies, and institutional religions, and judging of Him as seen there. Judge not Christianity even by its most perfect embodiment in the life of its disciples here. The best are imperfect, and Christianity itself teaches this, and points to perfection as yonder. Do not judge the science of the organ-builder by the half-finished instrument in the workshop. There is but little in that to please the eye, and from it scarce a note can be evolved to charm the ear. Judge not the artistic character of the painter by the first rough outline which you discover on the canvas in his studio. There is scarcely a touch of life in it, or any perceptible resemblance to the original. Judge the organ-builder by the instrument as it stands in the great cathedral, pouring forth by the touch of a master-musician,

pealing strains of music electrifying the congregated thousands. Judge the artist by the picture as hung up in the Academy of Art, looking, throbbing, and blushing at you as a thing of life, gathering round it a crowd of admiring spectators. Even so judge Christianity. Its organ—the Christian life—is not half-finished here: in the workshop yonder, in the great Cathedral of Eternity, you will see it in perfection and feel the inspiration of its harmonies. The painting is not finished here in its studio; its figure is half formed and blotched, and scarcely a feature is accurate. See it in the great gallery of the heavens finished, an exact copy of the Son of God Himself. Say not in thine heart, “Who shall ascend to heaven?”—that is, to bring Christ down from above, or “Who shall descend into the deep?” The subject addresses itself—

Fourthly: To Sorrowing Disciples. How many there are of the truly good, who, like Mary Magdalene, are in tears! But “blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.” Comforted perhaps at the very place where they were made sad. It was the sight of the empty grave that broke this woman’s heart into tears; but at that very grave the angel of mercy appeared, and spoke to her words about Christ suited to hush her sorrows and to transport her soul with rapture. “*He is not here, He is risen.*”

“Deem not that they are blest alone
Whose lives a peaceful tenor keep,
For God, Who pities man, has shown
A blessing for the eyes that weep.

The light of smiles shall free again
The lids that overflow with tears:
And weary hours of woe and pain
Are promises of happier years.

There is a day of sunny rest
For every dark and troubled night;
Though grief may bide an evening guest,
Yet joy shall come with early light.

Nor let the good man’s trust depart
Though life its common gifts deny;
Though with a pierced and broken heart
And spurned of men he goes to die.

For God has marked each sorrowing day,
And numbered every secret tear;
And heaven’s eternal bliss shall pay
For all His children suffer here.”—*Bryant.*

No. XIX.

THE HONEST SCEPTIC, AND HOW TO TREAT HIM.

“But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe. And after eight days again His disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then said He to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold My hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into My side: and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto Him, My Lord and my God. Jesus said unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.”
—xx. 24—29.

(For Exegetical Remarks, see Vol. II. p. 184.)

WONDERFUL day was that on which the Great Mediator rose from the dead as the Conqueror of death and the “Captain of human salvation.” In it all past and future eras in the annals of redeemed man meet as in a central epoch. It is a bright orb, in the sky of earth’s moral history, throwing its radiance on all events, however distant and minute.

On the evening of this ever-memorable day, the disciples, drawn by a common interest in the wonderful facts of Christ’s history, assembled together, probably for conference and devotion. “The doors being shut”—for they were afraid of the Jews. They knew that the men who had imbrued their hands in their Master’s blood, would not hesitate to inflict agony and death on them. Whilst in this room Jesus appears to them. No iron doors, no granite walls, no massive bolts can exclude Him from His people. “*He stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you.*” To assure them that He was not a spectre, but the same veritable Jesus that two days before was nailed to the accursed tree, He shows to them the hands through which the rugged nails were driven, and the side into which the heartless soldier plunged the spear. The fear of the disciples departed, their faith was established, and they “were glad when they saw the Lord.” Christ repeats His benediction,

gives to them a commission, and qualifies them to discharge it by breathing on them the inspiring influences of Heaven.

There were two disciples absent from this remarkable meeting, Judas and Thomas. Poor Judas could not be there; he had gone "to his own place" of retribution, he had done with such meetings for ever—he was somewhere in eternity in the iron grasp of avenging justice. Alas! Judas, no more Christian conferences and godly devotions for thee!

But where was Thomas? Was he unacquainted with the hour or place of meeting? Did he flee too far off at the Crucifixion to be able to attend? Or, had he other engagements which precluded the possibility of his joining his brethren on this occasion? It is idle to speculate about the causes; all we know is, that he was not present. Whether his absence was unavoidable or otherwise is not stated.

Some time in the course of that week, perhaps immediately after the meeting had broken up, the disciples met Thomas and told him that they had "*seen the Lord.*" But he could not believe their statement, and he candidly told them so. "*Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe.*" Whilst there is an energy in this man's scepticism rather startling, there is a manly outspokenness about it which one is disposed to admire.

Eight days roll by, the second "*Lord's day*" dawns, and the disciples meet again. Thomas is present now. The doors are shut as before; Christ appears. After pronouncing His benediction, He singles out Thomas, and says to him, "*Reach hither thy finger, and behold My hands; and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into My side: and be not faithless, but believing.*" Such is the wonderfully suggestive incident before us.

An *interesting religious sceptic*, an *exemplary religious Guide*, and a *super-eminent religious faith*, are the three prominent objects in this narrative. They stand out in bold relief and commanding attitude on the canvas of this fragment of evangelical history. They are not characters foreign to our times and spheres, at which we have to gaze with a little curiosity and then pass on; in them, we, the men of this age, and of this island, have a vital interest. They demand, and will repay our deepest and devoutest study. Let us, then, bestow some earnest attention on each separately. We have here—

I.—AN INTERESTING RELIGIOUS SCEPTIC.

An interesting religious sceptic! What an abuse of language—what a profanity of sentiment! A sceptic! his name should be mentioned with abhorrence, he should be shunned as a leper,

denounced as a criminal; at his head the faithful of all Christian sects should hurl their severest fulminations! Such, probably, will be the utterance of those pious dogmatists who have reached a blessed certitude in all departments of theological inquiry. Albeit I cannot but regard *doubters* like this Thomas, as characters of peculiar interest.

“Who never doubted, never half-believed;
Where doubt, there truth is,
’Tis her shadow.”—*Festus*.

And as *Tennyson* says:

“There lives more faith in honest doubt,
Believe me, than in half the creeds.”

There are certain features in this Scepticism of Thomas that mark it off from the conventional and common scepticism of mankind.

First: The scepticism of Thomas was Negative, not Positive. Thomas did not put himself in antagonism to the fact announced, and meet it with a dogmatic and positive denial. He did not echo the everlasting NO that thunders evermore in the infidel world; all he said was, I cannot believe it without more evidence. He did not manifest any affinity of feeling with that presumptuous herd of mortals who arrogantly proclaim Gospel facts impossibilities, Gospel doctrines absurdities, and Gospel believers brainless fanatics, or cunning knaves. Had he fully expressed his feelings he might have said,—“I do not deny its possibility, this would be to arrogate to myself infinite intelligence; nor do I impeach the veracity of you, my brother disciples; all that I say is, that such is the character of my intellect that I cannot believe such a strange and unheard-of fact on your unsupported testimony.”

Secondly: The scepticism of Thomas was Intellectual, not Moral. The wish is often the father to the thought—the creed the offspring of the heart; but it was not so here. There is evidence that his love to Christ was fervid and forceful. About three months before this, when Lazarus lay dead, Christ said to His disciples, “I go, that I may awake him out of his sleep,”—Thomas, being present, said,—“Let us go that we may die with Him.” A noble burst of generous feeling this, indicative of his strong attachment to Christ. His heart, then, we may presume, was in favour of the fact. Only too glad, we may suppose, would he be to welcome the beloved dead to life again. The difficulty was purely intellectual. The circumstance of a dead man coming to life, rising from a grave on which a large stone had been placed, and firmly sealed; a grave sedulously guarded, too, by the Roman soldiers, was altogether so stupendous and unique that his intellect

could not yield it credence without extraordinary evidence. In this, too, his scepticism differed widely from the general scepticism of mankind. Men's difficulties in believing now are not so much intellectual as moral.

