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1833-1902.
Preaching Christ. Sermons

PREACHING CHRIST.

SERMONS

BY THE

REV. LLEWELYN IOAN EVANS, D.D., LL.D.

Twenty-Nine Years Professor in Lane Seminary.

With a Sketch of His Life

BY

HENRY PRESERVED SMITH, D.D.

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TO

RAY LLEWELYN EVANS

THESE MEMORIALS OF HIS HONORED, BELOVED AND
SAINTEF FATHER ARE AFFECTIONATELY

DEDICATED.

S. E. E.

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PREFACE.

AT my request, Dr. Henry Preserved Smith has prepared this sketch of my husband's life, and arranged the sermons for the press. There was especial fitness in this, because Dr. Smith was for three years the pupil of Dr. Evans, and the tie which binds the earnest student to the inspiring instructor early became very strong. The friendship thus begun, was strengthened by nineteen years of affectionate intercourse as members of the same Faculty of instruction. Their kindred pursuits—both being students of the Scriptures—drew them more nearly together, and in their studies they developed similar views on the points of theology, so much debated in late years. They stood side by side in defending the rights of scholarly investigation of the Book they both loved, and their common experiences at this time made them esteem each other all the more, and increased their affection as it increased their intimacy. I wish here to express my thanks to Dr. Smith for the manner in which he has discharged his sacred duty, and to those who assisted him in the preparation of the volume.

In accordance with my desire, the sermons are reproduced just as they were delivered, and as they are contained in the manuscripts. Had my husband lived to see them through the press, he might have made changes or corrections. This fact should be borne in mind in case any reader discovers what seems to him faulty in arrangement or punctuation.

SARAH E. EVANS.

August 24, 1893.

LLEWELYN IOAN EVANS.

I.

EARLY YEARS.

DR. EVANS was the son of the Rev. Edward T. Evans, and was born at Treuddyn, near Mold, North Wales, June 27, 1833. His mother, Mary E. Roberts, was a daughter of the Rev. Robert Roberts, a prominent minister in the Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Church. His paternal grandfather, Mr. Thomas Evans, was a prominent elder in the same denomination. The following notices are translated from the Welsh biography of the celebrated minister, the Rev. John Jones.* It should be premised that the period was one of great agitation in the denomination. The adoption of a Confession of Faith was warmly discussed. The older ministers and elders were High Calvinists and endeavored to bring the more moderate party into subjection by discipline. The Rev. Robert Roberts and Mr. Thomas Evans were of the liberal party. On account of their expressed opposition to the measures of the majority both were called to account in Presbytery and Synod. The investigation ended in their favor and their vindi-

* I owe these notices to the kindness of the Rev. E. C. Evans, of Remsen, N. Y., by whom the translation is made.

cation led to a more liberal policy in the denomination at large.

“This preaching tour [of the Rev. John Jones] proved to be an important event in his life. For it was on this tour that he met for the first time personally the Rev. *Robert Roberts* of Tan-y-clawdd, the Rev. John Hughes of Liverpool, and Mr. *Thomas Evans*, Maes-y-coed, Caerwyss, who, from this time, became his most intimate friends and so continued to the close of his life. These gentlemen exerted a great influence on his views of Gospel truth. They differed greatly from each other in mental characteristics as in natural disposition, but they were intimate friends and they were in accord in holding more liberal views of the plan of redemption than many of their brethren. This was distinctly true with reference to some in their own presbytery, and hence the three were regarded by many as not being ‘sound in doctrine.’

“The Rev. Robert Roberts was a man of great mental ability, an excellent Welsh scholar, and remarkably well versed in Celtic archæology. He was of a philosophical turn of mind, delighting in metaphysical inquiries, and too ready, perhaps, to bring such questions into the pulpit as well as into conversation with people not conversant with such themes. He had studied carefully the writings of Jonathan Edwards in the edition containing the notes of Dr. Williams. He had mastered thoroughly the works of Dr. Williams himself. For a considerable part of his life he was a faithful disciple of Dr. Williams, fully adopting his views. Not satisfied with this, he went so far as to believe them not only to be of the greatest importance but to be the only secure ground from which to oppose Arminianism. In his later years, however, he had come to regard with doubt some of these views. He doubted in particular whether Dr. Williams assigned the Gospel and the Word their proper and important place as the means of regeneration. Still he held to the truth of Calvinism. But while strongly opposed to Arminianism on one hand, he was uncompromisingly against High Cal-

vinism on the other, observing frequently that these two agreed in shifting man's obligation and responsibility from their true and proper place, making them rest on God's grace. He met High Calvinists more frequently than Arminians, and hence came oftener into collision with them—though equally opposed to both. Possibly he was not always happy in the manner in which he expressed and defended his views. As one friend said of him: in one sermon he would appear more Calvinistic than others, while in the next, perhaps, his views would seem to border on Arminianism.

“Mr. Roberts was acknowledged by all who knew him to be a very godly man—an unusually godly man. In his last years he grew more tender and sympathetic in his feelings and in affection for his brethren, coming to be regarded by them in turn with reverence and affection. He died August 14, 1849, at the age of 75 years, having preached the Gospel forty-nine years.

“The other friend referred to was Mr. Thomas Evans. He was not a minister but an elder at Cærwyss, serving efficiently and faithfully for a long term of years. His personal piety, his extensive and thorough knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, and especially his extraordinary gift of religious discourse and devotional expression, rendered his services exceedingly valuable to the church. Being regarded in every circle of society in which he moved as one of the wisest, keenest, and godliest of men, he attained to great influence in the Presbytery to which he belonged, and also in the General Synod. In acquaintance with the theological writers of the period (Edwards, Bellamy, Dwight, Williams, Fuller, and others) hardly one among the old ministers was equal to him, certainly not one surpassed him. He entered upon this line of study when about eighteen years of age and pursued it steadily and faithfully for over sixty years. Yet he bound himself slavishly to no author. He tested all he read by the standard of the Holy Word, and felt free to take exception to his favorite authors if he thought they had forsaken the teaching of the Word of God. ‘A certain brother told me (he said once) that the Wesleyan Confession of Faith is:

'Every word that proceedeth from the mouth of John Wesley; but I would rather have no system at all than one in which there is no room for every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God.' Because of his broad views and fidelity to the truth, he frequently exercised great influence in behalf of his friends."

Thomas Evans published late in life a small volume on theology, a summary of Christian doctrine for laymen. In this he alludes to the theological strifes through which he had passed. He says that the zeal of the Calvinistic party against Arminianism led in many minds to hyper-calvinism, even to antinomianism. The mercy of God, however, had raised up ministers who were able to preach the unrestricted fullness of the Gospel. "Some of us (he adds) had the honor of suffering a little for about twenty years on account of our comprehensive opinions on the doctrine of the Atonement, and that from some brethren who were very dear to us. And the reason we were so patient was that we believed they were acting conscientiously according to their light, and that their zeal was in advance of their knowledge." He then gives an account of his own efforts to get at the truth. This is in the introduction to his little treatise which is entitled "Theological Meditations, or Remarks on the Consistency of the Doctrine of the Gospel." The order of the chapters is that ordinarily followed in treatises in divinity, but the fact that its interest is practical rather than speculative, is seen especially in the last chapter, which is an appeal to the unconverted.

An extract * in Prof. Evans' own handwriting from a Welsh work on Methodism in Wales, gives some further account of his grandfather Roberts. From it we learn

* Kindly translated for me by the Rev. J. H. Griffith, now of Cincinnati.

that his family were much opposed to Methodism. Mr. Roberts, however, was very earnest in his Christian life, abandoned all frivolous pursuits, established family worship in the home, notwithstanding his father's opposition, and entered the ministry in spite of many obstacles.

The recently published biography of the Rev. Henry Rees, one of the most renowned of Welsh preachers, contains an account of an important Association held at Hanfyllin, in 1823. The subject under discussion was the adoption of a Confession of Faith. When the article on Redemption was read, "Mr. Robert Roberts rose and made a strong attack upon the restriction contained in the words 'and they [the elect] only.' He called it 'an unscriptural restriction' and charged the article with 'being wise above what is written.' Those who favored the article, led by the venerable and influential John Elias, contended that the article was simply an abridgment of one adopted many years earlier, in Bala. Mr. Roberts, however, argued that the words were only a partial statement of the earlier article—for there was in that a distinct testimony to the all-sufficiency of the atonement, even for those who were not saved by means of it. This testimony had been left out of the new article altogether. 'So, having taken from us (he said) our old Confession in the liberal article of the Church of England, this leaves us without any declaration of our faith in the all-sufficiency of the atonement for the whole world.' He spoke powerfully and to such effect that the discussion was postponed to a following Association."*

* Abridged from a translation kindly made by the Rev. J. H. Griffith. When Dr. Evans read this account of his grandfather, not long before his death, he remarked: "Am I not proud of the old man!"

The Rev. Edward T. Evans (the father of Professor Evans) was of less pronounced individuality than the two grandfathers. He was of a very retiring disposition, so that comparatively few were admitted to his intimacy. Those who had that privilege were much charmed by his unaffected piety joined to refinement and sweetness of temper. He was an indefatigable student, and an earnest Evangelical preacher. He was settled at Racine, Wisconsin, and at Newark, Ohio, having preached also in Wales. Some of the revival seasons through which his churches passed, are still remembered by his associates. He died in 1881, having passed his seventy-fourth birthday.

Llewelyn inherited through his mother the poetical temperament of his grandfather Roberts. It was the mother's custom to spend an hour daily in prayer for and with her children, and this piety also early showed its fruit in the son. When quite a lad, he used to lead family worship. When visiting his grandfather Evans, it was his custom to gather the mill hands together, read the Scriptures and lead them in prayer before the day's work began. This early piety had, however, nothing forced or unnatural about it, nor was it associated with anything morbid in his disposition. For his disposition was bright and sunny, and his interest already went out towards all innocent activities. Intellectually he early gave promise of his future. John Davies, Esq., the Mayor of Carnarvon, writes that when the family came to Bangor, in 1846, Llewelyn (then in his thirteenth year) at once became a leader among the boys. He was made secretary of the Literary Society and also of a theological class. A report made by him on a sermon he had heard on "Original Sin," is still in existence. Mr. Davies also alludes to the mother's influence, saying: "The family

atmosphere was spiritual in every sense of the word. After family devotions were over in the morning, Mrs. Evans catechized the children and cautioned them as to their conduct in the course of the day."

At thirteen years of age the youth was sent to Bala college, where he spent three years. He at once became prominent for his intellectual brilliancy and for his physical activity. Dr. Edwards alludes to his early feat of walking upon the railing of the church gallery—a feat which none of his companions were willing to attempt. One of his schoolmates says of him: "Although so young, he was the most brilliant student of the college. He had an insatiable thirst for knowledge, combined with an intellect of great acuteness, and a most retentive memory. His perception of truth was wonderfully quick, suggestive of instinct or intuition. And he was even then a very fluent speaker, full of wit and humor, the life of every company. I could not but wonder at the extent and range of his reading at that early period. He seemed to be conversant with all things most worth reading in the whole range of English literature."* He was of course even more at home in the Welsh language. For during his stay at Bala he published poems in Welsh which attracted the attention of the whole principality. It is said that no student ever made such an impression upon both professors and pupils. This came out in a humorous incident, still a part of Bala tradition. On the playground, one day, young Evans, then but thirteen years of age, small for his age and very active, leaped upon the back of a large lumbering student named J. The general sentiment was voiced by one who called out: "J! keep that head on your shoulders—as long as you keep that head you will have brains."

* Letter of G. Parry, Esq.

He was called by his schoolmates "the Little Grecian." The lady in whose house he lodged says that he was so full of life that while learning his lessons he would be running and cantering about the room instead of sitting down to his books like other boys.

Three years were spent at Bala. But the boy was restless, longing for a larger sphere of activity. His associates still remember the enthusiasm with which he turned towards this country. He frequently asserted that Britain's sun was set, and that the country which would control the destinies of the world was the "great Republic of the West." So earnest was he in preaching this doctrine in the family that he was really the moving cause of their coming to this country. On the eve of their departure from Bangor a large meeting was held "where the young aspirant was presented with several volumes of books, addresses were delivered, poetry recited," some of it composed for the occasion. Such marked honor paid to a boy sixteen years of age shows well the esteem in which he was already held. Well known Welsh poets had already hailed him as their comrade.

The family reached Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in September, 1850, and, soon after, the Rev. E. T. Evans became pastor of the Welsh Church of Racine. The son entered Racine College, receiving the degree of B. S. in 1854, and that of A. B. in 1856. His intellectual activity during these years was as marked as in the old country. He was an earnest speaker on behalf of temperance and the Sunday School work. He took the lead in musical and literary organizations, and was founder of the Welsh Literary Society in Racine. It was mainly through his efforts that the Welsh National Literary Association was held for the first time in the West. This I suppose to be the Eisteddfodd of 1856,

from which one of his manuscript poems is dated. His poem on the Victory of the Cross, which took the first prize in 1857, is said to be equal to anything in the Welsh language. Several poems in English were written during his college course, and specimens will be published in the volume of Essays and Addresses now in preparation. During his college course he suffered sore bereavement in the death of his sister, to whom he was tenderly attached, and within a year from that event his mother also was called away.

The year of graduation from college was the year of the first national campaign of the Republican party, with Fremont as its candidate for the presidency. Young Evans, already a well known and popular speaker, took the stump on behalf of the new party. The ticket was defeated in the country at large, but its orator in Wisconsin was elected a member of the State legislature. Although the youngest member of the body, he soon became one of its leading spirits, and was made chairman of its important committee of education. He served but one term, however, finding the climate too severe for his health. Early in 1857 he accepted an appointment on the editorial staff of the Cincinnati Gazette, and removed to this city.

The thought of the Christian ministry as his true calling was one which came to him frequently. He had been consecrated by his mother to this work at his birth. But he often said to her: "dearly as I love you, I can not decide to study for the ministry, unless I hear the call in my own heart." Of his intellectual difficulties on some points of theology, we shall hear later. The conviction that the ministry was his work, came strongly upon him in Cincinnati. Possibly he was led to think more seriously of it by the influence of Professor D. Howe Allen, long a beloved professor in

Lane Seminary. It is known that before entering the seminary he had at least one important interview with Dr. Allen. The result was that in the Fall of 1857 Llewelyn Evans was enrolled as a student in Lane Seminary. This was, of course, a decisive step in the bearing upon his life work.

Before entering upon the history of his seminary course, it may be well to speak briefly of his abandonment of Welsh literature. As we have seen he had early attained a distinguished place among his countrymen both here and in his native country. Besides his poem on the Victory of the Cross, he published one on Time, one entitled *A Pastoral Song*, and one on *Martyrdom*. The last named took the first prize at the *Utica Eisteddfodd*. These received high praise from the most competent critics. The judge to whom the poems competing at one *Eisteddfodd* were sent for adjudication—himself a poet of high reputation—said: “the poets of the old country must look to their laurels.” Another critic praised highly the “originality, profundity, scholarship, taste and beauty” of Dr. Evans’ poem. Dr. Evans’ Welsh prose was also highly appreciated. His essay on the “Value of Education,” which first appeared in this country, was republished in Wales, where it attracted wide attention. The editor who introduced it there thought it probably not altogether to the taste of his readers, because too original. He advised his readers, therefore, “if they find it too American, to read it a second time,” and they will find its good points. He finds in it the “union of philosopher and poet,” as well as “the fiery zeal of a young writer following his subject to its logical conclusion.” Other contributions of Dr. Evans to Welsh newspapers and magazines are remembered as characterized by life and freshness.

After the publication of the poem on the Victory of the Cross, the author was attacked by an unsuccessful competitor, and, later, an extended criticism of the poem appeared signed "Lover of Poetry." The charge against the author was that he plagiarized from Milton. The poem was criticized for its alleged faults of metre and violations of good taste. In the year 1858, Dr. Evans published a pamphlet reply to these critics entitled "Crach Feirniadeath," or "Sham Criticism." In this he not only defends himself against the charges made, but expounds at length the principles of criticism and of literary composition, the laws of verse and the nature of plagiarism. That the defense was successful may be inferred from the fact that no rejoinder was made. The incident is of especial interest to us here, because it was the occasion of the author's giving up Welsh literature. The pamphlet concluded with a farewell to the Welsh muse, which gives us a vivid perception of the writer's state of feeling, and which I therefore quote at length.*

"But, in conclusion, I have allowed myself to write more at length than I would have written had I not resolved that this shall be my last contest on the field of Welsh literature. Let Lover of Poetry, with his Falstaffian host, take notice that I am determined to wage this one through to the bitter end; but ever afterward I will let Welsh 'lovers of poetry' alone. I have always been proud that I was a Welshman, and I shall continue to be so as long as there is a drop of Welsh blood in my veins. I never permitted a proper opportunity to pass without doing what I could to exalt my countrymen, everywhere and in every kind of assembly, as hundreds of citizens in the West can testify. I had a dream once that I might possibly be of some service

* The translation was kindly sent me by G. H. Humphrey, Esq., of Utica, N. Y.

to the literature and to the advancement of my countrymen.

‘But earth has bubbles as the water hath,
And this was of them.’

That dream has vanished. It may be that after some centuries have elapsed it will be easier for men of similar aspirations to realize such dreams than it now is. But, unfortunately, there are too many ‘Lovers of Poetry,’ of ‘Leading Men of Our Nation’ and of ‘Unprejudiced Men,’ among the Welsh people of to-day. The knowledge of these persons is immense! Their taste is worthy of Apollo! Their judgment worthy of Longinus! Their politeness worthy of Chesterfield! Their veracity worthy of Washington! And their sentence worthy of Rhadamanthus himself! There is no higher court in the Welsh world to appeal to, and this has found me guilty. I sink into the nonentity that becomes me. I will retire and make room for others worthier of their favor. Let no one mistake my motive. I know that life is a battle, and that it is unmanly to succumb before obstacles and opposition. But I hope in the name of Reason that there are worthier things to fight against than carping pigmies, sham critics, sham literates, sham grammarians, sham poets and sham preachers, with the hordes of Blockheadism and Stupidity behind them—against which it is said even the gods are powerless. ‘In our wide world there is but one altogether fatal personage—the Dunce!’ says Carlyle. But as Swift says:

‘On me when dunces are satiric
I take it for a panegyric;
Hated by fools, and fools to hate,
Be that my motto and my fate.’

“If obscurity and nonentity are my place, let me be consigned to them by men who know what poetry is. If I am a plagiarist I appeal to a public which knows what that means, and to a people that will at least do justice. I leave my Welsh compositions to their fate. I authorize ‘Lover of Poetry’ and his army of ‘Famous Men’ and ‘Leading Men’ to collect them, cast them

into the fire, scatter them to the four winds of heaven and destroy them from the land of the living. But let them do their worst—they can not take away the happiness of the hours in which they were composed. They can not deprive me of the joy with which I welcomed the visit of these visions to the chamber of my mind—

‘That turned me cold
And pale and voiceless, leaving in the brain
A rocking and a ringing glorious.’

They never can dry up some tears that are treasured in the bottle of the muse—

‘Such glorious tears as Eve’s fair daughters shed,
When first they clasped a son of God all bright,
With burning plumes and splendors of the sky,
In zoning heaven of their milky arms.’

“Fare thee well, Welsh Muse! Muse of my mother’s tongue! We have spent some sweet hours together—may they be sacred in the cemetery of the past. My mind wanders there in the night watches. A tear drops on their graves, welling up with the groan from a disappointed heart.* My soul holds yearning mute communion with their spirits in the divine light of the stars. A blessing upon thee, venerable Muse of Wales! In thy departure from me go and visit others. Solace them with a solace greater than that which thou didst pour into my heart. Teach them to sing thy mysteries better than I learned to sing them. May their hopes not be blasted by a cold and cruel blast from any quarter! May their good name not be tarnished by the foul breath of slander and libel! May their hearts not be pierced by the stabs of envy! Never, never, may they be dragged without cause and against their will into disputes that will embitter their souls, and send their good angel far away from them! Never may the inviolability of their word be questioned! Never may their motives in yielding to thine inspiration be suspected! Never may they be disappointed by false friends, and may their confidence

*Literally, “A tear is shaken on the graves by the groan (sigh) from a disappointed heart.”

in men never be shaken! Never may their sincere desire to serve thee be considered a crime! Success be upon all they do and say! May their words fall into the hearts of men as wine goes into the lips of him that is ready to perish! May they become household words! May they be taught by the mother to her child! May they be whispered by the youth to his beloved! May they lighten the heart of the sad, make serious the mirth of the merry, and lead to beauty, virtue and happiness! May their life be like a sunny day, and their departure like a cloudless sunset! May their path lie among flowers and roses and not among thorns and briars! May their names be blessed, may they be transmitted from father to son throughout the generations of Gomer's race, and may they be embalmed forever in the memory of a grateful nation! Fare thee well, ancient muse of my Fathers! Not without tears—once and forever: FAREWELL!"

It is not difficult to read between the lines here. The young poet had been stung by the nature of the polemic waged against him. Full of the highest aspirations, the warmest devotion to literature, he had found himself misunderstood and misjudged. He came to the quick resolve to abandon so ungrateful a soil. His powers might be employed where they would result in more than criticism and quarrel. He would turn to that larger field. But this resolution was occasioned, not caused, by the immediate situation. Young Evans had been early impressed by the greatness of this country. He had now become acquainted with its opportunities, and had determined where his own work lay. The one thing he was to do stood out clearly before him. The painful experience with his critics probably crystallized an already forming resolution. That resolution was to turn from the many interests which had claimed him in the past in order to devote himself more thoroughly to his direct mission. That he was a favorite not only of the Welsh muse, but also of her

English sister, is evident from the following—one of his poems from his college course:

JUNE.

Come Juno of the year and Goddess-Queen,
Walking with regal pride the months between,
Be clothed in thronal robes of darkest green,
That fall behind like clouds auroral flowing;
Of deeper beauty, ripelier blown than May,
Nor bronzed like August by the scorching ray,
Nor crimsoned by the kiss of Winter gray
But deep with life's intensest splendor glowing!

Come sweeping through the great Olympian hall,
'Mong its majestic forest pillars tall
Trailing behind thine ample-spreading pall,
With brightest leaves and flowers interwoven,
Raining thy smiles of most maternal love
On the divinities of vale and grove,
Whose eyes like glimpses of the blue above,
Sparkle among the leaves by breezes moven.

I love thee, June, whenc'er thou walkest forth,
For it was thou, who ushered in my birth;
'Twas in thy smile I first beheld the earth,
In thy hand took the infant steps of being!
And once, in age and gladness a boy,
Alas that Time should both so soon destroy!
I looked upon thee with a face all joy,
And only felt delight thy presence seeing.

I read no sorrow in thy tender eye,
No shade of sadness on thy brow did lie:
I laughed upon thee with the jollity
Of a child fondled by his mother dear
And playing with the tresses of her hair,
And clinging to her lips with loving air;
Thus once did I hang on thy face so fair,
And nestle in thy bosom without fear.

Thus was it once; but, ah! 'tis thus no more!
I love thee still but with a bosom sore,
And thou, methinks, seemst sadder than of yore,
Thy beauty and thy smiles seem touched with sorrow.
Thy comings unto me have been of late,
Dark visitations of a cruel fate
For death did hither on thy footsteps wait,
And chill me with eternity's cold shadow.

Thrice hast thou come and gone—like yesterday,
It seems—since thou my sister bore away;
My only sister—more I can not say.
My being's half was gone: I had no other.

Yet, still, one joy remained, and heaven I blest,
 One spot there was where my sad heart might rest,
 And there I flew like birdling to its nest,
 I had a home, for still I had a mother.

But now she too is gone with thee, and I—
 My nest is scattered—whither shall I fly?
 The scathing bolt has fallen from on high,
 Has struck and caused my bowery home to wither.
 My leafy joys have tripped away and now
 I stand upon the stripped and blackened bough,
 And shudder in the chilling winds that blow,
 And fain would weakly fly away—but whither?

E'en now a blast cold as the grave doth come,
 And whisper like a wail of death from some
 Lone mocking demon: 'Wretch! thou hast no home!'
 No home! What echoes of despair awaken!
 No sister's answering glance of feelingness!
 No mother's all-in-all of lovingness,
 Nor endless forms of winningness!
 I have no home! 'Tis desolate, forsaken.

Yet June, I love thee still, for thou dost seem
 Full of divinest pities which do gleam
 Within thy glances as in childhood's dream
 Those that around the dying Jesus hover,
 And with thy heaven-sent dewy calms would heal
 The creeping blight that o'er my heart doth steal,
 And in thine azure eye of love reveal
 A full infinite heaven bending over.

These verses are dated June 27, 1855, the author's twenty-second birthday. They give us a glimpse into the wealth of feeling in his heart, and show the sobering effect of recent afflictions. As his life-work became more absorbing he paid less attention to poetry, though occasionally throughout life the old fire would break forth.

II.

THEOLOGY AND PREACHING.

Lane Seminary, founded nearly thirty years before this time, was in 1857 manned by three professors of distinguished ability and scholarship. Of these the first in influence was Dr. D. Howe Allen, then occupying the chair of systematic theology. Dr. Allen was especially attractive to young men by his sympathetic insight into the experiences of the heart. He became the confidential friend and adviser of those he taught, and his pupils remember him as a living representative of the beloved disciple. It was a help to Llewelyn Evans to come into association with such a man at this time, for like all young men who think, he had his time of "storm and stress." It was a conference in which he had laid before Dr. Allen his difficulties in theology which decided him to enter the seminary, and it is known that later they discussed privately the problems more formally treated in the class room. Near the opening of his second seminary year (Aug. 19, 1858) he wrote at some length to a friend in Wales, who has kindly furnished in translation the following extract, descriptive of his state of mind.

"Somehow, the time has slipped away, and on looking back I fail to conceive what I have been doing. At the time however, when we are not conscious of

what is doing, we are sometimes undergoing the greatest changes, and are passing through a crisis in our lives. So the last two months have been, in some respects, an important period in my life, and as I have commenced lifting the veil from some of the mysteries of my internal life, I feel an inclination to proceed with that work. At the close of my first term in the seminary, it was natural for me to examine myself and look around to see to what point the past had brought me, and in what direction I was drifting towards the future. I took an important step when I joined the seminary. I have through that proclaimed my desire and determination to serve my fellow men by instructing them in the truth—and that, as the truth is understood and explained by orthodox churches. In this desire and determination I am, so far as I know myself, perfectly sincere. But it is necessary for me here to state that my own personal notions respecting several theological points are very unsettled. Since I began to think for myself I have had some doubts respecting some of the doctrines of the Old Body [Welsh Calvinistic Church]. I do not know whether there is anything in the atmosphere of this country more favorable to the spirit of doubt than in the stationary atmosphere of the Old Country or not. It is certain that it flourishes more generally here as regards everything—especially religious truth. And once that spirit begins to work in the mind, it will not rest until it tests even the old dear truths which appeared so beautiful and natural to us when we were children. And while this spirit exists it is not possible for man to believe the truth with such living faith as is worthy of the truth—faith that takes hold of it, that embraces it and is wedded to it. And this is the only faith to which my soul can be reconciled. It is not sufficient for me that a truth fills some niche in the building—that it is serviceable as a sort of *logical fiction* to hold the system together. I have not much faith in a system at all. That which I believe must commend itself to my belief as a truth alive in itself—as something that fills a want in my own soul—not some *metaphysical vacuum*

in my intellect. I have therefore resolved that I will not accept anything as truth save that which I can *entirely* believe; because it is better for a man to have real faith in one truth than to give some sort of soulless assent to a hundred truths. As a result I had thrown aside one theological opinion after another, until my faith had been reduced to a minimum. Through God's mercy, some truths remained as objects of my faith, and these I have as foundation stones on which I am able to build some sort of positive belief. That is to be my work for the coming year, and I intend taking to it in a spirit free and open to the truth, expecting the blessing of the God of truth upon my labors.

"I do not reject anything because it is a mystery. Just the reverse—I can not imagine how any one who has earnestly thought on it can help perceiving that every truth has its mystery, just as every substance has its shadow. But I do not know how to receive anything that is repugnant to the laws of my soul and the conditions of its working. I can not *falsify myself* without losing faith in everything. If I succeed, therefore, in reconciling what are now called orthodox doctrines with those laws to which they now appear contradictory, my path is clear before me, and my determination remains immovable. If I fail, I can not pretend to a faith which I do not possess; and it will be necessary for me to turn my face again to literature, and serve the world in other ways. I resolve at any rate to be a free man, and not to undertake anything that will not allow me to speak out my mind on any subject. Some of my friends, who are in a measure aware of my opinions and resolutions, urge me to strike out and become independent of all other religious denominations. But, as for myself, I feel that if it is not possible for me to be an orthodox preacher (as it is called), it is better for me not to be one at all, and that I can do more good in other circles. This is the summary of my meditations and resolutions during the past two months. My destiny will be fixed during the next nine months. Whatever it may be, I trust it may be acceptable to my Heavenly Father, and consistent both

with my self-respect and with the dictates of my conscience."

It can not be doubted that such a statement, made to an intimate friend in a private letter, unveils the heart of the writer. And the heart thus unveiled commands our interest by the honesty of its purpose. The writer is determined, first of all, to be true to himself. He will accept no statement of truth except as he finds it true. He enters upon investigation with the desire to know the truth. But while he will carry with him no prejudice for the old because it is old, he yet sees that religious power is with the truth as generally held by the Evangelical churches. He has no desire to be a free lance in theology, or to become the leader of a new school of thought. He will give existing churches the benefit of his work or he will turn to something else than preaching. The fact that he completed his seminary course and entered upon the ministry is proof sufficient that his inquiries gave him evidence of the agreement of orthodox doctrine with those laws of our own mind, which we can not ignore without giving up our prerogative as rational beings. And while we accept this conclusion we must recognize in the letter just quoted, that the purpose expressed is based on a sincere religious faith. The young theological student avows his desire and determination to instruct his fellow-men in the truth. He expects the blessing of the God of truth upon his labors. He has a high idea of the value of the truth as held by the so-called orthodox churches. He looks for the blessing of the Heavenly Father upon his efforts to ascertain the truth. In all these expressions we see the religious faith at the foundation of his being. It was with an earnest consecration that he pursued his studies and looked forward to the great work of instructing his fellow-men. But it is worth noticing

that even thus early he claims for himself the liberty of a free man, and resolves not to undertake anything that will not allow him to speak out his mind on any subject. For this shows us the understanding with which he entered the Presbyterian ministry. Minds of such originality as his, are not apt to accept a system *verbatim et literatim*. He already avows his distrust of a system as a system. He could not suppose that in adopting a system of doctrine he gave up the liberty which he so strenuously claims at the very outset of his studies. Had the New School Church in examining him for ordination insisted upon the rigid terms lately urged in the united church, it would have deprived itself of the services of one of the most exemplary, earnest and consecrated (as well as one of the most scholarly and brilliant) men that ever entered upon its ministry. These remarks are made with no polemic purpose, but for the light they shed upon the closing years of Professor Evans' life.

The spirit with which the young student entered on his work, may, perhaps, be gathered from a sermon (preserved in outline) on the text: "Unto me who am less than the least of all saints was this grace given to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ." In the introduction to this sermon he says: "There never lived a minister of the truth who so magnified his calling as the Apostle Paul. It is exceedingly interesting in reading to observe the glowing satisfaction, the joy, the enthusiasm, with which [he views it]. Everywhere we see beaming forth the conviction that he had found a work in which all his mighty energies might expatiate. And there is nothing which fills the soul with such joy, as the possession of a work which summons to its performance the highest and best in a man. . . . Such a work had Paul found—

to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ." At a later date he expressed again his conviction of the importance of the ministry of the Gospel in these words: "Thought shivering in the Arctic winter night of unbelief; Life pining on the barren banks of secularism; Society festering in a corrupt pool of sensationalism; Agnosticism turning its back to the sun, refusing to see anything but the blackness of its own shadow; Materialism substituting the dance of atoms for the processes of omnipotence, and reading its destiny in the dust of death, and not in immortal progression—what is the cure for all this? Only in men who know God with a knowledge that is power and life. The world is hungry for God, and is dying for the want of the spirit of truth and love. Be it yours to give God to men, to bring men to God; straight to God from everything, straight from God to everything, face to face with God in everything. We commend you not to any theory of God, not to any hypothesis about God, but to God himself—God as pith of every thought, God as nerve of every purpose, God as wing of every word, God as spring of every action, God as care of every conscience, pole of every heart, goal of every life. Be God all your end, all your existence. To this God we commend you." These eloquent words show how the writer's early conviction of the importance of instructing his fellow-men in religious truth had ripened. It had in fact become a passion. The truth of God as it is in Jesus Christ had taken full possession of his soul. But it was already there in the early time when he was not certain that he should be able to accept the forms in which the truth is accepted by the orthodox churches. For even then he saw the essential qualities of Gospel faith and its adaptation to the needs of men.

Mr. Evans entered the seminary a few weeks after the opening of the term. His classmates remember him as at first somewhat reserved. The reserve was increased in appearance by the fact that he was an entire stranger, while most of the students, coming from colleges already represented in the seminary, found old acquaintances among their fellow-students. It was not long, however, before the stranger was recognized as a brilliant student as well as a warm and genial friend. One of his classmates * writes: "Llewelyn Evans was not a young man to push an acquaintance. Yet there was even then [at the first] a magnetic influence about him to command attention, and one would inquire of another who that was that went trotting around with a head like Moses' bush. But it was not long until he led us to look at him in a different light. It was, I think, after his first topical discussion before the class which came out bristling with sharp points and was read with lightning-like rapidity, that the ever ready Joe Little whispered something in my ear about Mercurius having come down to join our class. From that time there was, I think, no difference of opinion as to who was at the head of the class in ability and scholarship. He was not only honored, but beloved by all his classmates." Another classmate † emphasizes especially his helpfulness and sympathy. This gentleman, writing of differences of view among the students on the subject of slavery, says: "He saw I needed sympathy. He came to my help. He did not see as I did, but he thought he saw me standing for a principle. And whether it was right or wrong for my church to press the principle to the extent it did, he conceived it to be my right to hold that view. And

* The Rev. J. P. Williamson.

† The Rev. A. T. Rankin, D.D.

these differences of view and of denomination made no difference as to our friendship. He was indebted to me for a few lessons in Hebrew; but I to him for the influence of a maturer mind, a stronger intellect, keener perceptive faculties and riper scholarship; withal a loving heart that repaid me a thousand-fold in less than a week. . . . He had that indefinable something which gives ease to a child in presence of, and converse with, a man. That great mind of his did not come down upon you with the weight of its treasures to crush you, or to frighten you with its flashes of light—but to encourage you, to cheer you, to give you ease and to draw something from you; leaving you with the feeling: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’ Though you received abundance from him, he left you as God left Jacob—feeling very good at giving a tithe back. Right there was Evans’ power. It was that large sympathy that put his mind into your mind and mingled his thoughts with your thoughts so that you never drew the line, but had all things in common. The man with a narrow lot has as good a view as the one with broad acres if the line fences have never been built. . . . I have questioned many of the graduates and they all seem to have had more in common with Evans than with any teacher in college or seminary. So you find it was with his classmates. There were fifteen of us. He outranked us all, but touched the envy of none.”* The characteristics of the man as here portrayed are the same everywhere emphasized by his friends. One of his earliest friends says: “I may briefly say that I consider it one of the greatest privileges of my life to have enjoyed his friendship for twenty-two years. As a man, I found him full of poetic genius, of great re-

* Address delivered at the Lane Seminary Club on the Life of Dr. Evans.

source and sound learning, of refined and sensitive nature, modest even to a fault. As a Christian he was one of the most simple, childlike and Christlike I have ever known. His prayers, while couched in the choicest language, breathed a childlike simplicity and faith which bespoke a spirit in close communion with his Heavenly Father. As a friend, though naturally reserved and not always easy of access, when once his confidence was thoroughly won, he was perfectly reliable, and would gradually, like the dawn of day spreading over the horizon, yield a wealth of intellectual, social, and spiritual pleasure to those permitted to enjoy it, seldom found in this imperfect world." Those who knew Dr. Evans will appreciate the justness of this description. To those who knew him not, it may faintly outline what he was to those who were admitted to his friendship. And what he was in after life, he was already as a student. His character was made broader and richer by the experience of years. But the foundations were there in the early time.

With deep and earnest piety, high intellectual qualifications, and broad and thorough scholarship, was united intense, practical interest in every good work. The theological student took an active part in city mission work. He was helpful in the Young Men's Christian Association, and assisted in the Union Bethel, besides aiding in the organization of the Pilgrim Mission. In the latter part of his course he was often invited to preach in the Lane Seminary Church. The church was organized in connection with the Seminary, but at this time its membership consisted largely of persons not connected with the Seminary. At the close of his Seminary course (1860) Dr. Evans was called to the pastorate of this church, and served it for three years. He had declined a call to the Presbyterian church of Newport, Ky.

What Dr. Evans was as a preacher and pastor, only those can know who had the privilege of being members of his charge. He had the highest qualifications for both offices. His burning rhetoric may be faintly realized from his printed discourses. For, after all, the living voice is necessary to render the full effect of such addresses. No one who heard him at this time will ever forget the impassioned wealth of his language, poured forth with an ardor that made the listener hold his breath as he tried to follow. The "lightning-like rapidity of his delivery," of which one of his classmates has spoken, was the natural expression of a soul on fire with zeal for the truth. As time went on he was compelled to moderate the speed with which he spoke, because physically it was too exhausting. But to those who heard him in the earlier time, it was a keen delight to follow this outpouring of thoughts that breathed in words that burned. It is related of him that when he preached his first sermon before the class, some of the students were disposed to criticize. But the Professor of Sacred Rhetoric, Dr. Henry Smith, one of the first of American preachers, said: "Young gentlemen, there is no criticism to be made on that sermon." Those who knew the height of Dr. Smith's ideal and the reserve of his utterance, will find that sentence higher praise than the laudation of thousands. As for his pastoral qualifications, we have already seen the sympathy of his nature, one of the first essentials to true pastoral efficiency. His ideal is well set before us by himself in a sermon commemorative of his beloved friend Dr. O. A. Lyman.* "The life of Christ's true servant is a life in earnest, a life of earnest striving, of soldierly courage, patience and perseverance. It is a

*Preached in the Euclid Avenue Church, Cleveland, March, 1872.

life of faithful adherence to the line of duty enjoined by conscience. It is a life of power, a power born of earnestness and fidelity, a power with which Christ himself invests his servant, a power which in its measure overcomes the power of evil in the world, a power which all recognize as the power of holiness, of truth, of Christ. It is a spiritual force, charged with electric energy to wither corruption, to blast error, to shiver wrong, to startle consciences, to quicken souls, to inspire Christian manhood. It is a life which to live is to be a king of men, a royal shepherd of souls, a spiritual leader, wisely guiding, strongly drawing men after himself. It is no less a life of quiet, gentle beauty, winning, persuasive, pure as one of heaven's glistening gems, shedding in its serene light a holy benediction, a life such as that mediæval saint must have lived whose name won for itself the addition "Mild as the evening star." Or it is a life which wears on its brow the morning star, full of glad promise, its pure radiance prelude the heavenly dawn, a morning Evangel of that holy light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day. It is a life which breathes hope and joy, the courage of principle, the enthusiasm of duty, the magnetic might of faith. It is a life, in fine, in which the power of Christ is felt to be working, on which the glory of Christ is seen to be resting, through which the sceptre of Christ is reaching forth to rule the world, to sway its thoughts and convictions and character, by which the cross of Christ is uplifted and glorified to the healing of earth's maladies, out of which the spirit of Christ goes forth with divine creative and assimilative energy, a life—

Where only Christ is heard to speak,
Where Jesus reigns alone."

The thought so eloquently expressed here is that the minister preaches the truth by embodying the truth in his life, bringing it home to his people in his social intercourse as in the pulpit.

Dr. Evans' social qualities, and especially the wit and humor which enlivened every circle in which he moved, will claim our attention later. Just now I wish to notice the fact that his service of the Lane Seminary Church came at the time when the nation was called upon to undertake the war for the Union. Dr. Evans' sympathies were altogether on the side of the Union. His heart, like that of every patriot, urged him to enter the army. But men were needed at home as well as at the front, and he saw that great interests would be sacrificed were he to abandon the post in which Providence had placed him. In 1861 (October) he was offered the chaplaincy of the eighteenth regiment, then recruiting at Columbus. The offer was a tempting one. But there were many things to be considered. His position as pastor was important to a growing church; at the same time he was already a help to the seminary, which needed all the resources within its reach. In fact, not long after this time he began to deliver lectures to the students of the seminary. It should be noted that the pecuniary compensation of the chaplaincy was considerably above what he was receiving as pastor. We can realize how youthful ardor, public opinion, the needs of the country, the good of the soldier, would plead for the army. But after careful consideration he declined the call. There was work to be done at home. In this exciting period Dr. Evans was foremost among those who sustained the courage of the people. In the darkest hours he never lost heart. His faith saw that the outcome was certain, though it might be at the cost of struggle and suffering. Every movement for the good

of the soldier had his hearty support. As he was not able to give largely from his salary, he delivered lectures, the proceeds of which went to the Christian Commission. The chief of these (on John Milton, the patriot,) is still remembered as a masterpiece. In general, it may be said here, few men have been less moved by pecuniary considerations than was our friend. He frequently declined invitations that would have given him an income more adequate to the wants of a cultivated man and a student, than the one he actually received. His salary, when called to a professorship in the seminary, was one thousand dollars per annum. Although doing the full work of a professor (and often more than that) he did not receive the same salary with other members of the faculty until 1874. The reason for this was the financial need of the institution. It is mentioned here not as a reproach to the institution, which, of course, was obliged to live on what it had, but as showing the unselfishness of the man. This unselfishness showed itself constantly in his readiness to help enterprises which could not give adequate compensation for service rendered. His lectures were always delivered for the benefit of some good cause. He preached much (after entering upon his work as professor) for small or recently organized churches, and took much interest in their growth. For many years prior to the annexation of the village of Walnut Hills to the city of Cincinnati, he was a member of the Board of Public Schools, and served with great efficiency as their clerk and examiner. But this is anticipating.

In 1863 Mr. Evans was elected Professor of Church History in Lane Seminary. He had given lectures in that department some time before, in connection with his pastoral work. Dr. Smith had been called to a charge in Buffalo, so that the seminary was inadequately

manned, even in comparison with what it had been. This chair Dr. Evans filled with great acceptance, and his brilliant lectures are still remembered by some of the people of Walnut Hills who were permitted to hear them. It was soon after his appointment that the New School General Assembly met at Dayton, Ohio (1864). Dr. Evans was not a member of the Assembly, but was an interested spectator. Sunday evening after the opening of the Assembly Dr. Howard Crosby preached a sermon on the text: "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." This sermon made a profound impression upon all who heard it, among whom was the young professor. Under its inspiration he prepared an address on John Calvin which made him widely known in the New School body. The occasion was on this wise: the General Assembly resolved to observe the Tercentenary of the death of Calvin, which came during its sessions. Dr. Allen was appointed one of the speakers. But being prevented from taking part, he had Professor Evans appointed in his place. That the Professor (then not thirty-one) was comparatively unknown in the denomination may be judged from the fact that the committee announced him as "a professor in Lane Seminary," while they did not find it necessary to describe any of the other speakers. After the address, which was in the Professor's most brilliant vein, it is safe to say that the speaker was no longer unknown. He may be said to have won his spurs on this occasion. Henceforth his friends had a right to number him among the leaders of his denomination.

III.

EXEGESIS.

In the year 1867 the chair of Biblical Literature became vacant, and Dr. Evans was transferred to that department, having already given some instruction in it. This was to be his life work. For some years he had both the Old and New Testament work. In 1871 the chair was divided, and Dr. Evans took the division of Hebrew and Old Testament Exegesis, the New Testament being placed in the hands of the Rev. Dr. Thomas E. Thomas. At the death of Dr. Thomas (1875), Dr. Evans was transferred to the New Testament department, which he retained until his death. For just a quarter of a century, therefore, he was allowed to devote his energies to the study and exposition of the Word of God. In this work he showed the same self-denying zeal which had characterized his earlier career. Repeatedly he assumed extra work and cheerfully performed it, even at the cost of cherished plans of his own. Thus during Dr. Thomas' illness and for some months after his death he carried the work of both chairs. When I became Instructor in Hebrew Dr. Evans carried the advanced work in both languages. After the death of Dr. Smith he took a part of the homiletical work, and similarly in the case of Dr. Humphrey and Dr. Eells.

Probably there have been few better instructors in Biblical learning. Professor Evans had had no advantages for special study. But he had a taste for research, fine linguistic talents, a deep love for spiritual truth, enthusiasm for literature, and sympathy with inquiring minds. By his own almost unaided exertions he acquired an extensive knowledge of German thought. He followed the course of theological inquiry with keen interest. Having made Greek and Hebrew his special objects of study, he was indefatigable in working out their problems. He was never satisfied with a single commentator's solution of a difficulty, nor even with the consensus of the scholars. He could rest with nothing short of all the light that could be had, and for this light he searched not only the commentaries, but the lexicons, the versions, the parallel passages. It was, perhaps, his experience in searching out the deep things of God that led to his talk on "the Preacher as a Seeker or Inquirer," of which an outline is still preserved. The theme is introduced by the remark of a minister: "I am always sure of one anxious inquirer: If there be none in the pews I know of one in the pulpit." To this Dr. Evans adds: "The preacher is or should be in a high and important sense an inquirer." He then points out that the term *inquirer* has a correlative. The seeker seeks something, an object is before him, and this in the case of the preacher is: that knowledge or experience of Christian truth which leads to complete Christian manhood. He then discusses the attitude of the inquirer for truth. He distinctly rejects the position that we must start without prepossessions. Yet he would have prejudice put aside—"all belief that is merely traditional, all which has not already commended itself on the best evidence." By laying aside these the seeker becomes as

a little child. "But he who does become as a little child *enters* the kingdom. He does not stand forever at the door. The progress of the theological seeker is not from one negation to another, not from doubt to doubt, but from faith to faith. . . . The complement of seeking is finding. . . . To seek forever without finding would be an eternal delirium." Hence he gathers the characteristic marks of a Christian seeker: "(1) To have the spirit and disposition of a true disciple; to recognize the true value of divine truth; to hunger and thirst after righteousness. (2) To exercise the requisite activity; to meet the advances of God's Spirit; to obey his suggestions; and to recognize the law of progress in spiritual culture; to seek that he may find. (3) Thus to avoid the faults of (*a*) stagnation, (*b*) self complacency, (*c*) narrowness and dogmatism." It is to be regretted that this fine address is not preserved to us complete. Enough remains to note (further) the author's conception of the Bible as the source of truth: "The material of truth is fact, *i. e.* reality. The great question the seeker proposes is: what is the reality of being? Now have you ever thought that the Bible is almost altogether a book of facts? The largest portion of it, to begin with, is history—the record of what has been. Then comes poetry, and poetry is a record of psychological facts, experimental facts, the history of souls. Job, Ecclesiastes, the Psalms are not surpassed [in this respect] by Sophocles or Shakspeare. Prophecy is what? Largely a recognition of existing facts, social, moral, religious; for the remainder, an anticipation of future facts. Even a didactic book like Proverbs is a source of facts. Hence our search is first a search for facts, next a search for the significance of the facts—we must find the soul of each. . . . This is not

all. We are to learn their relations. The facts and realities of revelation are not like a string of pearls, but like a network, interlacing, dependent, or rather they are all a spiritual body, an organic whole, members without number but all one body."

It was with such conceptions of the seeker and his object that Dr. Evans carried on his work. The work of the student is to search for the truth. But a further consideration had great weight with him. The truth gained by the theological student is a means to an end and this end is the good of others. Not to gain the truth simply for one's own edification, but to proclaim it for the good of others—this is the real aim of theological study. This practical aim was always prominently before Prof. Evans. His paper on an "Evangelistic Theology" is sufficient evidence of this statement. And even more explicitly he affirms it in his addresses on the Faculty of Lane (delivered at the opening of Seminary Hall, December 18, 1879) and on the Life and Work of Prof. Stowe (read before the Lane Club, December 14, 1886). His thorough appreciation of the spirit of the Seminary can be shown by a quotation from the former of these papers:

"The leading characteristic of the old Faculty of Lane, that which gave to its members their unity and vitality, was their *evangelistic spirit*. They were men in whom the Great Commission was as fire in their bones. The Redeemer's kingdom of grace and glory, the majesty, the power, the triumph of that kingdom—this was the vision which enraptured and energized their souls. . . . Would it be too much to hope that, through such seraph souls, Lane Seminary has been harnessed to the chariot of Christ, yoked forever to the thought 'Christ for the world, the world for Christ?'

"This seems to be the proper place to emphasize the *revival spirit* which so eminently characterized the early Faculty. The Faculty records show that in 1839,

in the very midst of the throes which accompanied the rending of the Presbyterian Church in twain, the topics of the Faculty conference with students for five weeks in succession, all centered in the idea of a revival. . . . This intense evangelism and revivalism found practical expression in the earnest endeavor and purpose of those men to train their students, above all else, to be preachers. They did not disparage scholastic attainments; they did not depreciate theological culture; but with them the crown of all theological acquisition and discipline was power in preaching — preaching so as to save souls. Dr. Allen has said of Dr. Beecher in words which indicate his own conception of what is the grand aim of theological instruction: ‘the truths he discussed became living truths, truths to be loved and lived and preached; *living stones* in God’s spiritual house, which would illuminate and animate everything they could touch, and not bones of a skeleton to be fastened together with wires, and hung up to show how complete a theological system can be and how cold it can be too.’ And the same may be said [continues Dr. Evans] of all that earlier Faculty from Beecher, with whom the grandest thing was to save souls, down to Smith, with whom a true sermon was the highest work of art, and the pulpit the most commanding pedestal of mental and spiritual greatness. . . . They were, moreover, thoroughly practical men. They were far indeed, from favoring the superficial cant of a practical culture which disregards thorough drill in the essentials of Christian scholarship and thorough grounding in the fundamentals of Christian doctrine. It was, indeed, precisely to counteract such pseudo-practicalism that they gave themselves up so heartily and zealously to the business of theological education in the West. But in the best sense of the word they were thoroughly practical men. They did not deal in hair-splitting dialectics, in mere speculative subtleties, in infra-microscopic infinitesimals. For them Truth was Life. . . . Nor must we omit to record their catholicity of spirit. What Bishop McIvaine said of Dr. Biggs, might be said of each of them: ‘A beautiful trait in his character was

the largeness of his Christian regards.' They believed in a spiritual Christianity; they took large interior views of its truths and forces. They came here not to tithe sectarian mint, or ecclesiastical anise, or theological cummin; they came to magnify the essentials of Christianity.

"This earnest endeavor of the early Faculty of Lane to bring their teachings into contact with the living wants of the world finds another expression in their progressive spirit. While firmly planting themselves on the Reformed theology as 'containing unquestionably the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures, and standing through ages against the encroachments of error, as the iron-bound shores to the ocean,' they sought at the same time to occupy those points of view which made more clear the adaptation of Christian truth to the exigencies of the day in which we live. Clearly discriminating between human philosophies and the divine Word, as factors of Christian thought, they sought to unfold the system of doctrine, as it is to be found clothed and beautified and inspired with life, as it exists and operates in the Word of God."

The warmth with which the author dilates upon these various qualifications of the early professors shows that he was strongly in sympathy with them. The appreciation of their devotion, their manliness, their thorough scholarship, their practical aim, their progressive spirit, which is shown in his eulogy, arose from a kindred disposition and kindred aspirations in his own heart. In truth, Professor Evans was not behind any of those noble men. Without exaggeration we may apply to him what he said of Professor Stowe: "This rare combination of gifts he consecrated to the service of religion in what was for him the great business of his life—advancing the true interpretation of the Word of God in the ministry, in the church, and in the world. This was his preëminent mission. It was the passion of his being. For it he was richly endowed with scholarship, genius,

aptness to teach, enthusiasm, and, above all, supreme love for the Bible. Of his statement and practice of the principles of interpretation, I must content myself now with saying that he was sound, sober, conservative; at the same time he was broad, progressive, fearless, open to the light; indeed, eager for the light which, with the Puritan Robinson, he believed is yet to break forth from the Word of God and 'will continue to increase until the time of the end.' He believed in exegesis, not eisegesis; in inductive, not *a priori* exegesis; in the exegesis of the spirit, as deeper and truer than that of the letter."

What Dr. Evans was in the class-room and in the services of the Seminary may be gathered from what has now been seen of his attitude towards the Scriptures. His pupils never had any doubt that the text they were studying was to him the authoritative Word of God. His personal reverence for it was evident in all his handling of it. It was the man of his counsel, the light of his path. It would not be too much for him to say with the Psalmist: "How sweet are thy words unto my taste! Yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!" The result was a rare familiarity with the Bible, and this not merely with the English version, but with the meaning and force of the original. His public reading of the New Testament was an evidence of this. By inflection and emphasis he put into the well-known words new life and beauty and power. What he said about the practical aim of the Lane professors was eminently true of himself. Any question by a student as to the application of a text was met with sympathy, and answered with interest. Towards the student in need of help he showed the friendliness noted by his classmate in a passage quoted above. The dull or discouraged were never repulsed or even sharply brought up by him. He seemed to have an instinctive appreci-

ation of the difficulties of his pupils, he entered into these difficulties, he understood the point of view of the inquirer, and, starting from that common point, led him to the higher and broader outlook. He had a genuine affection for his pupils, and followed their course both in the Seminary and out of it as only a genuine teacher can.

In connection with his work as professor, he was able to instruct a wide circle through the press. He was invited by the Rev. Dr. Schaff, editor of the great Lange Commentary, to prepare for the press the volume on Job in that series. The volume which appeared in 1874 was much more than a simple translation of the German. It was enriched by notes from many sources, and showed the translator's familiarity with the literature of the subject. He supplemented the introduction also by a discussion of his own on the authorship of the book. This discussion, headed "Was Hezekiah the author of Job?" is an acute comparison of the literary character of Job with the psalm of Hezekiah in Isaiah xxxviii, and with the historical notices of that king found in other books. The material in hand is not sufficient in quantity to make the argument decisive. But it must be said that the American editor, in attributing the book to Hezekiah, was much nearer the right date than his German original, which placed it in the age of Solomon. The commentary was welcomed by Dr. Schaff with high praise, and he immediately invited the translator to prepare a commentary of his own on some of the books where he found the German volume unsatisfactory. Dr. Evans accepted this invitation, and entered with ardor upon the work. Scarcely had he begun his preparation, however, when the death of one of his colleagues threw extra work upon him. With the

loyalty to the seminary which always characterized him, he gave up all outside matters to do double work for the students.

The Presbyterian Review, founded in 1881, was always an object of interest to Dr. Evans, and on the death of Professor James Eells, he became one of the associate editors. He had also been associated with the Rev. Dr. Day in conducting the Theological Eclectic. Of his contributions to the Presbyterian Review, two at least deserve mention here. One was an article on the Doctrinal Significance of the Revision (of the New Testament). This article, which appeared in 1883, is an appreciative estimate of the Revisor's work. It reviews the changes made from the Authorized Version under the several heads: Inspiration, Revelation, the Godhead, Christology, Pneumatology, Anthropology, Soteriology and Eschatology. Under each head the changes made are briefly characterized with their implications, abundant references being given in the notes. The article is a helpful review of Dogmatic Theology, with an indication of the way in which it ought to be brought nearer to Biblical teaching. It could be written only by one at home in both departments, and only by one saturated with the original language of the New Testament.

The second contribution I will mention, is an editorial note, published in 1887, on the Biblical Doctrine of the Intermediate State. On this, which the author rightly describes as one of the most difficult as well as one of the most imperfectly developed departments of Biblical Theology, we have here a model discussion. Apparently the induction is complete; no important passage is overlooked. The treatment is genetic and historical. The Old Testament rudiments are shown in their simplicity, and the development of the New Testament

doctrine is shown to proceed from this basis. The largeness of the New Testament doctrine is given without dogmatic forcing. Sobriety of judgment is combined with believing acceptance of what is revealed, and resting in what is revealed. The article makes us regret that the author had not given us a complete Biblical Theology.

Of late years his attention was more and more drawn to the Epistle to the Romans. He read it regularly with one of his classes and prepared extended outlines of a commentary for their use. The purpose to publish a commentary on it was formed some years ago, and one of the attractions in the call to Wales was that it seemed to promise him a time free from interruptions in which to complete this great work. He once said to me: "I want to get at the thoughts of the Apostle as they lay in his mind." With this end in view he had of late years paid especial attention to Jewish theology, hoping to understand the thoughts of Paul the Pharisee, as the Pharisees of the first century would have understood them. When it was laughingly said to him that the commentators get more things out of Paul's language than are there, he replied with great earnestness: "I once thought so, but the more I study his language the more I find in it." As an illustration of his method in bringing out the thought of the text, I will quote a fragment on Rom. v, 7:

Super-human
contrasts.

The maximum
of human
love.

"For [illustrative] hardly [a difficult thing to suppose or do] will any one die [future of probability] in behalf of a righteous man [double contrast of *δίκαιος*. 1. with *ἀσεβής* preceding; 2. with *ἀγαθός* following; *δίκαιος* here a man whose strict integrity rather than generosity is the conspicuous feature of his character;—with difficulty I say] for [justifying *μολίς*; something more than blamelessness is needed to call out any such sacrifice in behalf of another among men] in behalf of the

[ideally *τοῦ*] good man [whose nobleness and magnanimity inspire personal devotion] one does [*present indicative*: such a case is not unknown; one does now and then, here or there] peradventure [after all such a case is a possibility rather than a probability] even muster courage to die.

But [contrasting the *unicum* of Divine Love with the maximum of human love] God sets forth [putting one thing with, beside another, so as to set forth the former] HIS OWN [spontaneous, proceeding from Himself, worthy of Himself] love towards us in that while we were as yet [prior to the interposition of Divine Love] sinners [not *ἀγαθοί*, not even *δικαιοί*] Christ died for us [N. B. *Christ's* dying for us setting forth *God's* love].⁵

The *unicum* of divine love.

It must be remembered that this is a mere outline intended for the guidance of the student. In the classroom it was supplemented by the personal instruction of the author—an instruction vivified by intense love for the sacred Word, and glowing with a passion for the truth. The author's broadly sympathetic view of the Apostle Paul may be gathered from an outline sermon on Rom. v, 17: ("For if by one man's offense death reigned by one," etc.) from which the following is taken:

"This chapter is the scene of a thousand pitched battles. Here the theological war horses snuff the battle and prick up their ears—the Fathers, the Schoolmen, the Reformers, the Puritans, the Divines, the Commentators. The contest has raged about particles, clauses, grammar, logic. The Divine Fire has been parsed out, the Divine Life has been criticized and dissected. It has been the misfortune of the world to be visited with literal, prosaic, onesided minds, incapable of more than one thought, incapable of appreciating the high thoughts of others. . . . And it has been the misfortune of ardent enthusiastic souls to fall victims to such. Often one of the narrow, onesided, undertakes to measure the large, manysided. Sometimes the glowing melting inspirations of the poet (like David or Isaiah) are frozen into abstract formulas [by such a course]. The burning utterances

of a seraphic soul (like Paul or John) are parsed dry and dead like an Egyptian mummy; and there are those who (like the watchmaker) put on magnifying glasses and try to pick out grammatical errors in the songs of heaven.

“It is often the case that a man’s greatest enemy is his own reputation. If he have the reputation of a ‘wit’ he cannot say anything serious without making people laugh. If he have the reputation of an ‘enthusiast’ he cannot propose anything practical without having it called visionary. If he have the reputation of being ‘matter of fact,’ he cannot utter anything elevated without giving rise to the fear that he is insane. It has been the fate of Paul to bear the reputation of a *logician*. Such, no doubt he was. But, was he nothing else? [It is forgotten] that he was full of passion, poetry, fire. And when cold, unimpassioned, unimaginative, literal souls examine him, they see nothing in his impassioned appeals, glowing conceptions, poetic personifications, vehement bursts of eulogy, lightning-like flashes and transitions of thought, but *logic*—a chain of premises and conclusions; a string of argumentative hooks and eyes, which somehow have sometimes got very much entangled. No wonder that when such come to Romans V. they cannot agree. For the chapter is what? Not a didactic essay, a theological lecture, a dry formula like the Confession of Faith; but a hymn of joy, a psalm of thanksgiving. Of course, there is logic, for there is logic in all true eloquence. But it is a ‘logic on fire,’ as different from what ordinarily passes for logic, as the train of powder dry is different from the same train when fired. We cannot analyze it—it analyzes itself. . . . Regard it now as a hymn, and as I read it imagine the glorified spirit of Paul, clothed with heavenly radiance, chanting the praises of Christ’s redeeming love, to thrill with courage and joy the hearts of his brethren struggling and tried below.”

With such breadth and insight did our Professor carry on the study of the Bible. Nor was his study confined to the Epistle to the Romans. Among his

papers are extended analyses of Ephesians, Galatians, Hebrews and James, besides comparative tables of lexical peculiarities of different books, discussions of individual words, of hebraisms in the New Testament, and of points in introduction. His lectures on Hermeneutics and on the history of the New Testament text were frequently re-written. In short, his papers give evidence of constant activity in his department as well as of wide literary, philosophical and theological research. In connection with his professorship he acted as librarian of the Seminary for some years. He was also an active member of the Theological and Religious Library Association, of Cincinnati, during the whole of his connection with the Seminary. For a considerable part of the time he was a member of its Executive Committee. His wide knowledge of literature was of especial value to this association. He touched literature and theology thus at many points. Central to them all was his knowledge of the Bible and his interest in the Bible.

IV.

HOME AND SOCIAL LIFE.

It is unfortunate that we can not present our friends in their entirety—that in order to see them ourselves or to describe them to others, we have to analyze them. A bill of particulars is not a picture, much less is it a person. But a bill of particulars is all we can present in a biographical sketch. I have preferred to say what I had to say of my friend's character as a scholar and teacher under one head, reserving some personal traits for a distinct chapter. The mansidedness of his character makes it necessary that we should not, in considering the exegete, forget the man.

Of sanguine temper and abounding humor, Dr. Evans was retiring in disposition, so that he did not show this side of his character at all times. In the intimacy of home and among near friends, however, he showed inexhaustible resources both of wit and humor. A brief note in his handwriting gives his own appreciation of the latter endowment. "No man," he says, "can be fully and thoroughly and always wise, without humor. There are circumstances when it is only the keen and vivid perception of folly which humor gives, that can save a man from being foolish, or, what is quite as bad, ridiculous. Hence, humorless men, however grave, sagacious, learned, have often been guilty of absurdities

which amaze us." Those who knew Dr. Evans as a young man recall the almost rollicking enjoyment with which he would delight the social circle, keeping them bubbling over by his infinitude of jests. As he grew older this tendency was chastened, but his appreciation of fun was keen to the last. There was, however, nothing malicious in his merry-making, and it is doubtful whether a single human being was ever hurt by what he said.

For the last twenty-five years of his life he was a member of a social and literary club called U. C. D. A gentleman who was associated with him in this organization from its beginning, speaks of him as follows:*

"He brought to this club talents of the highest order, and placed his training as a teacher, a writer and a critic at its service. He constantly drew from the rich stores at his command, rare and beautiful things for its entertainment. Early in his membership he was appointed secretary, was re-elected year after year, and no one was found willing to assume the place when he vacated it. His minutes at once became the prominent feature of each meeting, and the greatest incentive to prompt attendance. Any so unfortunate as to be a little late would slip into a convenient chair, or rest upon the stairway to hear him before retiring to remove out-door wraps. Each record presented some new manifestation of his wonderful versatility as a writer. He never confined himself to a bare recital of the facts. He wove into the texture by way of background just enough reference to the actual events of a meeting to identify it, and then added such marvelous creations of his genius, such irresistible displays of wit, such rare bits of pure, genuine fun and such evidences of scholarly ability, as to make of the whole a literary production of very unusual merit.

*From a paper read before the Lane Seminary Club by Thornton M. Hinkle, Esq.

“The minutes of scientific and professional bodies report not only the papers read to them but also the discussions upon them which follow. Occasionally Prof. Evans would supply from his vivid fancy such a discussion to supplement his references to papers read to the club. At one meeting a paper was read upon American birds which mentioned the fact that it was the male bird only which is gifted with song and is clothed with the most beautiful plumage. He closed a brief reference to it by stating that it was interesting not only in what it said but in what it suggested; that it gave rise to a series of remarks by the various husbands in the company, which were reported somewhat at length in the usual style, in which they claimed analogies and drew deductions from these superior endowments of the male bird, to their own great credit and comfort, and to the poorly suppressed indignation and confusion of their wives. The discussion was very scientific, very funny, and altogether imaginary.

“His minutes came to us often in the shape of poetry, either blank verse or rhyme, with frequent imitations of many well known writers who prided themselves upon some marked peculiarity of style. They were instructive as well as amusing. They abounded in references to current matters of thought. In every one of them were casual suggestions which often ‘proved the key to open unknown apartments in the palace of truth’ and ‘unexplored tracts in the paradise of sentiment that environs it.’

“I cannot recall a single feature of the life or the needs of such a club in which he was not in some way prominent, or to which he did not contribute. He adapted himself to every occasion. He was prompt in repartee and yet never cutting or unkind. He was always cheerful and genial. Social life was for him a relaxation from the cares and duties of his profession. He needed rest and he gave himself up to it and enjoyed it with the zest of a boy on his holiday. Yet he fully realized that there is work to be done even in such relaxation, and was ever ready to do his share and more in order to contribute to the general pleasure.

I think he enjoyed fully as much the preparatory labor involved in the exercise of his wonderful powers, as he did those rare occasions when, perhaps a little wearied from the battles and toils of daily life, he sat as a silent listener. . . . He was an excellent actor, and upon occasion took a leading part in dramatic representations. I have alluded to his readiness at repartee. As Carlyle said of another: 'his sparkling sallies bubbled up as from aerated natural fountains.' His vivid fancy, well stored memory and fluent language found expression in conversations which ministered to intellectual culture. . . . One cannot review or report such conversations. Their point or pungency are so connected with the special events which gave rise to them, they depend so much upon the atmosphere of the occasion and the frame of mind of those present that no account of them will give an adequate idea of their brilliancy.

Some of Dr. Evans' humorous papers will be published in the proposed volume of Essays and Addresses. It will give the reader some idea of his fertility of resource, to indicate here the titles of some. "Apologia pro vitâ suâ, or a Word for Loafers, by one of Them" may head the list. "Leaves out of the Autobiography of a poor young man" is in the same vein. In criticism we have exhaustive discussions of "Jack and Jill" and "There was a Man in our Town." Poetry is represented by an "Ode to Sublimity," and an "Ode to the Ant," besides parodies of Jean Ingelow and the Sweet Singer of Michigan. Prose parodies are "Dr. Isaac Splaudius" (Crawford) and "Incendiarism as a Fine Art" (De Quincey). "Simon Firkin or the Career of an Ambitious Young Man" apparently belongs in the same category. "Anthropophagy: the Future Development of the Race, or the Coming Cannibal," sufficiently explains itself, as does the title of the pseudo-scientific paper "Formicæ."

October 19, 1871, Professor Evans was married to Miss Sarah E. Fry, of La Porte, Indiana. The union of hearts thus solemnized brought unalloyed happiness to both, and their affection grew deeper as the years passed by. Into the sanctities of home-life we get a glimpse in the two sonnets composed by the husband on the tenth and on the twentieth anniversary of their wedding:

OCTOBER 19, 1881.

"What
For sweetness like the ten years wife,
Whose customary love is not
Her passion or her play, but life!"
[COVENTRY PATMORE.]

Tell me thy secret, Love, I thee entreat!
My secret he doth win who winneth me.
Love unlocks Love; its holy Mystery
Forever grows more deep, more clear, more sweet.
Love's *hours* teach him who loveth, to repeat
The *alphabet* of yon celestial Law,
Which to their central suns the worlds doth draw.
Love's blissful *years* will nurture skill to spell
The *words* in which the heart of heaven doth burn.
Love's *decades* grasp the *phrases* wherein dwell
The love and worship of the saints above,
The blest divinity which seraphs learn.
E'en thus the undying *centuries* will yearn
To scale the untrodden, God-kissed altitude of love.

OCTOBER 19, 1891.

Lost in my bliss I marvel much to-day
How Love's strange shepherding brings heart to heart
By paths in their beginning far apart,
Which yet beneath his staff's mysterious sway
Draw nearer till they meet in one blest way
Whose course doth follow Love's unerring chart,
Whose steps are trained by Truth's divinest art,
Whose goal is crowned with Joy's eternal ray.
As now we reach our twentieth milestone, Sweet,
Of sacred fellowship upon that road,
We pause our altar-stone of help to raise,
To breathe one prayer, to sing one hymn of praise
For our one life, one trust, one joy, one load
Resting the while at our dear Shepherd's feet.

In September, 1874, Dr. and Mrs. Evans took possession of the residence in the seminary grounds occu-

pied at one time by Dr. Allen and later by Dr. Henry A. Nelson. This home was theirs thenceforth, and it was the center of united affection working for a common end. Speaking of the house soon after moving into it, Dr. Evans wrote to a friend in Wales: "The feature which I enjoy most of all is my new study, a room on the second floor front with three windows, two overlooking the campus and one to the east—as bright, cozy, quiet and cheerful a room for a study as I know. If I do not, like Milton, succeed in writing something that the world will not willingly let die, it will certainly not be the fault of my surroundings." This study was always open to any one seeking advice or information, and the whole house was the scene of cordial hospitality to friends from near and from far. To the students of the seminary especially it was made attractive during their course, and they were warmly welcomed to it when they returned for a visit after their graduation. Its friendly atmosphere can not be described, but it is remembered by the many who enjoyed it. The crowning happiness came May 13, 1876, when a son was born in that home. His father writes soon after the event: "The chief item of news from this household is 'all about the baby' who was born Saturday the 13th inst. He is a fine boy, fat and healthy, weighing nine pounds, and twenty-one inches long. . . . It is too early to say much about him. The general impression seems to be that he favors his mother. His hair will probably have a tinge of his father's. I wouldn't call him a superlatively handsome baby though I am his father, but he has a good bright face, and a dark blue eye full of life and, I suspect, of mischief. He is unusually vigorous, hits out square from the shoulder and kicks magnificently. On the whole I am not inclined to dispute what the ladies who

have seen him say, that he is a baby to be proud of. May God grant that, if his life be spared, he may be a true and good man."

The life in this home moved on quietly and happily through years filled with the literary work already indicated. The shadow which began to fall, took the shape of physical infirmity. Dr. Evans had always had remarkable vigor of body. For some years after he became professor in the seminary he was foremost in the athletic sports of the students—played ball with all his might, rode horseback, walked all over the neighborhood, and in fact was known as a "muscular Christian." It is not necessary here to detail the symptoms which gave him uneasiness and puzzled the physicians. After various experiments in treatment, he decided to spend the summer of the year 1888 abroad. His vacation was at first extended to six months, and later, he was given leave of absence for the year. Receiving no relief in the methods first tried, he consulted the eminent Sir Wm. Roberts, of Manchester, who discovered organic disease of the heart. He did not conceal from his patient the serious nature of the difficulty, but gave him reason to hope, that with care, he might enjoy some years of life and work. The remainder of the year was spent in rest and under treatment, and on his return the Professor took up his work with courage and cheerfulness. His disease made no sensible progress for over three years, and his labors as an instructor were never more successful than during these years.

The trip to Europe was taken at the conclusion of twenty-five years of service in the Seminary. It was fitting that it should be marked in some special way. The students of the seminary, as a token of their appreciation, presented him, at this time, with a watch and chain. Dr. Evans' reply to the speech of presen-

tation, touchingly expressed his deep and earnest affection for Lane Seminary. He said he had always been grateful for the providential events which had led him to Cincinnati, and as a student to Lane Seminary. The debt he owed to his instructors here, he could not measure. He began to love the seminary when a student, and his affection for it had deepened with each year of service. He owed a great deal to the students also, whom he had been permitted to teach, and he loved the classes in the institution now, and every member of each class. At the meeting the same year, the trustees of the seminary put on record their high appreciation of Dr. Evans and of his faithful service for twenty-five years in the following words (May 1, 1888):

“Whereas, the close of the past session marks the completion of twenty-five years of service in this institution by our beloved Professor, the Rev. L. I. Evans, D.D.; therefore,

“1. Resolved, That we record our sincere thanksgiving to Almighty God for the health He has given him, and the grace and power from on high, which have been added to his instruction.

“2. We hereby tender our congratulations to Professor Evans, and assure him of our sincere and hearty appreciation of his scholarship, our confidence in his teaching power and our affection for him as a man and as a Christian.

“3. We hereby grant Professor Evans any such extension of his summer vacation into the time of the next seminary year, as he may himself deem useful for the completion of his travel in foreign parts, and commend him and his to the good hand of our God whose are all our ways.”

Dr. Evans' continued interest in his work during his absence is indicated by the fact that he wrote to the class graduating in 1889, a pastoral letter which the class received and acknowledged with hearty affection. A copy of it is not in my possession.

V.

CLOSING YEARS.

The winter after Dr. Evans' return from Europe showed renewed theological activity in the Presbyterian Church. The years since the reunion had been spent in developing the practical activities of the Church. It had been assumed that its doctrine was virtually one, and that this was sufficiently expressed in the Confession and Catechisms of the Westminster Assembly. So recently as 1881 it was asserted on the floor of the General Assembly that the terms of reunion pledged the Church to keep these historic monuments in the exact form in which the American Church had always received them. This point of view was so far abandoned in 1889 that a decided movement was made towards a revision of the Confession, so far at least as to remove some extreme statements from that venerable document. This movement culminated in the Assembly of 1890, which appointed a committee to revise the Confession.

It need not be said that Dr. Evans took the liveliest interest in this movement. By conviction and by education he belonged to the New School branch of the Church. In the reunion he knew that that branch had made no surrender of principle. But he realized that the freer thought was now overshadowed by the pre-

ponderant conservatism, especially of this region. So early as 1876 he wrote to his friend in Wales of one who "is trying all he can to break down liberal Presbyterianism." In 1879 he writes again: "Sometimes I feel a little discouraged about the reactionary drift which seems now to be setting in in American Presbyterianism. I fear it will paralyze the power of the Church to stem the tide of unbelief. But it cannot always continue, nor, I trust, long." In 1883 he had an opportunity, of which he availed himself, to speak for liberty of discussion. The occasion was Commencement day of that year, when addresses were made by two of the graduates, which were attacked by conservative ministers as "dangerous." One of these, by Arthur J. Brown, was on "the Church of the Future;" the other by A. A. Rogers on "Revision of the Westminster Symbols." The extremely mild progressiveness of these papers was criticised by some who were present and (more bitterly) by some who were absent. Dr. Evans exposed these critics in a vigorous article, a part of which is as follows:

"Your strictures on the delivery of Mr. Rogers' address impel me to make a few remarks in my own behalf, as one of those whose action in the premises has been subjected to criticism. I write only for myself. (1) You say: 'the animadversions on it are not based upon the ground that revision is not a proper subject for investigation and discussion.' I question the authoritativeness of this statement. I challenge a poll of those who object to the speech. Without mentioning names, I am confident that only a very small minority of them could be found to say that they are in favor of touching the standards at all.

"(2) You say that 'nobody regards the Confession as infallible or immutable.' If the Professor of Systematic Theology in the Northwestern Seminary and the editor of the Presbyterian Banner do not hold that the

Confession is immutable when they plead as an argument against revision that under the terms of reunion 'the Confession shall continue to be held,' then what do they mean?

"(5) It would be interesting to know just what there is about this question of the revision of the standards which invests it with such peculiar sacredness. Candidates for the ministry are *permitted*, yes, are *encouraged*, nay more, are *required* to discuss the profoundest and most sacred of Scripture themes. They are set to tackle the problems of 'fixed fate, free will, fore-knowledge absolute.' They are appointed to write in more or less luminous Latin, theses *De Predestinatione*, *De Incarnatione*, *De Trinitate*. They are invited to exegete the knottiest passages of Paul, to write sermons and lectures on each and every theme of which the Standards treat. But when it comes to the discussion of the statements—human uninspired statements—of the Standards, the caveat is thundered forth: *Procul Profani!* at least *Procul Juvenes!* You are too young, too immature, too inexperienced! Is a young man competent to write a thesis or sermon on predestination in phraseology of his own, who is not competent to discuss the phraseology of the Confession?"

Dr. Evans had therefore taken his position squarely in favor of free discussion long before the revision movement was begun. After its beginning he writes again to his friend in Wales (Nov. 1889): "I am still avoiding all public work and shall adhere to that rule for some time to come. This cuts me off from the rather exciting discussions going on in our church Assemblies on the question of revising the Confession of Faith—against which position I chafe sometimes, as I feel I should like to have a hand in the fight. However I am doing a little writing on the subject in the religious newspapers, and mean, if I am able, to write a good deal more before the row is over. I care more for the *discussion* than I do for the Revision itself. I think a fine opportunity is presenting itself for putting

in a few earnest blows, which I hope may tell, for a *liberal progressive and more distinctly Biblical* theology." In accordance with this view Dr. Evans wrote two articles for the Herald and Presbyter and two for the Independent which gave no uncertain sound in favor of progress. From one of these is taken the following significant passage :

"But there is a more serious side to the case. Let me emphasize the fact that the opposition to revision is confessedly the expression of a serene and solid (shall I write it *stolid*?) satisfaction with the *status quo* of Presbyterianism and Calvinism. Why agitate for anything better than we have? Why strive for any higher or larger success than we have been all along achieving? 'All the past successes and victories of Presbyterianism have been accomplished under the old Confession. . . . Is it not better for the church to work on the very same old basis, in the very same straight line?' Is this, I ask, the spirit which should rule the church to-day? Is this the view we should take of its achievements and equipments for work and conquest? Glorious as may be the record of Westminster Presbyterianism for two and a half centuries, of 'the theological learning and pulpit eloquence, the spiritual life and practical zeal, the heroic endeavor and consecrated service of that body of Christians who have believed in the theology of Westminster divines,' shall we allow it to foster that spiritual complacency which is the bane alike of Christians and of the church? Shall we be content that the future shall be simply a rehearsal of our past? Was this the spirit of Paul, whom we are so much given to vaunt as our spiritual father? Is this forgetting the things which are behind and reaching forth unto those things which are before? Is this becoming all things to all men? Is this going in at every open door? Is this watching for great doors and effectual? Is this redeeming the opportunity, fighting as not beating the air, striking so that every blow will leave a black eye behind it? Is this building up the church as the temple of God, as the

body of Christ, as the fullness of Him that filleth all in all? Is this exulting in God who always leadeth us in triumph in Christ? If this be Calvinism, then what is Paulinism? Nay, is not this rather that nightmare of Calvinism, that dogmatic fatalism, the effort to get rid of which has probably as much to do with the Revision movement as any one cause?

“Let us glance a moment at another phase of this same phlegmatic temper, in which, sad to say, the champions of our confessional go-cart show to less advantage even than the champions of the liturgical go-cart. The latter have at least the enthusiasm of their convictions. They are benevolently anxious that the merits of their go-cart should be appreciated, and they look forward with confidence to the day when everybody will use it. Not so with the champions of the confessional go-cart. The unpopularity of their perambulator does not seem to distress them particularly. Apparently they expect nothing else. They see no good reason why if Mohammed declines to come to the mountain, the mountain should go to Mohammed (*sic* Dr. Shedd). They have little or no hope that it will ever be found practicable to make a statement of Calvinism that will commend it even to Evangelical Christians who thus far have not accepted it (*sic* Dr. DeWitt). They contemplate without discomposure the alternative of joining other communions for those who do not like our system (*sic* Dr. Patton). But are we reduced to this? Is this the outcome of two centuries and a half of Westminster Confessionalism? Is it strange that some of us are getting out of patience with this dogmatic phlegm; that we are somewhat tired of a Confessionalism which even in the third century of its existence is content to be still on the defensive, to be still explaining and re-explaining, ever at the end finding its explanations useless and beginning all over again; which despairs of making any impression on the Evangelical Christianity outside of its own bounds; and with face to the past and back to the future drones monotonous pæans of self-glorification? In all this we see nothing whereof to be proud, nothing to stir the blood, nothing

to inspire enthusiasm. We would fain see a Confessionalism of another type; one that dared trust itself; that put other creeds, if need be, on the defensive; that carried in its own bosom the pæan of victory; that bore within itself the promise and potency of development; that could adapt itself more intelligently to the new conditions of scientific, critical and religious thinking—a Confessionalism so distinctively and ringingly Scriptural that all Christians who accept and honor the Bible as the Word of God would hear the echo of its ring in their own inmost convictions—a Confessionalism that would encourage its adherents to go forward with a faith born of the assurance that the future is its own. Is such a Confessionalism possible? Why not, Calvinism? *Why not?*

“WHY NOT? I ask. Is Calvinism to be forever on the defensive? forever pleading with a half-apologetic, half-defiant snarl, that we know our system ‘is a hard system,’ that it has ‘its hard side,’ ‘its hard features’—but ‘there are proof-texts’? And after all, ‘why should our doctrines keep men out of the church? They are not asked to accept them’ (*sic* Dr. Patton). So! And what then is the *raison d’être* of our Presbyterianism? ‘To be a witness-bearing church’ (*sic* Dr. Patton). But to bear witness to what? Why to that same body of doctrines which, if we are to accept the dogmatic confession respecting them, are irremediably, hopelessly hard; which must nevertheless be unflinchingly and unalterably retained in all their hardness; but which, notwithstanding all this, only a small percentage of the witness-bearers of the church are asked or bound to accept! What an extraordinary position for a great witness-bearing church to occupy, to be sure!”

This eloquent presentation of the claims upon us for a revision of our creed, is one of the most mature as well as one of the happiest expressions of the author’s theological progressiveness. That progressiveness was a year later called out by an event which, as we now know, defeated the revision movement in the church, and changed the current of Professor Evans’ own life.

This was the inauguration of Professor Charles A. Briggs to the chair of Biblical Theology in the Union Theological Seminary. The now famous inaugural address was widely discussed throughout the church, and resolutions calling the attention of the General Assembly to its contents, were early offered in the Presbytery of Cincinnati. Dr. Evans on hearing the clamor raised about the inaugural, at once went carefully over the work entitled, "Whither?" a book containing the fuller expression of Dr. Briggs' theological views. He came to the conclusion that the author was within the liberty allowed by the Confession. It soon became evident, that the opposition was based on the extreme conservative view of inspiration. This view Dr. Evans had never held. At his ordination he had disavowed it. When Drs. Hodge and Warfield advocated it, Dr. Evans said, in private conversation, "they can not force such a doctrine down our throats." Many years ago he pointed out to the present writer that when we acknowledge the Scriptures to be an infallible *rule*, we do not affirm them to be inerrant in their statements of history and science. In his article on the Doctrinal significance of [New Testament] Revision, he had pointed out that inspiration is not adequately stated in current theories. He adds: "It is safe to assume that any theory of the subject which is not elastic enough to touch *all the facts* in the case is liable to break." When the Briggs' case was first discussed, he said to one of his colleagues (who interested himself in getting Dr. Briggs' transfer disapproved), "it will not do at this day to condemn any man on the theory of inerrancy."

The state of things which confronted us was this: Resolutions were introduced in Cincinnati Presbytery, condemning a member of another presbytery, and (in

effect) overturing the General Assembly to disapprove his election. These resolutions were based mainly on a theory of inspiration, which Dr. Evans had never held and never taught, and which he believed to be contrary to the facts. He was not the man to keep silent at such a time. Although he had not spoken in public for a long time, he resolved to oppose these resolutions in Presbytery. When they were called up, he argued against them, and succeeded in getting their consideration postponed until a later meeting. He saw, however, that a mere debate on the floor of Presbytery, did not meet the exigency. He had already begun the preparation of a thorough discussion of the main question. This he read in two successive meetings of the Presbyterian Ministerial Association, speaking nearly two hours each time. In the state of his health at the time this was a clear case of not counting his life dear, that he might advance the truth. His friends were much gratified to observe that the serious strain did not seriously affect his strength at the time.

The paper on Biblical Scholarship and Inspiration read at this time and afterwards published,* is a noble plea for freedom of Biblical study against dogmatic assumptions. It begins with a statement of the immediate occasion for the paper, but dismisses it for the larger question involved: "The movement, of which I have spoken, and the utterances in the press and elsewhere which have accompanied and interpreted its inception and purpose, convince me that the time has come for a definite understanding respecting the rights of Christian Scholarship in the Biblical departments of our theological seminaries." He then states his per-

* Now contained in "Inspiration and Inerrancy," by Henry Preserved Smith, published by Robert Clarke & Co., Cincinnati, 1893.

sonal interest in the matter; acknowledges the obligation the professor is under to do nothing that can embarrass the minister in his pulpit; but claims reciprocity, and asserts that there are some conclusions of Biblical theology which we must take into account. He gives Dr. Charles Hodge's definition of inspiration, and that of Drs. A. A. Hodge and Warfield. This *a priori* definition he finds to be unscientific, and "not only unscientific, but irreverent, presumptuous, lacking in the humility with which we should approach a Divine Supernatural Fact." This position he establishes by the analogies of creation and the Incarnation. He then sketches the recent progress of Biblical science and contrasts its method with that of dogmatic theology. Among the conclusions of Biblical science he singles out those concerning the composition of the Gospels for somewhat extended treatment. He points out how incompatible these are with "the *ipsissima verba* original autograph theory" of inspiration. He then gives some specific difficulties in the way of that theory, and closes with a positive formulation of the doctrine of Paul in I Cor. ii, 6-16, and a discussion of the Confession.

The time will come when, as Dr. Evans himself hoped, his views will "obtain from the Church, in its ultimate decision, the recognition which is claimed for them as Scriptural, evangelical, confessional, scientific, reverent, and indispensable to the satisfactory and permanent solution of the great problems of our age and to the harmony of religious faith and scientific and critical processes and results." Even at the present time it is impossible to read this paper without being struck by the revelation of the author's heart. That heart was a heart bound up in the Word of God. Its impassioned argument against a false theory of Scripture is based

on a living faith in that Scripture, and a desire that it should not be put in a false light. Dr. Evans saw that to commit the Church to the theory he opposed would be suicidal, certainly against the best interest of the Church itself. That interest was as near to Dr. Evans' heart as it was to the heart of the most conservative. To him as to the other, inspiration was one of the greatest of divine facts. In the course of this discussion he says:

“What now is the function of inspiration? In a word, it is to mediate the revelation; to interpret, to record, to apply it; to put us, to put all generations under the immediate power of those divine realities; so far as possible to bring us face to face with this incomparable drama of Power and Love Divine, *face to face with God revealing Himself*. All through the ages the Spirit of God was teaching one and another to understand, to interpret, to record, to apply that wondrous process. . . . And so to-day, and through all time, in all that makes the Bible the power of God unto salvation, it is the Voice of God, the Word of God, the supreme, the only infallible authority.”

It will seem incredible to a future generation that a man holding such a doctrine of inspiration should be regarded with suspicion, and denounced as a rationalist, because he refused to affirm the extra confessional doctrine of inerrancy. But such was the case. The spirit of heresy-hunting was let loose, and no piety, scholarship, or services were enough to protect from its attacks.

It will be readily understood that Dr. Evans watched with intense interest the course of controversy. After the publication of his paper he had little to say. But he visited Detroit and was an interested spectator of the General Assembly, which disapproved the election of Dr. Briggs. His attitude in this whole matter is

well indicated by the following found among his papers :

HERESY HUNTING.

For truth's worst foe is he who claims
 To act as God's avenger,
 And deems beyond his sentry-beat
 The crystal walls in danger.
 Who sets for heresy his trap
 Of verbal quirk and quibble,
 And weeds the garden of the Lord
 With Satan's borrowed dibble.

The overwhelming majority by which Dr. Briggs was disapproved in this Assembly and the continuance of attack by the denominational press led Dr. Evans to look with favor upon a call from the Theological College at Bala, Wales—the place of his early studies. Previous attempts had been made to call him to his native country and had been unsuccessful. This one came with special strength, first, because it was given after the publication of the paper on Biblical Scholarship, and with the assurance that the views there expressed would be no bar to his usefulness. In the second place, it was warmly urged by the distinguished Principal Edwards, with whom he had been on terms of intimate friendship for many years. In the third place, his experience of the climate of Wales at his recent visit gave him the most favorable anticipations as to his health. Finally, (and there is reason to believe that this reason was the decisive one) he had reason to hope that in his new position he would be favorably situated for study and the completion of his literary work. Discussion of theological questions he enjoyed. But for the polemics of the religious (!) press with its insinuations of 'unsoundness' and 'false teaching' he had no taste. For these reasons he accepted the call in the autumn of 1891. Had his health been firm there is no reason to doubt that he would have

preferred to remain in this county and fight the battle of a comprehensive and generous Presbyterianism.

As it was, he probably underrated the strain he would undergo in leaving this country. His affectionate nature had struck its roots deep in the soil where it had been planted nearly thirty-five years. He had testified to his love for the Seminary on more than one occasion. The activities of a lifetime had centered about this institution. His health might not have suffered so much had it not been for the *grippe* which attacked him late in 1891. He did not seem to regain his strength after this attack. March 15, the Trustees of the Seminary met and accepted his resignation. In April came an additional strain in the death of a little boy (son of the present writer) to whom he was much attached. It is not necessary to linger over the remaining weeks—the leave-taking, the voyage, the meeting with friends in Wales, and the severe attacks from which he suffered. At times he seemed to improve. The house at Bala was taken and furnished. In the large garden he spent many happy hours and in his stronger days he would drive about the beautiful country. He was enthusiastically welcomed by old and new friends. A public meeting of welcome was held, at which however he was not able to be present. Soon after landing he suffered from a severe attack of *angina pectoris*. The alarm of the physicians caused Mrs. Evans to cry out in the anguish of her heart: “do not leave me,” with other words of grief. In Christian trust he said: (speaking with difficulty) “it is as the Lord wills; if His time has come I am ready to go.” He then calmly gave her his messages for the son, absent at school. From this attack he rallied and seemed to be gaining. Two days before his death he wrote a bright and hopeful letter to his son, speaking of his feeling that he had really begun

to gain. Sunday, July 24, he was planning for his work, and spent a part of the day in the sunny garden. He spoke of writing letters but deferred it until he should be a little stronger. Late at night another severe paroxysm came on and refused to yield to any remedies. After great suffering he became unconscious and early in the morning of July 25, 1892, his loving loyal spirit departed to meet the Saviour of his love—the Saviour whom he had served so well. The frail house of clay was brought back to this country and rests near the scene of his earthly labors.

Ecclesiastical bodies in this country and in Great Britain passed resolutions honoring his memory. Personal friends and those who had known him through his writings, published tributes to his memory on both sides of the sea. Numerous letters assured the bereaved wife and son of love and sympathy. How little such efforts can accomplish, none realize better than their authors. The lesson of a life like his must be felt rather than expressed. The deep sense of personal loss testified by many friends, shows how distinctly the lesson was felt in his case. He was our friend: the heartache does not stop to analyze its sensations. †

But, if we can not analyze the grief, we can draw one or two obvious conclusions. Friendship is the result of personal character and personal character may help and stimulate those who come in contact with it. In the case of Dr. Evans, we must remember some things which will be a joy and help to us so long as we live. For one thing he was thoroughly and transparently sincere. "Clear your mind of cant," he used often to quote from Dr. Johnson. Few men have so successfully kept their minds clear of cant. This was true of him intellectually, as well as spiritually. Intellectually he sought the truth, the reality of things. "In

the study of Biblical questions, which my vocation has made necessary, I have both striven to keep an open mind, and earnestly sought the guidance of a wisdom higher than my own." This sentence from his last great work defines his whole intellectual attitude. And spiritually, he showed the same sincerity. Guilelessness was so thoroughly his own attitude that he could not suspect another of a willingness to deceive. In his business dealings with men this was to his disadvantage, for he could not be made to see the necessity of ordinary checks and precautions.

The mansidedness of his character was coupled with a modesty that sometimes seemed to his friends excessive. This was not bashfulness, which is often self-conceit, but it was self-forgetfulness, unconsciousness that he was in any sense superior to others, with frank and generous appreciation of all that was good in them. With this went unvarying cheerfulness of mood. His merry times were not offset by times of depression. Even in severe illness and when unexpected misfortune came upon him, he never lost the habit of looking at the bright side. Quiet heroism marked the severe attacks which came towards the close of life, and those nearest to him never heard a murmur of impatience.

The root of these graces was deep and fervent piety. His faith was fixed upon his Lord Christ, as, following Luther, he loved to call him. Supreme loyalty to him was the spring of his daily life. Like Paul, his great aim was to know Christ. Hence, intellectually, he made all knowledge tributary to this. His daily study was a joy to him, because it concerned itself with the life of his Lord. But spiritually also he fed on this life. His was no mere philosophical or historical construction of the facts he studied. He applied them in his own

life. He grew into the divine life as he apprehended it. One of his students, the last year of his life (a young man from Japan) asked him one day in the class, "how he had attained such holiness." The question shows the deep impression made by Dr. Evans' spiritual life upon those brought under his influence. "Personal Christianity," was the subject of his last address before Lane Seminary, and it sums up the purpose of his life. A result of this supreme loyalty to Christ, was ardent affection for the Scriptures, which contain the word of Christ. "If there is anything in which my whole being is wrapped up, it is the study and teaching of the Word of God. If there is anything that I love with every fibre of my every heart-string, it is that blessed old book. If there is anything for which, so far as I know myself, I would gladly lay down my life, it is that this book may be known and read throughout the length and breadth of the world, as the guide of lost souls to heaven." Such was his language at the time when he knew he would be accused of "attacking the Bible," and no one who knew him could doubt the truth of the avowal.

Of intellectual endowments—keen and brilliant power of acquisition, critical insight, philosophic breadth, vividness of imagination, richness of expression, felicity of style, the power of picturesque arrangement of thought—of these I will not speak. One quality came out conspicuously in the late controversy—the courage of conviction. Dr. Evans might have excused himself from coming to the defense of an unpopular cause. His health was not firm. He had been warned to avoid excitement and exertion. He knew the temper of his audience. He might have pleaded that he must not imperil the popularity of the seminary. But when he saw clearly (as he did from the beginning) that

freedom of teaching was endangered, he had no more question. What he could do to save the church from self-stultification should be done, regardless of majorities.

And with this steadfastness was joined a living hope for the future. Among the cherished words he spoke none are more cherished than his words of comfort and hope over the grave, as it seemed to swallow up the joy of life. His affection was fixed upon a living Christ, and by the eye of faith he seemed to see Him and to direct the look of others to the same bright vision. "It is not our loved ones," he said, "who have been translated into that life, who should be called 'the dead' or 'the dying.' We are the dead, we are the dying, for what is our life here but a continual dying, a being unclothed that we may be clothed upon? Let us not think of our departed loved ones as dwelling in the darkness of the tomb. Let us not seek our living among the dead." This, a part of his last public utterance, comforts us in our bereavement, and teaches us to look forward to the time, when with him, we shall live that larger, higher life.

NOTE.

The following sermons have been chosen with the aim of exhibiting various sides of Professor Evans' thought. Some favorites asked for by friends could not be included because the manuscript was imperfect. In some instances a word has been supplied (as in the quotations already given in the biographical sketch) and indicated by [square] brackets.

All who read the book are under especial obligation to Mrs. F. E. Cone and the Rev. J. H. Cone, who prepared the copy of the sermons for the printer. Mr. Cone has also kindly read the proofs of the whole volume.

SERMONS.

I.

FAITH, HOPE, LOVE.

I Corinthians 13: 13. And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

RELIGION is an assemblage of great things. Its sources are great: not cisterns but oceans, vast, unfathomable, deep crying unto deep. Its powers are great, great with the energies of Omnipotence, with the thunder-might of God. Its results are great; they are commensurate with the purposes of Deity, and they fill eternity. Greatness is for the most part a relative term. There is indeed a greatness which is absolute, independent of all comparison. Yet the greatness even of realities which are positively such is known through the relation which they sustain to our capacities. Greatness thus considered is that attribute of an object which calls forth all the resources of the power, or powers that have to do with it, which fills or more than fills the measure of any capacity, causing it to expand, constraining the mind to enlarge itself toward it. There are objects and qualities toward which the mind in its action upon them is constrained to contract itself, to narrow itself down, as there are material objects, the minuteness of which requires that the organs

which observe them and the powers which handle them should reduce themselves as much as possible before they can do much with them.

Again there are objects and qualities which just meet the measure of the powers which operate them. Such are most of the facts and objects with which we have to do. They can neither be called great nor small. They were not intended either to overwhelm us by their greatness, or to evade us by their littleness. We can not take our microscopes with us everywhere to hunt up the small: neither can we carry our Archimedean levers everywhere to overturn mountains or to move worlds. We can not be always straining ourselves lifting heavy weights; we can not accomplish much if we do nothing but pick up grains. God has therefore made most of the usefuls of life neither great nor small, but they may be easily handled, freely used, and converted to our purpose.

There are some things which challenge the powers, which draw out the capacities by which they are available. They exceed the average magnitude and weight of things with which we have to do. We are conscious of a strain on our faculties in our effort to grasp and use them. They tax our resources to the full. They excite our desires and aspirations: they stimulate the outreachings of our powers. These we call great.

It is possible for a man by constant intercourse with the little to have his views and powers contracted, until the small no longer seems such. One who has lived among the mountains when he first settles down on a rolling prairie feels contempt for the wavy hillocks about him, but ere long familiarity breeds in this instance something better than contempt. After a while they become a tolerable substitute for the half-forgotten cloud-capped ranges far away. And so with

moral realities. One who has associated with men of intelligence and moral worth, when he abandons their society for that of the brutal and degraded, experiences at first a feeling of revulsion—it may be of scorn: but a few years lower his standard of taste and sympathy, so that his present companions become great and good enough for him. This is one of the curses of sin. It brings down the soul to a state of insensibility in respect to the moral littleness and unworthiness, of the pursuits and characters with which it becomes identified.

On the contrary it is possible for any sense intellectual or moral, to grow, and for the views which come through it to be enlarged, until that which, at the first seems great, presently becomes familiar, and soon small. That which *seems* great, I say, for to the thoughtful and sympathetic observer, the truly great never becomes familiar, still less small. Things which are essentially great are great always to the soul that understands them. But that which is relatively great, which is great only for the time, and in relation to our present stage of development will, in a more advanced stage, be rightly regarded as of less importance. This principle is involved in the argument of which the text is a part. “Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail: whether there be tongues they shall cease: whether there be knowledge it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face: now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known. And now

abideth faith, hope, charity, these three : but the greatest of these is charity." The gift of prophecy, the gift of tongues, the gift of science, however great and important they may be, at a certain point, can not be carried up through all the stages of Christian development. They belong to the period of childhood; we go beyond them; they are partial and temporary; they are to give way to that which is perfect. But faith, hope, love, are great always; they abide forever. We can grow up to the former, we can come up to their altitude; we may grow yet higher, until we look down on them; we may outgrow them, until we think them small, as the man outgrows the thoughts, feelings and ambitions of the child. But there are things which we are never to outgrow, which rise as we rise, which tower always above us, as when, in climbing a mountain, the sky remains no less high, the stars no less distant than before. They grow as we grow; as we increase in strength, they increase in weight; they always require effort, energy, to possess and to use them. To receive them the mind must always expand itself. To employ them our powers must always exert themselves. These realities, experiences and exercises deserve to be called great. They abide in their grandeur, their power and their supremacy. "Now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three." all of which are great, all of which are eternal, "but the greatest of these is charity." "And now abideth Faith." This grace is permanent. It will never pass away. It will never give way to anything else. It will never become anything else. It will be glorified, made perfect. For like every other perfection it is here in its beginning, in its chrysalis state only. The faith of the future will be to the faith of the present like the winged butterfly to the creeping caterpillar. But it will never lose its distinctive character. It will always be faith.

Take any definition of it that you will. Regard it in its most restricted technical sense, as reliance on Christ. Will the Christian ever lose that? Will he ever cast it away from him? Will he ever remove himself from that sure foundation, so tried, so precious, the Rock of Ages? Will he ever build on any other name? Will he ever out-grow his faith in the Redeemer? How can he? He cannot undo that which has been done; he cannot change the past; he cannot dispose of the fact that he was a sinner, ruined, lost, not to be saved without an atonement; that such an atonement has been made; that he was saved only by accepting that atonement, by appropriating Christ; that he was received only through the mediation and intercession of Christ; that it was through his merits that he entered heaven, and enjoyed the favor of God and that he stands before God accepted in the Beloved. These *facts* he will never be able to change; and how can he forego his reliance on Christ? And even if he could, think you that he would? The Saviour who visited him in his distress, who pitied him in his misery, who strengthened him in his weakness, who healed him in his disorders, whose right hand supported him in all dangers, and brought him at last to heaven—is it possible that the Christian should ever give him up and fall back to rely on himself? Will the time ever come, when he will wish to say, Christ was my salvation, but he is no longer; he was my righteousness, but he is no longer; he was my mediator and advocate before God, but I have no further need of him. I can appear for myself, and plead my own cause. No! through all eternity, Christ will be to the saints, all the foundation of their hope, the rock of their faith. In this sense it will be true forever that “Faith abideth.”

Take the more general view of faith, as trust in God. Will God ever change? Will he be less worthy of your

trust? Shall we ever become independent of his support? Is not his kingdom an everlasting kingdom, and is not his will the ground of all our hopes and plans? Will not our success and our blessedness depend forever on the personal superintendence exerted by God over our individual interests? Is not this God our guide forever and ever? It is true that if we are sons of God, dangers which encompass us here will one day be left behind, that we shall be secure from harm; but why? Because we are nearer to God, but being nearer shall we trust him any the less? The child when beset by danger flees to his father for safety, because he trusts in his power to save him, and all the time that the danger threatens him, nestling in his father's arms he trusts him and feels secure. But when the danger is past and when his father still holds him to his heart and causes him to forget his fears by soothing words and loving embraces, does he cease trusting his father? And how can the child of God, when his father takes him home to himself, and bestows on him crowns of glory and rejoicing, wiping away all tears from his eyes, and surrounding him with the embraces of eternal love;—how can the child ever forget to trust the father?

Take a still more general conception of faith, that which is presented in the Bible statement, "Faith is the substance (certainty) of things hoped for, the evidence (conviction) of things not seen." In this sense at least it is supposed by many that the functions of faith will some time cease. There will be no further occasion for its exercise when the things which we now hope for are possessed, and when the things which are now unseen become objects of immediate contemplation and enjoyment. But this supposition assumes that all the objects of faith and hope, all the unseen realities toward which the heart goes forth in expectation, desire, and

love, will become visible, tangible possessions, that they will all become ours in a sense different from what they are now. Certainly this is true in respect to many of those realities, but not in respect to all. However much the sphere of possession may enlarge, there will always remain a beyond. The larger the horizon of sight, the larger the firmament of faith. It is true that some objects of faith become objects of sight and knowledge, but it must be remembered that the objects of faith are at the same time multiplied. For everything that is seen or known brings with it something new to be believed.