Thirdly: The scepticism of Thomas was Frank, not Underhanded. To whom did Thomas avow his unbelief? To the sordid worldlings who felt no interest in those things—to the sneering infidel who would readily nurse his doubts into atheism? Or, to Scribes and Pharisees, who would be only too delighted at the indications of his apostasy from this new and odious faith? No; to the ten men who told the fact, he avowed his unbelief; like an honest man he expressed his disbelief in the face of the believers. Let modern sceptics imitate his example in this. Let them be ingenuous and manly in their deportment; let them, instead of appealing to the thoughtless crowd, and seeking to work insidiously their infidel notions by jeers and jokes, innuendoes and tales, into the minds of the unreflecting multitude, go at once to the Church, to the men that believe, and say openly and respectfully, as did Thomas, "We cannot believe in the doctrines you offer unless you give us more evidence." This would be manly and honest, and this might serve the common cause of truth and the common interest of our race.

Fourthly: The scepticism of Thomas was Convincible, not Obstinate. There are some men so inveterate in their prejudices that no amount of evidence will modify their opinions. You may as well argue with granite as with them; as well endeavour to remove Snowdon from its rocky foundations as to uproot old notions from their brain. Such was not Thomas. After he first avowed his unbelief, did he seek, as is generally the case with sceptics, every possible means to establish himself in his infidel views? Nay, did he even avoid opportunities for obtaining evidence that would shake him in his foregone conclusions? The reverse of all this is the fact. He remained open to conviction, he sought new evidence. "*Eight days*" after he declared his scepticism, we find him with the disciples, no doubt in search of sufficient proof, to convince him that Christ had risen from the dead. It is not improbable that he spent the whole of the intervening week in the same earnest endeavour. He was an Honest Doubter. Honest doubt is active—active, because it is a law of mind to seek certitude.

Such, then, was the Scepticism of Thomas—it was negative, not positive; intellectual, not moral; ingenuous, not mean; convincible, not obstinate. Such scepticism stands in striking contrast to that impertinent dogmatism, moral grossness, underhanded obliqueness, and stolid obstinacy, which mark too many of the sceptics of this age. I confess to a kind of sympathy with the scepticism of Thomas's type. It indicates intellect of the

higher species, honesty of heart, activity of thought, and often an agony of feeling. I have more faith in the virtue, more hope in the destiny of such scepticism, than I have faith in the virtue, or hope in the destiny of mere traditional faith. Honest Scepticism is better than Technical Sainthood.

Another far more interesting object which we have in this narrative is—

II.—AN EXEMPLARY RELIGIOUS GUIDE.

We have here detailed the method in which Jesus, the Heavenly Guide of mortals, dealt with this poor sceptic. How does He act towards him? Does He denounce him as a heretic, and expel him from the circle of His disciples? Does He treat him even with cold indifference, which to sensitive natures would even be worse than actual severity? No. How then? Let the ministers, who fulminate from the pulpit denunciations against all who cannot subscribe to their tenets; let the sectarians who with self-complacency consign to perdition all beyond the pale of their little church, mark well the conduct of Christ towards this Thomas. Eight days after Thomas had avowed his scepticism, Christ finds him out, enters the room where he was with his brother disciples, fastens His loving looks upon him, singles him out, and says,—“*Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold My hands; and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into My side: and be not faithless, but believing.*” Three things are observable here—

First: The Direct Specialty of His Merciful Treatment. He dealt with Thomas Personally. He did not address some general remarks bearing on the subject of doubt, to the whole company, leaving Thomas to apply them if he would to his own individual case. He deals directly with him. He knew the highly critical state of his mind; He saw that the man was on the margin of the cold, dark, chaotic world of infidelity, and that he required prompt and special attention or he would be irrevocably gone. Men in this doubting state require special treatment—the case is special. The bulk of mankind are either too weak or too indolent in soul, ever to get into a state of doubting; credulity is their weakness and their bane. The doubter therefore requires what Christ gave Thomas,—special attention.

Secondly: The Exquisite Considerateness of His Merciful Treatment. The request of Thomas was objectionable on many grounds. There was an indelicacy of feeling, and a presumptuous extravagance about it, more or less revolting to our finer sensibilities. Nor can we see that the request went for anything like rational and conclusive evidence. He might touch the wounds, and the fact of Christ's identity would remain open to debate. Still though the request is thus open to objection, Christ with exquisite

considerateness condescends to grant it. He might have reproved him with severity for venturing such a demand; but instead of allowing a word of reproach to escape His lips, He at once, and lovingly, accedes:—“*Reach hither thy finger, and behold My hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into My side: and be not faithless, but believing.*”

Thirdly: The Moral Influence of His Merciful Treatment. What was the effect this produced upon the heart of Thomas? He answered and said, “*My Lord, and my God.*” As if he had said, “I am more than convinced, more than satisfied; I am subdued by Thy merciful condescension, I am won by the majesty of Thy love.” It was not, I trow, the mere touch of the wounds that produced this sublime effect upon his soul; it was the moral royalty of His merciful treatment. It is the *spirit*, not the letter of argument that will overcome scepticism. Far enough am I from disparaging the efforts of your Paleys, your Butlers, and your Lardners; but I believe that he whose life and words are inspired with the benign spirit of Christianity, though he may have no logic and no learning, will do more to subdue scepticism than your most cogent argumentations or your most eloquent appeals.

Mark well, then, my brothers, Christ’s method of treating scepticism, and take heed to the fact that in this respect He has left us an example that we should follow in His steps. But how has the Church acted towards sceptics? Has it treated them with tender consideration, singled them out, as Christ did Thomas, for special acts of kindness suited to touch their hearts, the seat of the disease? The volumes of history that lie about me unite in one emphatic No. History tells us, that for many ages the Church branded honest doubters as heretics, delivered them to the bloody inquisitors, and consigned them to the fiendish horrors of martyrdom. But how in our own times are they treated? In theological controversy their opinions are often caricatured, their motives often impugned, and their feelings often wounded, by a language coarse and contemptuous, and a spirit imperious in insolence and menace.

Take some modern Churches. Let one of the members be known to doubt the truth of certain of the statements that fall from the pulpit, or certain of the tenets held by the community, and that man shall be looked upon with cold suspicion, if not with pious horror. He may be signally honest, generous, devout; yet because he has some doubts, which he is manly enough to state, he shall, if not dismissed from the fellowship, be simply allowed the formalities of toleration. Selfishness and sleepiness, ignorance and vulgarity, shall be tolerated in a Church member rather than honest doubting. When will pastors and deacons

of Churches treat earnest doubters in the spirit of Christ? When will theological tutors have that moral majesty that shall win the confidence of the young student whose intellect is active enough to doubt, and who is honest enough in heart to declare the failings of his faith?

The other interesting object in this narrative is—

III.—A SUPER-EMINENT RELIGIOUS FAITH.

“Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.” These words imply two facts—

First: That it is Possible for those who have never seen Christ to believe in Him. Wherever His Gospel goes, there goes evidence sufficient to produce faith without any personal manifestation of Christ whatever. There is—

(1.) *The Testimony of Competent Witnesses.* A competent witness is one who has sufficient knowledge of the fact whereof he affirms, and a truthfulness of principle that would guard from any temptation to deceive. The declaration of such a witness I cannot but receive. Society could not go on, could not exist, were men to repudiate such testimony. Now, are not the Gospel witnesses pre-eminently of this class? Had not the apostles every opportunity of thoroughly knowing those facts of Christ's history which they propounded? Had they any possible motive to deceive? On the contrary, were not their inducements to deny the facts far stronger than those to declare them? There is—

(2.) *The Testimony of our Consciousness.* There is such a congruity between the doctrines of the Gospel and the intuitive beliefs of mankind, between the provisions of the Gospel and the deep-felt wants of mankind, that it comes with a self-evidencing power. It commends itself to “every man's conscience” in the sight of God. On this ground rather than any other, I imagine it is generally believed. Consult the great body of believers on the question, and they would say what the Samaritans of old avowed, “Now, we believe not because of thy saying, but because we have *heard him ourselves.*”

Thank God, it is possible to believe without seeing! In ordinary matters we are doing so every day. “Faith is the evidence of things not seen.” The illustrious believers, whom the writer celebrates in the eleventh chapter of the Hebrews, believed without seeing. Abraham believed in a city he never saw. Noah, in a deluge, long years before the windows of heaven were opened and the floodgates of the great deep broken up. Ever since the departure of Christ from this material sphere of being, the language of the Church has been—“Whom having not seen we love, in whom though now we

see Him not, yet believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

The other fact implied in these words is—

Secondly: That those who believe in Him, without seeing, are Peculiarly Blessed. We are apt to think that the contemporaries of Christ, that the apostles who saw Him, heard Him, touched Him, were privileged above all the rest of the human family. This is a delusion. The unseeing believer is the most signally blessed. "*Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.*" Why? For the following reasons—