Still further; the enlargement and elevation of knowledge, gives greater dignity and nobleness, to the power of faith. The child believes many things on testimony and on the authority of others, which when he has grown to be a man he finds of his own knowledge to be true; and the enlarged and enlightened knowledge of his manhood contains many things that were not contained either in the knowledge or faith of earlier years; but he also finds more to believe, and how much nobler and better after all the faith of the man, when real and vital, than that of the child! How much more intelligent, expansive, inspiring! The same will be true forever. With the extension of the powers, with the increase of the knowledge, and the greater breadth and depth of the soul's life, its faith will embrace more, appropriate more, bring more in, and send more out. It will become a more exalted power, investing man and his life with greater nobleness, and crowning him with greater blessedness. But as I have already intimated there are realities which must ever remain objects of faith, which can never be otherwise possessed.

All that pertains to the interior character and glory of God, all that can not be revealed immediately to the

mind as the light is revealed to the eye, all truths, principles, laws, which can only be symbolized or shadowed forth, these must always continue to be apprehended and appropriated through faith. And in the future—in heaven—realities such as these will be indefinitely multiplied. We seem oftentimes to entertain very gross and sensual conceptions of the heavenly life and of the realities with which it communes. We call them spiritual, it is true, but we use the word in a vague, general way, to indicate simply that the objects, pursuits and enjoyments of heaven, are much more ethereal than those of earth. The life of heaven we regard as essentially a life of sight—of direct contemplation, of tangible possession and enjoyment. Now, it is undoubtedly true that more—much more—will be brought within our immediate reach than here. With the renovation of all the powers of body and mind, which will follow the resurrection and our introduction into another sphere, will come the multiplication of those things with which we can directly communicate. We shall come into close contact with many more realities and facts there than here, we shall see more, hear more, of the facts and realities of being. But is this the only or principal gain which we may look for in the future? By no means. It is not in the circle of perception that the greatest enlargement is to take place. We must remember that in heaven as in earth, we are to have a two-fold nature; a material nature, refined, it is true, purified, immeasurably elevated above any we have now, and brought into the closest sympathy with the higher nature, but still material; and the higher or spiritual nature, also renewed, enlarged, prepared for a higher and more glorious career. There will be the spirit and the spiritual body of which Paul speaks. And corresponding to this two-fold nature, there will

be a two-fold heaven—a sensible heaven and a spiritual heaven; a world of glory and beauty and joy, appealing to the lower of our two natures, to the spiritual body, and a nobler world of grander glory, of diviner beauty, and more spiritual joy, appealing to the higher. Now, there are many whose anticipations of future blessedness do not reach much higher than the lower, the sensible heaven. They think of it as a Paradise of flowers and fruits, and groves and odors unknown to earthly climes, a magnificent expanse of sublimity and loveliness, flooded with perpetual sunshine, thronged with hosts in shining white, melodious with the harping and songs of joyous worshipers, who spend their eternity in the immediate contemplation of God, and in personal communion with the Lamb that sitteth on the throne. Now, there can be no doubt, as I have already said, that heaven will be a glorious place for eye and ear, and for every perceptive and receptive faculty. The love of visible beauty, harmony and sublimity will be gratified there in a manner and degree beyond all our present conceptions. There will be personal fellowship with Christ, and a face to face beholding of specific manifestations of God's glory, of which all earthly manifestations are dim foreshadowings, as the morning star prophesies the sun. But all this will be but the threshold of heaven; the outer porch of the temple. Beyond all this will be the inner courts and the Holy of Holies. The highest glory of heaven will be the spiritual. It will be a world for the heart, the soul, the affections, the aspirations, the intuitions, the spiritual powers, the sanctified reason, the glorified imagination, which reach beyond all that is immediately present, which soar on the wings of the morning, and take their flight into the shadow of the infinite and plunge into the depths

of the eternal, thence to bring up treasures for the heart to cherish and to love. It is a world for the higher nature of man to which faith belongs, of which faith is a ruling power. Faith itself will be a much nobler, more exalted, more productive power than here.

It will substantiate its objects with much greater clearness. It will realize them much more fully and satisfactorily. It will be accompanied with greater certainty, for certainty belongs to Faith as well as sight. And in this sense heaven will be a world of clearer apprehension, and in one sense we may call it a world of sight, because it will be a world of greater certainty. In this sense faith will change to sight. What we believe here with so much wavering and doubting that we must pray continually—Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief—we shall there believe as though we saw it.

“Now also abideth hope.” Hope is permanent no less than faith. As long as there is a future before man, and as long as there is in that future a good to be desired and attained, there must be hope. Hope stimulates to action, sustains life. It is the soul’s oxygen. It keeps it from being asphyxiated, from falling into spiritual torpor. It keeps man well up in the line of duty, spurs him to rise higher and to possess more. It links the present to the future, the lower to the higher, that which man has, to that which he has not. You sometimes sing “Hope will change to glad fruition.” What do these words mean? Do they mean that hereafter we shall enjoy much for which we can only hope here? Do they mean that as soon as you reach heaven you will get *all* you hope for here, and that there will be nothing more to be hoped for? The Bible teaches nothing of that sort. Think a minute what such a doctrine implies.

In heaven is all activity to cease, are we to have nothing to do there but to sit down on seats of ease, on thrones of state, and drink out of the cups of joy already poured out for those who reach the place? Is all possession to cease, is there to be no looking forward, no future, nothing but an everlasting Now? Is there to be no looking and climbing upward, no aspiration, nothing but a placid looking down from the lofty pedestals on which like stylites we are to stand forever? Is there not to be gathering in of new treasures, nothing but brooding like misers over the old? Is there to be no sowing and reaping, nothing but standing guard over fruits of past husbandry and harvesting? If so—then of course hope will be unnecessary; for “the hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth why doth he yet hope for?” But that is not heaven. When the Bible teaches that your life is hid with Christ in God—we know not yet what we shall be—that here we know in part, but there we shall know even as we are known, it teaches that the life of heaven is to be more truly life than the present if it be more distinctively a spiritual life, a life of faith, a life of upward soaring and of forward reaching after that which is above and beyond, a life of more intimate communion with the unseen. That is to say it will be a life of hope, a hope as much more exalted and inspiring than that which now encourages us, as the good which is there to be enjoyed and there to be longed for, surpasses all of which we have yet had any knowledge. And if here a life of hope, and of earnest waiting, of joyous expectation, of persevering progress, is nobler than a life of sluggish inertness, of dreamy sleepiness, of shallow contentedness, then most assuredly will a life of purer endeavor, of more blissful anticipation, of more earnest purpose, of more joyous

assurance, sustained by a richer experience of Divine love, surrounded by still more manifest encouragements of Divine favor, be nobler than a state of quiescent rest, of ruminating enjoyment, of blissful self-absorption, even in heaven. Faith and Hope have a perennial greatness, that can never pass away. The mind's possessions in the realms of both is boundless. The prospects which they reveal to us are most cheering and glorious. The life which they inspire is by far the worthiest of which we can have any conception. The deeds to which they influence us are the grandest that lie within the compass of human performance. The results which they bring are the most satisfactory and imperishable of all which the soul can call its own.

But great as are faith and hope, Love is greater. "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three: but the greatest of these is charity. Faith and Hope are of the royal household, but Love is queen.

Let us consider in what respects Love is greatest.

In the first place, Love in its largest exercise includes Faith and Hope. It is their condition, the root of their exercise. Without Love, either is impossible. There is indeed a lower exercise of Faith which does not proceed from love, as when it is said of the devils that they believe and tremble. That however is an exercise which is hardly deserving of the name Faith. It is simply the assent of the intellect to a fact which cannot be denied. It is extorted, compulsory. The evidence of that which is believed, is too overwhelming to be resisted; it crushes the soul into silence. The mind can no more help believing it, and admitting its existence than the eye can help seeing when the image is formed on the retina, or than the sensorium can help feeling, when the nerves are affected by any cause producing pleasure

or pain. There is no merit, no nobleness about that. That is not Christian faith.

This is voluntary. It is active, not passive.

It unites itself to its object, clasps it, embraces it, clings to it, saying to it—"Mine, mine forever!" And in other feelings or rather in another phase of the same feeling—"Thine, thine forever!" Now it says of God—"He is mine," and again it says to God, "I am thine." Now it says of Christ, "Mine!" and then it calls out to him—"Thine!" But this you see is very much like love. It is just such language as love uses. It is indeed of the very essence of love. One cannot thus speak, feel, or act toward an object, unless he has first loved it. One cannot thus cast himself on another, surrender himself to another, identify himself with another, without loving him. One cannot thus dwell on any reality, calling it up continually before the mind, feeding the soul on its beauty and fullness, until it becomes vividly, constantly, and indispensably present, unless one has first loved it. On the other hand one cannot love an object without exercising faith in it. If it were not trustworthy, it could not be loved; and being loved it must needs be trusted, it must receive the affectionate reliance of the heart. One is a faith working by love, the other is a love working by faith.

In like manner it may be said that love includes hope. If a man love God, he will hope to know more and more of him, to come into more intimate communion with him. If a man love Christ he will hope to see more of his glory, to taste more of his goodness and preciousness, to partake more of his image. If a man love the Holy Spirit, he will hope for a larger outpouring of his grace, and for a fuller indwelling of his presence. If a man love his fellows he will hope in their behalf for their progress and prosperity, and for new

opportunities of aiding and serving them. If a man love the Church of God he will hope for its growth. If he love his work he will hope for success. If a man love holiness, he will hope for more and more of participation in its life and blessings. As was remarked of Christian faith, so it may be remarked of Christian hope; it is a hope working by love, and a love working by hope.

Secondly: the superiority of Love to Faith and Hope, may be seen in the fact that Love is the end to which the others minister. It is true that all the other graces, faith and hope, depend on Love, as the light of the lamp depends on the oil that feeds it. Take love away, and all would perish. To quench love, and then bid men to believe or hope would be like dividing the main artery, and expecting the heart to keep on beating. But it is just as true that love is the end, as that it is the source of all other graces. Faith and Hope are appropriative powers in the spiritual life. They are faculties of acquisition. It is their nature to take possession of those great and blessed realities, which are essential to our life, to hold them for the soul's benefit, to obtain out of them nourishment, strength and joy. Their action is mostly reflexive, tending back to ourselves. But man was not made for himself. He was not made to gather up treasures for his own use and delight only. Appropriation and possession are not the end of his living. The treasures which he possesses are to be bestowed again. The strength which he acquires is to be used again. The joy which flows in upon him, must flow out from him again. And it is in that which goeth out from a man that his true life consists. It is here that we look for character, personality, influence, holiness, in their largest measure, and in their ripest results. It is here that the image of God shines

forth with the greatest brightness, and that God's glory in man is most abundantly revealed. And this brings me to remark :

Finally, the greatest of all graces is love, because it is most Godlike. What is the character of God? Is it that of a being who lives only in himself, who is absorbed in the contemplation of his infinite perfections, who concentrates all his energies in the production of his own happiness? What is the life of God? Is it that of acquisition, of ingathering, of self-ministration? Is he an infinite vortex into which all things are drawn and in which all things are lost? Nay! call him rather an infinite Heaven, eternal in its depth, inexhaustible in its fullness, forever pouring forth streams of health, of power and of joy. Call him the great central sun of all existence, who radiates light and life and blessedness to the uttermost recesses of being. The life of God is one of communication, of inspiration. He is, as the Apostle James calls him, "The giving God." He is forever bestowing himself and whatever is best and most precious in himself on others. It is true that all things are in him and through him and for him; that he has created all things for his own glory. But what does this mean? Is it to make them the subjects of arbitrary regulations, which look only to his own gratification and exaltation? Far from it. To say that God has made all for his glory, whatever else it may mean, means more than all else, that he has made all for his love, for love is the glory of God. He glorifies himself by glorifying his love. He created all in love. We acknowledge no necessity in God to create, other than the necessity of loving. It is no evidence of imperfection in him that he desired (I had almost said yearned) to be surrounded by a universe of holy beings, in whom his glory might be reflected, whom he might

love, and who might find their highest joy in imitating and responding to his love. It was much rather an evidence of his perfection. And now, having created such beings, his ever blessed life accomplishes itself in the perpetual communication of his fullness to them. The life of God is a life of giving, a life of love. Yea, in the incarnation of Christ, it reveals itself as a life of service. He, the highest of all, appears in Christ as the servant of all. I say then that a life of love, a life of self-surrender, of self-forgetfulness, of self-sacrifice, of humble and affectionate service, of devotion to the well being of others, and of consecration to the glory of God is the most Godlike life possible to man. By such a life we become like our Father in heaven. He is pleased with our faith and he deserves to be trusted, but in his own life he has no need of faith. He takes delight in our hope, he invites us to hope and encourages its exercise; but he himself is above hope. But he is especially pleased with our love, for God himself is love; and in nothing is his infinite greatness more shown than in his infinite love. Now, therefore, there abideth faith hope, love, these three, but the greatest of these is love, for God is Love.

And now, behold these three witnesses for the truth of God, essential, irresistible, eternal. Faith, Hope, Love, glorious Trinity of graces! What a testimony they furnish to the Divine origin of the gospel, to its power and perpetuity! How triumphantly they vindicate the adaptation of Christianity to man's nature, its fitness to be the determining factor of his destiny! What other system, what other religion is there which can give such vitality and potency to these exalted exercises? How does faith fare outside of the gospel? It can scarcely be said to exist. Scarcely a trace of its presence can be found. It is overpowered by the do-

minion of sense. There it wages a fruitless struggle with unbelief, fruitless because it finds so little to justify or to support it. In one system it is contemptuously set aside, its place usurped by science, falsely so-called—everything is refused which can not be understood or accounted for. In another system it is perverted to superstition, the victims of which believe only in that which makes the soul crouch and cower in abject servility. In another system yet, it runs into fanaticism, which may indeed inspire the soul for a time, but which, at the same time, intoxicates it; bewildering its vision and disturbing its equilibrium, while the intoxication lasts, leaving the soul prostrate, imbecile, helpless, when it is gone. How does hope fare without the gospel? There is no hope. It is the literal truth which Paul affirms of the heathen that “they are without hope.” That light which shines in the uplifted eye as the fore gleam of heaven, that looks into futurity, which shines with the anticipation of the glory to be revealed, is not to be found where Christ is unknown. To the world which has never rejoiced in the life and immortality brought in through the gospel, the future is a blank, a vacuity, if not an abyss of despair. Its hope is at best a sickly sentiment, a blind yearning, a longing agony; while at the worst, and to most it is a fitful dream, an elusive phantom, a fatal mockery. How fares it with love where Christ is a stranger? It is stifled by doubt; it is driven out by fear; it is paralyzed by unbelief; it is consumed by the feverish tortures of superstition, or crushed by the burdensome observances of self-righteousness. God is the unknown god; man to man is an alien.

Nay, my hearers, that faith which makes the unseen world a present reality, which makes man a seer of the

invisible, which gives him the strength that comes from communion with the Eternal, which is the victory that overcometh the world, is the product of the Gospel which bids man to believe and live. That hope which makes him a denizen of two worlds, which constitutes him the heir of immortality and incorruption, of boundless being and of endless life, that hope by which in a world of doubt and darkness we are saved, is the gift of the Comforter, whose voice brings glad tidings to the nations. That love which is the blessed fulfillment of the law, which embraces God, which clasps the world, which annihilates self, which conquers death, which triumphs over the grave, is shed abroad in our hearts by that Holy Ghost, the gift of which makes the gospel the power of God unto salvation. These are, one and all, the fruits of the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. These are powers of the world to come, of that glorious gospel dispensation which has come upon us with the fullness of the blessing of the Infinite God. And this is the gospel which is preached to you to-day. It is the gospel preached by Paul, the Apostle of Faith, who testifies: "I know whom I have believed." "I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me." It is the gospel preached by Peter the Apostle of Hope, who exclaimed: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again into a living hope." It is the gospel preached by John, the Apostle of Love, who says: "We love him because he first loved us." "God is love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him." Nay, it is the gospel preached by Him who is the trust, the hope, the love of all His people to all eternity. He who is the author and finisher of our faith, who is the ocean of our love, He is come

that we might have life and might have it more abundantly, for He fills our life here and our destiny hereafter, with the infinite possibilities of every grace and privilege, and power, which finds its life in Himself. Oh, the blessed gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ! With these essential, imperishable, Divine witnesses to its truth, to the unsearchable riches of the grace which it ministers here, to the ever increasing weight of glory with which it crowns the hereafter, how mighty are the appeals which it makes to us! Is it not worthy of all acceptance from us? Is it not the extreme of folly to reject it? Is not this to rob our souls of the truest life, of their most perfect growth, of their only bliss? Let us open our hearts to receive it. Let us learn now the precious exercises of the faith, the hope, the love, which the gospel both gives and requires. Then will all things be ours, life and death, things present and things to come, all will be ours, and we shall be Christ's as Christ is God's.

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II.

STRENGTH.

Ephesians 6: 10. "Finally my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might."

One of the principal idols of this age is strength. Some ages seem to have admired especially vastness, size: witness the pyramids of Egypt, and the gigantic monuments of Nineveh and Babylon. Others have worshipped grace, beauty: witness the temples and statues of Greece. Others have idolized grandeur, pomp: witness Rome, its Pantheons, Amphitheatres, festivals and triumphal processions. Ours bows the knee to strength. A very significant indication is the name by which it is sometimes called—"the age of Iron." This name which the ancients applied in a figurative sense to a former age is true in a literal sense of ours. The manifold uses to which iron is now put are highly characteristic of the times. Iron roads, iron bridges, iron ships, iron houses, iron monuments, iron ornaments—iron everywhere. Whatever the age disbelieves in, it certainly believes in iron. And not only in its material life must it have iron, but also in man, in character. The representative man of one of the leading nations of the world a few years ago was known as the "Iron Duke." The representative man of the strongest power of to-day has been.

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called by his admirers the man of blood and iron. The ideal man of the Age is the strong man. The Bible, too, believes in strength. It teaches us that there is such a thing as a strong Christian; that the strong Christian makes the strong man. As every man ought to be a Christian, so every Christian ought to be strong. "I bow my knee to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ that he would grant you according to the riches of his glory *to be strengthened with might* by his spirit in the inner man." "Watch ye: Stand fast in the faith: *quit* you like men: *be strong*." "Thou, therefore, my son, *be strong* in the grace which is in Christ Jesus." "Finally, my brethren, *be strong* in the Lord and in the power of his might." Let us consider these exhortations: what, in the Christian sense especially, *it is to be strong*; then, why we are exhorted to be strong *in the Lord*; how Christ is the source of the true strength of man.

1. *What is it to be Strong?*

In judging of strength we must not do it *by comparison* only. There is in the *physical* world no *absolute standard* of strength. We are not to judge of the strength of one particular thing or class of things by the strength of any other thing or class. We have no right to require in everything the strength of iron. The branch of a tree has not the strength of the beam of an engine, but it does not follow that the branch is weak. There is an immense comparative difference in point of strength between the trunk of an oak and a blade of grass, and yet the blade is strong no less than the tree. It may even hold up its head through the same tornado which lays the oak low. No one would dream of requiring the leg of the spider to sustain the weight which rests on that of the horse, and yet the

spider's leg is strong. We are to judge of the strength of everything in view of its own uses and ends, and we are to say that strength is the adaptation of every individual thing to sustain itself, and to secure the ends of its existence amid the various forces by which it is acted upon. Look at the tree. There is the trunk, the branch, the leaf. There is also the strength of the trunk, the strength of the branch, and the strength of the leaf-stem. The strength of the trunk is its adaptation to sustain the weight of the whole tree, amid all the forces which act upon it. The strength of the branch again is its adaptation to support the lesser weight of branchlets and leaves which it has to bear, and to sustain itself amid the forces which act upon it. The strength of the little stem by which the leaf hangs is its adaptation to sustain the life, and to support the weight of the leaf. Whenever either of these fails partially to fulfill its functions, whenever the antagonistic forces without overcome it, it thereby discovers itself to be weak. Whenever the failure becomes entire, whenever the hostile forces without gain a complete mastery over the self-sustaining forces within, the individual dies. Death is accordingly the extreme point of weakness; utter failure to sustain one's self; final exhaustion. So also the strength of man is his adaptation to sustain himself so as to answer the purposes of his existence, and so of the component parts of man. The strength of each faculty is its ability to maintain itself properly in its relations to all other faculties and forces, and to do all that can by right be required of it. A man's *intellect* is strong in proportion to its ability to meet properly all the demands of truth. A man's *feelings* are strong in proportion to their power to satisfy the requirements made on them by beauty, goodness and law. A man's *will* is strong when

it holds its own amid opposing and contending forces, and is not overpowered by them. A man's *conscience* is strong when it keeps itself from being warped or blunted. When either of these faculties fails in these respects it is a sign of weakness, and man is so far weak. When they all fail, when the whole man is rendered utterly impotent to sustain himself in his true humanity, to meet properly all his spiritual responsibilities, he becomes *dead*. Spiritual death is extreme, utter, spiritual weakness.

It follows that one indispensable condition of the strength of any whole is the harmonious adaptation of all its parts to their several ends. The strength of the tree is made up of the strength of each branch, branchlet, twig and stem. The strength of the body depends on the strength of each of its parts. He is not the strong man, who has a stalwart arm and a weak spine; nor he who has strong muscles and weak nerves; but he who is strong throughout, every limb, muscle, and nerve of whom is adequate to its functions. And here we are liable to be imposed upon, we are often in danger of being misled by special results, and to account that strength, which in reality is weakness, or at least the consequence of weakness. A gigantic forest-tree falling with the crash of thunder, and crushing scores of saplings, shrubs, and smaller trees around it, may for a moment make a greater impression of strength than it had ever made before; and yet the tree was really stronger when it stood, proudly rearing its head in the storm, flinging out defiantly its hundred arms so strong, and sporting with the ineffectual winds. The crash of its fall, and the ruin of its feebler brethren of the forest, are the consequences of its final weakness, not the evidence of greater strength. The explosion of a steam-engine, the terrible concussion heard for miles around,

and the scattering whirl of its thousand fragments, may momentarily impress one with the idea of greater strength of some sort; and yet the engine was unquestionably stronger when every part worked steadily in its place, and when the giant force was held in perfect control and docile submission to the conditions put upon it. In the explosion we see indeed the strength of the steam, but the weakness of the engine. So a man may give signs of an apparent strength, which is after all weakness. One may show an impetuosity of spirit, which sweeps along like a torrent, carrying everything before it, and which may be accounted strength, whereas, in reality it is nothing else than an eruption of passion, which ought to be checked by the superior force of will. Another may evince great apparent strength of feeling of sympathy of some kind, which is properly mere sentimental weakness arising from the lack of a controlling power of intelligence. Another may show a rigid inflexibility of will, which may be mistaken for strength, when in truth it is only the inertia of a character lacking strength on the side of the finer sensibilities. There have been men, especially in times of revolution and anarchy—witness the French Revolution—men who were reckoned, and are still reckoned by man to possess great individual strength, simply because they lay all about them in ruins, although in truth, the ruin was simply the result of their own weakness to brave the storm. Their power, if such it may be called, was that of a dead log, hurled by the torrent which it has no strength to resist, not that of the lightning, which in its own strength leaps out of the cloud, and cleaves the tall pine in twain.

True strength then implies perfect self-control; that man should be complete master of himself and be mastered by nothing; that all the component forces which

make up his being should be kept in harmony, and held in rightful subordination to the great ends of his existence. Whenever any one usurps the mastery over the rest, it is a sign of weakness, and the man becomes a slave. The strong man is the only free man. "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his own spirit than he that taketh a city."

These general considerations will prepare us for the Christian idea of strength. As Christianity is the restoration of humanity to its original idea through a special Divine agency, Christian strength must be the true strength of man produced and developed in accordance with that Divine agency. We may say that Christian strength is *that which adapts man to act out his true self, his regenerated self, amid and against all counter forces from without, and at the same time to preserve the inward harmony of all his powers, and of those divine forces which accompany the new life in the soul.* Really as the true Christian alone is the true man, so Christian strength is alone the true strength of man. For sin makes man weak; it destroys his adaptation to maintain and to live out his true self. He must be delivered from sin before he can become really strong, and as Christ is man's salvation from sin, it follows that *Christ is the true strength of man.*

But let us examine the matter a little more closely, and consider some of the reasons why the apostle in the text exhorted the Ephesians to "be strong *in the Lord and in the power of his might.*"

2. *Christ is the true strength of man.*

1st. Because he establishes *harmony* within man. Sin is discord, disunion, disorganization. It sets man at variance with himself. It makes *two* where God designed there should be but *one*. In every department of hu-

man nature, in every faculty of the soul, in thinking, in feeling and in acting, we see this two-ness when there should be one-ness, division where there ought to be union. We see it in the *intellectual* nature of man. His views of right are continually coming in conflict with his views of expediency. Every day his convictions of duty clash with his ideas of utility. The path of integrity and the path of profit seem frequently to cross each other at right angles. Sometimes right itself seems doubtful. Sometimes duty itself seems divided. There seem to be two pole-stars in his heavens, and he is often at a loss which to take. The same division exists in his affections. The Law of the Right pulls him by the one hand; self-interest pulls him by the other. Truth shines before him with the quiet, beautiful light of a star; he loves it—error gleams before him with the dazzling brilliancy of a meteor; he is fascinated. Virtue appears to him in calm serene beauty, and he humbles himself at her feet and swears eternal allegiance. Vice follows with her pleasure-train, entangles him in her wiles and lures him away from his first love and devotion. He knows not his own heart. Not only are there two poles in his heavens, but there are two magnets in his vessel; one points hither and one thither; which shall he follow? His *will* again seems divided. Now he wills the right and now the wrong. At one time he chooses virtue, again he chooses vice. Yesterday he did an act of benevolence; to-day he performs an act of unmitigated selfishness. He has a double self—as he has two pole-stars over head and two magnets in his vessel, so also he has two rudders directing him; and alas! for the most part, he chooses his evil star, he follows the erring magnet, he obeys the Devil's rudder and drifts away from God into the gulf of eternal

death. Such a division is of necessity weakness. A ship which should have on board two different magnets, pointing to two different poles, two opposing rudders, two propelling engines, the one working against the other, two sets of officers countermanding each other's orders, could make no headway. It could accomplish no voyage, it must inevitably be wrecked. A State which should have two governments, two bodies of rulers, two codes of laws, two supreme courts, irreconcilably opposed each to each, could have no internal strength; it must crumble to pieces.

An individual who should have two pairs of lungs, one absorbing life into the blood, the other poison; two hearts, one diffusing the poisoned blood through the system, the other diffusing the pure; two brains, the one picturing realities to the mind, the other picturing lies, would perforce be weak and grow ever weaker, and soon would die of sheer exhaustion. Even so man when divided against himself, when he has within him two contending principles, two opposing forces, can not help being spiritually weak. "If a Kingdom be divided against itself, that Kingdom can not stand," says Christ; "and if a house be divided against itself, that house can not stand." May we not add, "if a man be divided against himself, that man can not stand."

But Christ gives harmony. He makes one. "He is our peace." He makes man a unit, and thus gives him strength. As union is the strength of the many, so unity is the strength of the one—Christ gives man one-ness. He harmonizes all his powers and makes him a unit. Christ gives unity to the understanding. On this account he is called "Light"—"I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." He who

has the spirit of Christ knows what is right. The path of duty is one before him. That moral crossness of the soul's vision, which sin induces and which makes man to see double, is removed. The spiritual eye, the light of the inner man is made single, sound, true to the facts of existence. Man sees with the eye of Christ, and he walks with a brave, strong step. "The way of the wicked is as darkness, they know not at what they stumble;" but "the path of the just is as the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Christ gives unity to the *affections*. Where he is, the heart is one, the feelings are not drawn apart in contrary directions. They do not fly after this thing and after that thing, for there is a great spiritual magnet in the center of man's being, which draws all into one, and keeps all one.

Christ again gives unity to the *will*. He makes life one; the embodiment of one principle—love; the outflowing of one Spirit—His own; and thus the will is made strong. It has one choice—Christ: One thing to do—the will of Christ. Man is enabled to say, "for me to live in Christ," and he who can say that is the strongest of men. He has strength for every trial, and a "heart for every fate." But not only does Christ give unity and strength to the various powers of man's being *individually*, but he gives unity and strength *to the whole*, by establishing them in *their true relation to each other*. He assigns to each its rightful authority, or its proper subordination. Like some wise Ruler who enters an insurgent province and deposes the rebels who have usurped the power belonging to its legitimate governors and magistrates, puts down the mob which would carry out its own blind will, and restores law and order, so Christ enters the soul, deposes those faculties of sense which have usurped the rule

over it, puts down the wild mob of passions, and lusts, which would make their blind will law, gives to Reason and Conscience their rightful sway, and puts love on the throne to rule over all. He allows no one part of man to tyrannize over the rest. The sovereignty of love is no tyranny. The bondsman of love is the only free man. "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant (the slave) of sin:" but "if the Son make you free, ye shall be free indeed." Now then, as that state is strong, which has one source of power, one law-making power, one law-administering power, one law-interpreting power, each one in perfect harmony with the rest, and in proper dependence on them; as that commonwealth can sustain itself against foes without and dangers within, do the work of a Sovereign State, and make itself a power in the world; as the ship which has one rudder, one compass, one captain, one company of officers, one crew, with every man at his post, with every plank tight, with every spar, rope, and sail in its place, will prove stronger than wind and wave, and "walk the water like a thing of life"—so the man, whose bodily organs are all sound, whose heart and lungs act harmoniously, whose brain and nerves are in perfect sympathy, all of whose muscles and limbs play in blithe obedience to his will, and whose pulse joyously beats time to the pulse of nature is the strong man physically; so he, whose intellect is one with itself, whose heart is one with itself, whose will is one with itself, whose whole being is one with itself, and who is thus *made* one by Christ, who thinks Christ, who feels Christ, who lives Christ, is the strong Christian, the strong man. He is strong with the strength of Christ. "Strong in the Lord and in the power of his might." Christ is the true strength of man because he restores man to the true use and end

of his existence. Nothing can be strong when perverted to wrong uses—we have seen that nothing can be strong which is not harmonious, in all its parts, and one with itself. But by this harmony we understand the fitness of each part to do its duty in reference to the whole, and the adaptation of the whole to do the duty of the whole. By the harmony of the tree we understand the fitness of the buds and leaves to do their duty, the fitness of the stems to unite the buds and leaves to the branches, the fitness of the branches to unite the whole to the trunk in one tree, so as to answer the purposes of the tree's existence. The tree is strong, only when the whole tree, and all its parts, answer every purpose of their existence. If the bark were stripped off for other purposes than to protect the channel by which the sap is conveyed, if the branches were twisted into fantastic shapes, or crushed by heavy loads, instead of supporting the leaves and fruit, if the buds were all picked off to be used for ornamental purposes, the tree would be a failure; it would become weak and die.

The pleasure yacht with its exquisite curve of side and bow, its light spars and slender rigging, which is so strong in the race, would prove utterly weak if employed to carry a heavy cargo of iron; while on the other hand the coal barge with its blunter outlines, its broad prow, flat keel, and heavy beams would only be laughed at in the regatta. The camel, the ship of the desert, so strong on its native sands, would be perfectly helpless in the cold of Greenland; while the reindeer which bounds so swiftly and so strongly over the northern snows, would be worse than useless in an African Caravan. So man is strong only when he answers the purpose of his existence.

Whenever any single faculty is perverted, whenever

he fails to answer the purpose, which God in his creation designed him to answer, he becomes utterly weak, spiritually dead. Every power of man is strong, the whole man is strong only when that end is accomplished for which he was made. What then is the end of man? Let God himself make answer. "I have created him for my glory." Man was made to show forth the glory of God, to express as far as he may that which is glorious in God. This, indeed, is the design of all things. "The Lord hath made all things for himself." "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord." Man has the capacity to express more of what is divine, more of what is glorious in the Infinite than all the works of God. It is said that he was made "in the image," in the likeness, "after the similitude of God." He is to express not only the greatness, the power, the wisdom of God, but his holiness, his truth and his love.

But alas! Sin has marred it all. Man is no longer a complete Revelation of the Divine. He no longer unites with the heavens in declaring the glory of God. The stars, indeed, pure as when the "morning stars sang together, and the sons of God shouted for joy," still roll on—

"Forever singing as they shine,
The hand that made us is Divine."

The lily still wears the loveliness, and breathes the fragrance of its native Eden, reminding us that Earth is ever dear to heaven. But man—Oh! Man is Ichabod—his glory is departed, he has lost the uses of his being, he has forgotten why he is here. The Prophet of the Most High has buried his commission. Divine messages committed to him, like the Sybil's leaves, are scattered to the four winds, and he himself is become a "feeder of the herds and swine." The High Priest

of Jehovah, anointed to minister in his Temple, and to enter daily into the Holiest of Holies, has become an unclean thing. Urim and Thummin are speechless on his breast, he sets up golden calves, and says to himself, "These be thy gods." The Vice-gerent of the King of Heaven, whom his Lord has crowned with glory and honor, and made to have dominion over the work of his hands, is become an idiot, who trifles with the crown placed on his brow, and plays with the sceptre put in his hands, as though they were mere baubles. "How is the gold become dim, how is the most fine gold changed; the stones of the sanctuary are poured out in the top of every street. The precious sons of Zion, compared to fine gold, how are they esteemed as broken pitchers, the work of the hand of the potter."

But Christ creates man anew in the image of God, and thus restores him to his true uses. Christ is the image of God; to be like Christ is to be like God. To be in the image of God is to be brought to the true use and end of humanity; to fulfill that use and to answer that end is to be strong; Christ, and Christ alone, is the true strength of man. And thus we arrive at a more definite, and at the same time, a higher idea of strength. If strength is, as we have seen, the adaptation of everything to fulfill its uses, and if, as we have also seen, the highest use of every created thing is to express something of what there is in God, true strength must be power to make that expression.

The strength of the sun is its power to express so much of the Divine brightness and power as God has put into it. The strength of the flower is its power to express so much of the Divine beauty and loveliness as God has breathed into it. The strength of man is his power to express so much of the Divine truth, of

the Divine strength, of the divine tenderness, of the Divine love, as God has inspired into him. Do we desire then to be strong? Let us be Godlike. Do we wish to be Godlike? Let us be like Christ. Let us be in sympathy with him. Let us receive his spirit. "In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and ye are complete in him."

But once again, Christ is the true strength of man, because he inspires man with love. Strictly speaking, the harmony of man's being and his restoration to his true uses, are conditions of strength rather than strength itself. The essence of that strength is love. Love, indeed, is necessary to those very conditions. What but love harmonizes man? Whence arise the distractions of his inner life but from the want of it? Why the conflict we saw in the intellect between expediency and right, self-interest and duty, but because man seeks himself? Would that conflict exist if man should make a complete surrender of himself to God? Will not love decide at once and forever that what God wills is best to be done? Can that heart again be divided in its affections, which is filled with one great love that absorbs all other feelings into itself? And is not that *will* one with itself, all of whose acts are the spontaneous manifestations of an all-controlling love?

Nearly all of man's troubles and perplexities in life come from making himself the center of existence. This, it is true, seems much the simplest way to arrange the universe. So, to the old astronomers, it seemed altogether simplest and best to make this earth the center of everything. What was the sun good for, but to give light to the earth by day? or the moon but to give light by night? or the stars, but to help the moon the best they could? Then why should they not all

swing about the earth? But it somehow happened that the more they observed the changes and motions of the sun, moon and stars, the more puzzled they were to account for them, the more crooked became the lines around this earth-center, and the more decidedly awkward and rickety became the universe day after day. But finally one, more sagacious than the rest, and whose heart I think must have been large as well as his brain, ventured to guess that, possibly, this earth might not be the center after all; what if it were the sun? And sure enough, no sooner was the assumption made, than most of the difficulties vanished, things began to look a little safer, harmony reigned once more and spheres rung out their wonted music as of old.

And so when man makes himself the central point, he is involved in inextricable perplexities. All is in confusion. The orbits of righteousness and truth form all sorts of curves. Eternal stars become wandering meteors; the everlasting heavens topple over his head; no logarithms can save him. He is a doomed man, until he changes his center of existence and quietly sets himself to revolve with all God's creation about it. That which does this for man is love. It makes Christ his center, and sets the soul to revolve around him. It gives stability to all the interests and destiny of man, and thus makes him strong. "I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved."

Love again is the perfect restoration of man to his true end; for love is the truest expression of God, and in love—the love of God, of man, and of all that is spiritual, good, and true, man fulfills the great purpose of his existence.

But not only is love necessary to all other conditions of strength; it has also uses of its own as an element of

strength. It absorbs and concentrates all other feelings in itself. It is the flux which fuses them all in one. It penetrates with its own essence, it purifies to its own brightness, it intensifies in its own glow every higher and nobler feeling of the soul. Love is Faith, Humility, Hope, Reverence, Gratitude, Joy, Zeal, all melted together into one living stream, which gushes and rises, and heaves until it overflows all bounds, and bursts through the floodgates of the soul in one strong tide, which, like the old Ocean Stream of the Ancients, pours itself around the world, and encircles all being in its never ceasing flow. When now we remember how strong is each one of these feelings, that there is not one but has had its martyrs, not one but has nerved man to face adversity, suffering, and death, how strong must be their union, and how strong must that man be in whom they are all taken up into a higher energy, and blended in a love "strong as death, which water can not quench, neither the floods drown."

Love is strength again, because it makes man to forget himself. He who is forever haunted by his own shadow is weak. Man is always stronger in another, than himself. The strong men of the world, those whom we call heroes, its Davids, Pauls, Luthers, Knoxes, its Mohammeds and Napoleons even, were all strong in something else than in their own strength, the poorer sort of them in an irresistible fate which impelled them in their course; the better sort in a God who inspired their hearts and held them in his hand. "The Lord is the strength of my life" said David, "of whom shall I be afraid." "I can do all things," said Paul, "through Christ which strengtheneth me." "Stand thou by me, thou true and eternal God," was the prayer of Luther at the Diet of Worms. "Hast thou chosen me for this end? But I know for a surety thou hast chosen

me. Ha! then may God direct it, for never did I think in all my life to be opposed to such great lords, neither have I intended it. Ha! God then stand by me in the name of Jesus Christ, who shall be my shelter and my shield. Yea, my firm tower, through the might and strengthening of thy Holy Spirit. The world shall not be able to force me against my conscience, though it were full of Devils, and though my body, originally the work and creature of thy hands, go to destruction in this cause. Yea, though it be shattered to pieces, Thy word and Thy Spirit they are good to me still." *

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III.

COMPLETENESS.

Col. 2: 10. "And ye are complete in him."

Completeness, fullness, is an essential characteristic of true religion. The Christian state is one of completeness. In it man has been filled up, wholly and in all his parts filled up, with life; with Christ; with God. The fatal defect of all false religions and of all false conceptions of religion, is that they are partial, one sided. They take a part of religion for the whole. Man must have some religion, something, at least, that he can with some show of reason call his religion, and every form of religion in which man tries to believe must have something in it of truth and divineness, something which resembles, or is a part of true religion. It must be true so far as it goes. But false religion does not go far enough nor deep enough, and this it is which makes it fatal. Of all errors partial truths are the most pernicious. Of all partial truths, partial views of religion are the most dangerous. It is to some of these I would ask your consideration at this time, in the hope that we may be led thereby to understand better, and to value more highly, that completeness of spiritual development which belongs only to the life of Christ in the soul.

The first form of false religion to which I would direct your attention is that which, recognizing the claims

of the intellect in the man, would identify religion with a creed. This you will observe embodies a partial truth. Religion is a matter of belief. That is but a partial religion not worthy of the name which does not appeal to the rational principle, which does not recognize the importance of a solid healthy intellectual belief. That religion is a poor religion which does not enrich the mind. That religion is a weak religion which does not strengthen the understanding. That religion is itself ignoble which does not ennoble the intellect. A mere religious sentimentalism will not permanently satisfy active and thinking minds. It must furnish food to such and to all for thought and reflection. And the excellence of Evangelical Christianity is shown in this, that while it is so simple in its presentation of the more important truths which are necessary to salvation that the humblest intellect may understand them, it is at the same time so rich and manifold in its contents, that the loftiest intellects need not be weary in studying them. Let us now proceed to study a few other of the prevalent misconceptions in regard to religion. To some minds religion presents itself as a mere creed. It requires our faith in central doctrines. And in religion as well as in business, in government, in art, in philosophy and in politics, what a man believes is a matter of some consequence. In all ages of the world good men have thought it important to define their views, to draw the line as accurately as they could between truth and error. There never was a political party which did not have its creed. It was a necessity that the Church in developing its life, in unfolding its consciousness, in justifying principles and in assailing error should present to the world harmonious and systematic statements of what it believed. This necessity recurred continually, as often as the Church entered upon some

new phase of its life or as often as some new form of error threatened the integrity of its faith. In this way creeds arose. They were a necessity, and yet they had their danger. There was danger lest the human should be exalted into the place of the divine. There was danger lest the form should take the place of the substance, lest the spirit which giveth life having departed, the latter should have power only to kill. This indeed has been too often the result. The Church has too often made a Bible of its creed. It has made more of the shell than of the kernel. Men have mistaken intellectual acquiescence in certain doctrines for faith. One of the greatest obstacles to the progress of Christianity has been a dead, petrified orthodoxy. A live orthodoxy is a great and mighty power. Right thinking is at the bottom of all right doing, it is the pith and core of every manly, brave, successful life. But for the very reason that a living orthodoxy is a power and a blessing, a dead orthodoxy is an incubus and a curse. The best things perverted are the most dangerous. A live creed is inspiration; a dead creed is strangulation. We have heard, I admit, enough, and more than enough of that honest doubt in which some one has said there is more faith than in half the creeds.

I wish to say nothing to encourage the fashionable cant of the shallow would-be scepticism which prides itself on its doubts. For there is a doubt which is devil-born. No true, earnest thinker was ever proud of his doubts. The mind was made for faith; and that mind which does not gird itself valiantly to fight its doubts, which boasts rather of the hospitable entertainment which it furnishes to them, will avenge itself most fearfully. But let no one imagine that a sleepy, lifeless acquiescence in truth is faith, or religion. Convictions are not dead stakes driven into the mind,

however firmly, but living roots, which send themselves ever deeper, which, strengthening, spread and lay hold of the soul's depths, which grow up into pure and noble feelings, and into manly and holy deeds. The question is—what is your creed? Is it a dead trunk, or a living tree? Is it a weight loading down life, or an energy lifting it up? Is it a bolster on which you lay yourself down to sleep, or is it a living chariot in whose wheels is the spirit of life, bearing you on toward the goal of your heavenly calling? Is it a formula, or a faith? Is it an abstraction in the brain, or is it warm blood leaping from the heart, and carrying life through the whole organization? Thou believest that there is one God. Thou doest well. The devils also believe and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man! that faith without works is dead? But as it is the tendency of error always to run to extremes, so we find some who in their opposition to a mere creed religion have fallen into the opposite error of regarding religion as mere sentiment. The Bible lays great stress on holiness. The production of a virtuous life, of a perfect character, is again and again inculcated as the great end of Christianity. In the Sermon on the Mount, Christ's first great public discourse, he made it his aim to unfold the law in the breadth and fullness of its requirements. All through his public life we find him urging this and that duty and virtue. Now humility, now consistency, at one time forgiveness, at another charity. Duties occupy a large place in the inspired presentation of Christianity. By their fruits, says Christ, we shall know them. Faith without works is dead, says one of his apostles. It is clear then that the element of morality, is one of paramount importance. It can not be overlooked or denied. The only way to neutralize it, to make it mean nothing, is

to pervert it, to cut the connection between the outward and the inward life, to sever morality from love and faith, to contract its limits, to take away its vitality. And this is what sin is ever influencing men to do. There is more than one grade of morality to be observed. The lowest of all is that which takes for its standard public opinion, the average social morality of the community, or the statutes and laws of the land. And this poor, flimsy, fluctuating morality is what multitudes call their religion. Down in the secret depths of their souls, they try to persuade themselves that this thing will do to take with them into eternity, and to present unto God. They know that they can not appear before him and say: "We paid no regard to right, we believed in no such thing as duty, we recognized no standard of rectitude—no law to obey." And they flatter themselves that this religion of Social Law, of Public Opinion, of Respectability, will do their turn: that when they appear before God, they can present this miserable pretense and say: "This standard of duty we found in the world about us, this is what was required of us, and to this we sought to conform," hoping that the shortcomings and failures which they know have abounded in their lives may be extenuated on the poor plea that they are no worse than others. Terrible delusion!

Think you that God will set aside his standard for that of Public Opinion? that he will lay by his law, and try men by the laws, the tests, which they have manufactured. Be not deceived. The law by which God judges the world and will ever judge it, is his own. The standard by which he will try men is that which he himself has set up, that which he himself has exemplified. The religion which he requires is in the life of his Son. Judged by this standard of religion which

he gives, not that which society requires, my friend what is your morality worth?

There is another class of morality seekers who differ from the one just spoken of in this: that the standard to which they profess or strive to conform is Divine, not human. They feel that it is not enough to satisfy the demands of society. There is a higher judge at whose bar they must appear. Something more is needed than that which Public Opinion requires. The law of God is broader and minuter. But after all, their obedience is literal and formal rather than spiritual. Their religion is external. It is of the old narrow negative pattern, of the Judaistic type, if I may so call it. There is much more of the "Thou shalt not" in it, than of "Thou shalt." They make clean the outside of the cups and of the platter, but leave that which is within uncleansed. They have the form of Godliness; but the power is not there. God requires humility. And you will find some who make great outward demonstrations of humility. They take particular pains to seem humble, which is a pretty sure sign that there is not much true humility there. The truly humble man is like the violet, which is modest and lowly for the very same reason that it is lovely and fragrant, and which hides itself as humbly, and gives forth as sweet a perfume in the deep dell, where no eye sees it save God's, as by the wayside where every passer by may see it. But where would be the formalist's humility, if he were compelled to hide it? He wears some of the badges of humility, not humility itself. He is proud of what he calls his humility. Tell him that he is not humble and his pride will leap at you like a trodden serpent. It lies low in the grass till you tread on it.

Christ requires self-denial. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself." And some one pres-

ently bethinks himself, "Wherein can I deny myself? What can I give up? What can I do without?" And having found something which he can resign without much detriment or inconvenience, some sacrifice which perhaps to the world seems very considerable, but which in reality is hardly any sacrifice at all, which costs nothing, he makes a great show of self-denial in making that. "He that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me," says Jesus. And the mere moralist walks around among his crosses, tries one after the other, picks out the lightest,—he is very careful to leave behind the heaviest. Who ever saw him endure the soul agony of the true cross bearer, taking up without a murmur any and every cross which is put upon him? When a sharp and heavy cross is thrust on him against his choice, how he struggles against it and tries to throw it off—but this light, easy cross, which he has chosen, or which perhaps he has made—for there is such a thing as men's manufacturing crosses that they may get rid of the cross God puts on them. Ah! this is the very thing! shouldering it as carefully and easily as he can, so that it will hurt him as little as possible, he goes out into the market places, the public streets, and carries his cross as high as he can, that all may see it. He brings it into the house of God, and whenever the duty of taking up the cross is urged he feels comfortable in the thought that he is doing that at any rate. Do you call that bearing the cross? How different from the cross bearing of Jesus, from that which Jesus did, from that which he requires. "He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it."

But there is a higher grade of morality than either of those which have been noticed. There are those who are well convinced that morality is not altogether a thing of the external—that it is not comprised in out-

ward compliances merely. They are intelligent enough to know that it includes internal exercises, states, dispositions, and performances of the heart, a life within as well as a life without. There are spiritual exercises to be acquired, and enjoyed, moods, feelings, into which the soul is to be raised, duties to be performed by which it is to be elevated. All this is included in religion as understood by the higher order of moralists. I call this religious morality, because after all it is but a form of religion. It is still destitute of its essential spirit, of its vital active principle. And at this point, it may be well to speak boldly of the difference between religion and morality, however high the latter may reach; using the term morality in that lower sense in which it is often used, as contrasting with religion, although the propriety of thus using it may perhaps be questioned. Certain it is, that in its truest, strictest sense, morality is religion. But bearing this in mind, and remembering that morality as we now consider it, is not true morality, using it to designate a formal religion adapted to satisfy the demands of a disturbed conscience, let us see how wide is the chasm between it and true religion. For the latter *is* true, real, the other as I have just called it, merely formal. One goes down to the foundations of life, the other does not go below its surface. Religion is a positive thing; morality a negative. That is moved from without, this from within. The one is inspired by love, the other is prompted by self-interest. Religion asks—How much can I do? Morality—How little? In the former you find purposes which are born out of the deep, like an earthquake, and which upturn the whole life; in the latter you find resolves that are born of the surface which make no change in the current, but which after being borne along by it a little distance scatter and vanish. Religion is righteousness; Morality

self-righteousness. And what, you may ask, is the difference between righteousness or holiness, and self-righteousness? I know not how better to illustrate it than by calling the former a living body, the latter a petrification. You know that if a living plant be buried in the earth, it very often forms a petrification.

As the particles of organized matter decay, they are gradually replaced one by one by particles of earthen or rocky matter, which, because they take the position and dimensions of the decayed particles, assume their precise form and color, until the whole is changed. You have the plant exactly the same in position, size, shape, as when it was first deposited, but with this difference: that whereas at first it was composed of organized matter, it is now a stone. In like manner a process goes on in the soul of the self-righteous moralist, by which the life of whatever good has found its way into him is taken away, leaving only the form, the appearance. In the higher forms even of mere morality, we find an imitation of religious experience. The man is not satisfied with the mechanical performance of outward duty. He feels that more is needed. There must be feeling, desire, resolutions, plans, endeavor and enjoyment. So he cultivates these inward experiences. He seeks to excite those feelings, to put forth those designs, to form those resolves and plans, to create that sense of enjoyment which might be deemed appropriate to a religious life. But there being no true love to God, no real communion with Christ to sustain that life, very soon it begins to decay, and pride, vanity, self-righteousness, self-sufficiency, enter and fill the soul experiences, penetrating the whole inward life, taking the place of what was there before, until whatever of goodness and divineness there may have been about these experiences at first, vanishes, is

displaced by selfishness and pride, until the whole becomes a dead, hard mass, preserving the form, the color, the attributes of a religious life, but with no warmth, no sweetness, no growth. Such, brethren, is selfishness—a petrification, petrified righteousness. The infusion of self petrifies the whole. The noblest exercise of spirit, if self takes possession of it, is degraded. The richest experience of the soul, if self worms its way into it, is killed at the very core, until all of its sweetness and nutriment dies out of it. The best deed of the life, if self fastens on it, is smitten with a blight, and its glory and freshness are eaten as by mildew. That religion is imperfect which does not lay its claim on the whole man, which does not penetrate and renovate his whole being from center to circumference. No religion can command the obedience and respect of mankind permanently, which does not commend itself to the judgment, which does not bring within the circle of its influence the thinking faculties.

Some vague, dreamy sentimentalism may please for a time, but nothing calling itself a religion can give lasting satisfaction which does not recognize the claims of the rational principle in man. For man is distinctively a rational being. He is, indeed, a being of emotions, of affections—and in man these emotions and affections are of a far higher order than in irrational beings, of purer essence, of loftier reach and of wider range, of sweeter exercise. But they are higher, purer, loftier, sweeter, because man is endowed with intelligence—with reason, which brings him into wider and nobler relations, into contact with beings and realities that deserve and inspire feelings of a far more elevated order. One thing corresponds to the other. The depth of the feeling is proportioned to the height of the intelligence. It is true, on the other hand, that

the development of intelligence is aided by the power of feeling which man possesses. Take away the latter and the reason would be shorn of more than one-half of its power. There is an element of feeling in the higher operations of the reason which cannot be eliminated without serious loss. What would be the soul's perceptions of the attributes of God, of Eternity, Immortality, Beauty, without feeling? We may hold then, as indisputable, that the elevation of feeling is proportionate to the ennobling of the intellect—that to enrich the heart you must enrich the mind. To carry the feelings you must carry the intellect. And this is just as true in religion as in anything else. Religion is a life, but it is a life which fills every channel of the soul. It is a life, not simply a sentiment. It demands honesty, rectitude, earnestness in *thought* as well as in *feeling*. And let me tell you: *that* religion is a false religion which encourages *intellectual indifference*, which does not promote the love of truth and the earnest purpose to possess it. That religion is shallow, untrustworthy, which makes light of a man's belief—a man's creed. That which a man really believes, lies at the very bottom of his life. In rare instances you *will* find a man who is better than his creed; but the rule is, as a man's creed so will his character be. Admitting that sometimes a man may be found whose life is better than his theology, does it follow that the life does not depend on the belief at all? Shall we deny the rule because of the exception? Because we are and should be tolerant in regard to men, are we therefore to become lax, indifferent, in regard to errors?

Are we to withhold our condemnation of dangerous doctrines, because this or that man was a good man in spite of them? Not at all. Because in one or in a few some good influences have neutralized the poison

of the error, the error is none the less a poison. That religion, I say then, can not be the right religion which encourages indifference in belief. Charity is one thing, indifference is altogether another thing. The excellency of Evangelical Christianity shows itself in this, that while it is simple, adapted in its principal features to the humblest comprehension, it is also rich, deep, manifold. Like nature, it is an endless study. Each one of its truths branches out on all sides into the life. You can not take away one without leaving a great vacuum behind it. How poor, how barren, how bleak are the substitutes of modern religionists, when compared with the fruitful field of evangelical truth! How easy to exhaust the former; how inexhaustible the latter! How dull and flat the former become when their novelty is worn off! How new and varied in interest does the latter grow the older it becomes! If it fails to do this, then thinking, acting minds, will ultimately reject it. They will make something else their religion—science, literature, art. This in fact has been the case in all countries and ages where religion has degenerated into sentimentalism. The stronger minds have acquired the habit of looking down on it as something appropriate only for women, children, emotional, mystically inclined people, or the lower superstitious orders, those who are ruled by feeling and impulse.

The gospel is a gospel of sweetness, but it is also a gospel of power. It provides truth in its simplicity, even milk for babes. It provides truth in its sweetness—sweeter than honey, or the droppings of honey-comb. It also provides solid food for a manly maturity. Everyone that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness—for he is a babe. But strong meat (solid food) belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who

by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern between good and evil. Therefore leaving the (elements) principles, let us go on unto the perfection of the doctrines of Christ.

We have considered two forms of false religion; the one recognizing the claims of the intellect seeking to satisfy itself with a creed; the other, recognizing the claims of the sensibilities, contenting itself with mere sentiment. And now—my hearers—let us ask ourselves how do we expect to meet the claims which God makes upon us? Do we seek to content ourselves with the mere form of Godliness? Is our righteousness anything more than self-righteousness? Is our faith that living faith which adds to itself knowledge, and which worketh by love? Is our religion a life which makes itself felt in every part of our being? Let us remember that God demands the whole man; the intellect, the affections, the will, the thoughts, the motives, the purposes, the deeds, the life within, the life without. Nay more; He demands completeness, perfection in knowledge, perfection in love, perfection in life. There is a day coming when our religion, whatever it be, will be tested by the light of God's throne; tested by the fires of his judgment. There is a day coming when the great question with each one of us will be—Have I that which will satisfy the demands of the infinitely just and holy God? My friend, there is but one way of satisfying these demands. If you can say,—Christ is mine! you can meet God without a fear. There is salvation in no other. To know Christ, this alone is life eternal. Count all things but loss for the excellency of this knowledge. Make this knowledge the substance and essence, the warp and woof of all your creed. To love Christ; to love him with a love which comprehends the divine mystery of his love, a love which even passes knowl-

edge, a love which trusts all to Christ, which hopes for all from Christ, which yields all to Christ, which does all for Christ,—this feeling, this sentiment alone will fit you for that heavenly fellowship with Christ, wherein alone eternal blessedness will be found. To love Christ, to show his spirit, to reproduce his character, to measure all your life by his, to count all things but loss that you may win Christ, to do the work of God, to work as Christ worked, to be his fellow laborer, this is the only life which can endure.

IV.

CHEERFULNESS IN GIVING.

2 Corinthians 9: 7, (latter part). "God loveth a cheerful giver."

The emphasis of this declaration lies in the word "cheerful." God of course loves the giver, the man who freely bestows of what he has on those who are in need; the man who considers that it is a nobler thing to be a cloud distilling mercy and blessing on the place beneath, and exhausting itself in the act, rather than a vortex into which many things are drawn, but out of which nothing is ever seen to come forth. There are men who are like the daughter of the horse-leech, forever crying, Give! Give! There are men who seem to believe that everything and everybody were made for them. They have never learned the truth of the proverb: "There is that which scattereth and yet increaseth." They have never discovered the secret of becoming rich and of feeling rich. Love's paradox of giving without impoverishing is, to the selfish man, an absurdity or a mystery. Such a man the Lord loveth not. He is wholly unlike to God. There is no point of sympathy between his life and the Divine life. There is no principle in him which can delight in God; there is no quality in him in which God can delight. Not so with the giver. He whose life is a perpetual effluence of goodness, charity, goodwill, who radiates as well as

absorbs, who is the servant of others, the benefactor of all whom he can reach, is a man beloved of God. For God is a giver. He reveals himself as the giving God. Everything which he does is a gift. Creation, Providence, Redemption, all the Divine operations are processes by which the All-bountiful One is ever giving away something of infinite beauty and worth. As the sun would cease to be a sun were it no longer to radiate light and heat, so God would cease to be God, were he no longer to give. And because God is such, he loves the giver.

But this general truth being assumed, Paul affirms in the text that God loves *cheerfulness* in giving. Whatever may be God's reason for loving the giver, the same are his reasons for loving the cheerful giver. If he loves the giver, because he himself is a giving God, he loves a cheerful giver because he himself is a cheerful giver. To give and to give cheerfully are indeed in God's mind one and the same. To give grudgingly, reluctantly, to give with the hand, what the heart would keep, to wish back again what has been given, to give of necessity, under compulsion, from fear, for appearance sake, from self-interest, that is not what God calls giving at all. For, in giving, the motive and the manner are everything. Why a man gives, and how a man gives, are of much greater consequence than what he gives, or how much he gives. And therefore Christ commended the poor widow who cast in her two mites into the treasury, above the many rich folks that cast in much. "Verily, I say unto you: That this poor widow hath cast more in than all they which have cast into the treasury. For all they did cast in of their abundance: but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living." God accounts nothing a gift unless the whole heart goes with it. The

merest mite, when Love presents it as her best, is a gift more royal than a kingdom. A throne, when selfishness parts with it, is held of less account than the ashes into which fire might burn it.

But we may go still further and say that the same God who loveth a cheerful giver, loves cheerfulness in everything. I have said already that God's life is one of giving. It follows therefore that as man's life is to be like God's, his true life is also one of giving. It consists in perpetual self-impartment; in the bestowal of one's property, thoughts, affections, and entire life upon others. God loves cheerfulness in all things, and desires that all the gifts of the life, of the mind, the heart, the tongue, as well as the hand should be fragrant with its essence. Look back over the past. Think of the multiform, never ceasing activities of the mind during the twenty, forty, fifty, or seventy years of your life, and of all the thoughts to which those activities have given birth. You cannot realize it at once. Think of all the thoughts which spring up in the mind, or which come floating and drifting through it, one knows not whence, in a single day. You have all of you stood over a fountain and watched the bubbling waters as they came up and up out of the earth, in endless, rising columns, and you have with difficulty persuaded yourself that it is only dead mechanical pressure, and not a living agent, which produces the results before you. You visit it to-day and the drops well up and roll away; to-morrow, and it is the same; the next day, and it is as busy as ever, and your arithmetic fails you in computing the drops and bubbles that spring there forever. And so for years have thoughts been welling up in your soul, not as regularly, nor alas! as purely as the drops in the fountain, and what has become of them? You have forgotten all but a few; they have gathered

together like the dews of the vapor, and stand over the past, massed together in dim overshadowing clouds. The past is like a fog, into which you can see but a little, but is it all dead? Are those thoughts all lost and vanished forever? Nay, let no one think that. Hope not for that, ye whose thoughts have been idle, vain, unworthy it may be, and vile, such as ye might wish were buried forever. Fear not that, ye whose thoughts have been of divine and holy themes, penetrated with sweetness and heavenly joy, such as ye could pray might be your companions forever. They are not buried; they are not lost, they are with God. The all important question is, how did we render them to God? Did we deliver them into his hands humbly and cheerfully, as the free-will offerings of pure and loving hearts? Or did they escape from us, as against our consent, that they might be witnesses against us in the coming Judgment?

The first conditions of cheerful lives, are cheerful thoughts. Thoughts are the staple of our lives. As we think and feel about things, so shall we act in respect to them. Now I need not say, that God desires to receive our thoughts as daily sacrifices of thanksgiving and joy. But the character of our thoughts depends on the character of their objects. If the object is poor and worthless, the thought will be such. If the object is beautiful and Divine, the thought will have the same character. Hence the repeated admonitions of Scripture to fasten our affections on Divine things; because these alone can be evolved into harmonious, and cheerful thoughts, pleasing God. They "breed within us perpetual benedictions." They are born of God, who is light, and they carry with them the brightness and the gladness of light. The nearer we come to the sun, the great centre of light, the less and the fainter will be the

shadows. The reason why we behold so many shadows now is because we live so low, because we so rarely take our flight above the clouds, because we so seldom climb to the "shining table-lands, to which our God himself is moon and sun."

It is not of course to be expected in this life, that the soul should be in a perpetual transport of joy. It should, however, find its equivalent in a divinely sustained cheerfulness, which will be a constant testimony to the ever conscious presence of God's love around us and within us. We are to be earnest, serious, no doubt. We must never forget the great end of living. We must abhor all trifling, all foolery, all petty frittering away of time and opportunity. We must live "as ever in our Great Taskmaster's eye."

But there is nothing in this incompatible with the utmost cheerfulness. Indeed it may be said that only the thoughtful, sober-minded man, who has a clear and distinct understanding of the reality of life, and of the momentous interests which hang on it, can be truly cheerful.

There may be merriment, gaiety, frivolity, among the thoughtless and the careless, but true cheerfulness is unknown except to the heart at peace with itself, at peace with God. The earnest consecration of the life to its great purpose is therefore indispensable to the possession and manifestation of that cheerfulness which God loves.

Bearing this in mind, I repeat that it is every man's duty, by earnest meditation on all that is pure, elevating, and spiritually inspiring, by the constant reception of all holy and Divine influences, to cultivate bright and blessed thoughts, which shall diffuse their gentle glow through all the inner life, and shed their beaming luster over all the actions. Let him think cheerfully of

God. He is not a cold, distant, inaccessible Being, surrounded by impenetrable barriers, shrouded in eternal gloom, a stern, inflexible Fate, or an adamantine, inexorable Law, or a blind and Soulless Force. He is alive with sympathy, aglow with love, radiant with invincible attractions, ever with us, nearer to us than all others, bending over us with a brow of love, telling each one of us "I am thy Father; come unto me, my child; tell me thy wants; speak to me of thy sorrows; cast on me thy cares; declare thy joys. I am ever near thee to guide and save thee. Receive my Spirit; let him teach thee to call me, Abba, Father."

Think cheerfully of life. It is not a blank void, a blank, thorny path, a dull routine of lifeless performances, a dreary succession of vacancies and disappointments. It is, if we choose to make it so, if we submit to the discipline which God appoints for us, a blessed and glorious opportunity, the promising beginning of a career of progress, of ever increasing knowledge, capacity and power. If it has its losses, it has also its gains. If there is much bitterness in it, there is more that is sweet. If we are surprised with unexpected griefs, how much oftener are we not surprised with unexpected pleasures. If there is much to regret for in the past, how much more is there to hope for in the future. If there are many uncertainties before us, how much more numerous, how much more real and precious the certainties.

Let us think cheerfully of the world. It is not going to irretrievable ruin. It is not growing worse from year to year and from age to age. Our fellow-men are not sunk in hopeless imbecility and corruption. The well-being of society is not absolutely dependent on the success of this agency or of that institution. When one

or two men die, the hopes of humanity will not be buried with them. A few failures are not a defeat. Retrogression if an occasional fact, is not the law. God is not dead, has not taken himself away and left the world to its chances. Evil is not stronger than Good. Error is not mightier than Truth. Brute Force will not forever be a match for the Free Mind. Cunning will not always get the upper hand over Honesty. The world will not die in its delusions nor give up the ghost, hugging its lies to its heart. The Blessing, thank God, is slowly removing the Curse. Thorns and thistles are making way for the golden grain and the blushing fruit. The light is advancing, the day is breaking, one by one old errors and superstitions are slinking to their caves to die, while new Truths and Powers are coming forth, as it were, out of their graves, equipped for the battle, conquering and to conquer. The seed of goodness, of heroism, of patriotism, of true religion never perishes. It propagates itself from generation to generation, and the spot from which the Reaper bears away the ripe sheaf now, will hereafter wave with the hundred-fold harvest. There is much for which to thank God in the evidence with which history and experience abound, that he has not left man to himself. Things are not altogether as discouraging even as they look. When all seem given up to idolatry, and the Lord's prophet maketh intercession, saying, "Lord, they have killed thy prophets and digged down thine altars, and I am left alone and they seek my life:" What saith the answer of God unto him? "I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal." Good cometh even out of Nazareth. The foam comes to the surface, while pearls lie hidden in the deep. Out of failure comes humility; out of humility strength.

“Through the shadow of the globe we sweep into the younger day.” The God of Prophecy is the God of History. The world is gradually preparing for that new pentecostal Baptism, which is to dedicate it a vessel for new and long service in the Temple of Jehovah.

Let us think cheerfully of the church. It is not a dead skeleton, or an effete fossil. It is not as yet an antiquated relic, curious only as illustrating the superstitions of the Past. Neither is it altogether an empty shell of formalism, out of which the spirit of life has departed. It is not pure, but it is nevertheless the salt of the earth. It has its divisions, but it has also its unity. Hypocrisy may lurk like a snake within its fold, but the flower of sanctity, nestling in its shelter, grows fairer there than elsewhere. Its influence, although unseen, and apparently small, is yet widely spread, deep, and lasting. It is not to be measured either by its external bounds. For as “he is not a Jew which is one outwardly: but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly,” so all who believe, and who walk in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham, are the children of Abraham, blessed with him, and heirs of the promise which he received. We may rejoice therefore that the Church is broader than those visible and necessary limits by which it is separated from the world; and while we may well mourn that there is so much of the world in the Church, we may give thanks that there is not a little of the Church in the world: in other words, that there is so much of real Christianity outside of our ecclesiastical organizations. The Kingdom of heaven is as Christ described it, like leaven, spreading upwards, downwards, sideways, and in all directions, diffusing everywhere its purifying, ennobling, regenerating, and elevating influences, raising the standard of social and private morality, giving a

higher tone to public sentiment, dislodging vice and corruption from one stronghold after another, putting the brand of infamy on whatever is dishonorable and base, making the pursuit and observance of virtue easier to all who honestly and faithfully undertake it. The church with all its imperfections and shortcomings is still precious to God.

“Dear as the apple of his eye
And graven on his hand.”

Although at times the fire burns low, and it seems chilly and gloomy enough, it is yet the hearthstone of God's household in this world, the home of the Christian brotherhood, where heavenlier joys abound, and diviner pleasures flow, than in any other spot on earth not similarly consecrated by the presence and love of God.

Let us think cheerfully of our age. It is not the worst age known in history. The bad men of our time are not monsters, the like of whom have never been seen. The good men of our times are not degenerated below comparison with the good men of the past. Heroism is not entirely extinct, neither is it altogether inferior in quality. Virtue is not at its very lowest ebb. Dishonesty, fraud, speculation, sensuality, all forms of immorality are not more rife than they have been. God knows that they abound, that there is enough—and more than enough—of them to occupy the utmost energy of every worker and soldier of the Lord. But it has always been so. It will be so for a long time yet. We see and know and feel more of the wickedness, and misery, and shame of to-day, than of the same things in other centuries, because telegraphs and newspapers bring them from all corners of the world to our own doors. But the age regarded in its leading tendencies, its moving forces, its purposes, endeavors, and results is

a bright, noble, and hopeful age, rich with promise, abounding in glad omens of joy to the nations of the earth—an age in which we may well rejoice that we are permitted to live.

Let us think cheerfully of our trials. Sore, severe they may be, hard to bear, unaccountable, different from all we had hoped for or had reason to expect. Still they are not the worst that might have befallen us. They are not sent to crush our spirits, to break our hearts. They do not subject us to losses for which heaven has no compensation. They are not more bitter, more insupportable than have fallen to the lot of those who have gone before us. He who learns to carry the cross, will learn hereafter to carry the scepter. Trials make us humble, and blessed are the humble, for they shall be exalted. Trials make us strong, not in the consciousness of our own power, but in the sense of God's strength made perfect in our weakness. Some days must be dark and rainy days, otherwise the vineyard would yield no wine, nor the orchard bear fruit. If there were no storms the atmosphere would be loaded with death. If there were no clouds, there would be no majestic processions of the King of Glory through the skies.

“Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take,
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and will break
With blessings on your head.”

“All these things are against me,” said Jacob, in a moment of doubt. “All things work together for good to them that love God,” said Paul in the full triumph of faith.

Let us think cheerfully of our work. It is indeed no holiday play. Its demands are stern and inexorable. There is no laying down of arms in our warfare. God's soldier once, God's soldier always. There are no

furloughs in the service; there is no going into winter quarters. Our term of enlistment never expires. Death is promotion, not dismissal. Woe be to the man whose duties have not been performed, and who is not ready for higher service! Alas for him whose heart has failed him ere the battle of life is won! "No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God." But God's work is its own reward. To fight is at the last to conquer. To plough is to reap. It is not sowing to the winds. It is not beating the air. It is not running in vain. It is not exhaustion, weariness and then a long, torpid sleep; it is enlargement, growth, expansion, a coming to the stature of a perfect man, and then a joyous awakening, a resurrection of the whole man to a new and larger life.

Why should we not think cheerfully of all these things? With such a God to serve, with such a Father to watch over us and to bless us, with such a Brother in heaven to remember and to love us, with such a Helper on earth to sanctify and comfort us, with such a heavenly brotherhood reaching from heaven to earth, and from earth to heaven to sympathize with us, with such a world and such an age to live in, with such discipline to chasten and ennoble us, with such a blessed service to perform, with such a heaven before us, why should we not be cheerful? Why should we not rejoice evermore? What thought should discourage us and take away our cheer? The thought of our sorrows? But they are the seeds of heavenly joys. The thought of our losses? But what is it to win Christ? The thought of ourselves? But why think of ourselves? Let our thoughts then be cheerful, such as God loveth. Let the sunshine of his smile be woven into them and around them. Let them

shine as the wings of angels. Let them echo the melodies of heaven. If all our thoughts are bright, our whole lives will be cheerful. They will go forth like the voices of spring, diffusing gladness, content and joy abroad in the world. Many a poor wayfarer who has sunk down wearied by the wayside, will resume his journey with a lighter heart, and a lighter burden, and go on his way rejoicing. Many an unhappy wanderer, led astray by false words, or driven astray, it may be, by harsh ones, may be restored to the right path. Many a tired wanderer, oppressed by his foes, whose heart is growing fainter and fainter, and whose blows fall feebler and feebler, will take new courage and gain new victories. Many a discouraged laborer, whose ploughing and sowing seem to have been all in vain, will begin anew to "sow beside all waters," believing that

"Grace keeps the precious germ alive
When and wherever strown."

Our looks will be cheerful. There will be fewer careworn, pale, troubled, haggard faces in the world; fewer anxious, painful, eager countenances, that seem to be peering into everlasting darkness; fewer dark and clouded countenances, as though the shadow of some cruel doubt were forever resting on them; fewer moody, discontented faces, that indicate the determination to be pleased with nothing that happens; fewer gloomy, morose, misanthropic faces, that are a declaration of hostilities against the whole human race; fewer reserved, impenetrable faces, that keep the soul in a state of blockade from the outer world; fewer proud, supercilious, freezing countenances, that make the beholder shiver in midsummer; fewer suspicious faces, that look as though they conveyed an indictment against all mankind in general, and every body else in particular; fewer selfish, hard, insensible countenances, which seem

to say that the heart is not at home ; fewer blank vapid faces, that seem to say—nothing at all ! Sunny thoughts will make sunny faces. Men's looks will be at once outlets and inlets to their souls ; outlets by which their souls go forth to others, to brighten and to cheer them, inlets or windows by which others can look into them. Men, in their utterances, their appearances, their characters, their whole lives, will mirror the smiles of Divine Joy, delighting with infinite pleasure in " whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report."

"God loveth the cheerful giver:"—who comes into his presence with gladness and thanksgiving, whose songs are cheerful songs, whose prayers are cheerful prayers, whose devotion is penetrated with holy joy. There ought to be no place on earth more cheerful than God's house. It should be a place where the worldly-minded will be struck with the conviction that there are no joys like those of religion, no people so happy as those who can say, the Lord is our God. It should be a place where the weary feel abundantly refreshed, where the mourning may feel comforted ; where all may feel elevated with joy, where the only load known should be that of sin, and where that should be known only to be lost at the foot of the Cross. God loveth the cheerful sufferer, the man or the woman who bears without repining the afflictions of life, who submits without a murmur to its loss, who even rejoices in the thought that every sorrow and trial is proof, not that God has forgotten his child, but rather that he remembers his child, that his is a soul beloved of God. For it is to the glory of God that he can inspire such submission, such trustfulness, such love, that his servant will take

even the bitter cup at his hands, and drink it with cheerful resignation, saying, "Father, not my will, but thine be done!" It is to the glory of God when his promises are believed in, although all around is gloom and darkness, and when the cheerful songs of the bleeding heart bear witness to the assurance that even in his chastisement, God is love.

God loveth the cheerful worker—for by his cheerfulness he bears witness to the delightsomeness of his service:—he testifies that God's Yoke is easy and his burden is mild, that he is the best, the most tender, and just of masters; that the shame and reproach of his service are better than the honors and praises of the world, that in keeping of his commandments there is great reward; that his work can alone satisfy all the desires, and capabilities, and scope of the soul; that his followers have a hundred fold in this life, and in the world to come life everlasting.

It is our duty to be cheerful, to commune with the bright aspects of truth, to look at the sunward, that is the Godward side of everything, to come into sympathy with that Infinite Joy which pulsates in every act and manifestation of God.

It is a privilege to be cheerful. Our happiness, our usefulness will be increased in manifold measure; our fellowship with God and with one another will be purer, and fuller, and we shall dwell forever in the favor of Him, who as he loves the cheerful giver, loves every one who cheerfully surrenders his best and his all to the direction of one so wise, so watchful, so good.

V.

THE NEW COMMANDMENT.

John 13; 34. "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another."

It is the grand character of Christianity as an educational system, that it presents truth and duty, not as abstractions, not as barren formulas, but as incarnate living realities. The Bible gives us few definitions, but many illustrations. The Eleventh Chapter of Hebrews may be taken as a fair specimen of its method. The first verse is a definition: the remainder of the chapter (and it is longer than most,) is a series of illustrations. Truth is not unfolded to us as a system, but dramatized (if I may say so) as a History. Duty is not limited to the bare prescription of what is to be done, but enforced by living examples, arranged in fair adornments, and surrounded by such accompaniments of motion and illustration, as serve more clearly to define, and more urgently to recommend it. Along with each duty God furnishes the standard of its performance, the measure of its fullness. "Be ye perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." "I have given you an example that ye should do as I have done to you." "As I have loved you

that ye also love one another." It is only when we have raised our performance to these inspired standards, only when we grow up in all things into Christ, who is the head, and come up to the measure of the standard of his fullness, that we attain unto perfect manhood. The lesson of the text was designed more immediately for the disciples, and it has still a specific application to his professed followers. Christ's love for his disciples is to be the measure, the law, of their love one for another. But the principle is susceptible of universal application. Christ loves all men and his love for all is the standard by which our benevolence is to be measured. Moreover, as this feeling of benevolence or love is the root of all our relations and actions toward others, we may state the principle still more broadly as follows: In all our relations and duties and conduct toward others, we are to be governed by the example of Christ. Let us consider what this rule of action implies, or in other words, what general course of conduct toward our fellow-men, is made obligatory on us by the example of Christ.

I. In the first place, the example of Christ requires that we should distinguish between men and the circumstances. I use the word circumstances not merely in its later and restricted sense of station or social position, but in its earlier and broader sense, of all that which stands around one, which surrounds him, which, without being a part of the man himself, belongs to him. Among these circumstances we may mention rank, wealth, honors, titles, social considerations, party, family, race. It is manifest to begin with that we are very much influenced in our judgments and feelings concerning others by these belongings and accidents. It is unavoidable, indeed, that it should be so. It is neither possible, nor would it be desirable, if it were

possible, to dismiss these considerations altogether out of account. Thus, for example, race is a great historical and ethical fact, whose foundations lie deep in the constitution of humanity. It is a wise and important arrangement of Providence for the better accomplishment of the work which the family of man is to do on earth. As such it has its claims on us all who are subject to it. There are certain feelings, and duties which belong especially to each individual as member of a certain race, just as there are feelings and duties which belong to each as member of a certain family. I am justified in loving the nation of which God has made me one; in maintaining its honor, in seeking its interests, in aiding it to accomplish its historical mission in the world.

Wealth, again, has its claims in our consideration of men. Money is power, in so far as it is a symbol of what man has done, of what he has achieved and of what he has the power of achieving; in so far as it represents the confidence which society places in his abilities and the worth which it puts on his services.

Titles also, rank, official honors, positions of authority and influence, all by which society expresses its faith in men, its appreciation of personal merit, in the matter of social organization, have the claim upon a just measure of our regard. Parties, schools, sects, in regard to the various subjects of thought and belief on which we are called to judge and act, are unavoidable and not without their advantages. They stimulate inquiry, and help us to broader and juster views. And we cannot help recognizing the bonds which unite together men of similar opinions and aims in regard to those great questions, in the settlement of which we are all interested.

Circumstances, then, are of necessity an element

which we cannot disregard in determining our relations to others, as well as in determining those judgments and feelings which grow out of those relations. This however is very different from saying that circumstances are the only or the principal element in that determination. They are not to be left out of the account, but they are not to rule. We cannot consider man altogether apart from the circumstances, the belongings, but we must not identify men with these. We must not, however, allow these considerations to blind us to facts of greater consequence than they are. We must not put that which is about the man, the dress which he wears, the pedestal on which he stands, for the man himself. We must not confound the accident with the substance. Bancroft defines democracy to be the doctrine of the superiority of man over his accidents. This doctrine is not only democracy; it is Christianity. Manhood above race; manhood above nationality; manhood above family; manhood above money; manhood above party, manhood above every circumstance whatsoever, this is the fundamental principle of Christian democratic humanity. If I let my partiality for my own race carry me so far that I shall wrong one of another race, deny him any right which belongs to him as a man, refuse him any honor which is due to his worth, withhold from him any privilege which would make him a better man, a more useful member of society, put any burden on him which tends to crush his manhood, I sin against my brother, I sin against my own manhood, I sin against Christ. If because of a man's family connections, or social position, I wink at his vices, and gloss his crimes, if I accord to him a measure of deference and respect, which I should scorn to accord to one less favored in his family, or social relations, or if on the other hand, because a man's connections are humble and for no other

reason I hold him at arm's length, treat him with coldness, indifference, superciliousness, a man whom but for this accident of position I should be proud to honor, and to name my friend, I am guilty of conduct which is unworthy of a man. Why, the very fact that a man fights his way up, rises by virtue of an excellence which is superior to the plane in which he is first placed, shows his worthiness to take the highest seat, proves him one of nature's noblemen, and this in despite of all adverse circumstances. This should be his surest passport to any circle and to any heart worthy of him. You love your garden and prize its floral beauties, and enjoy strolling among these better than wading through a bog. But if in some stagnant, reedy fen, you see the soul of beauty, nestling in some lily, which grows amid the rank and slimy weeds, pure as the brow of an angel, you will gather it more joyfully and cherish it yet more tenderly and lovingly, than the proudest queen of the garden.

If I let my party zeal outrun my charity, if my love for the system or church in which I believe is exaggerated into bigotry, if every one outside of my own circle of thought and faith is a pariah, or at best a non-entity, if I can not see that God has many schools and many teachers, and suspect every man whose accent and dialect differs from mine, I am verily as yet, a poor, blind slave. Where, hearer, do we stand in reference to these obligations due from us to manhood as such? The world has much to do yet, to purify itself of its shortcomings in these respects. Even in this Democratic and Christian land, as we claim it to be, society has many steps to take before it will stand on that lofty ground to which Christ beckons us. Even here there are brands of degradation, which scarcely the blood of heroic daring and dying is allowed to wipe

away. There are classes, to which its members are confined with little less rigor than those who belong to a Hindu caste. There are circles which would as soon think of tolerating manhood without money, as a man without a coat. There are estates and conditions which are like deep ravines, flanked by declivities and thorny precipices, from which it is all but impossible to climb. When one by dint of hard labor climbs very near the top, and already rejoices in the hope of planting himself on the summit, too often the heel of prejudice spurns him down again, with a plunging crash to the bottom, where he lies bruised, broken, ruined, with no heart to try again.

But what is the example which Christ has left us in this matter? How do we find him conducting himself toward others? He looks at each one as he is in himself, as a man. His vision is never blinded or confused by any one's surroundings. He knows just how and where to separate between a man and that which has gathered about him. He knows exactly how much is due to the circumstances, how much to the man. He understands what is essential and what is accidental. No one can hope to be accepted by Christ for more than his personal worth. No one need fear to be accepted for less than his worth. His glance burns through all the adventitious and fictitious envelopes in which men are sometimes bound. Amid the dross which gathers around the nugget, he discerns the pure gold if there be any, and knows just how much there is of it. It is vain to rely on pompous pretensions, on class privileges, on hereditary or acquired distinctions, on any one of the foundations on which personal pride and social prejudice so often rest, and are built up. "Jesus did not commit himself unto them because he knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man, because he

knew what was in man." He needed not any of those artificial auxiliaries by which our judgments are formed, and on which our opinions and actions so largely depend. He showed no regard to the commendatory plaudits of society. He did not hold as of the highest value its proscriptive edicts. He did not honor a man because worldly maxims and creeds made him honorable. He did not scorn him because he did not pronounce the Shibboleth of a school or of a class. The Pharisees, flaunting broad phylacteries, found in him no smooth-tongued sycophant. Publicans and sinners, scorned and shunned by the religious aristocracy of the day, found in him a wise and gentle-hearted friend. He received the Pharisee as a man—nothing more, He received the Publican as a man—nothing less. He knew no sect, no caste, no privileged class, no superior or inferior orders. He knew only—man! The woman of Samaria is heard asking in astonishment: "How is it that thou being a Jew askest drink of me which am a woman of Samaria?" The proud and contemptuous Pharisee sees him allow the outcast to bathe his feet with her tears. He mingles with the rich and noble as their equal. The dying thief on the cross hears him say: "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." Thus did Christ love men, and the new commandment which he has given us is, "As I have loved you, do ye also love one another."

II. In the next place the example of Christ requires that we should distinguish between that which is real, internal, substantial in men, and that which is apparent, external, superficial.

Even after you take a man out of his circumstances, after you strip him of his surroundings, there is a great deal yet within the compass of his own personality, of which you must strip him, or through which you must

penetrate, before you can get at his real self. Just as it is difficult to separate between a luminous body, and the halo which gathers round it, so as to mark out sharply the outline of the flame, so it is difficult to separate the inward in the man, from the outward. Some people have the trick of seeming larger than they really are. It is said that the French people were very much surprised after the death of Louis XIV, at finding that his body was so much smaller than they had supposed. The Grand Monarque had succeeded in making an exaggerated impression of his personal proportions by the pomp, and circumstances and grandeur of air, which he assumed. And so intellectually and morally, some seem to fill up a much larger space than they really do. Others look smaller than they really are. Some, like comets, go blazing along a way, drawing a long nebulous cloud after them, and attracting much attention for the time, although when they are more narrowly examined, the nucleus of solid matter in them is found to be exceedingly small. Others are like stars that twinkle and flicker as though they were on the point of going out, although when you bring the telescope to bear on them, you find them to be majestic, mighty suns. Manners do much for men, as it is right to a certain extent they should. It is the right of a man or woman of graceful ways and speech to command homage and devotion. For after all, the best and most genuine manners are not far removed from the noblest qualities of the heart. It was perhaps the perception of this which led the earlier Romans to apply the same rule to manners and morals. Accomplishments are not to be despised. All those natural gifts and acquired arts, which give our access to the affections and regard of others, which carry with them the power to charm, to attract and influence others, are

to be esteemed and prized. Only let us beware of being misled. We are in danger of overvaluing these, or perhaps I should say of undervaluing the more solid, real and profound qualities of a perfect character. In fact, men are continually falling into this error. And the worst of it is, that too often they are willing to be deceived. At least I know not how otherwise to account for such facts as these. A man of plausible ways, specious manners, versatility, wit, tact in social converse, will find entrance, where if his recognition were made to depend on the amount of real manhood in him, he would find the door slammed in his face. A person whose entire mental capital is the airy nothings that sparkle like froth on the surface of fashionable society, will be welcomed, where if a respectable amount of intelligence, and a respectable number of elevated ideas were required as the price of admission, he would be a hopeless candidate for recognition. A person who is versed in the art of flattery, who is careful only to please and acquire popularity, and careless to compromise either the truth or his own integrity will be received with open arms, while another whose exterior is the leaden casket, hiding the jewel of a noble soul, who despises trickery and affectation, whose slightest thought or feeling contains more heart and brain than the former could put into a life, finds cold cheer and freezing welcome.

Again, we often fail to distinguish as we should between a man's former and his present self. There are cases, to be sure, where it is right to remember a man as he was, rather than as he is. This is the right of any grand old man, the hero of a glorious life campaign, in whom the fire of the past now flickers but feebly, and in whom only the shadow of the departed greatness remains. But, on the other hand, we often let the

shadow of an unfortunate past obscure the true beauty and worth of the present. The memory of anything disadvantageous will haunt one through life, eclipsing much real merit. There are those whom a single failure drags down and keeps down. There is a social pride which never forgets, never forgives.

Not so has Christ taught us—"Bear ye one another's burdens" is his law. "Whoso shall offend one of these little ones, which believe in me, it were better that a mill-stone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depths of the sea." "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment. "By their fruits, not by their professions, ye shall know them." Such, also, is the example which he has left us. The smooth plausibilities of the Pharisee did not impose on him. The stammering diffidence of the Publican did not excite his contempt. The ostentatious hospitality of the rich did not dazzle his eyes and prevent his seeing and rebuking its hollowness. In the widow's mite, he saw a love larger than all the other money in the treasury could measure. He sees everyone as he is, and whosoever cometh to him he will in no wise cast out. So does Christ love men; thus does he command us: "As I have loved you, love ye one another."

III. The love which Christ bears for men and which is the standard of our love, may be most fully summed up by calling it the love of a brother. We have seen how the various circles of human relationship too often degenerate into nurseries of selfish views and prejudices. Sectional feelings, party animosities, sectarian bigotries, social exclusiveness, family pride, the narrowmindedness of faction, the superciliousness of caste—these are so many indications of the way in which the brotherhood of the human family is encroached upon by the exag-

gerated and perverted sentiment of narrow spheres. How are these to be resisted? I answer, by looking at our brotherhood as Christ reveals it. He is identified with humanity, that runs all the way through every degree and condition of human life. No man, whatever his race, rank, nation, profession, style, or type of character, may not say "Christ is my brother." He brings all together before God, and says, "Call no man your Father upon the Earth, for one is your Father which is in heaven, and all ye are brethren." Not one body of men anywhere can say with any exclusive claim, "Christ is ours." He had not where to lay his head. Yet Nicodemus, the ruler, stood up for him in the Sanhedrim, and brought myrrh and aloes to embalm his body, and Joseph, the rich man of Arimathea, procured his body of Pilate and laid it in his own new tomb. He preached to the poor, and the rich came to take counsel of him. He dined with the wealthy Pharisee, he ate with publicans and sinners. The common people heard him gladly, and the educated marveled at his wisdom. His character was so symmetrical that no one type will express it. He combined the force, the massiveness, the breadth of man, with the tenderness, the refinement, the depth of woman. He was stern as the rock, gentle as the dew; bold as the lion, meek as the lamb; wise as the serpent, harmless as the dove. He is the center where all perfection meets. His manhood rises above all like the mountains, it expands over all like the firmament, it shines upon all like the light, and every one everywhere can always say of him, as we say of mountains, of heavens, of light, "He is mine."

And now it is our duty to lift ourselves up to Christ, to reach out to every point in the circumference of his life, to come forth out of that narrow, contracted, un-

natural self, into which the world with its thousand adverse powers squeezes us, into that broad, free, generous manhood, of which Christ is the type. We must outgrow the narrowness and littleness and shallowness, into which our lives run here and there; we must get rid of the conventionalisms, the professionalisms which grow around us; we must strive to exert an influence not narrow and partial, like that which the old astrologers attributed to the planets, but quickening, enlarging, fructifying, like that of the summer sun. In proportion as we become like Christ shall we be recognized and claimed by all as brethren. In loving and treating each man as a brother Christ regards all the facts of his condition and recognizes the circumstances which have acted on him, and which have extended an important influence in forming his character and deciding his destiny. The Bible takes pains to tell us that Christ is "touched with the feeling of our infirmities, for in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted." He sees in every man a brother, who has been agitated by conflicting emotions, who has been driven hither and thither by distracting passions, who has been tossed about by the winds of temptation, buffeted by the waves of affliction, wrecked it may be on the "Shoals of guilt," who has made the voyage of life amid storms and breakers, with broken masts, torn sails, shattered rudder, and leaky sides. He sees not one whose will has been his destiny, not one who has molded his character, as our artist forms his statue in the studio where in quiet and uninterrupted communion with his ideal, he gradually and carefully molds his cast, and chisels the marble into the image of the dream of his brain,—but in man Christ sees one who has been shaping his life in the rough quarry, where his foot slips, where his hand is struck aside, where the hurricane or ava-

lanche dashes down his work. He sees one who is tempted, who is weak, whose mind and will are not always his own. He sees him come into the world of evil influences, with susceptibilities to bad impressions, with deranged sensibilities, with inherited infirmities, with no knowledge of himself, or of the world, or of what lies before him, assailed by strong temptations, blinded by errors, whirled by the tempest, dashed from fall to fall, each leaving him weaker and more helpless than he was before. Christ sees all this: and although he himself fell not, although he knew no defeat, no overthrow, no wreck, he knows what it is to be tried. He is filled with sympathy. He knows how guilty we are, none better; it was because he knew so well our guilt, that he endured the cross; but he also knows—none better, how weak we are, how ignorant, how helpless. “Father, forgive them! they know not what they do!” Thus did he pray when his holy heart was most deeply grieved by the iniquity of man, when the exceeding sinfulness of sin stood revealed before him in its most damning deed. Yea! it was even in that hour that the thief at his side was encouraged to pray, “Lord! remember me when thou comest into thy Kingdom!” Not as a cold, unfeeling censor does Christ receive sinners; nor even as a stern, impartial judge, robed in the severity of Eternal Justice: Nay! but as a brother, unfallen, infallible, Divine, but as a brother still. He does not indeed extenuate our unworthiness, he does not hide from us our guilt, nor make us forget how deeply we have sinned,—Ah, no! Where—where do we feel so unworthy, where does the load of our guilt feel so heavy, where do the depths of our heart’s degradation appear so dreadful, where do we feel such shame, such self-condemnation, such humiliation as in the arms of Jesus? But, oh! where is such confidence, such beaming hope,

such cheerful self-abandonment, such joyous boldness, such delightful assurance as on the bosom of our Lord, on the heart of our Elder Brother?

The love of Jesus! Who can describe it? It is the same forever. It suffers no unfaithfulness, or unworthiness in its object to cool or change it. It measures itself by no merit in that on which it bestows itself. It has no tides and ebbs; no such barriers as circumscribe our love. No! Ah, No! It is its own measure; its own law; its own cause. It is its own source; its own channel; its own supply; its own moving energy. He loves because to love is his life, because to love is worthy of himself, because if he were to cease loving, he would cease to be the Son of God. And his love clothes whomsoever he loves, with its own glory. It carries the poor, imperfect, sin-stricken soul to its Mount of Transfiguration, and there beholds it in its future brightness and perfection, as the Disciples in the Mount beheld their Lord in the radiance of his coming glory. As Christ receives us into his fellowship and love, he sees in us not what others see, but Himself, the Lord from Heaven. He receives the weary wanderer without upbraiding, with no reproaches, but with a love which breaks down the heart more completely than the severest censure, with a winning gentleness, whose silent eloquence is more overpowering than the loudest chidings, welcoming him with open arms and open heart to the hospitalities of boundless and endless grace. Shall we, companions in guilt, hold one another off, and act the censor, criticising, condemning, torturing one another with the refined cruelties of sanctimonious self-righteousness? Ah! brethren, the holier we become, the more we have of the spirit and love of Christ, the less will there be of that, and the more of brotherly welcome, guidance, and aid. The more we

are in Christ, the more shall we be one in Christ. Out of Christ there can be no brotherhood, in Christ there can be nothing else. All elements of difference and incompatibility are there annulled; every partition wall is broken down. "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ. For as many of you as have been baptized in Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither bond nor free; there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Jesus Christ."

Let this be our aim: to love more as our Elder Brother loves, with a love which will be itself a living proof that we are his brethren, because our love is something like his.

VI.

LIVING WATER.

John 4, 14, latter part. The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life.

Christ is here speaking of the life which he imparts to the soul that believes on him. This life he describes by one of those simple, beautiful and suggestive images, which he knew so well how to use, and which make the facts of religion so clear and attractive. He was sitting, a wearied and thirsty traveler, at the well of Jacob in the Samaritan village of Sychar. It was the hour of noon, and a woman of the village came to draw water. "Jesus saith unto her: Give me to drink." Bitter sectional and sectarian animosities then existed between the inhabitants of Judea and Samaria, and were carried even to the suspension of all intercourse, so that the Samaritan woman was exceedingly surprised at being thus accosted by a Jew, especially at having a favor asked of her: and she said to him, "How is it, that thou being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria?" Christ, as he had already shown himself far superior to such paltry prejudices, did not in his reply so much as allude to the matter suggested by the woman, but falling back on his own lofty character and mission, he said, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is

that saith to thee, give me to drink : thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." Just as we might have expected, the woman, ignorant, prejudiced, superficial as she was, had not the remotest conception of the sublime truth thus announced to her; but taking the terms "water" and "drink," in their literal sense, and having had her curiosity and her pride touched by the words of Jesus, she replied with mingled incredulity, wonder and disdain, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep; from whence then hast thou this living water? Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well and drank thereof himself and his children and his cattle? Christ then made to her that strange reply of which the text is a part, "Who-soever drinketh of this water shall thirst again; but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." This latter clause, to which I ask your especial attention, seems designed to expand and still further develop the truth implied in the gift of living water. Christ says that this gift is not a boon to satisfy a present want, not like a cup of water given to quench the traveler's thirst, but a gift which is to abide, to be retained, to develop the same, and even greater results, a "fountain springing up into everlasting life."

This image of a fountain will suggest to your minds several characteristics of the Christian life. It may suggest the idea of purity. As it oozes upward and greets the light, strained through the filter of sand and gravel and soil, how it sparkles with brightness, and how its drops shine with the transparency of crystals! Such is holiness, pure as the unstained diamond, clear

as the dew! It may suggest the idea of fulness. The heat of summer may parch the surrounding region, dry up all the standing pools and reservoirs which are filled from the clouds; but the little fountain, defying the globe of fire which makes the heaven as brass, pours forth, in undiminished fullness, its bright and limpid waters. Such is the life of God in the soul. Earthly possessions may pass away, worldly comforts may perish, present supplies may fail, but this life will still send forth streams of undiminished power and joy. It may also suggest the idea of life. It is not a stagnant, dead mass on which the slime gathers, over which death broods, and which exhales deadly vapors, it is an active, moving body, never at rest, ever rolling up volumes of influence, which will be felt as far as the streams born of it can travel. So, of the holy life. It is true life, incessant activity, self-purifying and earth renewing.

A fountain will also suggest joy. As it bubbles up, and gurgles in its depths, and trickles over its basin's edge, its drops tinkling like tiny bells of silver, and gathering themselves together to murmur their way along in melodious sounds, is it not a very child of joy? Is not its birth a laugh, and its life a song? So also is the heavenly life born of the joys of heaven, and in every ripple of gladness that smiles on its surface, is mirrored the fulness of joy that flows at the right hand of God. A spring will suggest beneficence, unselfishness. How genuine it is; never hoarding, ever giving, one drop running away that it may make room for another, while it bestows itself somewhere else. And such is the life of Divine Love, never hoarding, ever giving, or hoarding only that it may give, squandering itself, lavishing itself, content to lose itself, to be changed (so to speak) into vapor, dew or rain, or to

run on in the humble channel of life, and to be left at the root of some "tree, planted by rivers of waters, that shall bring forth fruit in his season." Once more, a fountain will convey the idea of blessing. Not only does it give, but it gives to bless, to cool and slake the parched lips of the wanderer, to supply the daily needs of a neighborhood, to send forth streams which will diffuse greenness, freshness and life. It is a source whence many may draw the waters of consolation and strength, the source of gladness and holy influences, wherever it reaches.

But it is not to any one of these characteristics that I desire your attention now, but to the idea suggested by a fountain of the holy life as a life of free, unconscious, spontaneous obedience.

What a delightful unconsciousness there is about a fountain as it plays up from the hidden deep, not spouting up in spasmodic jets, but gushing upward calmly, constantly, yet irresistibly, winning its way through, and by all obstructions, flowing forth in wild, untrammelled liberty, and winding onward at his own sweet will, and doing it all as though it could not help it, as though it loved to do so, as though it were its habit, its way, its life to do so. Such, also, ought a holy life to be—a life of natural, instinctive force, outflowing of the purest sympathies, the heavenliest affections, the holiest desires, the divinest purposes. Such a life it ought to be; such a life it is in its perfection.

If the question be asked—what is that life of Christian perfection, after which we are encouraged to strive?—there are, of course, many answers which might be given; for perfection includes everything that can be said or thought of the highest state attainable to man. It is the culmination of every godlike power, the con-

summation of every holy hope and endeavor, the coronation of every heavenward aspiration and prayer.

Take any quality of a good life, purity, spirituality, love, carry it up to the highest point of power and glory conceived as possible for it, and you will be led to at least one true aspect of perfection. It is impossible from the nature of the case to give all of its elements in a single definition. But one statement about it which has at least some practical value is this: Perfection is a state in which holiness is the soul's habit; in which love is the settled law of the life.

But, if again the question be put: What is habit? we meet with more than one answer also to this. It is often said that habit is a second nature, a second self; this conveys a vivid practical idea of the strength, authority, tenacity of habit, the hold which it has on a man, the deepness with which it enters into a man; although it is not a strict philosophical truth—as it conveys the idea, or seems to convey the idea, that there is a first nature, a first self behind, second or underlying it; which is not the case, for the whole self, the whole nature, is incorporated with the habits of the man, and grows up into them. I would say that a man's habit is a way of using himself acquired by constant doing of the same thing. It is the impetus which man's performances acquire by motion in a given direction, which carries them on by its own force, the accumulation of power within which makes man independent in great measure of stimulants, or of pressure from without. That which the momentum acquired by the whirl of a fly-wheel is to the revolution of the wheel, such is habit to the actions of the life. In a holy life, it is the power which is gathered up in the soul by faithful and constant obedience, which helps man to do right without effort, almost without con-

sciousness, so that all the holy thoughts which spring up within, and all the holy feelings which are born in the heart, and all the holy words which are spoken, and all the deeds which are performed are natural, so that it would be unnatural, painful, to think, speak, feel, or act otherwise.

This is the condition in which man was created, or rather for which he was designed, and which if he had not fallen, he would soon have reached. We can not say, of course, that man was created in the habit of holiness, because habit is the product of time, but he was so created that if he had followed the law of his being, he would ere long have reached the state of spontaneous perfection, which has just been described. If he had never sinned he would have received the powers of a holy life, with little or no conscious effort. All that he had done would have been spontaneously pure. The functions of the spiritual life would have been discharged with as little constraint as those of the natural life. The affections would have beat in harmony with God, as the physical heart, "like a muffled drum," beats its regular life-march. Love would have been an inspiration. I do not say that there would have been no labor, no effort of any kind. That would have been necessary to develop strength and firmness of character. But there would have been no such conception of effort in his obedience, as there is now. There would have been no friction, no clogs within. There would have been the same kind of unconsciousness and spontaneousness as we find in perfect health. A man who is perfectly healthy does not, of course, absolutely forget that he has a body. Hunger, thirst, weariness, will remind him, at intervals, of that. His muscles are sometimes strained; his nerves are occasionally excited; and the blood often rushes in its

courses like a swelling torrent, and glows in his face with the fire of unwonted energy. But still he is never reminded of his body as the sick man is, a hundred times a day, by irregularities, disturbances, and pains, here and there, in the bodily machinery. He uses his body as a skillful workman handles his tools, as a part of himself. When one is engaged in writing, his mind reaches beyond his finger-tips, down to the very point of the pen in his hand, so that a little hair in the split annoys him as though it touched himself. When the painter is engaged on his picture, his brush and pallet are situated for the time being within the limits of his own consciousness, enveloped in the sensations of his own imagination.

The violinist, as he holds his instrument in his arm, embraces it as though it were a part of his own being, and the sounds which he draws out with his bow are drawn out of the depths of his own soul. As long as a man's implements do their duty properly, he does not think of them at all, but of his work. So does the man in perfect health use his body. And so also would a perfectly holy soul employ all its powers and aptitudes and instrumentalities. The life of the soul, the life of Divine Love, would have filled the powers, informed them, inspired them, carried on their activities by a heavenly momentum, imparted by the moving impact of God's own spirit.

The chain of influences between God and the manifestations of holiness would have been perfect and unbroken. The connection between whatsoever is divinely fair and the soul's motives would have been instantaneous, and the connection between motive and action would have been electric. Man would have been an instrument discoursed upon by God himself, and yielding the purest harmonies.

Such is the state for which God designed man, and such is the state to which he would restore him. I do not think that the New Holiness will be in every respect precisely like the Old. It will be higher, nobler even than that; that grace may "much more abound" through it. But they are just alike in this: that in each the love of God will be a spontaneous uprising, a fountain springing up into everlasting life. But you will say that such a state is unattainable here. To love God spontaneously, to do right instinctively, to find it infinitely easier to serve God faithfully than to be unfaithful, even in the least, *that* is to be perfect; and perfection is beyond our present reach. Well, if it is, it is none the less our duty to *try* to be perfect. It is our fault that we are not perfect. It is our duty to search after perfection, and this life is the beginning of the life that *is to be* perfect, and if we do not try to be perfect, one thing is sure, we never *shall* be. But there are two kinds of perfection, absolute and comparative. The latter we are commanded to possess now. Although we may not attain a state in which every virtue is at once a full grown power, and every habit an all-controlling, never-failing instinct, we *may* reach a state in which habits of holiness will greatly preponderate, and have a most decided ascendancy. We may by constant practice of the virtues, acquire an overmastering tendency toward them and a facility in their exercise.

The condition of habit, if indeed, we may not say the productive cause, is repetition. Its law is this: that by frequent and persistent iteration, by doing the same thing over and over, the powers both of body and mind acquire a *facility* in doing it, and an impulse to keep on doing it. The dexterity with which a mechanic manipulates his work, with which the composi-

tor picks up and puts together the type, with which the writer handles the pen and traces words on paper, the quickness with which the eye in reading seizes on combinations of letters, and groups them into sentences and grasps their meaning, the rapidity with which the musician fingers the keys or strings of his instrument—all this is acquired by use, by long and patient practice. And this is the case not only with fingers, eyes, feet and muscles, but also with the power of mind.