(1.) *Faith without sight is more Praiseworthy than faith by sight.* There are some I know who deny all moral character to faith; they say, that man is no more accountable for his belief than he is for the colour of his skin. This I admit to be true of a certain kind of faith. There are two very different kinds of belief; the one *voluntary*, the other *involuntary*. The one comes by a proper inquiry into evidence, and the other springs up irresistibly whenever a fact is visible to the senses, or a proposition is obviously truthful to the mind. The evidence both of the bodily senses and the mental intuitions renders faith involuntary, and takes away from it therefore all moral merit. For such faith, I say, man is not responsible. But the *voluntary* is a very different thing. This depends upon a man's agency. There is a universe of facts that lies beyond the realm of my senses and that transcends all my *à priori* ideas. Belief in those facts—and it may be shown that the belief is indispensable to our well-being—requires evidence, and the evidence requires careful, honest, and earnest investigation. Man may examine evidence or he may not; he may examine it in a right or a wrong way. Here, then, is the responsibility. This voluntary faith has a moral character. Why do men not believe in Christ? It cannot be said for the want of evidence—for as a fact there is evidence that has satisfied millions, and that will satisfy millions more—but because that evidence is either entirely neglected, or if examined,—examined improperly. Now the faith of Thomas sprang from the senses, and had in itself but little if any moral merit. "*Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.*"

(2.) *Faith without sight is frequently more Accurate than faith by sight.* The senses are deceptive, the eye especially makes great mistakes: "Things are not what they seem." Nature is not what it seems; men are not what they seem. The eye would have us believe that the heavenly bodies are but lamps of various sizes hung up in the heavens; that the earth beneath our feet is the largest object brought within our notice, and that it sits like a queen in the midst of the system, serene and motionless, while all the heavenly luminaries like attendant angels pass round it, ministering evermore to the requirements of its life, and to the

brightness and beauty of its forms. In all this the eye deceives; and in a thousand other minor matters it is busy with its delusions. Reason collects evidence and corrects those mistakes. It weighs the heavenly bodies and tells their density to a grain, it measures them and tells their dimensions to an inch. It calculates their velocity with the utmost accuracy. Reason has evidences on which to build a faith of unquestionable truthfulness.

(3.) *Faith without sight is more Ennobling than faith by sight.*

(a.) It involves a higher exercise of mind. Whatever tends to stimulate and work the mental faculties is good. Faith founded on rational evidence implies and demands this mental action. Sensuous faith does not require this; the mind may sleep while it comes and remains. The history of the apostles furnish a striking illustration of this. How morally weak, because mentally inactive, were their minds, during their personal connection with Christ! Their faith in Him was more or less the faith of *sight*. Hence how weak and timid they were! Peter had not power to avow Him, none of the disciples had force enough to stand by Him in His dying hour. "They forsook Him, and fled." But after His ascension, when they are thrown upon themselves, and upon rational evidence, how giantly strong they become in a few days! They make the Sanhedrim tremble, they brave the most terrible powers of opposition, they turn the world upside down. (b.) It ensures a higher mode of life. Were our faith in Christ to be merely built upon the senses, I can scarcely see how it could raise the mind from its present earthly and material state. Indeed, faith founded on the senses must confine the soul more or less to the sensuous department of life. Hence as a fact, the disciples, so long as their faith rested on this ground, had the most material notions of the Saviour. On the contrary, the faith that comes without seeing, that depends upon evidence requiring an examination that brings us in contact often with the most stirring facts, the most glorious principles, and the most quickening spirits, transports us beyond the realm of sense, and introduces us into the world of invisible forces:—the things not seen and temporal, but unseen and eternal. (c.) It gives a wider sphere of being. The man whose faith is bounded by the evidence of his senses must have but a very narrow world. With the places he has not actually seen, he will have no interest, no connection. The stupendous systems that roll away in the boundless districts of space, and the mighty principalities of spirits that populate those systems, will be nothing to him. Nay, life which is invisible, mind which is invisible, God Who is invisible, will be nothing to him, if he believes only what he sees.

From all this it is clear that especially "*blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.*"

The subject serves several important purposes. It suggests—

First: An Incidental Argument in favour of Christianity. The fact that there was such a man as Thomas amongst the disciples, who could not believe without extraordinary evidence, and who manfully avowed his belief before the whole, plainly shows that there was no *collusion* between these witnesses of Christ; and that they were not a body of superstitious and credulous men. It suggests—

Secondly: The Superiority of our Advantages to those of the Contemporaries of Christ. In certain sentimental moods we are disposed to say, Would that we had lived in the days of Christ, and enjoyed the privileges of His disciples! Would that we had gone with Him on some of His journeys! walked with Him the shores of Galilee, sailed with Him over the Sea of Tiberias, sat down with Him on the mountain brow, entered with Him the villages and cities which He visited! Would that we had heard Him preach, and witnessed the wonderful things He suffered and wrought! Ah! this is not only useless wishing, but unwise. It is *better* to be where you are. "We have a more sure word of prophesy, unto which ye do well to take heed." It suggests—

Thirdly: The Duty of the Church in relation to Doubters. Who are the men in the Church that are most severe with doubters? Not the men who have the most intelligent, earnest, practical, faith in Christ; but the men whose faith is either traditional, and therefore arrogant and blustering; or superstitious, and therefore moody, whining, and shaken with every breeze of doctrine. These in every age have been the fierce denouncers and the heartless persecutors of souls struggling with doubt. But as *Gilder* says—

"Against the darkness outer,
God's light His likeness takes,
And He from the mighty doubter
The great believer makes."

If we would be true to our profession, as disciples of Christ, we must imitate His example in His conduct with doubters. "If a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."

"Let not this weak unknowing hand
Presume Thy bolts to throw,
And deal damnation, round the land,
On all I judge Thy foe.
If I am right, Thy grace impart
Still in the right to stay;
If I am wrong, O teach my heart
To find the better way."

This subject suggests—

Fourthly: The Relationship to Christ we should seek to attain. It is that which Thomas expressed, when he exclaimed, "*My Lord, and my God.*" This man's faith reached the highest point. It was more than a satisfaction with the fact of Christ's resurrection, more than a trust in His Divine Person, more even than a confidence in His personal relation to him: it was a loving and loyal surrender of his being to Him. "*My Lord, and my God!*" I am entirely Thine;—my intellect, my affections, my powers, my energies, my all, are Thine. Thou art mine;—mine to guide me in difficulties, guard me in dangers, supply me with all I need through all the coming ages of being.

This is the Blessed Transcendentalism:—a loving self-abandonment to Christ; a moral absorption in Him.

CONCLUSION. Do not denounce Honest Scepticism, or treat it either with superciliousness or indifference. Do not regard the first disciples as being more privileged than yourself. You can believe without seeing, and this is the highest kind of faith. Do not regard the witnesses of Christ's resurrection as too weak-minded, prepossessed, and credulous, to have required evidence. Thomas says: "*Except I thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe.*" Do not fear to display special brotherly interest in an honest sceptic. He is a far more interesting character than a traditional believer. He is a living Spirit, the other is a mental fossil. Traditional faith is more obstructive to the spread of the Gospel than earnest doubt.

INTRODUCTION TO THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

No. I.

DISCUSSIONS RELATING TO ITS AUTHORSHIP.

WHEN a man takes into his hand a document, whether ancient or modern, if he is in genuine quest of truth for its own sake, his grand question is, not when, where, by whom, and for what purpose was this document written?—But what is the quality, measure, and practical bearing of the truth it contains? The other questions, as to date, authorship, and purpose, would perhaps naturally arise and stimulate inquiry. Such inquiry might become very interesting, and result in the discipline of mental faculties, and in enriching the mind with much information. Albeit, the truth contained in the document is absolutely independent of all such inquiries. It is the nature of truth to carry with it its own intrinsic worth and convincing evidence. The mathematical truth contained in Euclid is independent of the writer, and it is believed, not because of Euclid, but because of itself.

Notwithstanding this, many readers of such a Work as this will naturally look for some solution of problems that have agitated the minds of students for ages in connection with this Gospel of St. John. If I were to take no notice of these points, whilst some would be disappointed, others, perhaps, would say that I know nothing of these subjects, and am therefore disqualified for the work of Homiletic interpreter. I shall, therefore, endeavour to bring into the smallest compass nearly all the information which the most distinguished scholars and Biblical critics have furnished.