By practice men acquire a most marvelous facility in exercising the powers of calculation, combination, analysis and construction. The same is true even of the moral powers. There is a dexterity (if I may so say) of the conscience, a quickness in detecting wrong, a rapidity in deciding in matters of duty, which can only be possessed by a faithful cultivation of the moral sensibilities, and of the intellectual judgments and executive faculties, which are called into activity. So of faith; the man who believes and trusts from day to day, finds it much easier to believe and trust. But not only does habit imply a facility in doing anything, but also the impulse to keep on doing it. I need not stop now to illustrate this. All know, by experience, what it is to have gotten into the habit to do this or the other, so that you feel continually inclined to do that which you have been used to do, you feel restless, you do not feel right unless you are still doing it, and often you find yourself involuntarily doing it. Men sometimes try to apologize for their errors on this principle: "Oh!" they say, "it is so much a habit that you must overlook it this time." That is to say, we have done it so often, that we can not help ourselves now, and, therefore, we are not so much to blame; frequent repetition of the error or wrong, the impulse to do it, has gained an overpowering ascendancy over us! Is that

a good excuse? Admitting that it may be alleged in extenuation (not in justification, but in extenuation) of some particular action, does it relieve a man of his responsibility for the habit? The same may be said on the other side. You can not fairly detract from the merit of any good deed by saying—Ah! it is the man's habit. He can not help himself. Why, you could not pay a man a higher compliment than that. A habit of doing right? A habit of speaking kind words and of doing kind deeds? A habit of telling the truth? A habit of showing justice towards all? All the better for him! All the more for his credit! It is just as good as to say that he has done these things so often, so long and so earnestly, that to do them is to be himself, and that not to do them, would not be to be himself. All honor to such a man! Everybody will say that. And yet, in the next breath, a man will pass by the slave of some evil habit, who has weakly indulged some passion, until it has become a tyrant; who has done some unmanly, some unworthy deed over and over, until impulse to do it overpowers all resistance, or even takes away the desire to resist; and everybody now says, "Poor fellow! You must not be too severe on him. He can not break away from that habit." It is sad! but the worse for him. The greater his guilt. Where did the habit come from? God did not give it to him. He made it himself. It is the result of a long course of sinning. He forged his own fetters. He sold himself to the tyrant. This being the law of habit, that it is formed by constant iteration of the same deeds, by frequent repetition of the same motives, feelings and actions, it follows that the *strength* of any habit is proportioned to the frequency and constancy with which it is repeated. Not only is aptitude for doing any thing increased by much practice, not only can we do it with

much greater ease and dispatch, but the tendency, the impulse to do it, is greatly strengthened. On the other hand by negligence, by omission, by irregularity and infrequency in the performance, the habit loses its power; the aptitude for it is diminished, and the impulse toward it is enfeebled.

One of the great problems of a true life is to bring every good feeling and activity within the sphere of habit, to make all the duties of life, and all the graces of life—habits. We should make a habit of every duty. It should be performed so frequently and constantly that it will become easy, and that there will be an ever present desire to do it. Take for example the duty of prayer. We are commanded to “pray without ceasing.” What is that? You answer,—to be always in the spirit of prayer. Certainly that is implied. We can not pray always, unless we are in the spirit of it. But that is not all. We are to be in the habit of praying, which (I take it) means more than to be in the spirit of it, at least as the words are commonly understood. To be in the spirit of doing anything, is to be ready to do it when opportunity occurs; to be in the habit of doing it, is to be doing it, and to *make* opportunities if they do not exist. I think that here is a little loophole through which some try to creep. They know that prayer as a formal act can not be all the time performed, and so they content themselves with being, as they hope, in the spirit of prayer always, namely, in a certain frame of mind in which, if it is quite convenient otherwise, they will be ready to pray. Now that is not being quite up to the mark. Habit makes opportunity. Habit begets an impulse which will make itself felt, which will assert its power and *compel* a man to yield to it. He who is in the habit of praying, or of performing any other duty, will

feel a continually recurring impulse, constraining him to do it with a heavenly compulsion, so that he can not be at rest, without engaging in it. I have instanced prayer, but the same is true of praise. We should be in the habit of praising God, just as the birds are in the habit of singing all the day long. "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess, but be ye filled with the spirit; [Be always full of a joyous holy excitement; and how shall that excitement show itself?] Speaking to (among) yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, making melody in your heart to God." "Be in the habit of meditating on holy things." "Blessed is the man whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night." "Ah! how love I thy law, it is my meditation all the day." Cultivate the habit of thinking on heavenly themes, magnetize your mind with them until it points continually toward God, like the needle toward the pole. Cultivate the habit of Christian activity. "Be always abounding in the work of the Lord." "As we have opportunity, let us do good unto all."

But how, you say, "can so many habits be sustained?" How can a man be in the habit of doing so many things? My only answer is: Try it! You will never believe how many things can be done at once, until you try. The musician, who dashes his fingers up and down his instrument, producing different melodies and intricate harmonies, and at the same time holds an intelligent conversation with a friend, and sees all that is going on about him, once had to bend together all his energies to produce a simple air without any accompaniment. What is the secret of the difference between his first and present efforts? Habit. He has learned the habit of seeing and of thinking and of executing a great many things in one instant of

time. And do you not suppose that we can learn to crowd together a great many good and holy habits into one and the same moment? Moreover: Every grace of the Christian life should become a habit. It should be our habit to be grateful, as it is the habit of the rose to be fragrant. The act of faith should become the habit of faithfulness. The act of hope should become the habit of waiting. The act of love should become the habit of love: for love is its own habit, as it is its own law, its own reward.

Let it be observed: that there is an essential and radical difference between habit and formality. Every duty, every grace, has two elements: the form and the spirit, the soul and the body. Formalism is the repetition of the external form. Habit is the repetition of the whole duty, or of the whole grace, and especially of the spirit of each. A man, let us suppose, offers a particular prayer to God, a genuine prayer, a true, fervent offering of the soul. He takes so much delight in the duty that he recurs to it again. For a few times he experiences the like pleasure in it. But his heart gradually becomes cold; his enjoyment ceases; and, although, from some superstitious notion, or Pharisaical vanity, he repeats, it may be, the same petitions, that is all; there is nothing but the phrases, the form.

Another reproduces not only the form, but the spirit; he experiences the same wants, the same fervor, the same desires, the same delight in the exercise, as when he first engaged in it. In the one case prayer is a formality; in the other a habit.

There are men whose present is but the echo of a dead past, whose days are lifeless walls, that but take up and roll on the voices of other and better days. Once those voices meant something; they came from

a living heart; but that heart is now stagnant and buried, and the voices are without a soul. The man of dead formalities, compared with the man of living habits, is like one who plays on the keys of an organ when there is no wind in the pipes, compared with one who plays while the living breath rushes through the tubes, and who, as he touches every key, unlocks some sweet mystery of sound. Both go through the same forms, the same motions, both finger alike, and touch the same keys, but in the one case the result is clattering of ivory, in the other music. I have seen it stated that the great pianist, Liszt, when riding or traveling, has a dumb key-board in his carriage on which he practices his fingers, that they may be always ready to make a perfect response to every demand that may be made on them. Now there is the same difference between the man of mere forms, and the man of intelligent and conscientious habits, as there is between Liszt going through the forms of piano playing on dumb pieces, to keep his fingers nimble and vigorous, and Liszt over a deep-toned, perfectly attuned instrument, inspired by his theme, flashing forth inspiration in every touch, sweeping the key-board with a hand more potent than the wand of a magician, and making the air a temple of song. Formalism plays the keys, but they are dumb! They give no response. They do not strike the chords where harmony resides. Habit touches them and the air is vocal with joy. The strings of the Universal Harp are struck, and ring with divinest tones. Every touch is a living soul, a power that creates vibrations not only on earth, but in heaven, yea, in the heart of God himself.

Hence, also, we see why formalism becomes tedious, monotonous, dead. It brings down no response, no utterance of Divine enlightenment or joy. There is

no living connection between it and the sources of pure and elevated delight. It becomes wearisome. Who would not tire of playing forever on dumb keys? It receives no reward, nothing to minister nourishment or strength or joy. But a holy habit perpetually renews itself. It is a pleasing melody, a theme ever the same, yet ever varying, of which the soul never tires. It keeps up a living communication between the soul and the other world. It causes new blessings daily to descend upon the life, that bring into the heart the sweetness of heaven. But these habits are to be formed. They are not born with us into the world. God does not give them to us. We must make them for ourselves. We have lost that power of spontaneous obedience which our nature had at the beginning. We can recover it only by forming a new habit of obedience, only by applying ourselves with such delight to the performance of every duty, that our whole nature will be transformed into a new manhood, another and a better self. Everything depends upon the way in which they are formed. Their strength, their power over us, will be in proportion to the constancy with which we apply ourselves to their formation. Hence it is that Christ makes so much of faithfulness. Religion is not to be carried on by fits and starts. It is not a volcano, which sends forth eruptions, at uncertain intervals, and sleeps in the meanwhile. It is a fountain pouring itself forth steadily and continually. The formation of good habits is the work of time. This would have been the case even with Adam, if he had never sinned. How much more with us, who have so many *old* habits to be overcome, as well as new habits to be formed? Do not then on the one hand be too hasty, and flatter yourself that your habits are completely formed, when they are only just begun. On

the other hand, do not be discouraged at finding their growth to be so slow. Let patience have her perfect work. And good habits once formed must be maintained. The same process which formed them is necessary to preserve them. Remember that good habits are much more easily lost than acquired. A day of negligence undoes the work of a month of application. And, finally, although we have to form our own habits, let us remember that Christ alone can give the spirit by which they are to be formed. "The water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life."

VII.

FORGETTING THE THINGS WHICH ARE BEHIND.

Philippians 3: 13.

This is a part of Paul's experience. I have cited it as a rule of action for us. It is not always that one man's experience can be safely looked to by others as a model for imitation, but the disclosures which Paul makes of his inner life, present an ideal after which others may strive. This is especially true of the glowing and elevated self-revelations which he gives us in this chapter. Nothing nobler, nothing sublimer, can be found in the history of any human soul. No wonder that impelled by such motives, regulated by such principles and directed toward such ends, his life was a success. Life is sometimes called an art. We speak of the art of living. By this it is not meant that life is to be opposed to nature. True art is always in perfect harmony with nature. It is not meant that it is in any respect false; for perfect art is truth. It is not meant that it is made up of shifts and expedients, for a true life like true art has unity, and all the parts are necessary to the whole. But it is meant that success in life depends on certain conditions and laws, which can not be set aside or changed. It is only by complying with those conditions, and obeying those laws that we can secure the proper results of life. We have

several of these conditions grouped together in the passage which has already been quoted, in which Paul describes his experience. One of these he calls "Forgetting the things which are behind." Another, he immediately afterward calls, "Reaching forth unto those things which are before." The former defines his treatment of the past, the latter of the future. How to deal with one and the other of these two great factors of life is a question of no small practical moment. Standing as we do between the two, or rather moving as we are continually from one to the other, outgrowing the one and growing up unto the other, leaving the one behind us, and yet followed by it, reaching out toward the other and yet finding it ever before us, the question is an important one: How shall we make the most of either? How shall we make the best use of the things which are behind us, of the facts and experiences, the conditions which have gone from us; and how shall we make the best use of the things which are before us, of the states, the experiences, the acquisitions, which are not yet ours?

Sometimes in a journey we come to a turning point from which we see at a glance all the way along which we have come, or all the way along which we are to go. So there are turning points in life which bring before us now the entire Past, now the far-stretching Future. Sometimes we stand as on the top of Pisgah, and see the Promised Land spreading before us in all its glorious extent, a land overflowing with milk and honey. Again, we are like an Alpine traveler, who reaches some lofty summit whence he can look back and see down below him in the distance the village whence he began his journey, the green, smiling meadows which skirted its first stages, the rising slopes which formed the mountain's base, the steeper declivities

which next awaited him, the narrow defiles through which he threaded his way, the rugged path up which he toiled, and the almost pathless precipices which he must scale to reach the summit. On this last Sabbath of the Old Year, we naturally, inevitably, look back. The Past rises before us and invites us to commune with it. If we are ever in the habit of reflecting, we shall ask ourselves to-day, What have we been? What have we done? What have we passed through? What have we gained? What lost? What have we missed? What escaped? Wherein have we succeeded? Wherein failed? What if this or that had been otherwise? Such reflections are unavoidable, but how to profit by them? For it is not always those most given to reverie that are the wisest. It is not enough to muse over that which has been, or which may be, to brood over the lost, to dream about the impossible, to take up the fragments of life and to piece them together this way and that way; it is not enough even to order back the phantoms of days and months and years, to question them, and bid them tell over their tales of sorrow, of labor, of tedium, of excitement, of joy. Most of us, doubtless, do this at times, but what we need is to gaze backward, so that our forward vision will be clearer, to brood over the Past in such a way that in the very act of brooding the soul may replume her wings for a loftier flight, to win from the ghosts of past years the secrets which we have failed to learn of the years themselves; this is what we need. For this Past which invites us to hold converse with itself; whose whispers mingle even now with the moan of the dying year, what is it, in a word? Scan it closely—is it not a mirror in which you see yourself? Yes, that is what it is. It is self. A dead self it may be, which you had sought to bury, which you had hoped never

more to see. Is it so? Ah! vain hope! It confronts you once more! You must look in it. You must hear it. A forgotten self perhaps: you recognize it now that you see it. Yes! you were that once—but you are so different now, you had well nigh forgotten that self. A child self, perhaps: Ah, well! is the child the father of the man? And was that self the father of what you now are? It must be so, and yet it seems strange even to you. More likely still, you see a self neither dead nor forgotten, but one that is fading every day into greater obscurity. You have not become transformed into something else yet, and you hope you may never become an entire stranger to that which you once were: you say—

“And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.”

There is a growing difference between you and the self of other days, and yet you are changing. It may be the Past which visits you is a well known familiar self, which has come to you again and again, so that you recognize it at once as an old friend. So few have been the changes of your life, so even has been the tenor of your way, that at the close of each year it is the same Past which faces you, the same self which reflects itself on you. And so, you see, the difficulties which meet us in dealing with the problem of the Past are precisely those which meet us in dealing with the problem of self. The Past has become a part of ourselves, at least, in so far as it is at all available to us in the Present. The sights which we have beheld, the influences which we have felt, the experiences through which we have passed, have indelibly stamped themselves on our souls, have incorporated themselves with our very being. When we ask: How shall we best profit by the Past? what we want to know is, how

shall we learn wisdom from our former self? How shall we make that which we have been, help us in becoming that which we ought to be? A problem, this, which is easy for none, but which presents to some the most serious difficulties. The Past is much more productive of results to some than to others. The Pauline rule of the text, however, is a simple one which all can use. "Forgetting the things which are behind." Of course this does not mean literal forgetfulness, for we can not profit much by that which we have absolutely forgotten. Besides entire forgetfulness is impossible. Except in the imagination of poets there is no Lethe, no river whose waters can bestow the gift of oblivion. Or, if there were such a river, would you drink of it? Would you forget everything? Granted that there are some things which you might wish buried beyond the possibility of resurrection, are there not other things which you would desire yet more earnestly to retain? Alas for the man who for the sake of blotting out a part of his past, would make a blank of the whole! But, you may ask, are there not some things which we may try to forget? Of course there are many things which are sure to be forgotten, not indeed, absolutely and forever, but still, practically and for a time. It may be questioned whether any impression whatever, made at any time on the mind, is ever wholly effaced. In the light of Eternity thousands upon thousands of lines, which now seem to have disappeared, will reappear, clear and distinct as when they were first engraved, and what a page will be that of memory, read in that light! Now, however, very much that is written on that page seems to fade out after a time, or to become very dim. The proportion of what is remembered to what is for the time forgotten is in the case of most persons, small. After all, this seems to be a necessary

and wise provision in our present education. It may be doubted whether the growth of the mind could be sufficiently healthy if it retained everything indiscriminately. Yes, it is a blessed law of life's discipline that for the present we forget so much more than we remember. Now, although the faculty of memory is not subject wholly to our own control, it is unquestionable that we may learn to remember or to forget, in great part at least, according to our desire. There are things which we may in time forget by exercising certain precautions, and some things which we should certainly make an effort to forget. It were well if we could blot out of our memories the black impressions made by evil associations and the corrupting influences in the past. Shall we go further, and say that we are to make special efforts to forget all our personal failures, our sins, our sorrows? I think not. To do so is neither courageous nor wise.

It is cowardice to shut our eyes to the sin of life, instead of looking it steadily in the face. It is weakness to cover up failures, and then to dream that all is well. Better than to forget our errors and our sins, is to confess them, to repent of them, and to conquer them. Better than to flee away from the memories of our griefs, is to be humbled and chastened by them. Shall we say then, that by forgetting the things which are behind, we are to understand letting the past alone; giving ourselves no concern about it, one way or the other; making no special effort either to drive it away from us, or to bring it up before us? No! that can not be the meaning, for it is undoubtedly our duty at times to summon the past before us, to interrogate it, to think intently, and even intensely, upon our former selves, to call to remembrance what we have been even in error, unworthiness, guilt, that we may become

properly humble, grateful and strong. Take the case of Paul again. These words, as we have seen, are a part of his experience. He is speaking for himself: "This one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." But we know that Paul, the Apostle, never forgot Saul, the Persecutor. In this very connection he contrasts his past life with the present, his former motives and aims with those which now governed him; and in all his writings and discourses, we find him making continual allusions to himself as he was, no less than to himself as he is. And he shrinks from nothing. He has no concealments, no evasions, no palliations to make. There was no secret corner in his heart which he was afraid to enter, no skeleton closet, the door of which he dared not open. Although he calls himself the chief of sinners, we never find him expressing the wish that any part of his life might be cancelled. He would have nothing forgotten, lest the magnitude of God's grace shown in his salvation might seem to be diminished. And most assuredly Paul could not have desired the memory of past mercies, of former joys, of ecstatic hours of Divine Communion to be extinguished. The glory and the shame, the love and the guilt, the smiles and the tears, were too closely woven in the canvas of memory, to be separated, so that either could be taken out and buried in oblivion. Wherein then did Paul forget the things which were behind? In this: that he did not rest in them. He did not stop with them. He did not cleave to them. He did not content himself with them. The sources of his inspiration did not lie in them. They were not the supreme motives, the paramount forces of his character. His ideal was be-

fore him, not behind him. It was a self to be, not a self that had been. His life was not hid in the past, it was hid with Christ in God:—"That I may win Christ," "that I may be found in him," "that I may know him and the power of his resurrection," "that I may attain unto the resurrection of the dead," "that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." These were the grand ends which Paul placed before himself. They were to result in the creation of a truer and nobler self than aught he had ever been as yet. Paul was no troglodyte living in a cave of the Past; he was ever coming forth into a larger life, into a broader and clearer light. He was ever growing up into a fuller and riper manhood. Compare his hold upon the past with the hold which he had on the future. He would have said: "I cast it away from me that I may secure that glorious immortality, this heaven, this Christ, on which I have laid hold, and which must be mine, and which will be mine forever."

Compare his realization of things which were behind with his realization of the things which were before, of the manifestation of God's glory, and the experiences of God's love hereafter to be enjoyed. He would say, "I have forgotten the former as one forgets the morning star in the glory of the risen sun." He was the last of all men to depreciate the goodness which had crowned his life with glory, and his labors with success, and yet as compared with the crown which he expected to receive at the last, the royalty with which God would one day clothe him, he would say, "My life hitherto has been a void; my true birth is yet to come; my real life is yet to be lived; my perfect humanity is yet to be put on. As the life of the seed while it sleeps in the frozen clod is to the life it will

live when spring and summer with influences gathered together from earth, and sea, and sky, are quickening and energizing its growth, so is the life which lies behind me to the life which rises before me. My life here is a sleep, a dream, a frozen torpid winter as compared with that waking brightness, that morning vigor, that summer glory and strength which await me in the life beyond. I account the things to which I have as yet attained as of little or no value, I leave them there in the Past; they have answered their purpose, they have helped me so far, but they were after all mere preparations for something better, stepping stones to something higher. God ministers new aids to me now and he promises a glory to be revealed, far transcending the highest imagination of the soul in its present sphere. Then when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away."

Now and then we meet with a man who says: "My life has been a failure, I began it with glowing hopes, and as fair prospects as most of success. For a time all went well; prosperity, comfort, peace flowed in upon me in abundant measure, and out of the enjoyments of the past I had begun to build a mansion of hope for the future. But alas! its foundations have been swept away; its ruins have crushed my heart. In vain have I tried to rebuild it. In vain have I tried to even build anything humbler out of these broken and disordered fragments. My strength is gone. Let them lie. Let me spend the remainder of my days among them, looking at the moss gathering slowly on the mouldering heap, dreaming sadly of what might have been, but what never more will be." Friend! God never made man to live in a ruin, least of all in the ruin of himself. The Hand of Love sometimes throws down our airy mansions, sometimes tears down the summer

arbor of roses we had built for our enjoyment, but we may be sure that it is always well that this should be done. What you call a ruin was intended, you may be sure, to save you from ruin; what seems to you failure, was designed, you may be sure, to avert a more disastrous failure. You may never know the danger which lurked within or under the walls which that storm shook down. You may never know the poisonous serpent brood that was hatching in that bower of bliss in which your heart so delighted, and which the tempest stripped and scattered. Come out thence and take courage. Leave those crumbling walls behind you and pursue your journey. Your heart is crushed? There is a physician who can heal it. "The Lord healeth the broken in heart and bindeth up their wounds." Your strength is gone? "He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength." Your life is a failure? "All things work together for good to them that fear God." This plan and that plan may fail; this hope and the other may disappoint you; let them go! But your life is not a failure as long as there is a possibility of saying of God "He is mine."

Not seldom we meet those who rejoice in a past self—better, more exalted, more successful, than they now are. They are like one who has seen better days, who still occupies the old mansion where he once enjoyed his greatness and his wealth, although one by one the ornaments and furniture have disappeared or faded, and little remains but the bare walls. Yet there he sits and dreams of days when those walls gleamed with the splendors of art, and resounded with the echoes of song, and when through those halls streamed stately processions of beauty and joy. So there are those who surround themselves with the faded remnants of a glory that is departed. They recall the time when their souls

were filled with elevated thoughts, with noble aspirations, with high purposes, and tuneful joys. Christians there are, who revert continually to a period in their lives when their hearts were like harps, breathed on from morning till evening by the airs of heaven, when like a lark, the soul daily winged her ecstatic flights to the gates of the Celestial City and beheld visions of the glory which cannot be uttered, when the heart surcharged with gladness, found frequent and sweet relief in tears, when the exercises of religion were performed with rapturous joy. It is so no longer, but they take comfort in the thought that it was so once. Indeed it seems to be almost enough in their estimation that once they had such glorious experiences, such high resolves and such spiritual prosperity. They say: that is my true self; that is my real self; not this which you see now. They seek to forestall any criticism of what they are now, by pointing us to what they long ago were. Although they have fallen below that old self, they are always presenting it as the true image of themselves. If they are reminded of their present imperfections they look to their past excellencies, and they are satisfied. If the deficiencies of the life they now lead are presented to them, they point us to the position which they occupied of old, as much as to say "If you wish to judge us take us at our best, not our poorest!" When in reality, in judging others, that which they were is of no special importance except as an aid in determining that which they are; and the fact that one has been better than he is now only adds to his shame, that instead of being better, he is not so good as he was. The case would be a trifle better if they took that past ideal, that better self which has been, and set it up as a standard, striving once more to reach that point. It would be indeed but a poor ideal; but it would be better

than nothing, it would be better than remaining satisfied where they are. It is not trying to get very high, to be sure, to be trying to get up where one has been before, but even that were better than lying down in indolence, and saying: "I was yonder once!" But now because these persons have once attained a certain altitude it seems to be a matter of indifference to them afterward how far below it they fall. Brethren! if a man's life were what it ought to be there would be no such thing in it as a fall. There would be no stepping down from a higher to a lower seat. Whatever may be the external changes and depressions of a good man's life, his inner life, his true life, is one of constant elevation. It is ever on the ascendant. George Washington was a greater man and a better man the first day of his retirement from the Presidency, than the day he was inaugurated. The man who has not yet learned how to make every step an upward step has not yet learned how to live. How to become holier both by prosperity and by adversity, how to be made stronger both by labor and by rest, more patient both by gratification and by disappointment, more resigned both through losses and through gains, how to be made more heavenly minded both by business and by devotion, calmer both through excitement and through rest, wiser both by error and by truth, better acquainted with self both in solitude and in a crowd, more Christlike both by trial and by joy, how to make each day, each week, each month, each year, a stepping stone to the next—this is what we need to know, and this is what the love of Christ alone can teach us, even as it taught Paul.

Whatever then may be the self, which confronts us, as we face the past year, it is one which we are to leave behind and go beyond. Whatever the year has

brought us which we can carry along, which we can build up into the better self of another year, if it be God's will that we should enjoy another year, let us thank God for it and take it with us. Those precious tokens of a Father's love, those sweet assurances of a Saviour's sympathy, those delightful witnesses of the Spirit's friendship, those bright foregleams of immortality, those delicious foretastes of heaven, those lessons of human weakness and Divine strength, of the all-sufficiency of God's grace, of the certainty of our Father's promises, of the security of the Christian's hope, of the blessedness of faith and love, these lessons, learned by chastisement, by suffering, by trial, by endurance, by patience, by trust, by joyful labor, let us treasure them up for future use, for future growth. Has the year brought you much of suffering? Carry away from it much humility. Has it brought you many trials? Let it leave you so much purer. Has it taken away much in which you rejoiced? Let it leave you richer in love. Has it brought you disappointments? Let it leave you richer in faith. Has it brought you joys and crowns of your labor? Let it leave you more full of zeal and energy in the service of your Master. Was there much in it which you could not and can not yet understand? Leave that with God. Was there much in it which it grieves you to think of? Lay that also at the feet of Jesus. Alas, for those errors, and follies, and sins! Would that they were not there! But in the future lies the great bulk of your life. God be praised, the Past is barely the beginning. Oh, for help to make the Future purer than the Past, to make each year whiter, sweeter, diviner, than that which went before it.

VIII.

THE DISCIPLES' AMBITION.

Matthew 20: 17-28. "And Jesus going up to Jerusalem took the twelve disciples apart on the way, and said unto them,

Behold we go up to Jerusalem, and the son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes and they shall condemn him to death,

And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again.

Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him.

And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom.

But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able.

And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with; but to sit on my right hand and on my left is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.

And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren.

But Jesus called them unto him, and said, ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them.

But it shall not be so among you; but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister;

And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant;

Even as the son of man came, not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give his life a ransom for many."

"And Jesus going up to Jerusalem." How simply the fact is told, and yet it is one of no ordinary significance. Not that there is anything peculiar in his going to Jerusalem; for one of the great feasts of the nation is approaching, and Jerusalem is now the centre towards which thousands of Jews in Palestine, and out of it, are drawing.

Neither is this the first time that Jesus and his disciples have formed a part of that mighty throng which is wont to stream annually to the National Metropolis to celebrate the Passover. And yet of all high feasts

ever held since the first memorable Passover in Egypt, never was one like that to which Jesus is now going. Of all the companies on their way to it, not one of such interest to us as this little company of which it is said: "And Jesus going up to Jerusalem took the twelve disciples apart on the way, and said unto them: Behold, we go up to Jerusalem." Let us now seek to enter as much as we may into the spirit of the scene described in the text; and whereas no circumstance can be understood alone, apart from its relations, it will be necessary for us to study this scene in connection with those antecedent circumstances of which it is the historical off-shoot, and to this end let me remind you of a few facts respecting these men, with which you are already familiar.

Let us remember in the first place that *they were Jews*, and as such shared in the national views respecting the Messiah as a temporal king. They were not, however, *ordinary Jews*. They were deep, earnest, spiritual men, Israelites indeed, in whom was no guile. As such they believed that the Messiah was to be something *more* than a mere secular prince, that his kingdom was to be a kingdom of righteousness and truth. Moreover they *had found* the Messiah, and at his call they had left all and followed him, a fact which it will be well for us to bear in mind, as proving that they were not actuated by mere selfishness in following Christ. Again they had the right to regard themselves as the especial friends and followers of the Messiah. Nations like individuals have their ideals and hopes, and some of these have been very remarkable; but of all national ideas ever formed, of all national hopes ever cherished, the Jewish belief in a Messiah is beyond question the most remarkable. Whether we consider the character of the ideal itself, or the poetic beauty

and prophetic grandeur thrown around it, or the tenacity with which the nation clung to it through centuries of frequent and overwhelming changes, it stands unique in the history of the world. At length the nation is agitated with the hope that the long wished for time has come, and that the long expected Messiah is about to appear. Old prophecies are looked at and seem to grow luminous, like the magic talismans of fable, which blazed with a strange light when aught great was about to happen. Presentiments and rumors are ripe. To an aged man at Jerusalem it is revealed that he shall not see death before he has seen the Lord, his Christ. A voice is heard in the wilderness: "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven *is at hand.*" Jerusalem and all Judea go out to him; Priests and Scribes are sent from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who art thou?" He knowing whom they had come to seek, answers, "I am *not* the Christ."

Ere long certain Galilean fishermen are heard saying the one to the other: "We *have* found the Christ." We have found him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write. Joyful discovery! No wonder that they leave all and follow him. And now for three years have they followed him:—years of poverty, exposure, and contumely. Yet, still, they cling to that homeless wanderer. Still their faith in him is unshaken, nay, is stronger now than ever. It is our fashion sometimes to depreciate the spirituality of the simple-hearted men during this time. We, with the light of Nineteen Centuries reflected on those three years—we, with the Commentary of Inspiration, and with the Consciousness of the entire Christian Church, on the facts and sayings which transpired therein, shake our own wise heads at the lowness and grossness of those men's conceptions of those facts and sayings. We, living in an

age whose spiritualities are only refined forms of materialism, whose truth is a part of its stock-in-trade, and whose religion is a part of its stock-jobbing—we smile pitifully when we think or speak of what we call the carnal, grovelling views of these Jewish fishermen, who had forsaken all they had on earth, to cling to the great desire of their Nation, coming to them in the person of a carpenter's son. It will be time enough, however, for us to scorn, or even to pity these men when we exhibit the same unworldliness, the same self-denial, the same faith in an unseen ideal, and the same self-sacrifice in behalf of it. True, they were Jews; true, they shared the national views of the Messiah, They anticipated a visible King on a visible throne, who should, in their own words, “restore again the Kingdom to Israel.” But even the *common Jew* knew that this was not all. Again and again he had read in the Book of the Law, or heard in the Synagogue, that the coming of the Messiah should be like rain upon the mown grass, as showers that water the earth; that truth should spring out of the earth, and righteousness look down from heaven; and that the earth should be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as waters cover the sea. Even in the *ordinary* Jewish conception, therefore, the *visible* sceptre which the Messiah was to wield, was the emblem of a *spiritual* authority over the hearts of men. But these disciples of Jesus were *not ordinary Jews*. They belonged to that deep, earnest, spiritual order, to be found among every people, who, without rank, influence, or learning, it may be, yet always live in full view of the realities and glories of the spiritual world, who watch with longing eye the morning star and the day spring from on high, and listen with reverential ear to the Divine Message, whether spoken by the lips of mitred priests, or by

the voice of one crying in the wilderness. Accordingly we find that some of the men had been drawn by a powerful attraction to the stern, earnest, and spiritual Baptist Prophet of Judea, and had attached themselves to him as disciples; and when on a certain day, One came by of whom their Master said: "Behold the Lamb of God!" they at once followed the stranger. Of another, Jesus said, when he first saw him: "Behold an Israelite, indeed, in whom is no guile." (And there is certainly enough in the sincere, trustful unselfishness with which they abandoned everything at the call of the Divine Man of Nazareth, to dispose at once of this charge of want of spirituality, which is so superficially and flippantly brought against them.) Furthermore, they had now for no small length of time enjoyed the company and teachings of their Master. Some of them had even attained views of the truth, concerning which he had said that "flesh and blood had not revealed those things, but his Father in heaven." Nay, verily! imperfect, wavering, and confused, as their views certainly were, material, gross and selfish they certainly could *not* have been. It is absolutely necessary that we should judge these men aright before we can understand their feelings and conduct, and the sublime wisdom and tenderness exhibited by Christ on the occasion which we are now about to consider. And now as they are going up to Jerusalem, let us seek to discover their feelings, and put ourselves as much as we may *in sympathy with them*; for *without* some sympathy, no man can ever understand or appreciate another. Remembering, then, that they were Jews, let us first try to realize what is implied in that fact, to-wit: that they belonged to *the East*, and shared in the Oriental passion for grandeur, and reverence for external signs of greatness; and yet withal had much

of the practicalness of the West, which requires something more than symbol and form. As Jews, moreover, they doubtless regarded Mount Zion as the seat of Messiah's throne, and Jerusalem as the radiating center of the glory which was to flood the earth. Let us remember that they were now journeying to Jerusalem *in company*, (as they fully believed) with the Messiah himself, whose especial friends and followers they were. As such they could not but expect to be *particularly* honored in the *general exaltation* of their Nation. It was not in human nature to think otherwise, even if nothing had been said about it. But Christ himself from time to time *threw out intimations* which tended to encourage such expectations.

Thus it was but a few days before the present occurrence that one of them had asked the Master, saying: "Behold we have forsaken all and followed thee: What shall we have therefor?" And "Jesus said unto them, verily, I say unto you, that ye, which have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of his glory, *ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones*, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Because now we, standing where we do, know what Christ meant better than those simple-hearted Jews could have known, because we know that the regeneration and throne of which he spoke, as they were more purely spiritual, so also were more glorious than those which they imagined—shall we wonder, if to them, visions of present and earthly greatness mingled with the views of spiritual elevation and power, which Christ promised? But further: we learn elsewhere that the disciples were at this time full of the belief that *the time had now come for Christ's Kingdom to be established*. Luke in speaking of this journey says, "They thought that the kingdom of God *should immediately appear*." How this expecta-

tion was produced we are not told. It may have been one of those indefinable presentiments which sometimes visit the soul as harbingers of some great approaching Providence, and which, to the disciples flushed with exultation and joy, would naturally assume the form and hue of their own hopes. Or it may have been impressed on them by the manner and language of Christ as the Last Hour drew near—to him the Hour of the Power of Darkness, to them the Hour of his Coronation and Universal Kingship. They journeyed on, therefore, in eager joy, like a traveler approaching his journey's end, who knows that the next turn of the road will bring him into full view of his home. But, as sometimes a great joy brings with it a great Fear, as the traveler's heart sinks suddenly within him, if, as he draws near his home, a wail of grief be borne upon his ears, so we find that on this occasion a nameless dread fell on the Twelve. Mark says: "And they were in the way going to Jerusalem, and Jesus went before them; and they were amazed; and as they followed they were afraid." Observe the particulars. Full of the joy and exultation with which the recent promises and declarations of Christ had filled their souls, and having their Divine Leader in the midst of them, "they were in the way going up to Jerusalem; when lo! their Lord withdrew himself from them and went on alone. The dread Hour of his Loneliness was drawing nigh. Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered every man to his own, and shall leave *me alone!* *Alone* is he to tread the wine-press: *Alone* to face the Powers of Darkness: *Alone* to bear the world's sin: *Alone* to enter the Holiest Place to appear before God for man. And now as the shadow of that great and lonely sorrow falls on his spirit, what can he do but retire from those childlike

men, flushed as they are with a blind joy, and occupied as each is with his own little dream of greatness. But observe that in withdrawing from them he does not lag behind, nor turn aside. "Jesus went before them." No shrinking, no faltering; firmly, resolutely, he leads the way. But now that mysterious and silent solitariness fixes their attention and troubles their souls. "They are amazed;" that loneliness, that silence, that eager resolution—what can it all mean? At first amazed, their astonishment soon deepens into fear. "As they follow they are afraid." They too begin to enter the shadow, and trembling possesses them. Then the Master, knowing by Divine Sympathy their state, and that now they are better prepared to hear the sad truth of which it is so necessary to remind them, mingles with them once more and begins to address them, saying, "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem." Observe how he has come forth out of that "lofty solitariness" in which he was just now enshrouded, and makes himself *one of them*. "*We go up to Jerusalem.*" There for the third time recorded, he tells them what is about to befall himself. "The Son of Man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock and to scourge and to crucify; and the third day he shall rise again." How full, perfect and distinct his knowledge of all that was to befall him, of each particular suffering, anguish and shame. And this was what he had just been contemplating; it was to meet this that he went forth so calmly and courageously! "But they," says Luke, "understood none of these things, and this saying was hid from them. Neither knew they the things which were spoken." Do we wonder at their blindness, their want of understanding? True, they were not blameless. The saying, dark and

troubles as it was, should not have been hid altogether from them! Still let us make all just allowances. Let us remember how difficult it was for a Jew to reconcile such degradation, suffering and shame, with the exaltation, power and glory of the Messiah. Let us remember again that this was *not the first time* that they had heard such words; and this fact, although, regarded from one point of view, it might seem to aggravate their blameworthiness, yet looked at from another, it would seem to lessen it. For since those previous occasions on which these strange words had been uttered, had they not daily heard the "Kingdom of heaven" spoken of, and had not Christ so lately foretold a regeneration in which they should sit on twelve thrones, besides promising that they should receive a hundredfold *in this life* for their devotion and self-sacrifice in his service? Let us remember, moreover, what strong and sudden *transitions* their feelings had just undergone.

In rapid succession Hope, Astonishment, and Fear had filled, oppressed, and shaken their souls. They were still trembling from the latter when those foreboding words fell on their ears. What more natural in such a state of mental prostration than that they should be stunned, overwhelmed on the one hand by what was dark, mysterious and alarming in those words, and blindly catch on the other at whatever might afford encouragement and hope. And what of promise might not be contained in those closing words—"the third day he shall rise again." To minds so suddenly brought down from a state of joyous hope to one of bodeful, dimly understood fear, one such hope-breathing word would as suddenly remove the load which weighed them down, and cause their minds at once to spring back to their original level of joyous and eager expectation. Now it is at just such a moment of trembling hope, of

bewildered expectancy, of shaken conviction striving to reassure and to intensify itself, that the mind in its anxiety to test the security of its hold upon the future, puts forth its most secret desires, and seeks to embody them in something tangible, something at hand. When the soul is just recovering from the sudden shock of some momentary doubt, its most secret hopes will escape from it unawares, and the lingering shadow of the doubt, the bewildered eagerness of the soul not yet fully understanding itself, nor fully master of its desires, prompts a reaching forth to the hoped for good, not so much to grasp it as yet, as to make sure that it is not an airy dream, but a reality. Such was the disciples' state of mind at this time, manifesting itself, however, in one form in two of the disciples, and in another among the remaining ten. The *feeling*, however, was essentially the same in all.

We begin with the first form of its manifestation. Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children with her two sons, worshiping him, and desiring a certain thing of him, and he said unto her, "What wilt thou!" She saith unto him, "Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom." Although Salome, the mother, is represented as the speaker, and although undoubtedly her maternal pride and love would engage her interest in behalf of her sons, still it is evident from the reply of Jesus, and the conduct of the other disciples, that we are to identify John and James with their mother in the request: and in Mark's account of the scene, the mother is not mentioned at all. We inquire therefore, how came this request to be made by *these two* disciples?

In accordance with the theory of the case already suggested, this request was an impulsive expression of

the form which their hopes and desires in respect to the future had taken in their own minds. To sit on the right hand and on the left of Christ in his kingdom was to occupy the highest positions both of honor and of trust.

This then was the secret ambition of these two men: to be nearest to Christ in official rank, and also in personal confidence, and now in their peculiar state of mind, they by an irresistible impulse betrayed it. But next the question arises why did *these two*, James and John, *in particular* entertain and express this ambition? And here you will observe that the question concerns principally the *expression* of the wish, for as we shall see presently the wish itself was not peculiar to them. Leaving then out of consideration the doubtful supposition of some that Salome was the sister of Joseph, the reputed father of Jesus, we find one ground of the ambition of these men in their character. It is abundantly evident that James and John were both ardent, impulsive, large-hearted, whole-souled men. They gave very decisive evidence of this, just about this time. Luke relates that during this same journey he sent messengers "before his face into a village of the Samaritans to make ready for him. And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem." And when James and John saw this, they said with characteristic impetuosity, "Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven and consume them as Elias did?" Again it is said that Christ surnamed John and James Boanerges, which is, Sons of thunder: in allusion most likely to their character. And this same ardency of temperament will perhaps serve to account for the fact that one of them, James, was the first of all the Apostles to suffer martyrdom, and that the other, John, was the bosom-friend of Jesus.

Such characters were not the men to do things by halves, especially when, being brothers, each would naturally know and encourage the aspirations of the other. Their ambition would reach up to the highest pitch attainable. And the same impetuosity of Spirit will account for their being the first to express their ambitious wish. They were too impulsive as well as too honest to go about wearing a look of hypocritical humility, and making a false impression of a modesty which they did not feel. They *wanted* to be first, and they *said* so.

It would seem at first as though such a demonstration would be made by the impetuous Peter before all the others. But on examination it will be found, I think, that the impetuosity of Peter was that of will; the impetuosity of John and James that of feeling. The former would rush to the breach when something was to be *done*; the latter would be so carried away by their emotions as not to know what to do. Peter did not stop to ask Christ about the servant of Malchus, "Lord, wilt thou that I take my sword out of my scabbard and cut off this man's ear?" He did it. And, therefore it is, that on this occasion, when the disciples' *feelings* were moved *without* any cause for immediate action, John and James were the spokesmen rather than Peter.

Another ground of their ambition may be found in the fact that they were evidently *avored disciples*.

One of these, we have seen, was Christ's bosom friend, who was wont to recline next to him at the table, and who speaks of himself as the disciple whom Jesus loved. They, with Peter, were the sole witnesses of the transfiguration, and also of the resurrection of the daughter of Jairus, besides which we find various other indications of favor. Once more, their mother was

with them, who had herself followed Christ when he was in Galilee, and ministered unto him, and who might perhaps consider that this fact would give weight to her petitions in behalf of her sons. At all events she formed the bond between the brothers on this occasion, and was their medium of approach to Christ; and the fact of their having such a medium must be taken into account as one of the probable occasions of their making the request.

But let us now turn our attention to the expression which the common feeling of the disciples took *in the remaining ten*. "When the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren." Of course! How dared they express for themselves the secret ambition of each one of the rest? For we know that each one *did* covet the highest position for himself, since again and again they disputed among themselves who should be the greatest, and the reply of Christ shows that this was the predominant passion at this time. And now when two of their number had the audacity to try to snatch the prize from all the others, how could they help feeling aggrieved, yea, more, indignant? And in all probability their indignation assumed an extremely self-complacent form. Such is the inconsistency of poor human nature, that they flattered themselves, no doubt, that they were glowing with a highly virtuous indignation against the insufferable *pride* and *selfishness* of the sons of Zebedee for daring to anticipate themselves.

Having thus endeavored to get an idea of the position of the disciples, and the state of their feelings, there remains to consider the *replies of Christ*, *first*—to the brothers, *then*—to the ten. And here we cannot help noticing the *great gentleness* and *tenderness* of his reply to *James and John*. "Ye know not what ye ask,"

spoken, as I conceive, not sharply, reproachfully, but mildly, compassionately, lovingly, as though he should say: "What ye desire, my beloved, is indeed the highest and worthiest object which man can seek, and I can but honor and love even this blind reaching forth of yours toward it. Would, however, that you fully understood yourselves, and knew what you ask for!"

Do we understand this gentleness of Jesus? Certainly not in the full depth and beauty of it, but some of its *features* we perhaps may see. Do we not, for instance, see something here of that *love of honesty and downright sincerity*, which so eminently characterized Jesus? Did he not see in the outspoken frankness of these men, so free from all false affectation of humility, something noble and manly? Again, did he not recognize in this frank request of theirs a *feeling of strong personal attachment to himself*? Can the mother chide harshly her own child whose greatest fault is that it loves her too well to bear to be away from her? And is it likely that Christ would be very severe on those whose highest blessedness it was to be nearest their Lord, whom to be with and to love forever is heaven? And above all, do we not see here a little of that *mystery of divine sympathy* in Christ by which he clothes man in his own righteousness; by which he looks upon our imperfect prayers, and wishes, and efforts in the light of what in them is from himself; translates our stammering words into the language of his own Divine heart; surrounds our fluttering aspirations with the atmosphere of his own love, and lifts them to heaven; bathes our souls in the radiance of his own infinite beauty; idealizes our characters into his own perfect image, which they now so faintly reflect; and regards us, not as we are now in ourselves, but as we shall be when that which is earthly is put

off, and we are clothed upon by that which is heavenly, having fully put on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Thus, therefore, instead of *reproving* the *pride* of the disciples, as some of us might have done, he seems to regard their request as springing from the *germ*, at least, of a noble aspiration; instead of blaming them for what was earthly and materialistic in their views, he seems to sympathize with the difficulty which they met in having perfectly just views of the matter, and looking at them in loving admiration, to feel: What truthfulness! What affection! What lofty-mindedness! What devoted zeal! Thus, as it were, idealizing the spark of love which now flickers so dimly and uncertainly, and amid so much impure smoke, into that pure flame of heroic self-sacrifice which burned so brightly in the martyrdom of James, and in the life-long endurance and love of John.

In no other way does it appear to me can we understand the reply of Christ, and it seems to be from a failure properly to appreciate this Divine Sympathy of the Redeemer that so many commentators have either attempted to put a harsher construction on the reply of Christ than his words and the spirit of the scene can possibly justify; or else have expressed their undisguised astonishment at the exceeding gentleness of his manner towards them. I do not deny that there might have been a tender sadness in his tone; and that the mournful compassionateness of his look and voice ought to have caused some misgivings in their minds about the character or form of their petition, when the Master said: "Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" But they were too eagerly intent on securing their desire to heed the significance of Christ's manner, or to feel the great dis-

proportionateness between that which they coveted, and that which Christ held out to them, and so they answer unhesitatingly, "We are able." How truly had Jesus said: "Ye know not what ye ask."

But how did they understand this question of Christ? *We* know that the cup of which Christ was to drink was the cup of suffering, and that the baptism wherewith he was to be baptized was the baptism of blood. Did they thus understand him? Or did they suppose, as some affirm, that he spoke of drinking of the royal cup, and washing their hands in the royal ewer—marks of the highest distinction and honor? There can be but little doubt that they understood the words in their true sense, though not in their full meaning, as is apparent from the subsequent words of Christ, as well as their own reply. And besides the question *was put in such a form* that they could not easily misunderstand it.

The *very first word* of the question implied something else than a mark of favor: "*Are ye able?*" Implying that what he was about to propose required effort, strength, resolution. And their reply shows that they thus understood it: "*We are able.*" Admitting now that they knew not well what they said, granting that they knew not the bitterness of the cup, nor the terrors of the baptism, and, that perhaps they erroneously supposed the suffering of Christ held out before them to be but a brief transition to the glory of his reign, is there not, after all, enough left for us to admire in their self-sacrificing devotion to Christ, and in their lofty confidence in his power both to triumph himself, and to help them to triumph in the approaching struggle, and to end by reigning over all? Such, at least, seems to have been the view which Christ took of their reply. He recognizes the earnestness of their self-consecration and the sincerity of their purpose; he even tenderly

foreshadows to them the fact that the hour is coming when they *shall* drink of his cup and share his baptism. He does not deny that there are degrees of honor in his kingdom, and positions of power and intimacy with himself to which his followers may lawfully aspire; nor does he intimate, as many think, that *they* might *not* attain to such positions; he, however, tells them mildly yet firmly, that their wish could not be obtained as a gift *instantaneously* bestowed upon them, but must be reached through a *preparatory course of discipline*, by the Father. "And he saith unto them, ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with; but to sit on my right hand and on my left, it is not mine to give, except to those for whom it is prepared of my Father." Our version which reads, "it is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared," impairs the force of the passage: first, by taking away the granting of the gift from Christ; next, by failing to bring out properly the antithesis between *giving* and *preparing*; the former expressing the instantaneous bestowment of the honor, the latter the disciplinary process through which it is reached—"It is not mine to give, except to those for whom it is prepared by my Father."

The whole reply accordingly implies a recognition of the legitimacy of a pure and lofty Christian aspiration:—a loving appreciation of the real earnestness of these two disciples:—a gentle intimation of the future trial and triumph of their faith:—and the distinct announcement of *discipline* as the *law of advancement* in the Kingdom of Christ. Such, then, was the character of this interview between Christ and Salome, with her two sons, forming at the time a little group by themselves. Meanwhile, *the Ten* who were probably near enough to witness the whole interview, were, as we

have already seen, excited by deep indignation against the selfishness and presumption of their two companions who had so rashly and unexpectedly dared to step between themselves and the prize. Jesus seeing this, called them unto him, and said: "Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. *Not so* shall it be among you, but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister, and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant; even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

Here let me ask: Does it not strike you that there is a *difference* between the conduct of Christ toward the Ten, and his conduct toward the two Brothers? Do you not detect a new element in his language? True, there is tenderness, sympathy, love, as before, and as always in Christ's words; but does not this seem tempered with a degree of decisiveness, almost sternness, even? Compare the compassionate tenderness of his remarks to the brothers: "Ye know not what ye ask," with his abrupt and pointed reference to the ambition of the world and its rulers, in his first remarks to the Ten: "Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them." Compare again his mild questioning of the former: "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of," with the strong decisive "*Not so*" addressed to the latter: "Not so shall it be among you."

Why, now, this mildness in the one case, and this comparative peremptoriness in the other? Does it not seem to be founded on the difference of disposition which we have already noticed? Was it not because there was *more honesty and sincerity* in the former case

than in the latter? I do not say, observe, that *originally* the feelings and motives of James and John were any more pure and sincere than those of Peter, Andrew, Philip, and the rest. They were all alike, simple, unsophisticated Jews, who had found the Messiah; who had abandoned all to follow him; who had very good reason for believing that they should share the glory of his coming Kingship; who entertained a fond desire to be nearest to their Lord in his and their exaltation—a desire which was certainly very natural, and in some of its features a very amiable one; not *altogether sinful* therefore, although at times it assumed, we must say, a decidedly selfish form. And at this particular juncture, as we have seen, this desire with all its concomitant feelings, had been quickened and stimulated to an extraordinary pitch of excitement, which impelled it to demonstrations much stronger and more marked than was usual. *In its simple form*, therefore, this feeling was *not* sincerer or purer in the case of James and John than in the case of the others. But everything depends on *the use* which a man makes of his feelings, on *the practical issue* which he gives to them. John and James made *an honest use* of their feelings. They went straight to Jesus, and *told* him their most secret thought. We have seen how Jesus received them. The others were *not* so honest. Each one nourished his ambition within himself, and brooded over it in the recesses of his own heart, the tendency of which is always evil, as in this case. For no sooner did the other two disciples tread on it, than like a viper coiled up in the long grass, it sprung up fiercely, breathing selfish jealousy and envious indignation. Then Christ holds up the mirror before it that it may see itself in all its ugliness. “Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority

upon them." *There* in the pride and selfishness of the princes of the Gentiles, Christ holds up before them the image, or at least the legitimate development of their own.

It is, perhaps, impossible for *us* to understand the meaning which these words *then spoken*, had for *a Jew*. Rome was then in the zenith of her glory. Roman Rule—Roman Law—Roman Right—Roman Vengeance were everywhere. Rome was the world; the world was Rome.