DR. GODET, PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY, NEUCHATEL—by general consent one of the greatest Biblical scholars of this age—supplies the following information concerning the discussions relating to the authenticity of this Gospel. He says—

“In the rapid view of the history of the discussions on the Gospel we might bring together, in a single series, determined by chronological order, all the writings upon the subject before us, whatever be the tendency to which they belong. But it seems preferable to us, with a view to clearness, to distribute the authors whom we intend to quote into three series, chronologically parallel. (1st.) The advocates of-the entire spuriousness of our Gospel;

(2nd.) The defenders of its absolute authenticity; (3rd.) The supporters of the different middle terms proposed.

I.—THE ADVOCATES OF THE ENTIRE SPURIOUSNESS OF THIS GOSPEL.

“Down to the end of the seventeenth century the question had not even been raised. It was known that in the primitive Church, a small sect, mentioned by Irenæus and Epiphanius, attributed the fourth Gospel to Cerinthus, an adversary of the Apostle John at Ephesus. But the learning of theologians, as well as the feeling of the Church, ratified the almost unanimous decision of the first Christian communities, and of their leaders, who saw in it the work of St. John.

“Some attacks of little importance, proceeding from the side of the English Deists, who flourished two centuries ago, commenced the struggle. But it did not burst forth seriously till a century later. In 1792, the English theologian Evanson raised for the first time some noteworthy objections against the general belief. He took his stand especially on the differences between our Gospel and the Apocalypse. He attributed the composition of the former of these books to some Platonic philosopher of the second century.

“The discussion was not long in being transplanted into Germany. Six years after Evanson, Eckermann controverted the authenticity, whilst allowing that certain Johannine traditions must have formed the first foundation of our Gospel. Several German theologians carried on the attack thus begun. They urged the contradictions with the first three Gospels, the exaggerated character of the miracles, the metaphysical tone of its discourses, the manifest theological relations between the theology of its author and that of Philo, the scarcity of literary traces establishing the existence of that writing in the second century. From 1801, the cause of the authenticity seemed to be already compromised to such a degree that a German Superintendent, Vogel, allowed himself to cite the Apostle John and his interpreters to the bar of the last judgment. This, however, was still only the first phase of the struggle, the time of skirmishes which generally preludes that of pitched battles.

“It was again a German Superintendent who opened the second period of the controversy. Bretschneider, in his “*Probabilia*,” published in 1820, concentrated in one vigorous attack all the objections which had been previously raised, and to these added new ones. He developed with much force the objection drawn from the contradictions with the first three Gospels, whether from the point of view of the form of the discourses, or from that of the Christological teaching. The fourth Gospel must be the work of a Christian of pagan, probably Alexandrian, origin, who lived during the first half of the second century. The learned and

skilful work of Bretschneider called forth numerous replies, of which we shall speak further on; and at the close of which this theologian declared, in 1824, that he had attained the end he had proposed to himself, viz., that of calling forth a more vigorous demonstration of the authenticity of the fourth Gospel. But the seeds sown by the hand of Bretschneider were not eradicated from the soil by this somewhat equivocal retractation. De Wette, in his 'Introduction,' published for the first time in 1826, without positively taking part against the authenticity, confessed the impossibility of demonstrating it in an unanswerable manner. In the same year, Reuterdahl, following in the footsteps of Vogel, assailed as a forgery the tradition of the sojourn of John in Asia Minor.

"The publication of the 'Life of Jesus' by Strauss, in 1835, exercised a much more decisive influence upon the criticism of the history of Jesus than upon that of the *documents* in which that history has been transmitted to us. Strauss evidently had not devoted himself to a special study of the origin of these latter. He set out, as regards the Synoptics, from two ideas which had been disseminated before him,—the theories of Gieseler and of Griesbach, according to which our Gospels are a redaction of the apostolic tradition, which, after having circulated for a long time in a purely oral form, was at last slowly fixed in our Synoptics (Gieseler); this at first in the redactions of Matthew and of Luke; then in that of Mark, which is only a compilation of the two others (Griesbach). As for John, he admits as proved the conclusions of Bretschneider. And if in his third edition, in 1838, he recognized that the authenticity of that Gospel was no longer so absolutely unmaintainable in his eyes, he was not long in retracting that concession in the following edition in 1840. In reality, the slightest tergiversation upon this point unsettled the whole of his edifice of mythical legends. The axiom which forms its basis, that the ideal is not exhausted in one individual, would be demonstrated to be false if the fourth Gospel were the narrative of an eye-witness. Nevertheless, the great excitement produced in the learned world by the work of Strauss could not fail soon to react upon the criticism of the Gospels.

"Christian Hermann Weisse was the individual who first drew attention, in a remarkable work, to the close connection between the criticism of the history of Jesus and that of the Gospels. From 1838, he studied in a special manner the nature and origin of these writings. He positively rejected the authenticity of the fourth Gospel, but not without recognizing in that book an apostolic foundation. The Apostle John, with the view of fixing the image of his Master, which, in proportion as the reality receded from his view, became more and more indistinct in his mind, and in order

to render to himself a clear account of the impression which he had preserved of Jesus, had drawn up certain 'studies,' which, when enlarged, became the discourses of the fourth Gospel. To these portions, more or less authentic, there was adapted at a later time an historical framework altogether fictitious. It is not impossible to comprehend how, from this point of view, Weisse could defend the authenticity of the first Epistle of John. At this moment there appeared in the criticism of our Gospel a revolution similar to that which was taking place at the same time in the manner of regarding the first three Gospels. Wilke was endeavouring at that very time to prove that the differences which distinguish the Synoptic narratives from one another were not, as had always been believed, simple and involuntary accidents; but that it was necessary to recognize in them modifications, introduced in a manner savouring of reflection and of deliberate purpose, by each author into his own narrative or that of his predecessors. Bruno Bauer extended this method of explanation to the fourth Gospel. He maintained that the Johannine narrative was not at all, as the treatment of it by Strauss supposed, altogether the simple deposit of a legendary tradition; but that this narrative was the reflective work of a thinker and of a poet conscious of his procedure—the product of an individual conception. The history of Jesus thus became a philosophical and poetical romance; which, according to the witty expression of Ebrard, who reduced the narrative of it to a single line: 'At that time it came to pass . . . that nothing came to pass.'

"In that same year Lützelberger attacked, in a more decided and thorough manner than Reuterdahl, the tradition of the sojourn of John in Asia Minor. The author of our Gospel, according to him, was a Samaritan, whose parents had emigrated to Mesopotamia, between 130 and 135, at the time of the new Jewish revolt against the Romans, and had composed that Gospel at Edessa. That 'disciple whom Jesus loved,' whom the author is pleased to bring upon the stage, was not John, but Andrew.

"We here reach the third and last period of this prolonged controversy. It dates from 1844, and has for its point of departure the famous work published at that date by Ferdinand Christian Baur. The first phase had lasted upwards of twenty years, from Evanson to Bretschneider (1792-1820); the second, in like manner, twenty and odd years, from Bretschneider to Baur; the third has now lasted more than thirty years. It is that of the struggle to extremity. The dissertation which gave the signal to it is certainly one of the most ingenious and brilliant compositions which theological science has ever produced. The purely negative results of the criticism of Strauss demanded for their complement a positive construction; on the other side, the arbitrary and

subjective character of the procedure of Bruno Bauer did not respond to the wants of an age eager for positive facts. The discussion found itself then enclosed, as it were, in an inextricable difficulty. Baur understood that his task was to withdraw it from that position, and that the only efficacious means for that purpose was to discover in the progress of the Church of the second century a clearly defined historical situation, which might present itself as the soil on which there could have been raised an edifice so grand as that of the fourth Gospel. He believed that he had discovered that situation towards the middle of the second half of the second century. *Gnosticism* was then flourishing, alongside of which our Gospel marches throughout its entire course. At that time thoughtful men were above all preoccupied with the idea of the *Logos*, which is precisely the theme of our work. The need was then making itself more and more felt of uniting in one great and single Catholic Church the two parties, hostile to each other, of which the Primitive Church was composed, but which a series of numerous transactions had gradually drawn closer together. The fourth Gospel appeared as the desired treaty of peace. The spiritualistic reaction of Montanism was at that time displaying itself against the Episcopate. Our Gospel supports this tendency, by borrowing from it whatever it contains of truth. Finally, there was then kindling up the discussion between the Churches of Asia Minor and those of the West on the Paschal rite. Now it seemed evident to Baur that our Gospel modifies the history of the Passion in such a manner as to draw away minds toward the Western rite. While thus placing in a determinate historical situation the composition of our Gospel, Baur, following in the footsteps of Bruno Bauer, demonstrates with wonderful skill the reflective and systematic unity of that work; he explains its logical march and its practical applications, and thus destroys at a single blow both the hypothesis of unreflective myths, on which rested the work of Strauss, and every attempt at selecting between certain authentic and other non-authentic parts in our Gospel. Baur admits, then, the unity and the integrity of the writing, and fixes as the date of composition about the year 170, when all the circumstances indicated above meet together. He has not attempted, however, to designate 'the great unknown,' to whose pen we owe this masterpiece of high mystical philosophy and skilful ecclesiastical policy which has exercised so decisive an influence over the destinies of Christianity. From that moment the discussion had a precise object. All the forces of the school agreed in supporting the work of the master in its different parts. Zeller completed it by the study of the Ecclesiastical testimonies; and that labour had as its result the sweeping away from the history of every trace of the existence of the fourth Gospel before

the epoch indicated by Baur. Schweigler, in his treatise on the period which followed that of the apostles, assigned to each one of the writings of the New Testament its place in the development of the struggle between the apostolic Judæo-Christianity and Paulinism, and presented the fourth Gospel as the final and rich product of that long elaboration of the primitive Christian thought. Köstlin, in a famous work on the *pseudonymous literature* in the Primitive Church, endeavoured to prove that the pseudographic procedure, to which Baur attributed the composition of four-fifths of the New Testament, was in conformity with literary precedents and the ideas of the epoch. Volkmar laboured to ward off the blows with which the system of the master had been incessantly threatened by the quotations, less and less indisputable, of the fourth Gospel in the writings of the second century, those of Marcion and of Justin, for instance, and the 'Clementine Homilies.' Hilgenfeld finally treated, in a more profound manner than Baur had done, the dispute about the Passover, and its relation to the authenticity of our Gospel. Thus learnedly supported by that Pleiad of distinguished critics, devoted not without marked variations to the common cause, the opinion of Baur might appear for the moment to have gained a complete and definite triumph. Nevertheless, in the bosom of the school itself there was already manifesting itself a divergence of a secondary nature doubtless, but which, nevertheless, in many respects, struck a blow at the hypothesis so skilfully designed by the master. Hilgenfeld abandoned the date fixed by Baur, and in consequence the advantages of the situation chosen by him; he removed the composition of John's Gospel backward from thirty to forty years. According to him, the origin of that writing was connected with the development of Gnosticism, especially of the *Valentinian* heresy. According to his own expression, he hoped 'to succeed in throwing light, by the torch of Gnosticism, upon the sanctuary of Johannine theology.' The author of the Gospel had proposed to himself to cause the Gnostic teaching to penetrate into the Church under a modified form. Already towards 150, the existence of that writing could scarcely be any longer called in question. It must then date from 130 to 140.

"Volkmar took an intermediate position. He spoke of the year 155; and the Dutch professor, Scholten, in a work published in 1864, likewise removed back the date of the composition as far as 150. The author was, according to him, a Christian of pagan origin, initiated in Gnosticism, and who had taken it as his task to render that tendency profitable to the Church. It contained at the same time, within wise limits, the Antinomian reaction of Marcion, and the exaltation of the Montanist spiritualism, which were at that time displaying themselves. He interposed, finally,

in the question of the Passover; not to decide in favour of the Western usage, as Baur thought, but to ensure the triumph of the principle of Pauline spiritualism, according to which there ought no longer to be any festival days in the Church. The author of the fourth Gospel then skilfully appropriated the truth contained in all the tendencies of that epoch (the middle of the second century); and without sliding into any of their exaggerations, he presented to the world, under the figure of a purely ideal disciple of him whom Jesus loved, the perfect spiritual Christianity which alone could become the universal religion.

“In 1866, this same point of view was developed by M. Réville in the ‘Revue des Deux Mondes.’ M. d’Eichthal in like manner expressed his assent to the idea of a relationship between our Gospel and Gnosticism. The work which M. Stap published the same year, in his collection of critical studies, is only a reproduction without originality of all the ideas of the school of Tübingen. These first retrograde steps in the date of our Gospel were followed by a third, still more considerable.

“In 1865, appeared the ‘History of Jesus,’ by Keim. He energetically opposes, in the part of the introduction which he devotes to the study of the sources, the authenticity of the fourth Gospel. He takes his stand especially on the philosophical character of that writing, and upon the contradictions which the narrative contains, with the nature of things, with the data furnished by the writings of St. Paul, and with the synoptic narratives. But, on the other hand, he establishes the traces of the existence of that work as far back as the most remote times of the second century. ‘The testimonies,’ he says, ‘go back even to the year 120; so that the composition dates from the beginning of the second century, in the reign of Trajan, between 100 and 117.’ The author was a Christian of Jewish origin, belonging to the *Diaspora* of Asia Minor, in perfect sympathy with the heathen, and thoroughly acquainted with all that concerns Palestine. In a more recent writing, a popular reproduction of his great work, Keim has gone back from that early date, assigning as his reason for the change of opinion, arguments which, we may say, contain nothing serious; he now fixes its composition in the year 130.

“Of what importance here is a decade of years? It would follow from the one as well as from the other of these latter dates, that twenty or thirty years after the death of John at Ephesus, the fourth Gospel was attributed to him by the very presbyters of the country where he had spent the end of his life, and where he had died. How can we explain the success of an act of falsehood in such circumstances? Keim felt that difficulty; and in order to remove it, he found no other means than to take up the idea let fall by Reuterdahl and Lützelberger, and to represent the alleged

sojourn of John in Asia Minor as a mere fable. By this decided step he went beyond the school of Tübingen. Baur and Hilgenfeld did not doubt for an instant the truth of that tradition. Their criticism even rests essentially on the reality of that fact; at first, because the Apocalypse, the Johannine composition of which serves them as a lever for overturning that of the Gospel, demands the sojourn of John in Asia; and afterwards, because all their reasoning, drawn from the alleged contradiction between the Paschal tradition, bequeathed by the apostle to the Churches of Asia, and the day of Jesus' death in the fourth Gospel, would fall to the ground with the sojourn of John in these countries. At the present day, on the contrary, since the criticism which is hostile to our Gospel feels itself embarrassed by this sojourn, it throws it overboard without ceremony. According to Keim, all that tradition is only the result of a misunderstanding of Irenæus, who applied to John the apostle what Polycarp had related before him of quite a different person. Scholten then came to the rescue, in a special work, but with an important difference. That false tradition is to be explained, according to him, by a confusion of another kind. In the Church, the author of the Apocalypse, who was not the Apostle John, but who had borrowed his name, was taken for the apostle himself, and in this way they had come to suppose that John must have lived in Asia, where the Apocalypse seems to have been composed. Whatever be the real state of the case, and however the error retained by the tradition is to be accounted for, the discovery of that error 'takes away,' as Keim says, 'the last point of support to the idea of the composition of the Gospel by the son of Zebedee.' In this way two of the bases of Baur's criticism—the authenticity of the Apocalypse, and the sojourn of John in Asia—are at this hour undermined by those very men who continued his work, because such a negation appears to them the only means of making an end of the sacred book.

"In 1868, the Englishman Davidson ranked himself amongst the opponents of the authenticity. Holtzmann, like Keim, sees in our Gospel an ideal composition, but nevertheless one not entirely fictitious, dating from the epoch of the Epistle of Barnabas (the first third of the second century), and which since 150 has been favourably welcomed by the Church. Krenkel, in 1871, defended the sojourn of the apostle in Asia; he attributed to him the composition of the Apocalypse, but not that of the Gospel.

"We close our review by mentioning a work, published recently, in which is summed up with immense erudition all the critical labour of past times and of the present epoch. It is Hilgenfeld's 'Introduction to the New Testament.' In that work the author continues to defend the cause to which he consecrated the firstfruits

of his pen,—viz. the composition of the Gospel of John under the influence of the Gnosticism of Valentinus.

II.—THE DEFENDERS OF ITS ABSOLUTE AUTHENTICITY.

“This persevering attack by one party of modern critics against the authenticity of the fourth Gospel, resembles the siege of a fortress on which depends the fate of a country. In face of all these onsets, the defenders, let it be understood, did not remain inactive,—they also felt the supreme importance of that scientific struggle; and the numerous transformations which the tactics of their opponents underwent, sufficiently demonstrate the continuous action exerted upon the assailants by the works of defence. We shall rapidly enumerate the writings published in favour of the authenticity.