And never was Power, Authority, the State, anything like what it was in the Roman Empire. It was all in all. The State was everything: the individual nothing. Soon after the time of our Saviour this idea attained at the same time its consummation and its fall in the deification of the Emperor. But nowhere was this power felt more crushingly and at the same time more rebelliously than in Palestine. There the yoke of the stranger was on God's own people. There the false gods of the heathen had invaded the chosen precincts of the only true and living God. There the Roman Emperor was a usurper of the throne of Jehovah. Thus to a Jew, state domination—earthly rule, was synonymous not only with oppression, extortion and rapine, but also with blasphemy and sacrilege. Such was the image of selfish and worldly ambition which Christ now held up to his disciples. They had dreamed and talked of a Kingdom of Heaven—of a New Jerusalem: they looked in the mirror, and behold! to their shame and dismay, it was Rome. And now in contrast to Rome, Christ exhibits to them his own Kingdom. "Not so shall it be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister, and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." No, my Beloved! the New Jerusalem is not Rome. In

my Kingdom, to be great is to be humble:—to be first is, not *to be* served, but to serve:—to be chief is, not to sit on a throne, but to bend down to wash the feet of the humblest disciple: to be a King is, not to wear a crown, but to carry a cross:—to have power is to do good:—to live is to die, and to die daily. “Even as the Son of Man,” the Highest, the first of all—the King of Heaven and Earth—“came not *to be* ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.” And thus he leads them once more into the shadow of the great coming SORROW: and there we shall now leave them, sadder, and let us hope, wiser men.

It has been the aim of this Discourse not to enlarge upon the great and important principles recognized and announced by Christ in the words of the text, but to enter a little into the *spirit* of the scene—to appreciate as far as possible the feelings and actions of the disciples—and to see and feel to some extent the wonderful and Divine Sympathy of Jesus: in the belief that the more we can understand of the history of Christ, the more we can penetrate the depth, beauty, and tenderness of his character, the nearer we can come to that Infinite Heart of Love, which throbs in every look, word, and act of his the better, the stronger, the more Godlike shall we become. Let us now recall a few of the more prominent lessons here taught us. In James and John, we have seen the inestimable worth of truth, of manly sincerity. Very wise we cannot call them, at least on this occasion. Indeed it was very foolish of them to encounter the prejudices and hostility of the rest by such a course as they pursued. Such *young* men moreover: probably about the youngest members of the company. Truly we cannot say that they were over prudent, or considerate, or altogether as modest as was becoming. But they were *downright honest*;

they were *sincere out and out*. And they loved Christ, and wanted to be near him. And Christ knew this. He read their souls in their looks, and he could not help loving them. And how gently he treats them as a mother treats a child who is naughty from excess of fondness. He seems almost to *overlook* their faults; *almost*—not quite. He makes them feel guilty enough before he is through with them: but so delicately: by saying so little. A candid man needs but little to make him feel his faults. Now Jesus is the same yesterday and to-day; still he loves honesty, genuineness, sincerity. He loves to have his disciples come to him, and open their hearts before him. He loves to hear them ask all they want. No matter how poor the wish, nor how lame the language, nor how much you may be ashamed of it, take it to Christ, my brother, and he will accept it with such infinite grace from your hands, he will regard it with such favor, and in his smile it will look so beautiful, that you will hardly be able to recognize it for the poor worthless thing which you laid at his feet. And if while meaning well you do make any mistake, he will let you know it in such a way, and teach you better with such condescension and love, that you will almost feel tempted to be thankful that you fell into the mistake for the sake of the lesson. Trust Christ. He says, "It is I: be not afraid." Tell him all—He loves to be trusted, and he will reward your confidence. Keep your Heart-door open: Christ will walk in, and sup with you, and you with him.

In the ten disciples we may learn how good men, by failing to be *thoroughly honest* with themselves, fall into sin. We can not help sympathizing largely with the Ten on this occasion. Each one had sacrificed his all no less than the sons of Zebedee: Christ's promises

were his as much as any other's; and it must have been extremely trying for a man like Peter, *e. g.*, so much older in years, and not wanting in self-respect either, as we very well know, to see such forwardness on the part of these youths. On the whole, it was certainly very hard to show much forbearance at such a time. But the trouble is they *were not honest* in the matter. They stood aside and murmured together, and worked themselves and each other into a state of righteous indignation against the pride of these young men, when they themselves were every whit as proud. They fretted away their jealousy in a factitious wrath against selfishness; and clothed their own pride in a false humility. They were *dishonest*; than which nothing is more opposed to the spirit of Christ. He hates all pride; but of all forms of it, he hates most, false humility. He hates all envy, but most of all when it cloaks itself in a lying zeal for holiness or truth. He hates all sin, but above all he abhors the hypocrisy which frowns in public on the sin with which it dallies in secret. Humility, Propriety, Zeal, all are good; but honesty is better. Be just to all; but don't forget to deal fairly by yourself. It is very charitable to undertake to pick out the mote in your neighbor's eye, but you will do it much better when you have taken the beam out of your own. Brother! Be honest with yourself. It is the first condition of all sincerity.

But let us turn away from these men, erring and imperfect at best, to the Perfect, the Divine Jesus. As men, these were, indeed, the worthiest, the truest, on the whole, the best men which this earth of ours could then boast of. Yet how much that is unworthy, insincere, sinful even in them. How infinite the difference between them and Christ. How their meanness cowered in his presence! How their insincerities shriveled to-

gether in his glance! How their selfishness shrunk at his words! How their petty jealousies slunk away abashed! And yet, how, with all their faults, he loved them still! How he bore with their weaknesses! How he recognized whatever was noble, worthy and lovable! How he encouraged every feeble aspiration, and led it heavenward, even "as an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them and beareth them on her wings." How gently he admonishes them of error; taking it away from them and giving truth in its place, as a mother tenderly takes from her child a dangerous tool, by giving it something which is both beautiful and safe. How he humbled himself down to them; made himself one of them; how in exhorting them to be humble, he humbled himself to all; how when he called *them* to go, he *led* the way; how, as they were to suffer, he suffered; as *they* were to give *their* lives for one another, he gave his life for all. "As the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give his life a ransom for many."

And, now, as by those words, Christ led his disciples into the shadow of the cross, let us go there also. "Behold the Lamb of God." See there the whole life of Christ, consummating itself in the *one act of* death. For the death of Christ, unlike any other death, was an act. "I lay down my life that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me. I lay it down of myself." It was the last, the highest act of Perfect Sympathy, of Divine Compassion, of Infinite Love. The same Sympathy—the same Compassion—the same Love—which not only on his last journey to Jerusalem, but in every act of his life had throbbled and thrilled, and glowed, and burned, now gathering itself together for one act of self-sacrifice, which was to express the

Love of God forever! Brother! Take yourself to the cross! Take all you have there. Take your greatness. How small it will appear! Your honor, your talent, your influence, your fame—how insignificant and worthless!

Take your sins. How black they will look. Your pride—how unutterably mean! Your envy—how contemptible! Your insincerity—how you will despise it! Your selfishness—how you will hate it. Take your virtues there. What poor things they will seem. Your love—how faint! Your faith—how weak! Your sincerity—how hollow! Your devoutest prayers—how heartless! Your most heavenly thoughts—how groveling! Your most beautiful actions—how deformed! Will you *dare* to trust in these? Or will you not rather trust in that Divine Sympathy which gathers all up in itself and robes all in its own glory? Will you not rather trust in that Love, which there—on that Cross—is stronger than the agony of death—the rage of devils, and the hatred of the world, and expires, saying: “Father, forgive them, they know not what they do!”

IX.

THE CHRISTIAN'S DEBT.

Romans 1 : 14. " For I am debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians ; both to the wise and to the unwise."

Here speaks an honest man, if ever an honest man has lived in this world. First we have the honest confession of a debt, a debt which multitudes have owed no less than Paul, but which, not having his honesty, they have failed to acknowledge. Next, in the verse following, we have a proof of Paul's honest purpose to pay that debt. "So as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also." Because Paul is a debtor to the world, he is anxious to preach the gospel in Rome; in Rome, we may suppose above any other place, because it is at the time of Paul's speaking, the mistress of the world, the ear, as it is the head and the heart, of the globe; and to preach the gospel in Rome, is to preach it in the world's pulpit. If to these words you add the whole story of Paul's life, you will get a still clearer insight into his idea of life as a debt, and a still more vivid impression of the grandeur and power of that idea. Paul, I say, was an honest man. He represents the very highest type of honesty.

There are various grades of honesty in the world. One of the most obvious, and at the same time superficial, is what we may call material honesty, honesty

touching material obligations, business integrity, financial rectitude, honesty in money matters, money being the ordinary equivalent of what these obligations represent. This quality indeed is by no means to be disparaged. There are occasions when it even touches the height of true nobility. In our own times it needs to be emphasized anew, for there is none too much of it in the land, although we would fain believe it is not so rare as some indications would lead us to fear. Yet after all, judging by the more spiritual tests, this kind of honesty is comparatively superficial. It does not need much spirituality or moral delicacy to see, that for value received there must be value rendered, that when a dollar is owed there is a dollar to pay. In fact, there are a plenty of men in the world whose financial honesty is irreproachable, whose general morality is coarse grained enough. A man whose word is as good as his bond, and whose bond is as good as gold, may have a tongue all foul with ribald slime, and a soul that crawls in the mire.

There is an honesty, however, which looks beyond material obligations, which does not limit the relations of debtor and creditor to the sphere of dollars and cents. It recognizes various forms of indebtedness within the realm of the immaterial. Among these debts we may name gratitude, reverence, faith, service. The world's benefactors are its creditors. To those who have toiled and sacrificed much for our good, we owe a debt of endless gratitude. To those who tower above us in loftiness of character and attainment, to all that stands over us in the attitude of guidance and authority, we owe reverence. There is a *debt* of faith due from us to all that worthily inspires confidence. There is a *debt* of service, care and help, which those who are dependent upon us may rightfully claim at our

hands. These are debts in the proper sense of the word, being due from us as truly as any obligations that we incur by buying or borrowing. They are the foundation of our *duties*, for as I need not remind you, debt, due, duty, are all simply variations of the same word. Wherever there is a duty there is a debt, and to be false to duty is repudiation. That is our name for sin: repudiation. You see, accordingly, that true honesty goes much deeper than the pocket. It pulls at the heart-strings as well as the purse-strings. It has a balance sheet which sums up not in dead dollars and cents, but in the living currency of souls. It is possible, however, within either of these spheres, the material or immaterial, to take what we may call the purely commercial view of what we owe. That is to some extent natural, perhaps, seeing that a debt at once suggests an equivalent, a *quid pro quo*. It is easy for us accordingly to fall into the way of applying the *quid pro quo* rule, to ask, What is the value received in this case? How much do I owe? What must I pay? It is possible and even easy to take this way of estimating our obligations, as though they rested on a purely commercial basis of pure reciprocity, and every duty was a problem in equations.

I remark that there is an honesty which does not stop to measure its obligations by any merely legal or commercial standard, which does not weigh its debts in the balance of simple reciprocity, which does not ask, How much *must* I pay? There is an honesty which glories in its debts, which believes and rejoices in the strange paradox: He that pays his debts to God and to the world, shall owe more abundantly, and the more he owes, and the more he pays, the richer he shall be, the richer in possession for himself, and the more fruitful in benefit for others.

This is the honesty of which I take Paul to be the exponent when he says, "I am debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians, both to the wise and to the unwise," or when he says elsewhere, "I made myself servant unto all." "I am made all things to all men." These are the obligations on which I would dwell more particularly at this time, of which we may comprehensively speak as *the debt of the Christian, or Christ's service regarded as a debt.*

Before considering our theme in those higher and more ennobling aspects, which I have just foreshadowed, it may be well to look at it briefly on its lower side, taking an estimate of our debts according to the *quid pro quo* rule of equivalents or compensation.

I. I begin then, by remarking that we do, in fact, owe something to the world in return for what the world has done for us. Although this view is not the highest that can be taken, it is nevertheless a legitimate and useful view of what is required of us. It is a view which should appeal to our sense of justice and of honor, and one which may serve to show our shortcomings, judging even by this standard. It needs but a moment's consideration to realize in some measure the facts of this indebtedness, and the greatness of it. We do owe something—nay, we do owe much to the world, or, if you please, to society, to humanity, in return for what the world, society, humanity, has done for us. Let any one try to imagine what he would have been, but for the benefits which he has received from what others have done. What would any one's life be but for the contributions which the world has made to it? We are heirs of the past, and beneficiaries of the present. The house you live in, the clothes you wear, the food you eat, the tools you work with, all the facilities which you enjoy for work, rest, sleep, nurture,

travel, culture—how much of all this do you owe to yourself? All that vast aggregate of utility, comfort and power, all that mighty instrumentality of action and enjoyment which we call civilization—all the centuries and all the continents have made it, and it is at your service. This marvel that we call the Present, with its conquests of force, with its victories over space and time—it is born of the travail of the ages, of the rapture of countless triumphs, of the agony of untold failures—and it is at your hand. Science has searched out the deep things of nature, has disintombed the memorials of the everlasting hills, has surprised the secrets of the most distant stars, has mastered the processes of earth's laboratory, and has thus multiplied nature itself a hundredfold—and all for you. Art has stolen the witchery of sky and sea, has captured the myriad moods of mountain and valley, sunshine and storm, and gathered them into her enchanted palace, besides dreams and visions of her own, fairer than aught seen on land or sea—all for you. Commerce wafts, for your comfort or your need, treasures from the rising and from the setting sun. Government insures your person and your property against violence and wrong. Schools provide for you opportunities for mastering every form of knowledge, and for reaching every benefit of culture. Books echo for you the thunder of battles, and the silent struggles of thought. The complex mass of personality, of life and character in the world, radiates upon you influences of unspeakable importance from every point at which you touch it. Social institutions and agencies without number leave a thousand traces of their beneficent activity across your daily path. And in speaking of all these agencies which have done so much for us, we are speaking, of course, of men and women, in the past and present, who have

organized and used these instrumentalities for accomplishing these results. Others have sowed — an innumerable company of toilers, and ye are entered into their labors. Surely, in contemplating all that has been thus received, no honest, manly heart can help feeling that it rests under an indebtedness, the extent of which can hardly be measured.

If then, we take no higher point of view than the commercial, or the *quid pro quo* theory, it would still remain that the best we can render to society is not too much, simply as a return for what society or the world has done for us. The citizen can not do too much for the State in repayment of all that the State secures for him. The most liberal contribution which the scholar can make to the cause of education, will be but an inadequate return for the educational benefits which he found already provided for himself. The best that any one can do in the way of scientific discovery, artistic creation, industrial or intellectual production, will be none too great a recompense for the triumphs which genius, skill and patience have achieved in his behalf. The best that any one can be will not outweigh his obligations to the heroic lives and pure examples which have shone out of the world upon him. The benefits which the church, considered as a social agency simply, has conferred, constitute a claim which a life of service would but poorly repay. The debt which a man owes to the home that nurtured him, he never can cancel. He who owes to any influence a higher, better life, than he would otherwise have reached—that man will die a debtor.

2. But even this view, broad and suggestive as it is, does not prepare us to estimate sufficiently the Christian's debt to the world. If we were to stop with this we should be in danger for one thing, of resting as I said

before, in a commercial, not to say a mercenary spirit. We should be tempted to be eternally counting up our obligations, striking the balance of our debit and credit, and life would degenerate into a sordid process of wiping off old scores. The effect of all this would be unhealthy, it would be narrowing and impoverishing, it would tend to foster that selfishness, which measures its service by its receipts, to chill that spontaneous disinterested magnanimity, which loves to do good, even when nothing has been received, and when nothing can be returned. Christianity summons us to a larger, freer, nobler life, to a sublimer debtorship.

The rule of equivalents, moreover, strictly construed, would make us partial in our service. It would put us on that old Jewish platform, or rather, as we may call it, that old platform of publicans and sinners, which Christ condemned, when he said,—“If ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same? If ye do good to them which do good to you, what thanks have ye? for sinners also do even the same.” If we seek to benefit only those who benefit us, how about those who are of no use to us? If I am to live only for those who live for me, what about the rest? You say, perhaps, let those who get some good out of them repay them. Aye—but what about the poor, worthless wretches, who are of no good to me, nor to anybody else? Is nobody their debtor? Is nothing due them? Hear what Paul says: “I am debtor both to the Greeks.”—Ah yes: we can all understand that; the Greeks. They are the world’s benefactors, they have enriched the world with a history, the lessons of which are surpassed by those of no land’s history. They have given the world its greatest epic, its sublimest tragedy, its profoundest and its acutest philosophy, its most irresistible oratory, its most re-

markable political monuments. The Greeks: they have produced the most exquisite sculpture, the most symmetrical architecture, the completest civic life, and the most heroic type of character, which the world has known. We are all debtors to the Greeks for Homer and Pindar, for Aeschylus and Sophocles, for Pericles and Demosthenes, for Plato and Aristotle, for Phidias and Praxiteles. To them we owe the Parthenon, the Apollo, the Areopagus, the democracy of Athens, the oligarchy of Sparta, the empire of Macedonia, Lycurgus, Epaminondas, and Socrates—Thermopylae and Salamis, and Marathon. Well mayest thou say, O Paul, that thou art a debtor to the Greeks—Nay, but hear him—“I am debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians”—Aye—mark the word—“and to the Barbarians”—and by that word Paul means all that the word means to us, and more—to the Greeks and to all the world besides—to the Scythian and the Parthian—to the wild Ishmaelite of the plain, whose hand is against every man, and every man’s hand against him—to the savage islander who strips the wrecked mariner of his all,—to the superstitious bushman, who crawls before his fetich,—to the brutish dweller in caves, and the outcast of Syrian Steppes, who “embraces the rock for want of a shelter,”—to the lowest and most degraded pariah of the far East, spat upon by those who are themselves degraded: “I am debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians, both to the wise”—to the lofty in intellect, the brilliant in imagination, the sagacious in counsel, the accomplished in knowledge,—“and to the unwise”—to the dull, the brute, the fool, whom nobody cares for, whose life is more worthless than a weed,—Paul is that man’s *Debtor*, and every man’s debtor, and the world’s debtor, and you, my

brother, if your Christianity is the same as Paul's, are a debtor to all the world.

What is your debt? As briefly as possible, let me try to answer that question. 1. You owe to the world the best that you can *be*. You owe to it a holy, God-like, character. The world has the right to require in you the image of God, for that is what you were meant to be. And the world has the right to ask of everything that it should conform to the type after which it was created, that it should realize the character and the function which God's plan assigns to it. It has the right to expect of the rose the properties of a rose, and not of a thistle; to demand that a diamond should be a diamond, and not a bit of common glass. You are not simply to exist in the world, you are to be the likeness of the living God, a power in which God shall be felt, a glory in which God shall be seen, a character in which God shall be glorified. To be that, my brother, is to be the best that you can be. It is to open every part of your being to God—to be illuminated, energized, transfigured by the Divine Indwelling. The man in whom God thus dwelleth, is an instrumentality by which God works, a medium through which He communicates Himself to the world. His life is a Divine influence. His personality is an Ark of the living God. His character is a Shekinah. His presence is a benediction.

2. You owe to the world the best of all that you *have*. By this I mean the use, the fruit of all that you have. You say, perhaps, that you need so much of your property to support yourself and family, to carry on your business, to furnish your home, to make it attractive, refined and ennobling. So be it. But remember that in using it for *these* necessary ends, you are to use it with an ulterior view to the glory of God

and the good of the world. You need so much to support yourself—very well, but why should you live? Is it simply that there may be one more name for the census? You have your business to carry on—but why? Is it merely that there may be one more firm on the street? Why should you make your home winning and happy? Is it only that you and your household may have a better time in living? All that your property does for you, it should through you, do for the world. All that your property does for your home, it should through your home, do for other homes and hearts. The enlarged power, culture, refinement, happiness, which your means of living procure for you, are to find their way beyond you into the world of Greeks and Barbarians. They are not to be swallowed up in that little circle of self, of which you are the center; they are to spread into that circle of humanity, of which God is the center. And beyond what is thus needful for your present use, or future dependence, all should be subject at all time and immediately to God's drafts upon it for his needy, perishing world.

Paul, to be sure, was a poor missionary, and when necessary made tents for a living; but had he been as rich as Solomon, we may be sure that holding out his all toward the world, he would still have said: "I am debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians," and he would have paid that debt too, like an honest man.

3. You owe to the world the best of all that you *know*. You live in a world where there is much to be known, where knowledge crowns a man with dignity, and his life with power. The pursuit of knowledge is sweet, the possession of it brings satisfaction and strength. But what, after all, is knowledge for? Why

should a man know? Simply to serve himself? That is the use the Devil makes of his knowledge. Man owes his knowledge. He should use it for others. The more he knows, the more useful he should become; and in the best life, the desire to do good to others is one of the strongest incentives to know more. Let the man of the world seek knowledge simply as a means of power, of pleasure, of fame; the man of God will seek it as a means of getting more of God into himself, and of giving more of God to the world.

4. You owe the best of all your *experience*. I do not mean that you should trumpet abroad every passing feeling, still less that you should proclaim from the housetop, those most sacred and precious experiences which can and should be known only to God—and yourself. But throughout life's discipline, in every teaching of Providence, and of its Spirit, in every feeling wrought by Divine Truth in the soul, in every experience of God's grace in all his various dealings with you, there is *something* which can and which should be *in some way* communicated, some sweet flavor, at least some ripe fruit of the same, of which others can be made to partake. It were a crime to hoard it all up within; the world should in some way be made the richer for it. Hear the pious Psalmist: "I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart. I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation. I have not concealed thy loving kindness, and thy truth from the great congregation."

5. You owe to the world the best of all you can *do*. The rule is not—the best for yourself, and what is left over for the world. No, no! for yourself, once more, only as means to an end, only that others may be reached and blessed. The law of action, my brother, is service. Have you ever thought that there is a

sense in which this is true, even of God? God's activity is a ministry. "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister," and in His life, the life of God reveals itself as one of service. "Who-soever will be chief among you, let him be your servant," and the God who is the Sovereign of all, He is the Servant of all—yes—and it is with reverence I would say it—the Great God to whom we owe everything. He waits upon His universe, He ministers to all His creatures, from the highest to the lowest, as though He were their Debtor! What a lesson, my brother, for you and for me! Shall I, a poor, miserable beggar, a pensioner on God's bounty, live to myself—live as though I owed nothing?

6. To sum up all in regard to the substance of our debt—we owe to the world *Love*. "Owe no man anything but to love one another," says Paul in another place, and those words are a commentary on these. In other words, owe no man anything, except to owe every man everything. Let this be your only debt, to owe your whole self to the whole world. For to owe love is to owe all. A true Christian life is a perpetual assignment. "God is Love." If man be God's image, it should be equally true to say: "Man is love." God is the Infinite Fountain of all good, ever sending forth streams of blessing, and the life which He gives is a life which springs up not only to life everlasting for the possessor, but to good immortal for others. Where the love of God is shed abroad in the heart, it prompts man to will and to do for others what God is willing and doing for them. And here we strike upon the very heart of our subject. Here we come upon the principle which not only explains Paul's language, but which is the keynote of Christianity, the very heart of Christ's life and work.

For mark it, my brother, this debt of yours to the world is not a sweet little touch of sentiment, not a pretty figure of speech belonging to the poetry of charity, romance, or benevolence, not even the more earnest phrase of a genuine enthusiasm of humanity, of a certain sort. Be not misled by the mere sound of words. "The enthusiasm of humanity," "the service of mankind," "the love of the race," yes, fine phrases, all of them, no doubt; and you have known something perhaps of a dilettante Gospel of which they are the Alpha and Omega. It has much to say, and it says it beautifully and eloquently, of the Universal Fatherhood of God, of the universal brotherhood of man, the sublimity of universal benevolence, the grandeur of self-sacrifice, the beauty of the ministry of love. Its saint, Abou Ben Adhem, if you please; its creed, that worthy's prayer: Write me as one that loves my brother man.

Sweet and modest enough, no doubt. But ah! sirs, what is it to love your brother man? to provide food for his hunger and clothing for his nakedness? to teach him the alphabet and a trade? to give him a cottage, and flowers, and chromos, and books, and periodic dissertations on the Beautiful, and the Good, and the True? Well enough, doubtless, so far as it goes, but is that all? Ah, ye friends of humanity, be assured that the only definition of your own creed which is worth anything, is that which is to be learned from the cross of Jesus Christ. "Love ye one another as I have loved you." "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." The love which does not see in man everywhere the lost one whom Christ has come to save, which does not realize the exceeding sinfulness of that sin which cost the agony of Gethsemane and Calvary, the love in which regeneration is a fiction,

atonement a superstition, the wrath of God a myth, the love which does not love God, the honor of God, the justice of God, the character of God, the love which does not seek to save man as God seeks to save him, that love, be assured, is blind and helpless. Genial and amiable it may be, but superficial and powerless nevertheless. Go to the cross, and there learn the world's want, learn the malignity of the curse from which it is to be delivered, the depth of degradation from which it is to be rescued. "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." "When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son." Go to the cross, and there learn humanity's worth, in the price paid for its redemption. "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ." Go to the cross and there learn what it is to love the world in the sacrifice which God made for its salvation. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son." "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Go to the cross and there learn the infinite obligation which is laid upon you, learn what you owe to Him who loved you, and gave himself for you, learn to be crucified with Him who was crucified for you, to crucify self, to crucify sin, to die with Him to the world, that you may live with Him to God. Go to the cross and there learn Christ's right to the world. For in dying for it, Christ has made the world His own. The Father has rewarded His humiliation by crowning Him Lord of all, by giving Him the nations for an inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession. Here, and here only can

you learn what your debt is. You owe Christ to the world. You owe the world to Christ. You owe yourself to Christ and to the world. That is your debt.

The world needs Christ, it needs His life, it needs His truth, it needs His spirit, it needs His cross, and you are to give Christ to the world, in your life, in your character, in your words, in your service.

Christ wants the world. He wants it redeemed, purified, perfected. He wants it as His own, His witness, His image, as the harvest of His tears and blood, as the crown of His rejoicing, and to the utmost of your ability you are to give the world to Christ, to save it for Him.

Christ wants you—your affections, your powers, your property, your plans, your all for Himself—wants you because He loves you, and because out of Him you can do nothing. And the world wants you. It wants Christ in you; it wants the best you can be, and that is Christ formed in you; the best you can do, and that is Christ working mightily in you; the best that you know and feel and have—and what is all this but Christ as the center of your being, the motive power of your life, the lord of your service? Christ for the world—the world for Christ—and yourself for the world and for Christ. And when once you have realized Christ's claims on yourself and on the world, all the rest will follow. To seek to put Christ in possession of His own—that is to be the world's debtor. The love of Christ—in that you have the true love of humanity. He that truly loves Christ will love with something of Christ's love those for whom He died. This love is the Christian's debt, and here we have:

That which explains the peculiarities of this debt. (1) It explains its universality. God loves the world. Christ died for all, and the Christian, like Paul, is a

debtor to all mankind. He loves, with a love born of God's love, all whom God loves. He yearns for the salvation of all for whom Christ died, with a longing which has come into his heart out of the Savior's heart. It is a love—and thus it is a debt—broad as the world and deep as every want and woe of a lost humanity. It reaches wherever the cross reaches. (2) It explains again its freeness and disinterestedness. This debt knows no constraint save that of Love Divine. "The love of Christ constraineth us." There is here no selfish counting of the cost. You do not dole out your service. You do not weigh out your love in scruples and grains. You are not afraid of going too far, of paying too much. No! "freely ye have received, freely give," that is the motto. You have received infinitely; you would, if it were in your power repay infinitely, you can never do enough. Your language is—

"Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small:
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all."

(3) For this same reason it is a debt which can not be exhausted. Love's debt is never discharged. The more it pays, the more it owes. Most of all is this true of Christian love. As the love grows, the debt grows. The more it is exercised, the stronger does the love become, and the more irresistible the impulse by which it is swayed. The more spiritual and Christlike it grows, the more deeply does it realize the world's necessities, and the more readily does it respond to the claims of Christ and the world upon it. In a word, the more it owes the more it gives, and the more it gives, the greater is the debt; and eternity will only add to the sweet despair of ever being able to satisfy love's

blest longing to give itself away. But why may not the love itself fade away and perish? Ah, my brother, it is because it is exercised in and through and for Christ. A love of humanity in the abstract, certainly might perish. A mere sentimental benevolence might and would wane away. A living love must have a Personal Inspiration, and that you will find only in Christ. Apart from Him the love of humanity is as a branch that is cast away and withers. But union with Christ furnishes it with an unfailing inspiration. His personal presence acts upon it with quickening and strengthening power. While He is near, while He dwells within, the heart can not cease to love, to yearn for the lost, to go forth in sympathy and to lavish itself on want and woe. When He is within, then while there is good to be done, while there is want to be relieved, while there is a sin to save from, and a soul to be saved, nay, while there is anyone or anything to love for Christ's sake, and a channel for love to flow in—that love will be a blessed reality. The spirit which He imparts is no spasmodic passion, no effervescing and transient sentiment. It is unwasting, unwearying as Himself. (4) And here you see finally, why this debt of love and service, as it is never to be exhausted, as it is one which is ever to grow, so it is one of which the Christian is never to be ashamed. Ashamed of it! Nay, he glories in it. It is his chief honor. It was with a noble and holy exultation that Paul exclaimed, "I am debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians, both to the wise and to the unwise." There are debts which bring humiliation and shame. They crush the spirit. They take away all manliness. They are a blight on the life. But the debt of which the Christian boasts expands and exalts the soul. It is an inspiration. It stimulates every power and purpose. It ennobles the life, gives man

the consciousness of an end in living worthy of the highest capabilities and attainments of manhood. This sense of a boundless and an endless obligation becomes the power of a boundless and an endless life. This life for Christ and for His world is a life of freedom, of joy, of growth; yes, of growth into the life of God, into the Heart of Christ, into the power of the Holy Ghost.

And now, brethren of the Seminary, in discharging the duty laid on me, of thus addressing you on this first Sabbath of a new Seminary year, I hold up before you this Debt, and urge you one and all to accept it in all its greatness, in all that it costs, in all that it offers, and to glory in it. I know of no better preparation for all of us in view of the work of the coming year, than to be fully imbued with the spirit in which the great Apostle of the Gentiles addressed himself to the preparation of the master-piece of his life. It was as the world's debtor that he wrote this wonderful Epistle to the Romans, in which he reaches and unfolds the heights and depths of the Gospel. As the world's debtors I would that we might engage this year in our work, whether it be teaching, or learning the heights and depths of that same Gospel. We can surely be actuated by no higher motive than the feeling which is prompted by the recognition of that glorious, immeasurable, inexhaustible, inspiring obligation which we owe to Christ and His world.

Do you ask yourself—why are you here? May I not answer in a word by saying—it is to learn, as here you may be helped in learning, how best you may pay your debt to the world; and be assured that the more you realize its magnitude, its sacredness, its blessedness, the more solicitous you will be to make yourself worthy of it. Oh, my brother! it is an honor to owe this debt, it is a privilege with which earth has

nothing to compare, to devote ourselves to the lifelong payment of it, in its highest and purest form, but it is an honor which should make us tremble, it is a privilege of which to be unworthy were the saddest of all failures. Remember, then, to be worthy of it, you can not be too holy. You can not be too earnest. You can not be too diligent. You can not prepare yourself too thoroughly for its demands upon you. You can not afford to slight any opportunity, nor to decline any instrumentality by which you may become thoroughly furnished to discharge the obligation which God lays upon you. There is no Key of Knowledge, there is no element of power, there is no perfection of mind, or of heart, which you should not be anxious to possess. You can not know too much of that Divine Truth which you hope to impart to others in all its sources, in all its relations, in all its developments, in all its modes and application! You can not have too rich and deep an experience of it in your own heart. You can not be too bright and eloquent an illustration of it in your own life. All that this Seminary can do for you, all that your religious associations and activities can do for you, all that your personal culture of mind and heart can do for you,—let me say more, all that God by His word can do for you, all that Christ by His Spirit can do for you, while here—will be none too much to qualify you to pay what you owe to Christ and His world. If you owe yourself, then be all that you can be. If you owe the Gospel, then let the Gospel be a light filling your mind, a power filling your heart. Christ claims you for His world at your best. He claims the most and the best that you can be, the most and the best that you can acquire, the most and the best that you can do. May God so assist you in fitting yourself for this service, that however short you come at last of paying all you owe, it may at least be said of you, "He hath done what he could."

X.

ENDURANCE.

Proverbs 24: 10. "If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small."

This proverb breathes throughout the spirit of antiquity. This shows itself not so much in the spirit of the proverb as in its form. The virtue of fortitude is not distinctively antique, although greater prominence was given to it in ancient than in modern morality. The reason for this I apprehend to be two-fold. First, the inferior development of the intellectual powers and resources of humanity. The increase of knowledge, the progress which has been made in science and art, the multiplication of activities, professions and pursuits, in which skill, cunning, foresight, calculating combination, adaptation, invention, and other intellectual powers might be exercised and embodied, has opened new avenues of distinction, and presents new objects, which men may aspire after. Before this intellectual development took place, men sought to be respected rather for the display of qualities which are inherent in man's constitution, and which require only a strong will and persistent application to bring out. The tendency of modern civilization is perhaps to the other extreme, to place less value on moral qualities, and more on intellectual than they deserve. Another reason for the greater prominence formerly assigned to fortitude

is to be found in the narrower development of the moral activities themselves. The moral life of men was not altogether so broad of old. The social obligations were not so universally felt. The claims of humanity were not so clearly recognized. Men were more isolated than now. The virtues held in highest repute were those of man as an individual, standing alone, rather than those of man as a member of the body social, bound up with others. The spread of Christianity has brought into clearer light our duties to others, and the claims of a common brotherhood. It has stimulated the sympathies, the outreaching affections, the charities, the beneficent activities of men. Although Christianity makes no change in a man's duties to himself, but rather confirms them, although the independent or individual virtues, those which belong to man as an independent agent, are the same as before, the greater prominence which it gives to the active, diffusive, communicative powers of morality, have perhaps rendered less salient its passive, self-supporting, and defensive powers.

God educates the individual by bringing first into exercise the powers which are necessary to maintain an independent existence and growth, the powers of self-preservation, self-protection, self-development. Then the social instincts are brought into exercise, those which are necessary to the existence and wellbeing of society.

The race is educated in the same way. The moral principles first impressed on men have a more immediate bearing on the individual. As the race makes progress in these, other principles are urged with greater distinctness, principles of a wider application, which without displacing those first engrafted, tend to give greater breadth as well as depth to the life. Observe, I do not affirm that there is any morality antecedent to benevo-

lence. There can be no virtue without love ; love to God, love to man. But although it is the nature of this love to give, to impart, to lavish itself on others, it is not inconsistent with the highest and most enlightened regard for the interests of the individual. It does not disparage the qualities which give grandeur, nobility, strength to man as a unit. It might be easily shown that as there can be no true greatness without love, neither can there be love of the highest order without a distinct consciousness of the elements of individual greatness.

We see these principles illustrated in the education of the Jewish nation, which is a type of that of the world. God had from the first proclaimed love to be the great law of his Kingdom. At the same time he circumscribed the nation within fixed bounds, which separated it from the rest of the world. He impressed upon it a strong instinct of national self-preservation. He permitted the growth of tribal sympathies and local attachments. And above all he encouraged the cultivation of those moral excellencies, those personal attributes which clothe the possessor with a celestial nobility, making him an object of admiring contemplation and of conscious imitation. Hence the significance which attaches to the histories of individual men among the Jews, as *e. g.* Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, Daniel. Hence also, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, which, whoever may have been its author, was conceived in a genuine Hebrew spirit, we see the wonderful and apt force of the Eleventh Chapter, where the examples of departed Jewish worthies are chanted in a most magnificent psalm. In every one of those examples you will observe that the quality recommended is individual strength, self-contained power, fortitude, unbending and unbreakable firmness of will in bearing, enduring, and doing.

And as God has never intended this virtue to be superseded by Christianity, which sets aside nothing that is noble, but confirms and energizes it rather, it may not be amiss for us to look at it a little, and that, if possible, in the old Hebrew spirit, enlightened however, let us pray that it may be, and enlarged by the spirit of Christianity.

“If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small.” The truth here affirmed may be thus paraphrased: If a man is overpowered by calamity, if he is overmastered, made useless, if his manhood be laid prostrate by misfortune, it is a sign of weakness.

I. It is not necessarily any evidence of a weak, defective character, that a man is the victim of misfortune. Undoubtedly there are calamities which are a disgrace to him on whom they fall. Every calamity which is the natural result of presumption, which is the inevitable recoil of overbearing pride, which is the bitter fruit of dishonesty, or treachery, which is the falling asunder of inward rottenness, which is the accumulated and just retribution of baseness, hypocrisy, cruelty, selfishness, is a brand of shame on him who bears it.

But all calamities are not the direct penalty of individual transgression. We are so bound up, one with another, our interests are so intermingled, that one is seldom ruined without involving others with himself. The sufferings and trials which the guilty bring down on their own heads, must often overwhelm the innocent too.

God has organized humanity in circles of wider or narrower extent. One of these circles circumscribes the nation. Another includes the family. Others embrace the professional, the social, the political, the ecclesiastical communities into which society is divided. Whatever affects any one of these circles, affects most,

perhaps all who belong to it. Blessings are diffused, curses are spread, through the same law. Men are tried in their social feelings, in their natural affections, in the hopes and desires which they cherish as citizens of a nation, and as members of a civil or religious brotherhood.

To some extent, indeed, individuals are responsible for those general disasters which come on nations and communities, on account of national crimes or social sins. All who are directly implicated in them, or sustain them, must be held legally accountable. God does thus hold them. And when the responsibility and guilt are thus distributed, they are just as real, and the punishment which overtakes them is just as disgraceful to each sufferer as though he alone were guilty, and he alone suffered. But where the calamity is part of a general disciplinary system, as in the case of famine, plague, war, or any general misfortune brought on by the guilt of some, or of many perhaps, but not all of the sufferers, it cannot be regarded as a reproach to all alike.

2. Again, it is no evidence of weakness when men show that they feel, and that keenly, their misfortunes.

Pain is a natural appointment, for the most part involuntary and unavoidable. It depends on the nature and function of the sensibilities with which we are endowed, whether physical or spiritual. Moreover, the measure and quality of the pain endured is an index to the rank and excellence of the being by whom it is endured. As we ascend in the scale of existence, the sensibilities become finer and more acute. Man has susceptibilities to pain which no inferior order of creatures can have, and which are evidences of higher capacity, both of attainment and enjoyment.

Among men, again, there is almost every grade of

susceptibility. Some are comparatively obtuse, their sensibilities are blunt, sheathed as it were in hard armor. Others are highly sensitive, they have the most delicate and exquisite susceptibility to pain. There is no reason why they should restrain all exhibition of these, more than of any other sensibilities. There is nothing more improper or unmanly in letting the world know how greatly we suffer, than in letting it know how greatly we rejoice. It may be unmanly to be overmastered by grief, but it is no less unmanly to be *overmastered* by joy. To be *unmanned* by anything is unworthy of a man. For if to him has been given the power of more exquisite feeling, to him has also been given the power of a more rigid self-control. By a beautiful law of compensation, those natures which are most delicately sensitive, have in general the greatest power of persistence, of patient, calm endurance. Woman, whose sensibilities are constitutionally so much more acute, not seldom displays a silent, uncomplaining fortitude, which astonishes the world.

This fortitude which accompanies deep sensibility, is a different thing from that nerve, that nonchalance, that "cold blood," (*sang froid*) as the French call it, with which men of an iron nature look on danger or pain. There is a physical imperturbability, a stoicism of the nerves, which enables some to bear without wincing, what would make others faint outright. One can look on firmly, and converse calmly, while his arm is sawed off; another will barely survive the operation even with chloroform or ether to aid him. Yet the latter may be every whit as brave as the other. It is a difference of organization, a difference between fine and coarse. But let the pain be of that subtle, mysterious character which comes on quietly, but irresistibly, as a shadow which spreads like poison, working more and more

the bitterness of death, and the finer organization will probably display greater power of resistance and endurance than the coarser. One man will bear an affliction that smites like the blow of a sledgehammer, and yet break his heart under the dull monotony of a pain which oppresses him like the gloom of a dungeon. Another will become as one that is dead from the sharp agony of a pain that cuts like a lancet into the flesh, who will bear with the fortitude of a Prometheus, the slow torture of a sorrow, gnawing like a vulture at his heart.

But to endure pain with patience and fortitude is one thing; to try to seem perfectly indifferent to it, or utterly unaffected by it, is another. The former is a virtue; the latter folly. Here is where the old stoic philosophers erred, who otherwise said many wise things, and did many noble things, and whose philosophy was far superior to many of the shallow, butterfly speculations of their day. But they did not rightly apprehend, as it was impossible for them, perhaps, rightly to apprehend, without Divine Revelation, the sacred significance of sorrow. They overlooked the holy ministry of pain in chastening men; not in breaking down their spirits, but in humbling them. No man is the same while he suffers, or after that he has suffered, that he was before, and it is folly to pretend it. I do not say that a man ought to parade his sorrows before the world, to proclaim his grief in public places, to lay bare his innermost heart to the careless gaze of the multitude. There is in every deep sorrow much that can not be told, which can not be brought to the surface, which is too sacred for any eye but that of God. There is a line in the depths of suffering below which Divine Sympathy can alone descend. There is not a depth to which that can not reach. It is not a deep

nature that forgets what is due to the *sacredness* of sorrow; but neither is it a weak nature that remembers what is due to the *power* of sorrow.

3. Again: it is not a sign of weakness, if, when a man is overtaken by calamity, he *pauses* for a time to consider its nature, its cause, its probable consequences and his own duty. There are some who regard it as an indication of strength, not to be impeded or delayed in their course by any disaster, but to go on in the same direction, with the same urgency and pertinacity as before. They are like a wild beast which, when it is hindered in its course, dashes against the obstruction, butting obstinately against it, without pausing to consider whether it can be beaten down by opposition, or whether the path which it is pursuing is the safest to be taken. Obstacles and reverses may produce in a man one of several results. They may either arouse a spirit of stubborn doggedness, which, right or wrong, will not be turned aside, which will plunge madly and blindly onward from one disaster to another, or fume or chafe itself to death against invincible difficulties, which is the most insane result of all. Or they may generate despair, and impel a man to throw up everything, and to cry out that all is lost, without making any effort to rally against misfortune, which is the weakest result of all. Or they may produce irresolution, vacillation; they may drive the man to be utterly at a loss what to do next, which is also a sign of imbecility. Or they may lead him to pause, to bethink himself, to take his bearings and soundings, and to find out where he is, and in what plight; to look backward and see how he came where he now is; and forward and see how best to extricate himself; how much he must be content to lose, and how much he can save, and what he can afford to lose, and what he *must* save. This, as

it would be evidence of prudence, is also a sign of strength.

There is, indeed, one course nobler and better yet; *i. e.*, when, even before the calamity comes, one has made up his mind what is best to be done, has fully planned out his line of conduct, taken into consideration the difficulties and the failures which may occur, has anticipated and made provision for all possible reverses, when one has foreseen where the danger is likely to break out, is ready for every emergency, and is so completely master of himself and master of his situation, that instead of being overwhelmed by disaster, he emerges victorious over the past, strong in the present, hopeful for the future. Indeed, there are situations when this is a man's only salvation, when, if he is not prepared to act with the utmost promptness, he is lost! There are difficulties, dangers and disasters ahead which can be foreseen, which a mind accustomed to reason on general principles and laws will perceive to be inevitable, against which it can, therefore, fortify itself.

“A prudent man foreseeth the evil and hideth himself, but the simple pass on and are punished.” When it can be thus foreseen one will be stronger, of course, to meet it. But sometimes it breaks unexpectedly on a community or an individual. Disaster overtakes them unawares. And when that is the case, it is no proof of weakness to pause in one's course to consider the situation, and to delay action not until it is too late, but until the way becomes clear enough for the adoption of some definite course. For men, governments, societies, all bodies which act, must have a policy; that is to say, they must have a distinct and clear understanding of what they are about, and of the means employed to bring about the results contemplated. They must act

from principles and not from shifting expediencies, if they would succeed.

4. It is no proof of weakness for a man when admonished by some decisive disaster that the course which has been pursued in seeking any end is wrong, to abandon it and enter on a new course.

If the policy adopted to secure any object fairly and utterly breaks down, showing that it can no longer be relied on, wisdom dictates its abandonment. It is no act of weakness to give up that which is weak. Of course a plan which has been adopted thoughtfully, candidly, conscientiously, which seems at the time the best possible, deserves and should receive a fair trial. But when it has been tried fairly, sufficiently, long enough, and thoroughly enough, and has been found wanting, it is anything but imbecility to throw it away, saying, "No more of that." It is strength rather. It is weakness not to do it. It is imbecility to cling to old prejudices, to adhere to moth-eaten precedents, to throw away golden opportunities, because to do otherwise would require a little sacrifice of pride. This obstinate adherence to prejudices, to certain policies with which a man has identified himself, or with which a party has identified itself, this stubborn persistence in trying to do what experience shows abundantly can not be done, or ought not to be done, recoils with terrible effect upon the head of those who are guilty of it. History is full of examples of the fatal consequences of such folly. There has been no more fruitful source of disaster than that moral cowardice which shrinks from the confession, "I am wrong! I have acted foolishly!" and turns over a new leaf. One of the noblest and wisest things which a man or a people can do in time of adversity is to make a frank, manly acknowledgment of defeat, of failure, of grievous error; to accept the

humiliating fact with all its inevitable results, however painful—not to make a maundering and silly parade of it, for men should preserve their self-respect in adversity—but to face it fearlessly, to probe it honestly, to own it freely and then to gird themselves at once to retrieve their failure, to turn their back on all which led to it, to avoid in future, the errors of the past and by the wisdom and experience, as well as the humility and patience acquired through adversity, to work out a more glorious destiny than if the failure had never befallen them: that is wisdom: that is strength.

But let us consider briefly what it *is* to faint in the day of adversity. And what are some of the signs of weakness which adversity brings into prominence.

1. It is a sign of weakness in adversity to lose faith in God.

God is an everpresent reality. He is personally present everywhere. His Providence is over all his works. All the issue and results of life are included in his plan. All the calamities and sufferings which visit the human family are embraced in his purposes, and permitted or ordained for their good. The greatest disasters therefore ought not to take away our confidence in him. Nothing must be allowed to rob the soul of its faith in God. This faith is essential to our spiritual life, just as God himself is essential to all life. It is indispensable to all faithful activity in the service of God. It is the true basis of that calmness, that peace which should underlie every feeling and deed. Man cannot afford to lose it therefore. It is true that the mind may be stunned by the shocks of adversity, it may be paralyzed by the lightning-stroke of calamity; it may be bewildered by the confusion of a general wreck of everything; and in this temporary paralysis, this present bewilderment, it may be pressed by cruel doubts.

But this condition must not be allowed to become permanent. God will allow no blow so heavy to fall on a man as to crush him forever. He himself may desire to *try* our faith, to test its truth and power; he may roll heavy burdens on it; he may send the floods to beat against it, and to sweep over it; but destroy it—quench it—uproot it, that he never will. If it is swept away, it is because it never had taken firm root. If it ever is crushed, it is because it never had any true vitality. If men *settle down* in unbelief, if they learn to doubt the goodness of God, to distrust his power, to suspect his willingness to hear prayer, and his readiness to answer it, to regard him as a God afar off,—it is a weakness, a guilty weakness, a sin; for every *such* weakness, is no misfortune merely, it is a crime; and if it deserves pity, it deserves no less consideration. Beware of that insidious device of an evil heart, which says of a sin, “It is my infirmity!” and hopes thus to extenuate its guilt, if not to escape punishment. It is a lying refuge, which like every other, will be swept away.

2. It is a sign of weakness in adversity, secondly, when men lose their faith in the right, in its present obligations, and its ultimate success.

This indeed is involved in what has already been said about faith in God. No one can maintain his faith in God, and lose his faith in the right. Nor can he maintain his faith in the right, and lose his faith in God. If there is a God, a Holy Being, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and who cannot look on sin, who hates impurity, and selfishness with infinite abhorrence, a Just Being, whose purpose is immutable to punish the guilty and to reward the innocent, and to secure the final triumph of the right, and utter overthrow of the wrong, an Almighty Being, whose Power is the willing minister of his Holiness, Justice and Love, and the sure

guarantee of the fulfillment of his will, why or how should we lose faith in the immutable obligations and the certain success of the right? As surely as God reigns, and as surely as the reign of God means the reign of all which God approves and loves, and the downfall of all which God disapproves and hates, so surely will the right triumph over wrong. To doubt this is to doubt God. To disbelieve this is atheism.

The most dangerous form of this unbelief is the practical. There are very few indeed, if any, in our days, who doubt the Reign of Right as a theory. The dictates of reason are too unmistakable, the voice of conscience is too potent to permit the denial of it. But there is a practical disbelief of it, which, as it is much easier to fall into it, is as much more insidious and dangerous, yes fatal, in its consequences, as it is, alas, more widespread. There are men in abundance, who, while in theory they acknowledge the supremacy of pure justice, will, notwithstanding, barter it for present gain, and subordinate it to the claims of worldly expediency. This is a crime, one of the highest misdemeanors in God's government, yea, it is of the very essence of treason against God's throne. Every lover of absolute right should revolt from it as the basest infidelity to God. Every friend of justice in its integrity, of justice as God desires to see it prevail in the world, of *justice*, I say, and of *right*, which means that which *ought* to be, that which God says *must* be, not that which self-interest desires or expediency commands, should spurn away from him every attempt to compromise truth with error, right with wrong, and to hold the former in any sort of abeyance to the latter, as treason to the King of Heaven and Earth. But there are those who without any deliberate purpose to betray the right, who, desiring perhaps to maintain it as far

as seems to them practicable, (which, however, is putting the matter on a very slippery footing, since, by that which is practicable, most people seem to understand that which is compatible with their own interests), there are those who from such motives will under the pressure of adversity allow themselves to swerve from that inflexible allegiance to the right, and the just, and the true, which God demands. But this also is a crime. Call it weakness if you will, it is criminal weakness. It carries its own condemnation, just as much as the more calculating and devilish betrayal, of which others are guilty.

I have already remarked, that when the *ends* sought after are seen to be absolutely impracticable, or essentially immoral and injurious, we are justified in abandoning them, nay, we are required to do it. It is weakness to hold on to them. Also, that when the means which have been adopted to secure a manifestly just and noble end, fail entirely, and that from their own inherent weakness, we are required to discard them and try others. But when the ends are indisputably high and worthy, and when the instrumentalities are both righteous and efficient, to cast them away, just because a temporary reverse occurs, which postpones fulfillment of the end, and cripples the instrumentalities for a season, is most deplorable weakness, is the breach of a divine and heavenly trust. When we have a noble end before us, and the right sort of means in our hands, there is but one thing to be done—to go on, and to go on until the end is gained. If we lose our way, let us try to find it as soon as we can, and then go on again. If we find unforeseen obstacles, let us bring all the power that we can to remove them out of the way, and then *go on* again. If the enemy is thicker on the way and all around us than we had anticipated, let us mul-

tiplify our powers and resources, let us be a little more watchful and determined, and *still go on*. If the road is longer to the goal than we had deemed it to be, let us be a little more patient, but let us *still go on*. If the path is rougher than we thought it was, let us take a little more time to it, but all the time let us *go on*. If we fall down, let us get up and *go on* again. If we are more badly hurt than we thought at first, let us do our best cheerfully to get over it, and then *go on* again. If it costs us more than we reckoned upon, let us make up our minds to the sacrifice, and then *go on*. The question of questions is, are we in the right way? Is the right before us? Is justice our Guide? Is truth our Leader? Is God the pillar of light which we follow?