“The oldest attack—that of the sectaries of the second century, called *Alogi*—did not remain unanswered; for it seems certain that the work of *Hippolytus* (beginning of the third century), the title of which thus appears in the catalogue of his works, ‘In favour of the Gospel of John and of the Apocalypse,’ was directed against them.

“The attacks of the English Deists were repulsed in Germany and Holland by Le Clerc and Lampe; by the latter, in his celebrated Commentary upon the Gospel of John. Two Englishmen, Priestley and Simpson, replied at once to Evanson. Storr and Süsskind resolved the objections raised shortly after in Germany; and that with such success, that Eckermann and Schmidt declared that they retracted their doubts.

“In the train of this first phase of the struggle, Eichhorn, Hug, Bertholdt, in their well-known Introductions to the New Testament, Wegscheider in a special work, and others also, unanimously declared themselves in the direction of the authenticity; so that at the beginning of this century the storm seemed calmed down and the question decided in favour of the traditional opinion. The historian Gieseler, in his admirable little work on the origin of the Gospels (1818), decided in the same way, and gave expression to the opinion that John had composed his book for the instruction of those heathens who had already made some advance in the Christian religion.

“The work of Bretschneider, which all at once broke this apparent calm, called forth a multitude of replies, amongst which we shall cite only those of Olshausen, of Crome, and Hauff, and the first edition of the commentary of Lücke. At the close of the first of these publications, Bretschneider declared, as we have already said, that his objections were solved; so that once again the calm seemed restored, and Schleiermacher, with all his school, could devote himself, without encountering any opposition worthy of

note, to the predilection which he felt for our Gospel. From the very beginning of his scientific career, Schleiermacher, in his *Discourses on Religion*, proclaimed the Christ of John as the true historic Christ, and maintained that the synoptic narrative must be subordinated to our Gospel. Critics so learned and independent as Schott and Credner in like manner supported at that time, in their Introductions, the side of the authenticity. De Wette alone at that moment let a somewhat discordant voice be heard.

“The appearance of the ‘Life of Jesu’ by Strauss, in 1835, was thus like a thunderbolt bursting in a serene sky. That work called forth a whole legion of apologetic replies; above all, that of Tholuck on the credibility of the evangelical history, and the ‘Life of Jesus’ by Neander. The concessions made to Strauss by the latter have often been erroneously interpreted. They had for their aim only to secure a minimum of indisputable facts, by giving up what might be the subject of attack. It is precisely this work, so moderate and impartial, and in which we feel at every word the unchangeable love of truth, which seemed for the moment to have made the greatest impression upon Strauss, and to have drawn from him, in reference to the Gospel of John, the species of retraction announced in his third edition.

“Gfroerer and Hase, although setting out from quite different points of view from the two preceding writers, defended the authenticity of our Gospel against Strauss. Frommann, on his side, refuted the hypothesis of Weisse. In the following years there appeared the work of Ebrard on the evangelical history, the truth of which he valiantly defended against Strauss and Bruno Bauer and the third edition of the commentary of Lücke (1848). But the latter made such concessions in regard to the credibility of the discourses, and of the Christological teaching of John, that his opponents did not fail soon to turn his own work against the very thesis he had desired to defend.

“We reach the last period—that of the struggle maintained with Baur and his school. Ebrard was the first to appear in the breach. At his side a young savant presented himself, who, in a work filled with rare patristic erudition, and a science derived from the primary sources, sought to recall to the right path historical criticism, which, in the hands of Baur, seemed to him to have strayed from it. We speak of Thiersch, whose work, modestly entitled an ‘Essay,’ is, even at this day, for beginners, one of the most useful means of discovering one’s true position in the domain of the history of the first two centuries. Baur could not bear this call to order which was addressed to him—to him, a veteran in science—by so young a writer. Under a feeling of irritation, he wrote that violent pamphlet in which he accused his opponent of fanaticism, and which assumed almost the character

of a denunciation. The reply of Thiersch was as remarkable for its propriety and dignity of tone as for the excellence of the general observations which are there presented on the criticism of the sacred writings. We may call in question the correctness of several of Thiersch's opinions, but it cannot be denied that his two works abound in ingenious and original points of view. A strange work appeared at that epoch. The author is usually quoted in German criticism under the name of '*The Anonymous Saxon.*' He is a Saxon theologian who then belonged to the Thurgovian clergy. He defended the authenticity of our Gospels; but with the intention of demonstrating by that very authenticity how the apostles of Jesus, authors of these books, or rather of these pamphlets, had only laboured to decry and vilify each other.

"The most skilful and learned reply to the works of Baur and of Zeller was that of Bleek in 1846. Alongside of this writing the articles of Hauff deserve to be especially mentioned. In the following years, Weitzel and Steitz discussed with great care and erudition the argument derived by Baur from the Paschal controversy at the end of the second century. Following in the footsteps of Bindemann (1842), Semisch demonstrated the use of our four Gospels by Justin Martyr.

"The year 1852 saw appear two very interesting writings, that of the Dutchman Niermeyer, designed to prove, by a discriminating and thorough study of the writings attributed to John, that the Apocalypse and the Gospel could and must both have been composed by him, and that the differences of substance and of form which distinguish them are to be explained by the profound spiritual revolution which took place in the apostle after the fall of Jerusalem. A similar idea was at the same time expressed by Hase. The second work is the commentary of Luthardt on the fourth Gospel, the first part of which contains a series of characteristic portraits of the principal actors in the evangelical drama, drawn after St. John, intended to make palpably visible the living reality of all these persons. These portraits are full of fine and correct touches.

"We shall here bring together three authors: Hase, Reuss, and Ewald, whose point of view in respect of our Gospel seems in general to agree. All the three defend the authenticity of the writing; but, what is almost inconceivable, they accord scarcely any historical credibility to the discourses which the apostle represents Jesus as delivering, and even to the miraculous deeds which He relates. That is an inconsistency on which Baur has severely animadverted in his reply to Hase. Such defences of a gospel are almost equivalent to sentences of condemnation pronounced against it,—or, rather, they mutually destroy each other. We may say of these almost what we say of the opinion of Bunsen,

who views the Gospel of John as the only monument of evangelical history which proceeded from an eye-witness, who declares even that otherwise 'there is no longer an historical Christ,' and who yet consigns to the domain of fable a fact so decisive as that of the resurrection. Guericke and Bleek in their Introduction to the New Testament, Meyer, Hengstenberg, Lange in their commentaries, have pronounced in favour of the authenticity, as well as M. Astié (who adopts Niermeyer's point of view), as also the author of these pages. The Johannine question in its relation to that of the synoptic Gospels has been treated in an instructive manner by MM. Sabatier and de Pressensé.

"Let us here mention a strange notice which was published by Nolte, after a chronicle of the ninth century—that of George Hamartolos. It is a narrative attributed to Papias, according to whom the Apostle John was killed by the Jews.

"The study of the patristic testimonies has recently formed the subject of two works, the one of a very popular character, the other more strictly scientific: the small work of Tischendorf on the date of the composition of our Gospels, and the academic programme of Riggenbach in 1866, relating to the historical and literary testimonies in favour of John's Gospel. The solidity and impartiality of this latter work have been recognized by those who were opposed to the views of the author. To these two writings we may add that of Hofstede de Groot, professor at Groningen, in which he treats of the question of the date of Basilides, and of the Johannine quotations, especially in the Gnostic writers. The cause of the authenticity has likewise been maintained by the Abbé Déramey (1868). The tradition of the sojourn of John in Asia Minor has been valiantly defended, against Keim, by MM. Steitz and Wabnitz. Wittichen, regarding it from a point of view which is peculiar to himself, gives up the sojourn of the Apostle John in Asia; but in order the better to support the authenticity of our Gospel, he maintains that it was composed by that apostle in Syria, to refute those Ebionites who had tendencies to Essenism. That writing would then date from the times which immediately followed the fall of Jerusalem. As to the John of Asia Minor, that would be the presbyter, author of the Apocalypse. We have here the antipodes to the theses of Tübingen.

"In two works, the one by Zahn, the other by Riggenbach, the question of the existence of the Presbyter John as distinct from the apostle has been discussed. These two authors, after a very careful study of the famous passage of Papias relative to that question, came to a negative conclusion. This is the case, in like manner, with Leimbach in a very recent study, and with Professor Milligan, of Aberdeen, in an article in the 'Journal of Sacred Literature,' entitled 'John the Presbyter' (Oct. 1867).

“The historical credibility of the discourses of Jesus in the fourth Gospel has been defended against modern objections by Gess, in the first volume of the second edition of his work on the person of the Saviour; and more especially by M. H. Meyer, in a very remarkable thesis for the degree of licentiate. From the year 1872 dates the English work of Sanday; and from 1873 that of the Superintendent Leuschner,—a courageous little work, which specially attacks Keim and Scholten.

“We have pleasure in concluding this review by mentioning two remarkable works: the critical study of Luthardt on the origin of the fourth Gospel, forming in a special volume the introduction to the second edition of his commentary, the first volume of which has just appeared; and the brilliant article of Beyschlag in the ‘*Studien und Kritiken*,’ which perhaps contains the most decisive and intellectual answers to all the objections of present criticism.

III.—THE SUPPORTERS OF THE MIDDLE TERMS PROPOSED.

“Urged by the force of the reasons for and against, a certain number of theologians have sought a middle position, suited to give satisfaction to both sides. Some have tried to make a selection between portions which are truly Johannine and those which are not authentic, but which have been interpolated at a later date. It is in this way that Weisse, whom we cannot exempt from including amongst the opponents of the authenticity, on account of the important place which he occupies in the development of that manner of view, would nevertheless be disposed to attribute to John himself some verses, such as ch. i. 1—5 and 9—14; also, certain passages in ch. iii.; finally, the discourses of ch. xiv.—xvii., while cutting off from them the dialogistic and narrative parts.

“Schweizer has tried another mode of selection. According to him, the narrations which have Galilee for the theatre of action must be eliminated from the Johannine writing; they have been added at a later time to facilitate the agreement between the narrative of John and that of the synoptic Gospels. Schenkel proposed to consider the discourses as the primitive work forming a whole, and the historical parts as added at a later date. But since the unity of the composition of our Gospel has been triumphantly demonstrated, the division of it externally into parts of diverse origin has been given up. Weizsäcker maintains that there is certainly a difference to be established in that narrative; but it is not of a quantitative nature,—it is the whole narrative which, from the first to the last line, presents a double character, an historical character on the one side, a speculative one on the other. In this way, then, the author himself comes to be made two different persons: the one, the witness, from whom have

proceeded in an oral form the information which constitutes the substance of the book; the other, the editor, who has collected this information from the mouth of the former, and from it has composed our Gospel. Thus Paulus, in his account of the work of Bretschneider, proposed to attribute the redaction to a disciple of the Apostle John,—a disciple who had himself attended the ministry of the Lord in Palestine, and who composed that didactic work with the aim of blending the Judæo-Christian belief in the Messiah manifested in Jesus with the idea of the Logos as it was taught by Philo. It is almost the same idea which reappears in the hypothesis which has been developed by M. Michel Nicolas. One of the members of the Christian society of Ephesus took as a guide the teaching of the Apostle John, and sketched a tableau of the work of Jesus Christ. That writer was the person who in the smaller Epistles is called *the Elder*, and with whom history has made us acquainted under the name of *John the Presbyter*.

“Tobler, in like manner, maintains that alongside of the ideal character of the narrative there are features truly historical, chronological and geographical notices for example, which can rest only upon testimony of a very exact nature. The witness was the Apostle John, according to whose instructions Apollos, the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, composed our Gospel before the end of the first century.

“In the 13th edition of his ‘Life of Jesus,’ M. Renan, after having scrupulously weighed the reasons in favour of these different hypotheses, arrives at this conclusion, that a half Gnostic sectary constituted himself the editor of the narratives of the aged apostle; perhaps he even possessed some notes dictated by the latter, and which formed the primary materials of his work. Thus M. Renan explains, on the one side, the obvious features of authenticity; and, on the other, the not less indisputable characters, in his eyes, of a composition of later date and of an artificial nature.

“Finally, Weizsäcker, in a work which we may be allowed to call masterly, thinks that he can discover, even in the text of the Gospel, traces of a distinction between the evangelistic editor and the apostolic witness, on whose credibility the former gives the narrative. The editor has carefully worked up what he had gathered from John’s narratives, and believes that he is able to put into the mouth of Jesus Himself what he had heard related by that apostle of the impression produced on him by the person of the Saviour. We may compare with this result certain expressions which have proceeded from the pen of Holtzmann, in the articles of Schenkel’s ‘Biblical Dictionary.’ We conclude this exposition by again mentioning the third edition of the ‘Introduction to the New Testament’ of Bleek, which we owe to the care of Professor Mangold. Whilst Bleek maintains in that noble work

the authenticity of the fourth Gospel, his present editor accompanies his argument with very instructive critical notes, which put the reader *au fait* with all the details of recent discussions, and the bearing of which is tolerably sceptical. The external evidences would appear to the author sufficient to confirm the authenticity; but the internal difficulties seem to him, up to the present time at least, insurmountable.

“This long enumeration, in which we have included only the more remarkable works, proves of itself alone the gravity of the question. A century will soon have elapsed since all the forces of science have been drawn up to sweep away or to defend this position. Long ago the Emperor Julian already indicated its supreme importance in that saying which is attributed to him, ‘It is this John who, in declaring that the Word was made flesh, has done all the evil.’ The Johannine question has become the decisive question, not only in the domain of criticism, but also in that of Christology,—that is to say, of Christianity itself.”

No. II.

JOHN THE SUPPOSED AUTHOR OF THE GOSPEL.

(A Supplement to the article in Vol. I. page 1.)

JOHN the Divine, called the beloved disciple (xiii. 23; xix. 26; xx. 2; xxi. 7, 20, 24), and one of the Sons of Thunder, was son of Zebedee and Salome (Matt. iv. 21; xxvii. 56; Mark xv. 40). His father was a fisherman, probably of Bethsaida, and apparently in good circumstances (see and compare Mark i. 20; Mark xvi. 1; Luke xiii. 3; xxiii. 55; John xix. 27, and xviii. 15). His mother is said to have been daughter of Joseph (Mary's husband) by a former wife; so, she was our Lord's sister, and John His nephew. John followed his father's occupation till his call to the Apostleship (Matt. iv. 21, 22; Mark i. 19, 20; Luke v. 1—10), at about twenty-five years of age. He remained with Christ till His ascension; was present at the Council at Jerusalem, A.D. 49 or 50 (Acts xv.); is said to have gone to Asia Minor as pastor of the Seven Churches; resided chiefly at Ephesus; was banished thence by Domitian, A.D. 95 to Patmos, where he wrote the Apocalypse; was recalled on accession of Nerva, A.D. 96; returned to Ephesus, where he died about A.D. 100, aged about 100 years, in the third year of Trajan. That he was thrown, prior to his exile, into a caldron of boiling oil, by order of Domitian, before the Porta Latina at Rome, rests mainly on the authority of Tertullian.

No. III.

THE LOGOS.

THIS Work would be undoubtedly incomplete without some elucidatory remarks on the word "*Logos*." Having consulted some of the best critics on the question, such as Meyer, Bengel, Luthardt, Westcott, Godet, Hengstenberg, &c., I avail myself of the observations of one of our ablest modern authorities. It is not only the last production on the subject, but the most condensed.

"As early as the second century *Sermo* and *Verbum* were rival translations of the Greek term LOGOS = Word. Tertullian (fl. A.D. 195—210) gives us both, but seems himself to prefer *Ratio*. *Sermo* first became unusual, and finally was disallowed in the Latin Church. The Latin Versions all adopted *Verbum*, and from it comes our translation, 'the Word.' None of these translations are at all adequate; but neither Latin nor any modern language supplies anything really satisfactory. *Verbum* and the "*Word*," do not give the whole of even one of the two sides of *Logos*: the other side, which Tertullian tried to express by *Ratio*, is not touched at all; for \acute{o} $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ means not only the "spoken Word," but the thought expressed by the spoken Word: it is the spoken word as expressive of thought. It is not found in the N. T. in the sense of 'reason.'

"The expression '*Logos*' is a remarkable one: all the more so, because St. John assumes that his readers will at once understand it. This shows that his Gospel was written in the first instance for his own disciples, who would be familiar with his teaching and phraseology. Whence did St. John derive the expression *Logos*? It has its origin in the Targums, or paraphrases of the Hebrew Scriptures, in use in Palestine, rather than in the mixture of Jewish and Greek philosophy prevalent at Alexandria and Ephesus, as is very commonly asserted.

"(1.) In the *Old Testament*, we find the Word or Wisdom of God personified generally as an instrument for executing the Divine Will. We have a faint trace of it in the 'God said' of Gen. i. 3, 6, 9, 11, 14, &c. The personification of the Word of God began to

appear in the Psalms xxxiii. 6 ; cvii. 20 ; cxix. 89 ; cxlvii. 15. In Prov. viii. and ix. the Wisdom of God is personified in very striking terms. This Wisdom is manifested in the power and mighty works of God : that God is *love*, is a revelation yet to come.