If we are sure of that, and there is no reason why we should not be, let us onward. On, and on, and on, while the Right keeps moving. When that stops, we may stop too; not before. When the end is gained, we may rest; no sooner. When God bids us halt, we may do so, but the order is not yet. When the banner of righteousness is furled, we may go to sleep. When it is stricken down, never to be raised again, we may throw away our arms and return from the warfare. But that is never to be. If men's hands should fail to bear it up, angels' hands will seize it. If one after another they should let it fall, God's own hand will raise it, and his hand must fail ere it be made to trail the dust. Nay, it must never be abandoned. No! not for a moment. Right must always and forever be maintained—followed to the grave and into it; clung to until death. Up with the standard! If one standard-bearer falls, let another rush to his place; if he falls, let another seize it.

Let it be held up against a tempest of fire, against the

crashing hail of earth and hell's artillery; let it be followed through flood and flame. It is never more worthy of our devotion than when the storm of battle rages around it, than when it is tried, or rather when we are tried in supporting it.

XI.

A THANKSGIVING SERMON.

Isaiah 51: 9-15. "Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord; awake as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Art thou not it that hath cut Rahab and wounded the dragon?"

Art thou not it that hath dried the sea, the waters of the great deep; that hath made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over?

Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away.

I, even I, am he that comforteth you: who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man that shall be made as grass; And forgettest the Lord thy maker, that hath stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth; and hast feared continually every day, because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he were ready to destroy? And where is the fury of the oppressor?

The captive exile hasteneth that he may be loosed, and that he should not die in the pit, nor that his bread should fail.

But I am the Lord thy God, that divided the sea, whose waves roared:
The Lord of hosts is his name."

Nothing strikes us more forcibly in these old writings, in these prophecies, poems and historical records, which make up our Sacred Book, than the deep, intense, ever present consciousness, which pervades them, of an all-surrounding, all-embracing, all-inspiring, Infinite, Personal Presence, whose glory overshadows, whose Power sustains, whose Spirit quickens, whose love fills all things. It is this same sense, this living realization of God which, above all else, is needful to-day, that our gratitude may be deep, pure and abounding. We hear much said in these days of "the Logic of Events," "the Genius of History," "Social Forces," "the hand of Destiny." I am not disposed to question about the occasional use of such terms. Like the phrases, "Laws of Nature," "Physical Forces," they are often conveni-

ent and expressive. Nor is the fact that they are the pet expressions of men who disbelieve in a Personal God, who deny an intelligent, over-ruling Providence, of itself a decisive objection to their use. Only let us not be blinded. As philosophers, speculating in abstract ideas, there is no objection to the use of general terms, as symbols of certain facts. As poets, thinking in metaphors or in allegories, there is no objection to the use of figurative expressions, as images of certain realities. But as earnest, thoughtful, religious men, desirous to know the truth, yearning to see into the deep, inner facts of being, anxious to discover our obligations as subjects of the King of Kings, we had better dispense with abstractions and figures, and speak in the simple utterances of a pious heart. To-day, as we seek to realize our obligations to Him who has made us, blessed us, and brought us where we now stand to-day, we must have something else to talk about than Logic and Laws.

In this world of sin, temptation, trial, we need all the motives which have any power to impel us toward God. Of these, gratitude is at once one of the strongest and most elevated. Henry Rogers has called attention to the fact that this is the great instrumental feeling which Christianity employs in restoring man to God; and he observes that gratitude for past good is a stronger motive than the hope of future good can possibly be. Now, gratitude is possible only in view of personal beneficence. You can not manifest gratitude towards any impersonal thing or force. The tree which bears nutritious and delightful fruit, the fountain which sends forth pure and refreshing waters, the sun which radiates light, each is a benefactor and its benefactions are invaluable, but they excite no gratitude. It is the same with a force or a law. The law which produces the

succession of seasons is a most beneficent law, but no one thinks of thanking it. No shipwrecked mariner, saved by clinging to a floating plank, or by swimming ashore, dreams of returning praise to the Law of Specific Gravity, although he owes his life to it. No people delivered from oppression, or victorious over their enemies, have been known to erect temples or altars, or votive tablets to the Logic of Events. But let men, who have been delivered from some great calamity, or visited by some benediction of Providence, be told, "It was God who saved you: It was God who visited you!" and let them feel that it was indeed God, and gratitude, reverence and love will flow forth as spontaneously as song from a cheerful heart. In all the benefactions, therefore, which as a people we enjoy to-day, in all the reasons for gratitude, which we are about to consider, let us seek to discern the gentle and Opulent Hand, the warm, living, loving Heart of our ever near, ever gracious Father. The great, central theme of gratitude which I would present to-day is *Progress*, the growth of the American Nation as the result of our National trial, that growth as indicated by our present condition and character, compared with our condition and character at the time when our trial began.

And first of all, and as lying at the very root of our national growth, I would mention the progress which has been made in the feeling of nationality, in the sense of our responsibility to maintain our national life. This fact of nationality has indeed been doubted. But this was in itself a terrible witness to the truth that whether or not we are one nation, at least we ought to be one. The mournful spectacle here exhibited to the world, of two large sections of a continent, separated by no frowning and impassable barriers, subject to no

such differences of climate and production of physical resources and conditions, as would necessitate their population by distinct races of men, but bound together rather by links subtle as air or dew, and yet strong as the everlasting mountains,—the spectacle of two people, two for the time being, speaking the same language, sprung from a common ancestry, long subject to the same government, identified in their main interests and pursuits, possessed essentially of the same physical and mental characteristics, nurtured by the same literature, science, art, religion,—the spectacle of two such people, making deadly war on each other, putting in the field armies, which for magnitude and military equipment have never been equalled, such a spectacle is itself a most overwhelming argument that there ought to be here but one American nation, that the interests of peace, of humanity, and of progress demand that there should be but one. For if a war so vast, so fierce, so desolating, could arise once within the limits of the same national fold, what must be the horrors of the continuous and inevitable wars which must arise between two distinct nations, occupying the same relative positions, each more numerous, more powerful, better prepared for war, than was either section at the outset of this contest, as would certainly be the case in a few generations, by the simple force of progress? But the same witness testifies that there *is* a nation here, that there is also a clear recognition of the necessity of national union, that there is in some degree the spirit of a just national pride, and of a broad national love, that there is a God's voice in the heart of the people—we must be one and indivisible.

Some have agreed that the secession from the Union of so many States, the demand for separation of so many millions, the contribution of so much money and

treasure, and the levying of such large armies to enforce separation, and the bitterness and fierce determination with which that object is pursued, are proof positive that the nation has been divided, that henceforth we must be two.—By the same process it may be argued, and yet more justly and powerfully, that the contrary voice of a great majority of the people, the decision of more than twice as many millions that the nation is one, their determination that it shall not be divided, the contribution of vaster sums of money, and the raising of larger armies to maintain the unity of the nation, are proof positive and irrefragable that we are one, and that no schemes of designing men, no conspiracies of a spurious and corrupt aristocracy, built up on the enslavement of men, no temporary madness on the part of deluded multitudes, led astray by ignorance and inflamed prejudice, shall be allowed to put asunder what God has joined together. Never since the time when this nation first asserted and established its independence, never since the days when the Father of his country addressed to the people those noble and prescient words of warning in which he portrayed the evils of dissolution, never certainly during these later years of political deterioration—during which the nation's pride seemed to slumber, while "Union" had fallen to be the watchword of scheming men, a veil behind which they concocted plots *against* Union and Liberty—has the idea, the fact of nationality shone forth in these United States with more majestic glory than since this great reawakening of the nation to a sense of its honor and its right. Not only has the war revealed and proved this nationality, it has enlarged and exalted it, given it intelligence, consistency and strength. The assertion which has been made of the principle, the clearness with which the necessity of the fact has been demon-

strated, the sacrifices which have been made to sustain it, have endeared it more than ever to all hearts, and given it a hold upon them, such as it never had before. Never since its birth has the American nation been more truly a nation than it is to-day.

But how was it when this trial was sent upon us? Was this sense of nationality always as deep and uncompromising as it has now become? Let me ask you, have you always felt the same assurance of the fact, and the same confidence in the reality of this national life as you now feel? Look back a little, and see: not to the time when the Union of the States was the dream of a dozing and lethargic peace, or the cant of demagogues, but to those later and darker hours that have passed since the thunder which smote on Sumter first startled us out of our dreams, to those terrible crises during which the faith of the nation has been so severely tried:—Ah! do you not remember how at the first outbreak of the rebellion, when State after State was passing its ordinance of secession, and when a feeble and faithless administration took no measures to stay the plague, but ministered to it the rather, men looked with pale fear into each other's faces, as the fate of the nation hung trembling in the balance, trembling, because so rampant and defiant was treason, that it was doubtful whether the nation had enough patriotism left to strike treason a blow that might send it reeling to its lair? Do you not remember how, yet later, after the nation had been committed to war, after it had drawn the sword to maintain its sovereignty, after the thunder of a thousand cannon had proclaimed that armed rebellion must be crushed by the nation's strong right arm, after tens of thousands of the noblest and bravest of our brethren had sealed that declaration with their blood,—how that, after all this, scarcely one year ago, the same

cruel doubt returned, the same anxious questioning: Is there enough of pure patriotism to carry this war through? and how that it seemed once again as though we must answer, No! Treason is stronger than Loyalty, and more cunning than Loyalty is wise; there is not enough of the spirit and love of country to save the nation! Strange that it should have been so, and no less mournful than strange! For who does not know that in all lands, in all ages, among all tribes and kindreds, and tongues, the instinct of nationality, the love of country, the sentiment of loyalty, has been recognized, as one of the most profound, one of the most commanding, one of the most exalted principles of a nation? Philosophers have loved to praise it; poets have loved to sing it; historians have loved to describe it; heroes have loved to die for it. It has been the soul of many of the most honorable achievements of courage and endurance recorded in history; it has been the moving power in many of the noblest movements by which the progress of the race has been furthered; it has been the inspiration of many of the loftiest strains of eloquence, of the grandest deeds of daring and self-sacrifice which the world has ever known. First our God! next our Country! Such has been the battle-cry of hero-souls in every age. How, then, came it to pass, that in this land so highly favored, in this American heart, with its many just, brave, and generous instincts, in this American nation, possessed of so many of the highest and most promising attributes of national life and glory, the privilege of a nation to claim the undivided allegiance of all, should have been not only doubted, but denied; that here there should have been found in some quarters, a haughty, fierce, and disdainful rejection of national obligations, and in others but a cold, heartless,

scarcely concealed indifference to the same? What have been the causes of this debasement of national feeling? First of all, and most radical of all, the spirit of worldliness, selfishness, materialism which has grown up to such strength and magnitude all over the land, which had subordinated everything to itself, which was disposed to sacrifice every interest, principle, and responsibility to its own requirements, which compelled all considerations of public justice and morality to yield to the claims of self-interest.

Secondly: the corrupting, destructive spirit of slavery, which, actuated by an ambition that can only be characterized as infernal, and finding in the prevalent spirit of materialism a convenient and willing instrument to serve its ends, succeeded by its haughty insolence, its overweening pride of power, its despotic sway over timid, time-serving, self-seeking men and parties, its dangerous sophistries and enervating falsehoods in politics, morals, and religion, in producing sectional alienation and strife, a spirit of insubordination against rightful authority, a disregard of sacred, civil and moral obligations, the systematic corruption of public men, the prostitution of official power to its ambitious schemes, the poisoning of public sentiment, a widespread apostasy from the principles and policy of the founders of the Republic, a mournful departure from the spirit which gave birth to the nation, and the loss of that respect for manhood, and of that generous conception of liberty, which is the very soul of life to a republic. Lastly: the baneful influence of a false idea of loyalty, invented by a sagacity which can only be characterized as satanic, which, foreseeing the time when the antagonism of liberty and slavery must issue, if not in the total subjugation of one, then in their separation, cunningly prepared for that separation by

the diligent inculcation of the theory of State Sovereignty, of the right of each State to the supreme allegiance of its citizens, a theory utterly subversive of all true nationality, and wholly fatal to that higher loyalty, which rising above all territorial limitations and all secondary jurisdictions, reaches upward to that grand, dominant, primary Sovereignty, which embraces all that is signified in the word Nation, which is co-ordinate and co-extensive with all that an American *should* mean, with all that every true American *does* mean, when he says, *My Country*.

And now, to what a fearful extent these causes combined had enfeebled, and all but destroyed the spirit of nationality, let this war testify. How widely spread, and how powerful that fatal heresy which has carried out of the Union one-third of the States which composed it. How many a noble spirit, a Zollicoffer, a Johnson, a Jackson, has been seduced by it from his lawful allegiance, and led into the dishonored grave of a traitor. What embarrassments has the same fallacy, perverting the public sentiment of our own North, thrown in the way of the Government in the successful suppression of the revolt, what hindrances it has occasioned, what vacillation, what delays! And worse than all, and most shameful of all, how deeply and widely had the foul and fatal virus of Slavery tainted the body politic, and paralyzed whatever was sound and healthy therein, when such a war as this, for such a cause, had become possible. What a sad and terrible confession to make, that in this government calling itself free, claiming to be the example and champion of liberty among the nations of the earth, founded in the declaration, that all men who bear the image of God are created free, created each with the inalienable right to himself, a right in which he is the equal of all

others, that in this model republic, where every throb of the nation's brain should be liberty, where every throb of the nation's heart should be liberty, where every tramp of the nation's footsteps should sound forth liberty, that here should have existed a purpose so foul, so fell, so damning, to stamp forever on the national escutcheon the black stain of slavery; that here should have been hatched a conspiracy so extensive and powerful as to consummate that nefarious design at the cost of war and disruption, that this monster curse should have been caressed and nurtured, until in the pride of its strength and the wildness of its passion, it should seize on the nation's heart and seek to crush out its life, so that it requires the utmost straining of the nation's energies to shake it off, and dash it to destruction!

What a mournful evidence of the poverty into which the spirit of nationality among us had sunk, that when the question had become; Which shall perish, the Nation or Human Slavery? there should have been found, not millions, not even thousands, but any, to say, "Let the nation be rent in twain, sooner than that a being, made in the image of God, should have the brand of a chattel taken from his brow! Let the nation be overthrown from top-stone to corner-stone, sooner than that a free spirit, endowed with the heritage of immortality, should have its fetters burst! Let the nation's life be extinguished in an ocean of blood, sooner than that a system which makes man a brute, which annuls the sacredness of marriage, which makes motherhood a mockery, which makes merchandise of God's children, which buys and sells Jesus Christ in the market-place, for it buys and sells his brethren, should even be impaired!"

My countrymen! had it been a system fraught with physical, intellectual, and social advantages to the inhabitants of this Continent, which had come into an-

tagonism with the perpetuity of this nation, had it been an institution transmitted for generations from fathers to children, fragrant with patriarchal benedictions, sweet with sacred memories of the "storied past" clustering about it, endeared with the hallowed associations of names embalmed in a nation's reverence, consecrated by the tear-baptisms, and the prayer-baptisms of ages, there ought still to have been a spirit of nationality in this people, strong, brave, and stern enough to say, Before THE NATION be allowed to wreck itself on that, let it be mined and blown into a myriad atoms! But that when the life of a nation was put in peril by an institution, branded with the curse of Cain, infamous with the scorn of ages, sentenced to crouch like a leper outside of the gates of Christendom, besmeared like the idol Moloch by the blood of men, women, and children, wrung out of them by the sting of the lash, and the fang of the blood-hound, vocal with the groans of a scourged, a tortured, an outraged humanity, yea, vocal with groans never heard on earth, audible only to the ears of a God of Infinite Justice, the groans which would have been uttered, had not the manhood of the victims been benumbed, paralyzed, crushed, blighted with a curse worse than death,—that then the question should have been raised even, in a land calling itself free, in a land calling itself Christian: which shall live, *The Nation* or *The Curse*? that when it was raised, there should have been found multitudes, not only in those States which gloried in the shame of human bondage, but in States calling themselves free, and which were free indeed from the immediate presence of the evil, although not from its curse,—multitudes ready to say, Perish the Nation, but let Slavery live!—this was a sight most astounding, most shameful, most humiliating! But, God be praised! to-day the shame is at

least felt; the humiliation has issued, we trust, in humility and repentance; the retribution which has overtaken us is felt to be just; the punishment which God is inflicting on us has been mercifully over-ruled to the reawakening of the nation's conscience, and of the nation's life. We shudder as we think how near we came to the betraying of the Divine trust committed to us. For we have learned, and the fires of war have burned the conviction into our souls, that a nation's life is a trust as sacred as that of the individual, not to say, more sacred. Woe be to the nation which does not realize the worth of its life, which becomes indifferent to its mission, which abdicates its God-given prerogatives! Woe be to the nation, which, by its effeminacy, its luxury, its folly, its corruption, becomes incapable of sustaining its claims to be a member of God's family of nations! Woe be to the nation, which dies by its own hand! Such nations there have been in the world. Their corpses lie on its highway to-day. The curse of heaven lies on the shrunken, blighted, bedwarfed, inane phantasms which represent them. They were guilty of self-murder; and the suicide among nations is a criminal in the sight of God, no less than the suicide among men. Who can doubt that were this nation to consent to its disruption, the curse of the crime would rest on its fragments?

Will any one pretend that the disintegration of this republic into diverse confederacies and sovereignties, would not impair the essential nationality of the people, any more than a diversity of governments has obliterated the German nationality or the Italian? But who does not know, that where, as among the Germans and Italians, there is a real underlying basis of nationality, the irresistible tendency is toward unity, and that all present division is regarded as a calamity?

Or will any one say, that it is a fallacy to assume that we are but one nation, that in reality we are already two, and that the success of the rebellion would be only the logical and historical development of that which already lies in the nature of things? A greater fallacy than that, or one whose absurdity were more ridiculous, if its malignity did not make it odious, it is difficult to conceive. When we behold the continent—home of the nation, veined as it is with rivers, and ribbed with mountain-ridges, which, reaching from the winter to the summer zone, speak of no Northern nation and no Southern, but only of one American nation—When we look at our past history as a people, our education in one grand world-school, our fraternal intercourse and commingling, which has been going on now for two centuries without a suspicion of diverse nationalisms having been entertained for a moment, until of late the interests of Slavery had made the fiction necessary—When we consider the futility of all the arguments employed to prove the existence of antagonistic nationalities, arguments, which, if they have any force, would split up and splinter every people on the face of the globe—When to all this we add the prospect which presents itself, if two or more nationalities be allowed, alike and nearly equal in intelligence, prowess, wealth, energy and independence, especially if, at the same time, unlike and divergent in their social system, their political aspirations, their national aims, in any of those points which would alone necessitate or justify their division, the prospect of collisions, jealousies, misunderstandings, enmities and incessant wars—When we contemplate all this, the idea that God has made us two, or many, or that it is his desire that we should become two, or many, is both incredible, and repulsive. God forgive us that the con-

viction of this was too feeble to prevent even the outbreak of a war so gigantic and calamitous; but God also be praised that this very war has so deepened and strengthened that conviction, that hereafter, when the supremacy of our nationality shall have been triumphantly maintained, any other attempt to overthrow it will be for ages, yea, we devoutly believe, forever an impossibility. Let all the people thank the Most High, that to-day, as never before, to-day, notwithstanding the prevalence of civil war, the nation is a reality; that henceforth, no such phantom as a Virginian nationality, or a Carolinian, or a Georgian, shall be allowed for a moment to eclipse this great, bright, solar fact of the American nationality, destined to become an even brighter and more blessed reality, to illuminate and bless this earth; that henceforth it will be the recognized and solemn duty of all American citizens to cherish and cultivate to greater intensity and purity, the love of country, to bring into clearer and fuller light the consciousness of our nationality, to guard with more sacred jealousy that oneness of destiny and of glory, which God has given to be our inheritance.

But we have a still further cause of gratitude in the fact, that not only has progress been made in the feeling of nationality, but that the Divine idea of that nationality is more clearly understood, more universally recognized, and more faithfully carried out than perhaps ever before.

Assuming it as established that God has given us a nationality, the question arises, why? To what end? There is a national as well as a personal individuality, distinctly impressed by the power of God. National organisms have their part to perform in the development of the world, as personal organisms have in the development of nations. And without attempting to

press the analogy too far, or to indulge in over-refinement of speculation, it may safely be assumed, for all history shows it to be true, that the leading nationalities of earth, those which exert a controlling influence in the world's development, have a distinct and important mission entrusted to each by God. Thus, to Greece was assigned the mission of asserting the supremacy of mind over matter, of intellectual over brute force, of science and art over animalism and barbarism. To Rome was assigned the mission of asserting the superiority of intelligent self-controlling will, of disciplined and consolidated civilization, involving the supremacy of law, and the subordination of *the one to the all*, whether over the intelligent, undisciplined energy of barbarism, or over the more effeminate civilization, the frivolous culture without energy, the intelligence without will, the self-assertion without self-restraint of degenerate Greece. To the Saracen it was given to put forth the dignity and power of simple faith, its supremacy over the blind superstition of oriental heathenism, over the enervate intellectualism of Greece, or even over the more disciplined and practical, but latterly the less spiritual and earnest power of Rome. Whenever any nation proves false to the Divine Idea entrusted to it, God prepares its fall.

Thus, when Greece forgot its mission, and made the intellectual serve the physical, when culture became the slave of sense, when science became sophistry, and art the handmaid of luxury and corruption, Greece fell. When Rome, intoxicated with success, and maddened with pride, lost its power of self-restraint and self-discipline, used its energies as the instruments of self-aggrandizement and the ministers of a debased materialism, forgot the sanctity of law, and the paramount claims of the common weal, Rome fell. When

the Saracen lost his simple faith, and sank into a sensualism yet lower than that of the nations which he had conquered, he too, became a nonentity in history. The law is universal and unailing. It applies to the nations of to-day as well as to those of the past. Yea, and it behooves us to confess to-day, that it is because this American nation has been unfaithful to its trust, because it has departed from its Divine Idea, that God is now punishing it; and although he gives us strong encouragement to believe that he does not now seek its total overthrow, it is at least his manifest purpose to chastise it, that through chastisement it may be brought to renew its consecration, and to enter on that high service to which it is called, with greater diligence and conscientiousness than heretofore. We are thus summoned to a consideration of the mission of the American nation.

On the very threshold of our inquiry into this subject, we are confronted with the spirit of materialism, which has undertaken to decide this question from the lowest of all standpoints, by the shortest and narrowest of all standards, and which has thus contributed, in no small degree, in bringing about that infidelity to its trust of which God now accuses the Nation. And this has been its language: "The American Nation has been organized to furnish to the world an example of wealth, prosperity, commercial greatness, industrial success. Behold a country rich in all natural resources, a continent of fertility, abounding in all the elements of power, whose products will ere long be adequate to supply the demands of civilization from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same. See a land, where every man, if he has only the requisite tact, energy and prudence, may acquire a fortune. Behold a people ingenious, quick witted, enterprising, ever ready to avail

themselves of whatever tends to insure success. See what they have already accomplished. Wildernesses have been transformed into gardens. The place which is to-day the haunt of the savage, is to-morrow the seat of empire. Cities spring up as by enchantment. Rivers, which yesterday rolled their majestic course amid the unbroken silence of nature, are to-day ploughed by the keel of the steamship. The scream of the fire-car sweeps over the prairie, which resounded but now with the tramp of the buffalo. The roaring of machinery, the hum of trade, the sounds of husbandry, the lowing of cattle on a thousand hills, echoed and re-echoed from shore to shore, mingle with the harmonies of its Eastern and Western Oceans. How great a Nation is this, whose commerce whitens the seas, whose industry prints its footsteps all over the continent, whose innumerable treasuries overflow with precious stores!" How often has this spirit confronted us? How often during the days of our peace were these proud boastings heard, made not in the spirit of gratitude to the Giver of all good, not in the lofty consciousness of a grand moral destiny, to which all this wealth and power might be made subservient, but in a spirit which regarded the prosecution of these material ends, the development and accumulation of these physical resources as the be-all and the end-all of our national life.

Is it not true, that, however it may be now, until lately, until the stern teachings of war had shown us the shallowness and unworthiness of our views, the Nation had become, in the popular conception, little else than a vast co-partnership, organized on the lowest material basis:—a great Mutual Insurance Company, to protect and to advance the property interests of its members? Was it not too commonly the case, that the worth of the Union was estimated by its financial value

rather than by any higher standard of worth? But there is a somewhat higher idea of the American nationality which, combining itself with that material idea just described, was, perhaps, the prevalent idea among the mass of intelligent and active American citizens almost down to the present moment, which yet exerts a potent sway over large multitudes. This, we may call the Political Idea. The characteristic of this idea is that it gives prominence to the political significance of the State, as a fact of more perfect accomplishment here than elsewhere. It regards the American continent as a theater for the most satisfactory solution of the great problem of government, the adjustments of the rights, privileges and obligations of men as citizens, as free subjects of law. This is undoubtedly a condition of the Divine Idea of our Nationality, an integral element of its development: but is it all? Is there nothing higher in that idea than the expression of a political formula, the establishment of a governmental system, distinguished by the harmony and equipoise of its component forces? This, indeed, were no trifling achievement: it were one of vast consequence and momentous results. But that we may the more clearly see the reason which we have for gratitude in the prevalence at length of a yet nobler view of our people, let us look for a moment at some of the practical results of regarding the production of a political system as the highest function of American Nationality. Some of those results are these: the idea of citizenship has, in great measure, eclipsed the idea of manhood; the claims of the State have been too often stated and enforced without due respect to the claims of humanity: the idea of Law has too far merged itself into that of the Popular Will, and has thus lost the attributes of fixity and authority: Politics has lorded it over Morality: the Nation has become

secondary to the State, whereas the State ought to be the servant of the Nation.

What next? There has resulted the diminution of reverence for law, as a thing altogether in our own hands, capable of being changed and moulded at will; the degeneracy of politics into a trade; the absorption of the nation's energies and the exhaustion of its passions in exciting political contests; the ascendancy of party spirit, and the substitution of the claims of party for the claims of country; the politicalization of the two great intellectual powers of the land, the Rostrum and the Press, and their consequent degradation; the degradation of the Rostrum by lowering it to the vulgar tastes and prejudices of the rabble; the degradation of the Press by making it the organ of sophistry, vituperation, and falsehood.—And now mark how God is punishing us for this. In consequence of this lack of genuine heartfelt reverence for law, in consequence of the disposition to regard it merely as the breath of a popular impulse, which another breath may dissipate, and not as the authoritative determination of the enlightened Reason and Conscience, not as the well-considered expression of that which must be, and which should endure; in consequence of this surrender of the State to political traders and tricksters, in consequence of this subordination of manhood to political ends and uses; in consequence of the prevalent servility to party; in consequence of the dishonest expedients adopted to secure partizan success; in consequence of the lying spirit, which has so largely possessed the platform and the press; in consequence of the disproportionate accumulation of the intellectual and emotional life of the nation in political channels,—what have we seen? We have seen the authority of the Supreme Law of the land scornfully and defiantly repudiated; we have seen the principle and the right of an-

archy unblushingly proclaimed; we have seen political machinery, measures, and agencies, made the instruments of the nation's destruction; we have seen nationality sacrificed to sectionalism; we have seen the revelations of the dishonesty of our public officials, and the corruptions of our political life held up to the contempt of the world; we have seen this momentous conflict scornfully described as a disgraceful political squabble; we have seen the utterances of our public men, the representations of our orators, and the statements of our press, contemptuously tossed aside as unworthy of credence, and the American people denounced as untruthful, unscrupulous, dishonest.—This is the penalty which we must pay to-day; and who can deny that it is in great part merited? And yet these consequences are the direct, not to say the legitimate outgrowth of that political idea of our nationality, which has so extensively prevailed. At least we may hope, that with the predominance of a higher idea, and with the consecration of the nation to a nobler aim, these evils will gradually diminish. And it is to-day a cause of the deepest gratitude that the war has brought this higher idea, this nobler aim, in the clearest light before us.

The problems which it has brought with it have forced upon us a more thorough and profound investigation of the providential mission of the American People.—It has compelled us to ask: Of what significance is this struggle, if something higher is not involved in it than the success of a political experiment? Is it worth the tremendous sacrifice which it demands, if nothing else is to come out of it than the determination of mere political issues? If the American People has no higher mission than to build and run a political machine, why go to war to stop the building and running of another such machine? What is the Unseen Impulse

which drives this nation, almost in despite of itself, into a war of such magnitude, to prevent disruption? What is that stern inexorable necessity, which compels it to maintain at every cost and hazard the proclamation of its original and indissoluble unity? What is that Future, that glorious destiny, toward which an invisible Hand beckons it onward through the Red Sea of blood? These are questions, through the solution of which, forced upon it by a wise and merciful Providence, the Nation has at length been educated into a higher idea than it has ever before seriously and generally realized, of its historical world-mission.

What, then, is the mission of the American Nation? I answer, to vindicate the idea of manhood in its fullness and integrity; manhood, as the basis of individual freedom, of social order, of national growth; manhood, as the fountain of wisdom, the depositary of justice, the inheritor of all privilege and right. Ours is the first nationality in the history of the world, which has made the assertion of this Divine Fact its definite aim. Other nations have contributed, doubtless, to its development, but no other has ever felt itself summoned to assume the vindication of this idea, as its especial function. The great declaratory charter of its rights, the immortal inaugural in which it first enunciated to the world its inspiring idea, rests on the fundamental truth, that all *men* are in God's idea free. Manhood, it affirms, is the grand fact of social and individual life. It is the crown of all creaturely development. It is the goal of all history. Heaven and earth are ordained for it. Government is made for man, not man for government. All institutions, laws, liberties, rights, penalties, rewards, are shaped to the production of this result. It is superior to all its accidents. Its claims and prerogatives are to be vindicated against every foe, whether

against the brute force which would crush it; or against the pride of rank, which would scorn it; or against the selfishness of wealth, which would traffic in it; or against the bigotry of caste, which would ostracize it; or against the tyranny of the mob, which would outrage it. A commonwealth of *men*, founded on the attributes of manhood, on freedom, virtue, intelligence, self-respect, self-control, independence—such is the ideal American Commonwealth. A grander idea was never given to any people to cherish and to actualize. It is an axe which strikes at the root of the poison-trees, by which humanity has been overshadowed, and its beauty blighted. It is a fire which goes forth to burn the accumulated mass of usurpation and wrong, beneath which the true life of manhood has been buried. It is an electric power which vibrates in the sky, clears the overhanging clouds that darken the world, and, albeit in storm, purges the atmosphere of its deadly miasmas. To other nations it has been granted to vindicate this or that attribute of manhood, but to ours it has been granted to vindicate its Divine Idea in its completeness, to be the Angel flying in the midst of the heavens, proclaiming over sea and land this Eternal Evangel of Manhood. It is the advocate of personal independence; the apostle of individual worth. It throws its heavenly aegis around man, saying: "Here is the image of God, and it shall be sacred forever." It inculcates faith in man, without which no progress, no heroic achievement is possible. It proclaims the principle of self-government, to-wit: that a people can administer its own affairs, by virtue of its own inherent power, wisdom, justice, benevolence, on the basis of universal right, and guided by the Eternal Spirit, whose inspiration is ever present in all the movements of humanity; that men in the light of the intelligence,

and under the promptings of the conscience, which God has given them, can discern and ordain the best laws for their government; that a nation of men, bound together by the common recognition of human rights, and by the common law of justice and liberty, is a better executor of the trusts committed to it, than any man, or class, or order, who may undertake their administration. Of this system, this National Idea, Manhood is the central pillar. It is the keystone of the arch. Take it away, and all must fall to ruin. Take it away, and the American Republic is a body without a soul, a corpse. Take it away, and the history of this people, the dealings of Providence with them, become a mystery, which time in its whole course will scarcely be able to solve. Take it away, and American Nationality becomes the baseless fabric of a vision. This is the Idea of that Nationality, grander, indeed, in its present development than in its first germs.

And manifestly, to provide for this idea a fitting theatre of development, God has given it a continent, a world, for ages shrouded in the darkness of the Unknown Mystery which haunted the ancient world from beyond the earth-surrounding ocean-river, and then brought to light in the fulness of time, to receive and nurture the seed of liberty: a continent lying midway betwixt the extreme East and the extreme West of yon old world, and thus so situated as to receive and communicate the throbbing currents of international life; a continent, physically the oldest, historically the newest, and geographically the most central, built, one would say, on purpose to be the heart of the world; a continent on which the Almighty has stamped Diversity in Unity, Oneness in Variety, as though expressly to contribute to the most varied and manifold development of the one, but multitudinous nation whom his Provi-

dence had ordained to inhabit it. And, manifestly, still further to contribute to the growth of this grand organic nationality, God has been bringing and still is bringing hither the offspring of all the leading and vital nationalities of the old world, their life, their active forces, their brain, blood, bone, and sinew, their ideas, powers, and characteristics, all the elements which time has engrafted on them, and, fusing them together in this great world-crucible, is producing a unitary result in national life and character, the like of which has never elsewhere been seen, and could under no other circumstances be produced. And why? Manifestly again, to organize here a nationality which should be the richest and ripest fruit of all ages and lands; a commonwealth answering to Milton's sublime definition, "One huge Christian personage, one mighty growth and stature of an honest man, as big and compact in virtue as in body;" a Majestic Empire of Freedom and Fraternity, which might be for all the world, and for all time, the exponent of manhood in its broadest, freest, fullest development; a beneficent Christian Power, qualified by its constitution, its education, and its animating spirit, to understand, to reach, to influence, to lead, to elevate, to evangelize all the nations of the earth.

And it is because the rebellion of the South is a conspiracy against this hope, because it is an attempt to blast this future, to wrest from the American commonwealth its crown of glory, to pluck from the Queen-nation's brow her diadem of royalty, to blot out the stamp of unity which God has put on the land, to render nugatory all the historical preparations which the past has furnished for the establishment here of a world-ruling, world-inspiring, world-sanctifying power, that the Nation has at length arisen in its Majesty, and

uplifting its hand to the Eternal Throne, has sworn by him that sitteth upon it, and with the aid of his Omnipotent Arm, to crush it utterly and forever.

At length it has become fully alive to its mission. And when it sees that Holy Mission warred upon, when it finds a minority rebelling against it, trampling with the heel of scorn on the Declaration by which the Nation's independence was secured, denouncing with bitter and contemptuous hatred the fundamental truth on which the Republic was built, denying with fierce disdain the sacred claims of manhood, pouring contumely on the image of Deity, seeking to rivet indissoluble fetters of bondage on souls whose liberty God came to proclaim and secure; when it finds itself overwhelmed with a war so portentous, so devastating, so bitter in its fruits, a war inaugurated as a crusade against God's Idea of Man and in behalf of the Devil's Idea, which would make a man a thing, a soul a slave; a war either to subvert all nationality or to wrest from the Nation its charter of life, to compel it to stultify all its past professions, all the labors, achievements and sacrifices of its fathers, to make it blind to the heavenly charms of freedom and the dignity of personality, to make it deaf to the celestial voice of Liberty, and the thunder tones of human progress, to make it dumb that it may not utter the sublime inspirations which sound from the battle-fields, whereon bleach the bones of the heroes, of the heroes of liberty and nationality from Marathon and Thermopylæ down, and ring in every noble heart—when the Nation sees all this, its firm, unalterable resolution is: The Union—that Union which represents all that is sacred in our past, precious in our present, glorious in our future,—must be preserved: while the foe of our nationality, the destroyer of our brotherhood, that Wrong which represents whatever is most shameful in our past,

tragic in our present, and fatal to our future, that curse, which would divide what God has joined, which would make weak what God has made strong, which would make that a power for injustice, which God meant to be a power for justice and liberty—must be destroyed. This, thank God, is the Nation's position to-day. It has taken us some time to reach it. Very tender has been our treatment of the great root-crime out of which our bitter woes have grown. Exceedingly cautious have we been lest we might seem to countenance the terrible charge of malignant enemies and hypocritical friends of the government, that this war is in any sense an assertion of the law and power of liberty. To be sure the war is primarily and fundamentally to preserve the government, to maintain our nationality: but there has been, one might suppose, a very unnecessary degree of shrinking from the open declaration that it is to preserve a government, whose soul is liberty, that it is to maintain a nationality, whose grand mission it is to assert, within its sphere, and in all of its activities, the right of manhood. It required two years of suffering, of anxious, terrible toil, of costly, bloody sacrifice, to bring us to feel that our only salvation is in taking our position openly, firmly, immovably on the rock whereon our Fathers stood, in identifying ourselves with the Divine Idea, which is the core of our nationality, even the sacredness, the inviolability, the Godlikeness of manhood. God be praised, at last we are there! At last we are prepared to say, that liberty is the supreme law of the land, and that liberty is commensurate with manhood. This is to-day the voice of the Nation. And when I say Nation, I mean that spirit of nationality which is now so triumphantly marching on in the tramp of our armies, so majestically proclaiming itself in the suffrages of the

people, so nobly embodying itself in the acts and declarations of the government. I mean whatever is sound, vigorous, and vital in the power, which even now dominant, will shortly reign supreme and alone. I mean, if you will have it so, the North. Yes! the North is henceforth the Nation, by which I mean, that the civilization of the North, the institutions of the North, the policy of the North, the spirit of the North, are to be henceforth the civilization, the institutions, the policy, the spirit of the nation; and that whatever is opposed thereto must and will cease, in part by force of law, in part by force of circumstance, in part by force of assimilation produced by a freer intercourse and a truer union. Hereafter our public men will know no North, no South, not for the old reason that all is South, but for the new reason that all is North: because from the Lakes to the Gulf the ideas, the education, the liberty, the progress of the North will bear sway unchallenged and unimpaired.

Nor in this process will the South be lost. Far from it. It will receive new life. It will be transformed into a higher form of being. Whatever is corrupt, barbarous, unchivalrous, unrepublican, unchristian, having perished, then whatsoever is noble, generous, vital, exalted, will pass into the life-blood of the new-born Nation, to be an element of beauty and strength. It is charged that victory can only result in subjugation. Say rather in the liberation, the regeneration, the elevation of the South, its more perfect identification with the free Imperial Republic of the future. Then will the spectacle be seen of a grand homogeneous nationality, a noble Christian commonwealth, possessed by no demon of discord, bearing no brand of shame, dragging in its footsteps no clanking chain, leaving in its footprints no crushed or mangled emblem of divinity,

but animated by one soul of liberty, breathing one spirit of love, its brow shining with the light of that celestial commonwealth, whose union is perfect, its footsteps blossoming with peace, and life, and joy.

We praise God to-day that the vision of this Future is granted unto us. We bless Him that with almost unclouded eyesight we can look to that joyful consummation. To-day we stand on Pisgah, and gaze at once backward along the course of our painful pilgrimage, and forward, to the rest which we trust awaits us, and thank God for the one and the other. As we look back, and see the wilderness through which we have fought our weary way, with its terrible trials, its hissing venomous serpents, its fields of carnage and desolation, as we look back with tearful eyes on the resting-places of the slain, the groans of the loved and honored brave, who have fallen in the strife, as we think how much we have been called on to bear, to suffer, to sacrifice, we can still thank God, who has been our pillar of cloud by day, and our pillar of fire by night; who has been so patient with our murmurings, our unbelief, our longing after the flesh-pots of Egypt, our worshiping of the golden calf, our conspiracies of the congregation of Korah, and our compacts with Moab and Midian; the God who has inspired our legislators and our rulers, given them patience, wisdom, courage to do what is right, and hearts in sympathy with the great heart of the People, and responsive to its wishes and determinations, and who through them, amid the thunder and lightning of battle, has given the Law of Liberty to the land; the God who has led our armies, who has sustained the hearts of our brethren in the field, kept them from sinking under defeat, or from ever despairing of the Republic, filled them with a loyalty which cannot be shaken, with a courage which knows no fal-

tering, with a patient endurance which nothing can tire, with a love of country which shrinks from no toil, no suffering, no sacrifice, to save her from dishonor; the God who after many sore trials, and bitter humiliations, has at length smiled on our arms, crowned them with victory, and through victory strengthened the resolution, born in adversity, to consecrate the Nation to liberty, the Union to humanity; the God who has restrained the Nations of the Earth, whatever may have been their disposition, from falling on us in the hour of weakness, despoiling us of our most cherished prerogatives, and frustrating us in our endeavors to accomplish what we believe to be our chosen mission as a people; the God who has done wondrously and gloriously, not only infinitely beyond what we deserved, but immeasurably more than we have ever dared to hope for. We praise him as we look forward to the Land of Promise toward which he has been guiding us, and see it lying before us, resting under his broad bright smile, sparkling with the golden streams of prosperity, overflowing with the milk and honey of Learning and Art, rich in the wine of liberty, and waving like Lebanon with the never fading, lordly crown of sovereign manhood. Our feet do not indeed quite touch it as yet. We have the Jordan yet to cross, the Canaanites yet to fight, and a long hard struggle perhaps with the lingering Philistines; we have the work of organization, of reconstruction, of harmonization, to perform; we have the battles and victories of Peace yet to win.

But the God who has led us hither will lead us to the end. His arm is not yet asleep. "Art thou not it that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the dragon? Art thou not it which hath dried the sea, the waters of the great deep; that hath made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over?" We thank Him,

then, to-day, for the goodly prospect which expands before us, the glorious future which beckons us onward, glorious in its responsibilities as well as in its promises, in its duties as well as its hopes. We praise Him in behalf of that despised and oppressed race, who have bowed so long under the yoke of slavery, whose blood has so long cried from the earth for vengeance, who have waited so patiently and prayed so fervently for their deliverance from the house of bondage, that to all of them the day of their salvation is nigh, even at the door, that to thousands it has already come, that to hundreds it has been granted by rallying around the banner of freedom and nationality, by swearing to uphold it, to save it from dishonor, and to follow it even unto death, and by vindicating their oath before the mouth of the caannon, at the point of the bayonet, and in the deadly trench, by doing all which brave men can dare or do in a noble cause, to show themselves worthy of freedom, and deserving of a nation's gratitude and praise.

We praise Him in behalf of those who have been summoned to make great and costly sacrifices for the country, for the assurance which they may enjoy that their sacrifices will not be in vain, that results have been already secured worth all the price which has been paid, and that those which we may hope will ere long be secured, transcend the most that we can give.

We praise Him in behalf of the generations yet unborn, that they may hope to be spared the bitter cup of which we must drink, that they may reap the harvest of beauty, of prosperity, of power, of progress, of joy, which we to-day sow in tears and blood; that they may take warning by whatever in us has been unwise, unworthy, unmanly, sinful; and inspired by what-

ever our times have brought forth that is sagacious, honorable, heroic, just.

We praise Him in behalf of the oppressed Nationalities of Earth, that the expectations which they have so long centred on this Republic do not seem doomed to disappointment, that the example of self-government here presented is not to become a shadow and a mockery, that here they may always find a sympathizing Helper and Friend.

We praise Him in behalf of all the free Nationalities of Earth, that here they may hope ever to find a counsellor and fellow-laborer, to aid in the great work of raising humanity to the enjoyment of its noblest prerogatives and privileges.

We praise Him in behalf of the Church of Christ, that here may spring up a Missionary Nationality, which, by its central position, its commercial relations, its popular institutions, its spiritual as well as secular enterprise, its more richly constituted and freely developed humanity, its vast resources, its training in the virtues of magnanimity, liberality, sympathy, philanthropy (indestructibly engrafted on it, we pray, by this trial) will be prepared, beyond any other nation, to reach, to move, to civilize, and to Christianize the benighted nationalities of the globe, until that bright Millennial Day shall dawn, when universal humanity shall enter on the possession of its lasting heritage of liberty, truth, religion, love, when the great brotherhood of man shall bow together before the throne of our common Father, shall circle the Cross of our common Redeemer, and strive in one love, for one faith, one character, one immortality. Then shall glory be to God in the highest, peace on earth, good will to men.

XII.

THE TESTS OF CHRISTIANITY.

Ephesians 3: 18. "May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height,"

In its intellectual aspects the age in which we live is wont to be charged as a critical age. As humanity advances in intellectual power, the spirit of inquiry and personal independence becomes more strongly and generally developed. Men are less disposed than of old to be led by tradition, or lean on authority. They insist on testing whatsoever claims their acceptance. This is so especially in matters of religious faith. Christianity itself is subjected to searching tests, and probed through and through.

An impression seems to prevail in some quarters that Christianity is afraid of this trial, that it shrinks from these tests. Nothing can be more unfounded than this impression. Whatever a few timid souls here and there may have thought and said, whatever mistaken policy of proscription or persecution a benighted, corrupt, enervated church may sometimes have adopted, Christianity itself, as represented by the faith of an intelligent, healthy, living church, has ever welcomed the fullest, most searching examination of its claims. Indeed, it is one great duty of the advocates of Christianity to hold it up to this inspection, to help men in applying to

it whatever tests are in themselves legitimate and appropriate.

It will be the aim of this discourse to aid in making an application of one such test to Christianity, as we understand it. This test is a quality not very easily defined in a single term, for which no single term is in the nature of the case altogether adequate, and which can not be better described, perhaps, than by that group of terms in which Paul in the text describes the Redemptive Love of Christ, when he prays that the Ephesians may be able to know and comprehend what is the breadth, and length and depth and height.

I assume now, as a fundamental axiom, self-evident to every reflecting mind, that a trustworthy system of truth, and especially a true science of Divine things, must possess these properties, spiritually interpreted, of breadth, length, depth and height: that is to say, it must have fulness, richness, (expansiveness,) comprehensiveness, manifoldness. It must be broad and long and deep and high, full and inexhaustible. It must have, of course, other qualities besides these, such as clearness, consistency, unity, practical utility, and the like: but these qualities being presupposed, it may be safely laid down that *that* system has the greatest antecedent probability in its favor, which is largest in its contents, widest in its range, most manifold in its relations, most inspiring in its power, most enriching in its contributions to the higher life of the soul. That representation of the world of spiritual facts and Divine realities is most likely to be true, which gives one the widest scope of vision, whose horizon is broadest, whose zenith is highest, whose heavens are most spacious, whose depths most abound in treasures of great price. That religion is most Divine which answers for us the most questions, which solves

the most doubts, which fills the most wants, which touches the soul at most points, which opens most avenues of communication with God, whose revelation brings to light most sublimity and perfection, and bears the costliest freight of "truths that wake to perish never."

I shall not stop to argue at length in favor of this proposition. It is implied in the very being and constitution of man. Behold for a moment this product of Divine wisdom! this being so fearfully and wonderfully made! Look at the complexity of his organization, the multiplicity of his needs and susceptibilities, the boundlessness of his desires, the manifoldness of his relations, the illimitableness of his capabilities. Surely it is no exaggeration when the poet says of the human soul that it is—

"Of a thousand faculties composed
And twice ten thousand interests."

For such a being as this, so bountifully endowed, made to be, in the language of the old philosopher, "the measure of the universe," that must be the true religion which most fully corresponds to his wants and possibilities. That must be the truest version of the grand universe of spiritual facts, which best satisfies and harmonizes with the soul's needs and activities.

We come to the same conclusion in another way. Look at this universe of matter! How vast! how endlessly varied! how broad and long and deep and high! how rich in significance and beauty is even this! But compare matter with spirit. That is gross, monotonous, barren, lifeless: this is ethereal, infinitely various, free, potent, productive. The one is but a shell, the husk: the other the true living organism. The one is the shadow, cold, colorless, unsubstantial, dead: the other is reality glowing with beauty, palpitating with life, in-

stinct with energy. The material world, considered apart and alone, is finite and temporal. The spiritual has God for its centre, infinity for its boundary, eternity for its measure, and is traversed its whole length by mystery, the shadow which ever trembles along the line where the finite borders on the infinite. The one is exhaustible to the reason and feeling, the other inexhaustible forever.

Hence then, I repeat, the system that most faithfully reflects the boundless universe of Divine Reality in its magnitude and amplitude, that system which brings the human into the closest connection with the Divine, the finite with the infinite, the temporal with the eternal, flashing on the lower the light of the higher, and investing it with infinite significance and worth, such a system, it needs no further argument to show, must be that which God meant for men.

And such a system is Christianity. Alone of all the systems received among men does it satisfy the terms of the test which has already been laid down. The Word of God claims for it this quality in language most significant and emphatic. It is called a manifestation by the Church of the manifold wisdom of God, a manifestation made to the principalities and powers in heavenly places, to the highest, that is, in the celestial hierarchy of intelligence. Angels desire to look into it. It is the mystery hid from ages and from generations, but abounding in riches of glory made known to the saints. It is the unsearchable riches of Christ. It is what eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart conceived—Yea, the deep things of God revealed by the Spirit who alone searcheth them.

The Bible then, we see, claims for Christianity, as a body of truth, these qualities of boundless breadth, of unsearchable depth, of inexhaustible fulness, of trans-

cedent glory. Can this claim be justified? Does Christianity really possess these qualities? In discussing these questions I hope to make it appear that it does, and not only so, but that the one form of Christianity for which this claim can be vindicated is that which is commonly recognized by the name Evangelical Christianity.

First then, let us test in the light of the principle first laid down, the claims put forth by Christianity as a system of supernatural facts and agencies.

The theory called naturalism, which opposes these claims, teaches that everything takes place wholly and exclusively according to physical law, according to a certain fixed immutable order. There is a line of sequences running from the beginning to the end of things. No power can come between the cause and effect, and change the course of law. God himself never so intervenes, either because he can not, being himself bound by the law which binds nature, or because he will not; the predetermined order established by himself being the best possible, so that it would be inconsistent in him to change it. And this, it is claimed, is the glory of the system of nature. It is so perfect, so harmoniously adjusted from the beginning, that no intervention is needed. Whatever design God had to fulfill at any particular point is provided for in the system itself. No exigency can be sprung upon it, which the system is not ready to meet.

Whereas, it is claimed that the theory of the supernatural, seems to imply that God's original plan is a failure. It breaks down here and there, so that God must step in to repair the failure, to do himself what the system which he first chose and established as best, as perfect, has shown itself inadequate to accomplish.

Now we admit that if God has called into existence

nothing but matter, nothing which is not moved and determined from without, the argument is a good one. If God has created nothing but a machine, in which one wheel is set in motion by another, and in which every motion of every wheel is regulated absolutely by other parts of the machinery, then to say that God puts forth his hand here, and his finger there, to change the motion of one wheel, to stop or reverse that of another, to secure at any point some particular result, which the machinery at that point fails to secure, that is to reproach God with failure. But this is exactly the point where we take issue with materialism. According to *its* theory, the universe is just such a machine.

You see, then, what this system gives you. It gives you a huge machine, constructed—*perhaps*—by God, ages ago, but since then let alone, running itself, weaving out its own products, God standing aside and looking on. Or else if you prefer the statement, for it is the only alternative on the theory of naturalism, God himself is that machine. This endless play of cause and effect, this incessant plying of the shuttle of law, it is God in motion. In either case you are shut up in this iron-bound routine which you call law; you are under the inexorable tyranny of causation; you, and everything else, are mere puppets of Fate. You may speak of “moral agents,” but you are cheating yourself with a name. All agents are subject to the same laws. Your actions, and all actions, are determined by powers which you can not resist nor change. You may talk of “spiritual world;” it is a mere euphemism; all is part and parcel of one system. There is nothing but nature anywhere. You may talk of “right and wrong,” but it is only an illusion. These words mean only that some wheels turn forward, and

others turn backward, whereas if you could only see the whole machinery, it is all one. You may talk of "God;" you might just as well say "Law," "Nature," "Fate," "Logic of Events," for what is that which you call God after all? It is simply, generally, a metaphysical convenience to account for the existence of things, to help the unscientific mind answer the question—who made the world?

But all that you can know of God is what you find out in nature. All that God can do for you is just what nature does for you. As for praying to God, or thanking him--what is the use of it all? As well pray to the law of gravitation to bring the rain down. As well thank the law of specific gravity for preserving you from drowning. As well love the law of nutrition for sustaining your life. Religion, faith in the unseen, trust in a Power who uses every other power as he wills, love and reverence for One whose wisdom is unsearchable, and his ways past finding out—it is all vanity. Nature is all in all. This you can see, touch, handle, use, and know. What more do you want? What else is there for you?