“(2.) In the *Apocrypha* the personification is more complete than in the Old Testament. In Ecclesiasticus (c. B.C. 150—100) I. 1—20 ; xxiv. 1—22 ; and in the Book of Wisdom (c. B.C. 100) vi. 22 to ix. 18, we have Wisdom strongly personified. In Wisdom xviii. 15, the Almighty Word of God appears as an agent of vengeance.

“(3.) In the Targums or Aramaic paraphrases of the Old Testament the development is carried still further. These, though not written down, were in common use among the Jews in our Lord's time. And they were strongly influenced by the growing tendency to separate the Godhead from immediate contact with the material world. Where Scripture speaks of a direct communication from God to man, the Targums substituted the *Memra* or ‘Word of God.’ Thus in Gen. iii. 8, 9, instead of ‘they heard the voice of the Lord God,’ the Targums have, ‘they heard the voice of the *Word* of the Lord God :’ and instead of ‘God called unto Adam,’ they put ‘the *Word* of the Lord called unto Adam,’ and so on. The ‘*Word of the Lord*’ is said to occur one hundred and fifty times in a single Targum of the Pentateuch. In the theosophy of the *Alexandrine Jews*, which was a compound of theology with philosophy and mysticism, we seem to come nearer to a strictly personal view of the Divine Word or Wisdom, but really move further away from it. Philo, the leading representative of this religious speculation (fl. A.D. 40—50), admitted into his philosophy very various and not always harmonious elements. Consequently, his conception of the *Logos* is not fixed or clear. On the whole his *Logos* means some intermediate agency, by means of which God created material things and communicated with them. But whether this *Logos* is one Being or more, whether it is personal or not, we cannot be sure : and perhaps Philo himself was undecided. Certainly his *Logos* is very different from that of St. John ; for it is scarcely a Person, and it is not the Messiah. And when we note that of the two meanings of *Λόγος*, Philo dwells most on the side which is less prominent, while the Targums insist on that which is more prominent in the teaching of St. John, we cannot doubt the source of his language. The LOGOS of Philo is pre-eminently the DIVINE REASON. The *Memra* of the Targums is rather the DIVINE WORD ; *i. e.* the Will of God manifested in personal action ; and this, rather than a philosophical abstraction of the Divine Intelligence, is the starting-point of St. John's expression.

“To sum up : The personification of the Divine Word in the Old

Testament is *poetical*, in Philo *metaphysical*, in St. John *historical*. The Apocrypha and Targums help to fill the chasm between the Old Testament and Philo; history itself fills the greater chasm which separates all from St. John. Between Jewish poetry and Alexandrine speculation on the one hand, and the Fourth Gospel on the other, lies the historical fact of the *Incarnation* of the *Logos*, the life of Jesus Christ.

“The *Logos*, therefore, of St. John is not a mere attribute of God; but the Son of God existing from all eternity, and manifested in space and time in the Person of Jesus Christ. In the *Logos* had been hidden from eternity, all that God had to say to man: for the *Logos* was the Living Expression of the nature, purposes, and Will of God. Human thought had been searching in vain for some means of connecting the finite with the Infinite, of making God intelligible to man and leading man up to God. St. John knew that he possessed the key to this enigma. He therefore took the phrase which human reason had lighted on in its gropings, stripped it of its misleading associations, fixed it by identifying it with the Christ, and filled it with that fulness of meaning which he himself had derived from Christ’s own teaching.”

REV. A. PLUMMER, M.A.

No. IV.

AN ANALYSIS OF THE GOSPEL.

CHAP. i. 1—18. THE PROLOGUE.

- (1.) The Word in His own nature (1—5).
- (2.) His revelation to men, and rejection by them (6—13).
- (3.) His revelation of the Father (14—18).

Chap. i. 19; xii. 50. THE MINISTRY.

I. (i. 19; ii. 11.) *The Testimony.*

- (1.) The testimony of the Baptist (i. 19—37).
 - (a.) To the deputation from Jerusalem (19—23).
 - (b.) To the people (29—34).
 - (c.) To Andrew and John (35—37).
- (2.) The testimony of the disciples (i. 38—51).
- (3.) The testimony of the First Sign (ii. 1—11).

II. (ii. 13; ix. 41.) *The Work.*

- (1.) The work among the Jews (ii. 13; iii. 36).
 - (a.) First cleansing of the Temple (13—22).
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No. V.

LATIN HYMN.

“SACRED Latin poetry,” says *Professor Plumptre*, “scarcely possesses anything grander or loftier than the following composition. Many readers will be glad of an opportunity of reading that hymn in the unapproachable majesty of the original. Others will appreciate it even in the weaker medium of a translation. The writer is unknown, but he was clearly one who had been trained in the school of Adam of St. Victor, and was not inferior to his master.”

Verbum Dei Deo Natum
Quod nec factum nec creatum
Venit de cœlistibus ;
Hoc vidit, hoc attraxit
Hoc de cœlo reseravit
Joannes hominibus.

The Word of God the Eternal Son
With God the Uncreated One
Came down to earth from Heaven ;
To see Him, handle Him, and show
His heavenly life to man below,
To holy John was given.

Inter illos primitivos
Veros veri fontis rivos
Joannes exiliit
Toti mundi propinare
Nectar illud salutare
Quod de throno prodiit.

Among those four primeval streams
Whose living fount in Eden gleams
John's record true is known ;
To all the world he poureth forth
The nectar pure of priceless worth
That flows from out the Throne.

Cœlum transit veri rotam,
Solis vidit ibi totam
Mentis figens aciem ;
Speculator spiritalis,
Quasi Seraphim sub alis
Dei vidit faciem.

Beyond the heavens he soared, nor
failed,
With all the spirit's gaze unveiled,
To see our true Sun's grace ;
Not as through mists or visions dim
Beneath the wings of Seraphim,
He looked, and saw God's face.

Audiit in gyro sedis
Quid psallant cum citharœdis
Quater seni proceres ;
De sigillo Trinitatis
Nostre nummo civitatis
Impressit characteres.

He heard where songs and harps
resound
And four-and-twenty elders round
Sing hymns of praise and joy.
The impress of the One in Three
With print so clear that all may see,
He stamped on earth's alloy.

Volat avis sine metâ,
 Quo nec vates nec propheta
 Evolavit altius ;
 Tam implenda quam impleta
 Nunquam vidit tot secreta
 Purus homo purius.

Sponsus, rubrâ veste tectus
 Visus, sed non intellectus
 Redit ad palatium ;
 Aquilam Ezechielis
 Sponsæ misit, quæ de cœlis
 Referret mysterium.

Dic dilecte, de Dilecto
 Qualis, adsit, et de lecto
 Sponsi, sponsæ nuncia
 Dic quis cibus angelorum
 Quæ sint festa superiorum
 De sponsi præsentia.

Veri panem intellectûs,
 Cœnam Christi super pectus,
 Christi sumptam resera ;
 Ut cantemus de Patrono
 Coram Agno, coram Throno
 Laudes super æthera.

As eagle winging loftiest flight
 Where never seer's or prophet's sight
 Had pierced the ethereal vast.
 Pure beyond human purity,
 He scanned with still undazzled eye,
 The future and the past.

The Bridegroom, clad in garments red
 Seen yet with might unfathomed,
 Home to His palace hies.
 Ezekiel's eagle to His bride
 He sends, and will no longer hide
 Heaven's deepest mysteries.

O loved one, bear, if thou can'st tell
 Of Him Whom thou did'st love so
 well,
 Glad tidings to the Bride ;
 Tell of the angels' food they taste,
 Who with the Bridegroom's presence
 graced,
 Are resting at His side.

Tell of the soul's true bread unpriced,
 Christ's supper, on the breast of Christ
 In wond'rous rapture ta'en.
 That we may sing before the Throne
 His praises whom as Lord we own,
 The Lamb we worship slain.

See *Rev A. Watkin, M.A.*, in BISHOP ELLICOT'S COMMENTARY.



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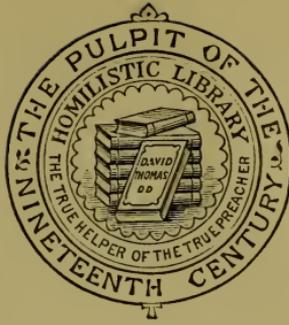
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