Now let us turn to the doctrine of the Supernatural that we may contrast it with the other, and judge which gives the broadest and sublimest view of God's Administration of the Universe. This doctrine you will notice, admits that there is a system of nature, a world of order, uniformity, law, as these terms are defined by the Naturalist. In *that* system everything is subject to the law of cause and effect, and so far as we may call it, for practical purposes, a machine. Moreover, this machine is perfect in and for itself. So far as the results belonging to itself are concerned, no supernatural interposition is needed. But this machine does not embrace all forms of existence. God has

created agencies whose movements are not a part of the mechanism of cause and effect. He has made beings in his own image, free, independent, having the power to originate movements, to produce results which would be impossible in a mechanical necessity. Here, then, we have in effect another world, another system of powers, forces, activities, above and apart from that mechanism of cause and effect, which is the only world recognized by naturalism. And the doctrine of the supernatural teaches that as between these two worlds, the world of free, spiritual, self-moving activity is far superior to the world of necessity. Its powers and activities are nearer in form and reality to those of God. Here, then, we are to look for the truest interpretation of God's plan. Here we must expect to find his highest and largest methods of working.

Instead of making that lower world of necessity, of matter, the measure of this higher world of liberty, we should make *this* the measure of *that*. That is altogether subordinate to this. That world of mechanical movement is simply an instrument used by God to further his plans in this world of moral movement, of spiritual activity.

“ What is the world, the starry state
Of the broad skies—what all displays
Of power and beauty intermixed,
Which now thy soul is chained betwixt,
What else than needful furniture
For life's first stage? ”

Instead of judging the laws of God's actions by what he does in that world of preparatory instrumentalities, we should judge them by what he does in the world of ultimate results.

Our doctrine affirms still further that this latter world, by virtue of the very power of liberty inherent in it, has become the scene of fearful disorder. It has gene-

rated within itself an appalling power of evil, which strives to dislocate the universe, to send it from its God, and to hurl it back into chaos. This terrible power is what no mere machine could ever have produced.

It is a perversion of a glorious power which has in it something of God Himself. Something which matter could never contain or manifest. It strikes at the very throne of God. Is that conceivable of matter or any evolution of matter ?

Now bear in mind that this moral system, endowed with these wonderful powers, thus disturbed and convulsed by sin, is *the* system in which God most especially reveals himself; that its interests are the highest and most important in his sight; that the ultimate ends of all he does are to be sought for here, that the system of nature exists for this, and is of use so far, and only so far, as it helps to work out the great results for the sake of which he made the moral world. Bear in mind, moreover, that these two systems, or if you prefer, these two parts of the one great system, are so different in their quality, their organization, their movements, that the physical world can no more solve the problems of the moral universe, than a calculating machine can expound the decalogue; and that to say that in dealing with the mysterious powers of the spiritual world, God must use the same methods as in the natural, and none other, is as reasonable as it would be to affirm that he must use moral forces as he uses physical forces, in conformity to the principles of geometry.

You will then be prepared for the teachings of faith in the supernatural, when it says: God uses the system of nature as he wills, to secure the grand results of his moral administration. He uses nature as his instrument. He exercises the liberty of a wise and sover-

eign Ruler to change its uniform order, whenever the interests of his moral administration require it. He opens the windows of heaven, unseals the fountains of the deep. "He springs the hushed volcano's mine, he puts the earthquake on her still design, darkens the sun, hath bade the forest sink, he changes water into wine," makes the blind to see, brings the dead to life again, in a word, he transcends the bounds of our limited experience, asserts himself as Lord of nature, constrains it to the performance of results of which apart from the great spiritual ends thus accomplished, nature itself furnishes no foreshadowing.

But you ask, does not this doctrine in the least disparage nature? Does it not dishonor law or detract from its true significance? Not in the least. On the contrary, there is no system which sets on nature the seal of a higher consecration than Christianity, in that it declares nature to be more than a huge mechanism of physical force, more than an intellectual phenomenon, to be in truth the auxiliary of God's moral plan, his pliant instrument in the spiritual regeneration and discipline of his children. The Christian system is indeed in the highest sense a system of law, not a law as dominant merely to these grosser material elements of existence, not of law as confined within the bounds of our brief and petty experience of physical facts. It reveals to us a system of law as determined by the Divine Mind, of law as manifesting itself in the illimitable realms of spiritual liberty and life, of law as the measure of the Divine purpose that runs through the ages of eternity. Its agents are not the dancing puppets of Destiny, moved by some higher sort of electricity, which makes freedom and responsibility impossible. They are sons of God deriving from their Author capabilities which the categories of Infinitude can alone

measure and contain. Its forces are not meaningless make-believes playing at an infinite game of hide-and-seek, sportively disguising themselves as Good and Evil, Truth and Error, Angel and Devil, whose collisions have no significance, essentially more real, or profound, or lasting than the clashing of billows, or the battles of ants. They are endowed with the free rational energy which moves in Omnipotence itself. Its disorders and convulsions have power to shake all but the everlasting throne. Its conflicts are such as enlist the energies of Omnipotence, the flaming ardors of Infinite Justice, the gentle but invincible compassions of Infinite Love. Its height is heaven; its depth is hell. Its glories and joys are consummate perfection of capabilities which find their completion in the Infinite; its horrors and woes are the dread counterpart of those glories and joys, the abysmal darkness, desolation, despair of lost souls.

Contrast again for a moment the revelation which Christianity as a supernatural system gives of God, with that given by naturalism. According to the latter, as we have already seen, God is little else than Force or Fate. He is nothing more than Nature personified. What Nature is, God is: that, and that only. The solution of Nature is the solution of God. Man is the measure of the universe, and the universe is the measure of God. But what does Christianity reveal to us? It reveals God as in very deed, and not in name only, the Infinite One, whose intelligence is boundless, whose wisdom is unsearchable, the laws of whose activity infinitely transcend the manifestations you find in Nature, so that it were easier to find all of the soul in the visible actions of the muscles and nerves of the body, than to find all of God in Nature. It reveals God as a Ruler whose Kingdom is without end. A Ruler

whose great Plan has for its meaning not the mere evolution of matter, but the redemption and beatification of spirit. It reveals God as a Father, as the Head not of a kingdom only, but of a family, who administers the affairs of his vast household, not with the cold precision of the mechanist, nor with the willful caprice of a despot, but with the thoughtful interest and yearning tenderness, the faithful wisdom of a Father's heart, ever overflowing in gentle ministrations of beneficence, and ever breaking out in sweet surprises of love. Say, O brother man! which of these views of God is most worthy of Him? Which best meets the needs and longings of that erring, struggling, suffering heart of thine? And here before leaving this branch of our subject, let us compare briefly the views which these two systems present of man. We will not insist now, as we might do, on the manifest tendency of all forms of naturalism to degrade man by sinking his genealogy in the brute, and to make his physical conditions the determining force of his life. We will, for the present, assume that naturalism goes no further than to deny the need or the application of supernatural agencies to the redemption of man from sin, or, to the promotion of his spiritual advancement. But consider what this denial involves.

If there is no supernatural redemption, and no need of such, it follows that sin involves no serious derangement of the normal order of existence, that the commission of it involves the exercise of no power of liberty or self-determination peculiar to man. If there is no such power, appalling as it is, when exercised in the direction of evil, it is difficult to see how there can be in the direction of good, the possibility of attaining any such elevation as will vindicate for

humanity any special prerogatives above the rest of the sentient creation.

Human development being a purely natural process, the products of brain and heart being but organic secretions of a higher quality, the Platonic philosophy is but a more refined type of the silkworm cocoon. That the Christian commonwealth is but a colossal honey comb, that the achievements of genius and of heroism are the offspring of one universal force which rolls through all things, which works in the spider and the serpent, the coward and the knave, as well as in the martyr and the saint—what then? All personal nobleness vanishes at once out of human character, the glory of the God-like no longer crowns the life.

Christianity on the other hand, in recognizing supernatural agencies among the determining forces of man's spiritual history, recognizes in man something which rises above nature, which claims nearer kinship to God, which qualifies him to know and to feel God in loftier aspirations, and more intimate relations than those in which he can be known or felt in nature. In the view which it furnishes of the reality of human responsibility and liberty, of the depth of humanity's fall, of the power needed for its recovery, of the subordination of all natural and historical movements to the moral interests of the Divine government, it confers imperishable dignity on that manhood, to the spiritual restoration and culture of which all the forces of the Divine administration converge. Recognizing in man the very child of God, it finds in his powers affinities to the Divine powers, it finds the Infinite of the Divine Life reflected in the illimitable of human capacity and progress, it finds in human perfection the spiritual asymptote which ever approximates the Divine Perfection, the ever ripening

glory of a manhood nurtured immediately by the life of Him in whose Infinite Beauty is Infinite Holiness. Naturalism tells us that Inspiration is a general and perpetual fact. It is not limited to times or persons, or books. Every utterance which brings to light some great verity, or some important aspect of being is a revelation. Every soul which speaks from an original, living, and powerful intuition or experience of beauty, goodness, truth, is inspired. The Bible is a revelation, but so are the Vedas, the Koran, the Iliad. Isaiah, Paul, Jesus, were inspired, but so were Buddha, Zoroaster, Socrates. God did communicate with men in Palestine centuries ago, but so he does in other lands to-day. Inspiration is not a thing of the past. The Book of Divine Revelation is not closed: and the Scriptures of the Nineteenth Century are, and of right ought to be, better and fuller than those of the first. And the naturalist imagines that in thus enlarging the area, extending the period, and multiplying the media of inspiration, he dignifies humanity, exalts its prerogatives, widens its prospects, and magnifies its destiny.

But is it so? Let us admit the claims put forth by the opponents of supernaturalism, in so far as they are of a positive character. They tell us that God's Spirit as the spirit of Truth is not confined to Judea, or the past: that he is present with men of all times and of all lands, unfolding now more clearly and now more obscurely the realities of the Spiritual Universe, giving to them glimpses, here brighter and there fainter, of the Good that is above them, the Life that is beyond them, of the Eternity that is around them, of the God who is in all, and through all, and over all: and furthermore, that he raises from time to time seers, prophets, teachers, men of refined spiritual organization, of clarified vision and prevision, whose souls thrill responsively

beneath the influences of the unseen, and throb with the life of the unborn Future, and whose tongues are tipt with heavenly flame. Let us admit that, I say, as Paul in Athens admitted it. Call those manifestations if you please, revelations: call that enlarged apprehension—inspiration. We will admit the fact, waiving, for the present, all controversy about terms. But what then? Do we gain anything by saying that there is nothing more than this? Does the materialism of the world gain by denying that amidst all the productions which give value to it, amidst all the “thoughts which breathe and words which burn” on the written page, amidst all these, and rising immeasurably above all these, there is *one word* which can be called—THE *Word of God*? Does the realm of thought gain by denying that amidst all the profound intuitions, the surprising discoveries, the glowing exhibitions of truth, amidst all those sublime utterances in which we are constrained to recognize the echoes of the Eternal Voice, there is *one Book*, in whose utterances that Voice so unmistakably speaks that by it we are enabled to test all other utterances whatsoever—Yea, not only to test them, but to extract from them a higher meaning, to see in them a diviner beauty than would otherwise have appeared in them?—for does anyone doubt that the Christian philosopher of to-day finds in Plato greater depth and beauty of thought than the most gifted philosopher of Athens? Does the history of truth in its progressive march from age to age gain by denying that God ordained aforesometimes a wonderful series of events to be the living embodiment and representation of truth, culminating in a great historic Incarnation of THE TRUTH, a series of events so unspeakably sublime, an Incarnation so mysteriously and yet so divinely glorious, that the special teachings of the Eternal Spirit were needed to

enable human intelligence rightly to apprehend them, and human speech faithfully to record them for the enlightenment of the future? Does the conception of humanity's capabilities and prospects gain by denying that the spirit of man can be brought into such accord with the Spirit of God as to be susceptible of perfectly receiving and transmitting the thoughts, the purposes, and the life of God?

When we say that human intelligence, insight, prevision, can be made, even now, the special exponents of the Divine Thought, can even in this world of obscurity and bewilderment, in this life of struggling and doubting, be lifted to the realms of light and calm and certainty, when we point in proof of this to the Bible, to the Divine Power which pulsates in every line of it, to the Divine Beauty which shines on every page of it, to the Divine Fullness which bursts forth in every message of it, do we thereby depreciate the powers and prospects of the soul? Nay! The doctrine of Plenary Inspiration, while it takes naught away from the greatness and worth of all other activities and achievements of the mind, immeasurably enhances our view of the sweep of its powers, of the range of its possibilities, of the altitude of its future attainments, by establishing a communion between it and the Eternal Spirit, the loftiness and intimacy of which surpasses all that otherwise we could have deemed possible.

I have discoursed thus long about this part of our subject, because the controversy between faith and unbelief in our day, seems to turn principally on the opposition between naturalism and supernaturalism, and because the denial of the latter is a bar at the outset to the reception of any of the distinctive features of the Christian Religion. I shall only have time to indicate very briefly, some of the results which may be

reached by applying the same test to a few of those features, leaving it with you to make a wider and minuter application for yourselves.

Let us begin, then, with the Evangelical doctrine of the Trinity. The opposite view commonly known as Unitarian (which name I use in its philosophical, and not in its sectarian sense,) establishes itself on the simple and absolute unity of God. This it sets forth as the only and total expression of the constitution of the Divine Nature. According to the Trinitarian view, on the contrary, all of a positive character which Unitarianism affirms of the Divine Unity is true, and of Cardinal importance, while still further there is a sense in which God is three, as he is also one. He is not only the Infinite and Absolute One, he is at the same time, the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit, these distinctions being not nominal, but real and personal.

And, now, which of these two views gives us the fullest, most comprehensive, and satisfactory conception of the Deity? Let me direct your attention simply by way of illustration, to one or two connections in which the superiority of the Evangelical view is, to my mind, strikingly manifest.

Have you not often found yourself striving to conceive the existence of God, when he was as yet alone? And have you not found something appalling, something oppressive in the thought of that Infinite and Eternal solitude in which the naked conception of the Divine Unity compels you to place God? Do you wonder, then, in all heathen religions, and in all systems of thought outside of Christianity, the mind of man shrinks from regarding Eternity as the abode of a solitary personality, and has preferred filling it either with some impersonal attraction, some neutral Force, some Nothing of which it could just be said that it

was, some Infinite *That*, as the Hindu calls it, some *To Auto*, as even Plato is betrayed into designating it, or else with an endless series of theogonies, or succession of changes? What relief from that oppression is there except in the doctrine revealed through Christ, that from Eternity God was there, that from everlasting, Father, Son, and Spirit, lived together in ineffable and blissful intercommunion? How is it again when you think of God in his relations to the mind? First of all you find yourself under the necessity of thinking of Him as the Great First Cause. Your intellect demands this solution of the problem of creation. But does this satisfy you? No! You want to find God *in* Nature. You do not want to feel that nature stands between you and God, that he is behind it, back of all its movements and powers, but that he is here, now. You feel all the time that the conception of a mere First Cause fades away into an abstraction, something far away from you, vague, impersonal, intangible. You want a conception of the Deity, which will assure you not only that God made all things, but that he is the life of all, the spirit who encourages all. But are you satisfied yet? No! You find that this conception of a Universal Spirit filling all things, tends to diffuse itself into a generality scarcely less vague than the former. You feel yourself drifting into pantheism, the conception of a God who *is* everything. You want still further, the conception of a God who comes forth out of himself, revealing himself as a distinct, real, historic personality. Such is the view of God which the Christian doctrine of the Trinity gives you.

It reveals God as the Cause, the Life and the Law of the universe: God the Father, creating all things; God the Spirit, animating all things; God the Son, the Logos, legislating and ruling all things, in whom,

as the Incarnate Word, the true personality of the Godhead is most fully manifested. Here the mind is satisfied. It has a revelation of the Deity in which it can rest, secure from those negative, vague, mechanical extremes, into which more partial views almost certainly lead.

Let us rise still higher to the moral life of the Deity. The Fatherhood of God: where should we find the best evidence of that? Shall we look to Nature? Its testimony is enigmatic, fragmentary and confused. Shall we appeal to Providence? Its witness is all but drowned in the thousandfold wail of earth's discords and woe. Shall we listen to the voices of the heart? Conscience burdened with guilt and trembling with forebodings, speaks louder than the heart. No! if you would be assured that God is indeed the Father, you must betake yourself to the testimony which assures you that from eternity his heart throbbed with the love of his only begotten, the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person. Nor is this all which this testimony makes known to you. It tells you of a Spirit proceeding from the Father, by the Son, who is given to those who believe, and who being received by them makes them the sons of God. The Eternal Father, the Eternal Son, the Eternal Spirit of Sonship—this is the threefold testimony on which we rest our faith in the Divine Fatherhood. Take it away and will not this precious truth lose its most sure witness?

The Love of God! do you wish to comprehend its breadth and depth and length and height? Where then will you find its highest expression? The test of human love is sacrifice, the sacrifice of self. Does not your heart cry out for some testimony of the Divine Love, as full, as deep, as tender, as that which human love gives when it sacrifices itself for another? But think of

it! God making a sacrifice,—and that sacrifice Himself, is that conceivable? Take away the doctrine of the Trinity, and the conception *is* impossible. He makes the sacrifice—do you say? but how, to whom? There must be One to accept it, One to represent those infinite interests of Love and Justice, to satisfy which the sacrifice is made, and to declare its sufficiency. There must be One again to authenticate it again to us, to seal it, make it efficacious, secure its benefits to those for whom it was made, and this is what the Gospel reveals to us.

“Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world!” This is the sacrifice,—God’s Lamb! “This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.” This is the acceptance of the sacrifice. “God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son.” “The Son of Man came to give his life a ransom for many.” This is the Love which ordains, and the Love which makes the sacrifice. “The love of God shed abroad in our hearts, through the Holy Ghost that is given unto us.” This is the Love in its blessed human consummation. The Father’s love, the Son’s love, the Spirit’s love—Behold the love of God which passeth knowledge!

A hint or two in regard to the wonderful suggestiveness of the Christian Doctrine of God’s Incarnation in Christ. “The Word was God.” “The Word was made flesh.” How simple! how sublime! For ages philosophy has busied itself with the contradiction between Eternity and Time, attempting their reconciliation, and failing in that, denying either their reality, or the possibility of their reconciliation. The Incarnation silences this contradiction at once and forever. “Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given; and his name shall be called the Mighty God, the Father of Eternity.” What a view does it give us of the Power

of God! He, who was in the form of God, and the equal of God, empties himself: He whose life we call infinite, because, in the poverty of thought and language, we can not tell what it is, only that it is not finite, He enters into the conditions and limitations of this little life of ours. *God can do that!* What greater manifestation of power is conceivable?

What a revelation does this doctrine give us of the Moral Life of God! He who *gives* the law, appears *under* the law. He whom all laws obey, becomes obedient, even unto death. The King of all, is the servant of all, and reigns through serving. "Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant, *even as* the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." How many are these infinite contrasts we find in the Incarnate Son of God, so wonderful and yet so needful for the intellect, the conscience, the heart! The Hearer of Prayer—the Man of Prayer! The Author and Finisher of Faith.

Example of Faith: All victorious strength—the sympathy of human tears! Divine Blessedness—the Agony of Blood! The Glory of the Father—the Cross of shame! The Fulness of the Godhead—the First-born among many brethren!

"Most human and yet most Divine
The flower of man and God."

Above all, who can measure the significance and power of that great central fact in the Incarnate Life of the Son of God, the atoning Sacrifice of Calvary? Is there in the world any knowledge of the Purity and Justice of God, of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, of the inviolability of God's law, of the worth of the soul, of the magnitude of redemption, of the immensity of Divine Love? It comes from the cross. That which makes sin a fact of such terrible import, is that the

Son of God must die to remove its guilt and power. That which makes the Law divinely sacred, is that Christ laid down his life to honor and to establish it. That which makes holiness authoritative and supreme in the realm of moral obligation, is the manifold sanction which it receives from the dying obedience of the Savior. That which makes manhood of priceless worth, is that its price was the blood of Golgotha. That which invests life with awful solemnity, is that Christ has entered into his struggles, and made victory possible. That which confers honor and immortality in the imperishable deeds of self-sacrificing heroism, is that they faintly reflect the deed and breathe the spirit of him who sacrificed himself for the world. That which makes Divine Love ineffably sweet and precious, is that it comes to man through a gift which cost the Father's heart infinitely. That which makes known to us the intense reality and earnestness of the life of God, is that its yearnings and purposes find their divinest issue in the Cross. That which gives to the history of our fallen humanity its divine solution, that which makes its *miserere* anything but the wail of delirium, that which makes its immortality aught but a grand *Perhaps*, is the light of the Cross.

In the cross of Christ I glory,
Towering o'er the wrecks of time,
All the light of sacred story
Gathers round His head sublime.

XIII.

NOT RICH TOWARD GOD.

Luke 12: 16-21. "And he spake a parable unto them, saying: The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully. And he thought within himself, saying: What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul: Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou Fool: this night thy soul shall be required of thee, then whose shall these things be which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

"So is he"—such his condition, such the prospects before him. Ruin stares him in the face. His investments are worthless. The hour is at hand when he will lift up his eyes in a state of utter and eternal destitution. He thinks he is rich, and lo! he is a beggar.—He says to his soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years, and one night finds him stripped of everything. There must have been a tremendous mistake somewhere. How did he come to commit such a fatal blunder? Christ explains the matter: "So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." Not, observe, because he layeth up treasure, but because he lays it up *for himself*. Not because he is rich in fruits and goods, but because he is *not* rich toward God.

Christ then does not prohibit all seeking after riches, He does not forbid the acquisition of earthly property, within certain limits, under certain conditions, and for certain ends. He does not disapprove the efforts of

any to secure an independent competence, to make provision for the future, against sickness, reverses, and old age. He does not say that it is wrong to grow rich, or that the rich cannot be saved, although he does say that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven, and that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. And if Christ said this, we may be sure he meant this.

Furthermore, if it was true when he said it, it is true to-day. At the same time Christ does not blame men for being rich, nor for becoming rich. It is not for having this, that, or the other that he holds them guilty, but for not having that which is indispensable: not for seeking after other things, but for not seeking first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness. That which determines the right and wrong of the matter is the motive, the end in view. Do you seek to become rich toward God? Then there is nothing which you may not strive to acquire and to make your own. "All things are yours." Do you lay up treasure for yourself? God says to you, "Thou fool!"

The character of the rich man spoken of in the parable, is by no means an uncommon one. There is nothing said about him which requires us to suppose that he was avaricious, that he was what men call a miser. He does not seem to have been of a grasping disposition. It does not appear that he cheated anybody. He did not grind the poor, and wring his wealth out of their sweat and groans—indeed it is not necessary to suppose that in the pursuit of gain he put forth any extraordinary degree of ardor and energy. He seems to have been rather a happy-go-lucky—a lover of ease, enjoyment, and good living. He was fortunate, unexpectedly so. His ground brought forth plentifully,

so that he had no room where to bestow his fruits. Naturally he resolved to build new barns, and larger ones, and thereupon he seems to have been satisfied. He was not consumed apparently with that feverish desire for more, like the leech which can never say—enough. He made up his mind to enjoy his unexpected prosperity. It was not his purpose either to hoard up his riches, to brood over them, or to consume them in solitary enjoyment. He meant to share them with others. He was what the world calls a generous man, a good fellow. He would fill his house with delicacies and luxuries, load his table with the daintiest of dishes, and the choicest of wines, and entertain his friends with princely cheer, and one unceasing round of merry-making. “Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.”

Such an one the world is ever inclined to judge leniently. It admires him, it applauds him, it welcomes him to its most favored circles; even when it blames him it is so tenderly, with a tongue so sugared with flattery, and with a look so evidently dazzled by the qualities which it admires, as to leave it doubtful whether after all its blame is not most eloquent of praise. And this is the man whom God charges with folly. To this pet of society, this favorite of fortune, revelling in riches and luxury, bountifully dispensing hospitality, surrounding himself with all that can minister delight to sense, taste, and sociability, God says—“Thou fool! this night thy soul shall be required of thee, then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?”

Now it is true that Christ presents to us here a special case, what we may call, perhaps, an extreme case. He would put before us, in most startling light, the folly of living even for a day, as though this life, this world were all. He represents to us a man who is

taken away from his riches just as he is preparing to enjoy them. The cup of his prosperity has just been filled, he is just raising it to his lips, when it is dashed from his hand by death. "This night thy soul shall be required of thee." That one who was on the verge of eternity, who had not another day to live, should abandon himself to selfish enjoyment, was, indeed, the height of folly. Most people would admit that, but is that all you see in the case? Was it simply the fact that the shadow of death was already on his threshold that made this man a fool? Did he show any more folly in promising himself many years' enjoyment than thousands of others all about him? Has any one here a better right to say what he said, than he had? Have you a surer claim on the future? Is it any wiser in you to neglect the acquisition of imperishable riches, to put it off for a single day, than it was in him? Observe—he did not promise himself *endless* enjoyment of his possessions. What he said to his soul was: "Thou hast much goods laid up *for many years.*" He did not say "*forever.*" He knew there would be an end of enjoying those things. We are at liberty to suppose, at least, that he meant at some time to secure treasures more lasting.

That time never came to him. It may never come to you. Certain it is that to multitudes of those who say: "I hope to be a Christian sometime," that sometime never comes. God says *to-day*. For man to say *to-morrow*, is unspeakable folly.

Well, suppose that this rich man had realized all the enjoyment which he promised himself. Suppose that instead of dying just as he was raising the cup to his lips, he had drained it and had then died—would his folly have been any the less? Would those many years of luxurious pleasure have made an eternity of

poverty any the more endurable? Would they not the rather have made it more bitter and wretched? But, you say, he might have repented! The probabilities are all against it. Think of it! Ten or twenty years of such living as he anticipated—what would have been the result of it? It would have enfeebled his moral constitution yet more; it would have stupefied his conscience, paralyzed his will, confirmed the power of evil habit, crushed yet more completely all capacity for earnest thought or endeavor, rendered infinitely more difficult the task of bursting the fetters of sense, of shattering the power of the world, of breaking with the past, of giving up the present, and of laying hold on Eternal Life.

While the means of enjoyment lasted, think you that he would have stopped his career? When these were gone, and with them, perhaps, the capacity of enjoyment, think you that in that vacant sense of desolation that would have followed, in that dreary torpor, that bitter exhaustion, that writhing of the heart which succeeds a career of self-indulgence, there would have been much power or disposition left for anything better? Oh, it is a great mistake—unspeakable folly to promise to God the last remnant of your life, the fag-end of your manhood, when, perhaps, there will not be enough left to make a change possible.

Or suppose that instead of abandoning himself to an epicurean life, he had devoted himself to business, to the pursuit of gain or power, had entered on a public career, had bought more land, or solicited honors or preferments, and served himself in that way, would he have shown much more wisdom? Some things, it is true, might be said in favor of such a life, which could not be said in favor of mere pleasure.

We are supposing, however, that his motive, his pur-

pose is still as before a selfish one, that he simply laid up treasure *for self*, without growing rich toward God. Would he have been any the less a fool in the estimate of God? So long as a man is heaping up only perishable treasures does it make much difference what they are? Diamonds or bits of common charcoal, does it make much difference which, when the fire gets hold of them? But suppose, last of all, that the man instead of being rich, had been in moderate circumstances, or even poor, but had still been governed by the same spirit. For it is not indispensable that a man should be rich in order to be worldly. It is not money of itself, nor the making of money of itself, that produces selfishness. A miserly heart often lives in a lean purse. A self-indulgent will may lurk under a tattered coat, as well as under purple and fine linen. If the man then, of whom Christ speaks, had only desired to be rich, without actually becoming such, if he had only coveted money, without getting much of it, if he had set his highest affections on the world, without acquiring a great deal of it, would he not have incurred the stern condemnation of God just the same? The man who loves the world supremely, whether he gets much or little of it, the man who lives only in the present, whose best life is that which now is, who, when death strips him of the things of time, has nothing left him, who, when he is left alone with God, has nothing in God that he can call his own, that man God calls a fool. He has deliberately refused or carelessly neglected to secure the only true riches, and when his soul is required of him he parts from his all.

The lesson taught by these words of Christ then is not for a few, not for a class, but for us all. It is for the poor as well as for the rich, for the unsuccessful as well as for the prosperous, for the man of business as

well as for the devotee of pleasure, for him who expects a long life, as well as for him from whom death can not be far off; for every one who is in danger of choosing the transitory for the eternal, the corruptible for the imperishable, earth for God. And who is not in danger of making this choice? We know it to be folly, and yet how easily we fall into it! For consider how near these things of time seem to ourselves. They lie at our feet, at our fingers' ends, all about us. They seem so near to us that that which lies beyond can only be reached apparently by breaking through them, or thrusting them from us:—seem near, I say:—but after all they are far off: although we touch and feel and handle them every day, there is still an immeasurable distance between them and us, as there is between the perishable and the Eternal, for nothing is *near* to the soul of man which it can not take up into itself, and make a part of itself.

And yet the fact that they *do seem* so near to us prompts us continually to reach forth our hands to grasp them, as children stretch out their hands to clutch at the moon, which seems so near, but which is yet so far. And because these worldly treasures seem so near to us, so they *seem* also much easier to get:—*seem*, I say here again: for in truth nothing is harder to get, nothing is so hard to make our own: nay, we can not make them *ours* fully and forever: no one ever has made them his: no one ever will make them his: a man may have a legal right to them which none will dare dispute, he may brood over them day and night, he may use them in every possible way, and get out of them all the profit and utility there is in them, and still they won't be his, for nothing is truly mine which I can not in some way make a part of myself, and treasure up in the very core of my being, and I can treasure nothing up there which is not Godlike, which has not some affinity to

the life, the will, the heart of God. For the soul of a man's soul is the life of God within him. If that life be wanting the man is dead. It is only when you have laid aside one after another, the folds which envelop the life, the sensations, experiences, opinions, feelings, habits, all the accretions which gather about you from without, only when you have pierced to the center, to the spirit, and only when in that spirit you find the Spirit of God, that you find your true self. Nothing will endure then, nothing will be yours forever which you can not make a part of the life of God in the soul. The man who has the Spirit of God dwelling within him, in whom a Divine life is the essential life of his manhood, who in all his acquirements enlarges and enriches that life, who ever lives in God and for God, a life of sympathy, communion and co-operation with God, that man is rich, and he alone. That man is wise and he alone. He has that which death can not take away from him, which he can carry into eternity, and to which he can add and add forever. He who is without this has nothing, and for him death is loss, eternity is endless bankruptcy and beggary. "To him that hath shall be given, and he shall have more abundantly, and from him that hath not shall be taken away even that he hath." The one layeth up treasure toward God and is rich, the other layeth up treasure for himself, and is poor.

The question then is, what is our treasure? How do we lay it up? What are we living for? What is the life we are living? Ask your own heart, my hearer, these questions. There are not a few, I suppose, in this community, as in every other, who live for money. You are one of these perhaps. If you are honest with yourself, this is the answer which comes from your heart: "I am living to make money." At least that is the

case at this present time. It may not be so always, you think, but it is so, you admit, now. Money is the most desirable acquisition which you can make just now. You have been carried along by the current, you have taken your place in the arena of competition. You are doing just what the rest who are about you are doing. As a business man you are constrained by the necessities of your position, by a feeling of personal pride, by the influence of the atmosphere which you are daily breathing, by the interests of your family, and by other influences to devote all your energies to the purposes in which you are engaged, and to the immediate end which you have in view. Without examining now in detail the life which you are living, without considering your manner of conducting your business, or the business itself, or the amount of time which you devote to it, let us admit in general that so far there is nothing absolutely wrong about your way of life. Business is legitimate, of course. Skill, enterprise, success in business are legitimate objects of ambition. But the question is, what is all this for? Where does it all end? All this planning, toiling, driving, what does it come to? It puts money into your purse, does it put anything in your soul? It procures for yourself and your family more of the comforts, it may be of the luxuries, of life, it adds to your influence and consideration in the community, it enables you to respond more honorably and worthily to the appeals which are made to your liberality and public spirit—and—is that all? Oh! brother—that should not be all. There ought to be more—ininitely more than that. When you and your money part company, when you are taken away from all that it has gathered around you, when money can do nothing for you,—what then? When the life which you are now living stops, as stop it must,—what then?

What will you have, what can you do, in what can you take pleasure in a world where the only business known is the service of God, where the only riches that are worth anything are the rewards of that service?

There is such a thing as serving God in business. "You can not serve God and Mammon," but you can constrain Mammon, you can compel the world into the service of God. There is such a thing as making money, not for self, but for God, and that is the only way to get out of money whatever good there is in it. The man who lives to God is the only man who can make the most of all that God gives him. The man who says of himself—"I am God's!" and who says of everything that he has and of everything that he gets—"This is God's," and who says of everything which he does—"I am doing God's work:" he is the only man whose life can be anything but a failure, a total loss. If business is making your heart better, if your daily pursuits are ennobling your manhood, deepening, enlarging, enriching the life of God within, if in forming all your plans and carrying out all your enterprises, you are acting as God's steward, as Christ's agent, if you rejoice in every success which crowns your plans, and in every acquisition that you make, because you will be able to do more for God. If you are so living that you have reason to believe that God is preparing, training you for a higher life hereafter—then you are growing rich toward God:—then when you part from your money you will lose nothing, for you still have and will carry with you into eternity all the spiritual good that the acquisition and use of money could bring you, all those holy habits and devout dispositions, all that consecration of spirit; all that community of heart and life with God, which when perfected and glorified make heaven.

If, on the other hand, you are laying up money for

yourself, if you are seeking and using it only for self-gratification; if you are investing it only in fleeting enjoyments, in things which are good only for time, you are laying up for yourself eternal poverty. "He that soweth unto the flesh," he that liveth unto self—"shall of the flesh reap corruption," he shall find all his labors resulting in rottenness, "but he that soweth to the spirit shall of the spirit reap life everlasting."

Let us just glance at some of the other ends for which many of you are living, treasures, perhaps, of a less earthly character, which you regard as more valuable, and which you fondly hope may prove more lasting than silver and gold. Take, for example, esteem, good will, the praise of others. This is an object which may be legitimately sought after, and it has two uses. One is to please the recipient, to gratify his feelings, to increase his individual happiness; the other is to make him watchful over his character, to incite him to render himself worthy of the respect and praise of others, to confirm and encourage him in the right, to be a witness to the approbation of God. If, now, a man seeks praise only for its former uses, only for the present self-gratification which it ministers, he seeks that which is perishable. Think of that man's life! You feel at once there can be nothing solid about it. The man who does everything only to be seen and to be praised of men, is far from being the most admirable character, judging even by the standard of the world. His life is a perpetual compromise with popular favor. It is a standing bid for applause. His character is mere varnish. His virtues are hollow plausibilities. There is nothing in him that will stand the trial, nothing heroic, nothing Christlike, nothing that will bear the mockery, the spitting, the crown of thorns, the shame of the cross. The world may speak highly of him, society

may flatter him, history even may trumpet his praise, and—verily, he hath his reward. But there is a higher court, which judges not according to appearance, a judge who requires truth in the inward parts, who demands the love of right as right, who enjoins devotion to truth, virtue, holiness, for their own sake, who honors only those who honor Him, and who seeks first his glory. When that man appears at the bar of Eternity in presence of the Searcher of Hearts, what will he have to show? What honor remain for him whom God dishonors? What sweetness in the praise of the universe to him whom God condemns?

On the other hand, if a man does good because he loves it, if he does right to please God, after doing it with his right hand, when his left knows nothing about it, if he values esteem and honor from others as a ground of encouragement in well-doing, if he prizes the approbation of society as an earnest of the approbation of God, if he receives praise, not as incense to his vanity, but as a tonic to his conscience, if he rejoices in the favor of men as an element and a token of further influence over them for good, then he has a treasure which will never leave him.

Take a life of intellectual acquisition, a life devoted to the accumulation of knowledge, the study of truth. Is not this, you ask, a treasure which will endure? It undoubtedly has an element of greater permanence than some other treasures which men seek after, but whether it will endure forever, depends still on the question: Is it sought for and possessed in the law of God? Is it made a part of the deep inner spiritual life of the heart? Does it contribute to the development of God's image within? Knowledge may make proud. It may petrify the heart. It may turn the soul's honey

into gall. As (Byron's) Manfred exclaims: They who know the most

"Must mourn the deepest o'er the fatal truth
The Tree of Knowledge is not that of Life."

Knowledge is power, to be sure, but it may be the power of a devil. The true significance of knowledge is reached when you find what God thinks and means in everything. The true use of knowledge is not realized until it puts you in line with God. What after all makes the true, the highest pleasure of a life of intellectual acquisition? It is the discovery of truth, of reality, of things as they are, of Being, that Being whose Alpha and Omega, whose center and circumference is God:—it is the apprehension of Law, of God's will, making known his Infinite Wisdom; it is the perception of beauty, of the presence and inspiration of the living Spirit of God; it is the practical application, and above all, the benevolent use of principles and laws in their moral significance and power to advance the coming of his kingdom, who is the truth and the life. Take away these elements of enjoyment in the pursuit of knowledge, and what have you left that is worth cherishing one hour?

You will say perhaps that one may take pleasure in truth considered simply in its abstract intellectual relations. Let us grant that. But you must also grant that truth so considered is limited. Take away from truth its divine aspirations, its significance as the medium of communication between God and man, between spiritual realities and the mind, separate it from its moral instincts and results, and somewhere you will find an end to it. In a soul that is insensible to spiritual beauty and perfection which is the reflection of God's glory, the motives to the pursuit of truth must sooner or later lose their power. I say then, that such a soul cannot

make permanent progress. There is a point beyond which it either cannot, or will not go. And what then? Of what value will all previous acquisitions be, when the mind can no longer use them as stepping-stones to aught higher, when it can no longer delight in them? Will they not be a burden? Will it not say—Let them perish! Nay, will they not perish for that mind? Here also will that fearful curse come to pass—"Whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath."

Take as an illustration the physical sciences, the study of nature, so justly popular in our day. Here there is doubtless an immense field for research, yet it is not illimitable. Say that there is occupation here for the mind through countless æons—but there is an end somewhere. Nature is not infinite. Robert Browning, in one of his most remarkable poems, that entitled *Easter-day*, describes the experiences of one who has chosen this world, "Earth's exquisite treasures of wonder and delight," for his all. At first his soul is filled with rapture, but he finds ere long that there is all the time something wanting. The vastest science is finite after all. He is ever haunted by the feeling that all he sees and knows is but the shadow of something infinitely more glorious. He has knowledge, it is true—but the question, "Whereto does Knowledge serve?" burns his eyes at every step, until at last he cries out in despair, "I let the world go and take Love," and a voice from the eternities reminds him that all the time he was striving to satisfy himself with mere knowledge, that love for which his soul hungered was all about him. Its mightiness was entwined round about all the power and beauty of the earth.

"Love lay within it, and without
To clasp thee but in vain. Thy soul
Still shrank from him who made thee whole."

My hearers, seek that love now which is reaching forth to embrace you. Lay up your treasures, your love in that Love! Your affections, your friendship, your household loves and joys—these are your treasures, and these you fondly hope may endure. Ah! you cannot bear to think that these should perish. You cannot bear to dream of them as a mere memory, a thing of the past. You look into those bright and loving eyes that leap to meet you, your soul thrills to the music of those sweet familiar voices, which daily greet you, your heart yearns toward the kindred heart that shares its deepest, most sacred life, you think of the departed, of the sound of a voice that is still, and you feel that love must be immortal, that true affection will never die. You would fain say :

Love strikes one hour.—Love! those *never* loved,
Who dream that they loved *once*.

Yes, my friend, God made love for immortality. Eternity has its friendships—oftentimes earth's friendships but transplanted, ineffably transfigured and glorified. Heaven has its loves, its affections, its purely human love—the beginnings of which were here, the consummate beauty, the perfect sweetness of which is there, for is not heaven the best of earth made infinitely better? Do they not point to heaven then here? Did not our Elder Brother have his bosom friend? They have their lower, their earthly uses indeed. They minister to our present gratification; they contribute to our personal comfort; they soften the roughness of life's journey; they refresh the wearied spirit; they promote material prosperity, intellectual and social culture. But is that all they were given for? Ah, no! They were given to redeem humanity from its selfishness, to bring the soul into sympathy with heavenly affections, to

attune it to spiritual joys, to create sources and supplies of holy living, to open fountains of pure and regenerating influence, to be channels for divine nurture, to educate hearts in the love of God, to train them for the endless future, to anticipate heaven below. Friends, are your affections, your friendships, your social life, your home loves, consecrated to these ends? Sons and daughters, brothers, sisters and friends, are these fondly cherished ties of life, for the sake of which you cling to the thought of immortality, are they made lasting by union with him who says, "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch and is withered, and men gather them and cast them into the fire, and they are burned"? Or do you profess to live for humanity, to love your neighbor as yourself, to serve your age? Let me ask you is Christ in your love? Is the cross in your service, with all its hatred of sin, with all its sacrifice of self, with all its consecration to the glory of God? If you would have in your life a power that will make it immortal, get all you can of Christ into it. If you would have a treasure that will endure, make God your chief good. Make his will your highest law, his glory your supreme inspiration. Live to God and all things are yours. *Be* what God loves. *Do* what God loves, and you need not trouble yourself about your having and your getting. "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." No! it is not money, nor what money can bring, not the world nor what the world can minister, not knowledge, not fame, not pleasure, not power,—but *life* that you want.

"'Tis life whereof our nerves are scant,
More life and fuller that we want,"

and that you can find only in an indwelling, inspiring Christ. "I am come that they might have life and that

they might have it more abundantly." Seek first then the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, and not only will all other things be added to you now, but hereafter nothing that is worth having will be taken away from you.

XIV.

PRAYER.

Luke 6 : 12. "And it came to pass in those days that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God."

This is but one of many passages in which mention is made of Christ praying. Indeed these passages are so numerous that it would seem as though the Holy Spirit desired to call special attention to the fact that Christ while on this earth did pray, and to impress the fact indelibly on our minds. There is also a manifest purpose to impress on our minds this other fact that Christ not only prayed, but was earnest, constant, diligent in prayer. It was not something unusual, extraordinary. It was not a spiritual luxury in which he indulged only at rare intervals. It was a constant habit; as much a part of his soul's life, as breathing of the life of his body.

There are many interesting facts in connection with Christ's prayers, which it would be profitable for us to consider. It would be interesting to look at the circumstances in which they were offered. Sometimes—most often, doubtless, he prayed in solitude. "And when he had sent the multitude away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray; and when evening was come, he was there alone." At other times he engaged in social prayer. "And it came to pass about eight days after these sayings, he took Peter, and

John, and James, and went up into a mountain to pray." What prayer meetings were those? Who of us has not said, "Would that I had been there?" We learn that he withdrew to pray *before* engaging in some important work, as before choosing his Apostles. Again he retired for prayer *after* some miraculous exhibition of his power, as after the feeding of the multitude with a few loaves and fishes. And, again he is represented as praying *in the midst* of his labors, as when in the midst of his discourse to the Jews, he sent up a petition to the Father, and the voice of the Father was heard in answer, so that some thought it had thundered, and others that an angel had spoken to him. He prayed for himself. "Who in the days of his flesh when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared." He prayed for others. And the Lord said, "Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not." "I pray for them—neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which should believe on me through their word." He prayed in the agony of the garden. He prayed in the glory of the transfiguration. He commanded men always to pray. He taught us how to pray and what to pray for. He gave us an example of prayer.

But the subject I wish more especially to consider now is the nature and value of prayer itself, as it stands forth revealed to us in the life of Christ; the meaning, the power, the worth of prayer as signified to us by the fact that Christ was a Man of Prayer. The importance of prayer as an element of the spiritual life cannot be overestimated. The many exhortations and encouragements to pray contained in the word of God,

and the universal experience of God's people in all ages, and in all circumstances, demonstrate that prayer is a necessity of true religion, an essential function of its vitality. As much as on any one thing, the prosperity of the spiritual life depends on earnestness and faithfulness in prayer. And a man's estimate of that life in its breadth, its obligations, and its privileges may be indicated almost infallibly by the estimate which he places on the necessity, the value, the power of prayer. Every consideration, therefore, which elevates and enlarges this estimate, cannot help proving eminently useful, if rightly applied. And I know of no consideration which so highly exalts the dignity of this duty as its observance by Christ. Indeed one of the grand results accomplished by the incarnation of the Love of God, has been the exaltation of every duty, of every virtue, of every holy feeling and holy deed, to a dignity which it could never have reached had it been left to human performance alone. If we wish to measure human duties and human virtues at their highest and their best, we must measure them by the standard to which Christ has raised them. We have scarcely known them until we know them in his life. Let us look at Prayer then as a part of the life of Jesus, and try to discover what we may learn by so regarding it.

And first consider the testimony which the prayers of Jesus furnish to the intrinsic efficacy of prayer, or the reality of prayer as a power influencing God. This conception of prayer is one that is altogether repugnant to the spirit of unbelief. That view of man which denies his all-sufficiency in himself, which inculcates his entire dependence upon God, arouses the pride of man to the bitterest opposition. That view of prayer which most completely and absolutely recognizes this depend-

ence is rejected with scorn. Speculative difficulties and scientific objections are urged against it. God—it is said—is perfect; self-containing and self-contained, self-sufficient and self-energizing: all his motive powers are within. He can not be moved from without. If he could he would not be perfect. How can the finite influence the Infinite? Moreover, God's plan is perfect. His will is unchangeable. His laws, the laws of nature, the expressions of his will, are inflexible, because perfect. Man change God's plan? Man by his prayers interfere with the operations of his laws? The thought is folly. Special providences, special answers to prayer are an absurdity, an impossibility.

Listen to the latest exposition of the theory, given by one who is justly admired for the brilliancy of his scientific speculations and the glowing eloquence in which they are set forth, but for whom we can not help regretting that on this point, at least, he did not allow faith to teach him what science has failed to understand. "A miracle," he tell us, "is strictly defined as an invasion of the law of the conservation of energy. To create or annihilate matter would be deemed on all hands a miracle. The creation or annihilation of energy would be equally a miracle to those who understand the principle of conservation. Hence arises the skepticism of scientific men when called upon to join in national prayer for changes in the economy of nature. But while prayer is thus impotent in external nature, it may react with beneficent power upon the human mind. That prayer produces its effect, benign or otherwise, on him who prays, is not only as indubitable as the law of conservation itself, but it will probably be found to illustrate that law in its ultimate expansion."

Is this all? Is this the last word of science on the

sweetest, divinest exercise of the soul, on this delightful privilege of prayer, that it is only the ultimate expansion of the law of conservation?

Is prayer a power for no other reason than this, that no particle of force can be lost, that the energy which goes forth in prayer, although it has no power to move God, or his Laws, reacts on him who prays, and thus is saved? What a petty, pitiable conception! Ah! ye who worship at the shrine of nature, ye who pay your cold and formal homage to Fate, to Law, as ye call it, think you that with the Bible in our hands, with God's exceeding great and manifold and precious promises spread out before us, with all the manifestations which he has given of himself as the Hearer of Prayer, with all the urgent invitations which he addresses to us to plead with him, and to importune his power and compassion, with all the evidences which the experience of believers and the history of the church furnish of special answers to prayer, we can take up with this miserable pretense, this mocking of true prayer? For what is prayer on the theory just mentioned but mockery, God and man playing a part? Prayer to God? There is no such thing on such a theory. It is prayer to self. God is but a blank wall against which the prayer is projected that it may rebound to him who sends it forth. "Draw nigh to God and he will draw nigh to you," says the Blessed Book. Yes, there is a reciprocal movement of God and his child in true prayer, each drawing to the other. But according to this philosophy, falsely so called, the diviner half of this precious truth, that which teaches that God really responds to prayer, and is drawn by it, is a mere delusion. How then can I pray to God? The very soul of true prayer, truth, earnestness, simplicity, trustful communion of heart with heart, is gone. When I truly pray I believe

that God hears me: I believe that he will answer me: I take his promise just as it is, as meaning all that it says, yea, and more than I can comprehend it to say or to mean. I use it not as the gymnast uses his rings and ropes to strengthen his muscles, but as a power to move God. I believe that it *does* move the Heart of my Father in Heaven, and that every attribute of his Godhood is at the service of his Son to answer my prayer. If in all this I am mistaken then I can not pray; I will not pray. I will not mock the Infinite One with words which have no meaning. If I can not pray *to* him, I will not pray *through* him to myself. If he is not to be moved by my entreaties, I will not degrade him to be the dead inert mechanism by means of which I accomplish my spiritual exercises.

What I want is not the reaction of my own soul from an Infinite *vis Inertiæ* which I call God, but the action of God on my soul. But let us turn from these superficial speculations of men, to the words and life of the Son of God. And first, his words. Look at the model of prayer which he has given us. Does that look like a charm, an incantation, to be muttered over for the sake of its reactive influence? The petition—"Give us day by day our daily bread," does that mean anything? Does God really give us our bread? Do we not get it by the observance of physical and social laws? Is there any need of asking for it? Is not praying that he would give us our daily bread interfering with the fixed irreversible laws of nature, the law of conservation of force, and what not, fully as much as praying for any other material or spiritual good?

Not only that, but Christ exhorts us to importunity in prayer. He encourages us to believe that the Infinite Friend we have in heaven can be prevailed upon by the urgency of our pleadings, that he will

yield to human importunity, and grant what he would not have granted without it. Does not that imply a power in prayer beyond its power on the man himself who utters it? Did he not tell his Disciples that prayer had power to cast out devils, those even which would not depart from men when commanded to do so in the name of Christ? Were they not to pray that their flight from the calamities impending over the nation should not be in the winter nor on the Sabbath day? Does not that pre-suppose the power and the willingness on the part of God, to dispose of the events of life in answer to prayer?

Did he not say to Peter, that if he desired, he might obtain through prayer more than twelve legions of angels to deliver him out of the hands of the Jews? Would not that have been a miracle, what the materialism of to-day would call an impossibility? So much for the test of Christ's words. But more than all, look at his example. Remember how diligently and earnestly he prayed; how he was wont to go forth,

“Beneath the moonlight, through the lines
 Of trembling olive leaves, to where the path
 Came sudden out upon the open hill;
 Then he stood waiting till the flame from heaven
 Lighted upon the inward sacrifice
 Of thoughts most pure, and then the holy words
 Came musically forth upon the night,
 More sweet than tinkling Kedron on the pipe
 Of distant nightingale; or on the cliff
 Above the tossing lake He prayed and stood,
 And through the flight of jarring elements
 Came unimpeded gliding swiftly down,
 From the Father's hand a healing drop of peace
 Upon his wounded soul. On mountain heights
 All the mid-hours of night, with serried crags
 Towering in the moonlight overhead,
 And through a channeled dell stretching away,
 The plains of Galilee seen from afar,
 Till morn alone he prayed—whether the cup
 Of self-determined suffering passed athwart
 His forward vision and the Father's wrath

Upon his human soul pressed heavily,
 Or for the welfare of his chosen flock
 He wrestled in an agony of prayer,
 'That their faith fail not.'

Were not these prayers realities? Was he simply playing a part in them? When in Gethsemane, "being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly," was he but going through certain forms of devotion, that his soul might become purer, stronger, more resigned? When he prayed with supplications, aye, with strong supplication and with tears, yea with tears of blood, was there in his prayer nothing more than that which materialism finds in prayer? Ah! did not his whole soul grapple with the throne of omnipotence? Did not his whole being wrestle with God? And when he was heard in that he feared, did not he feel that prayer is a power with God?

This then is the conclusion to which we must come with the life and words of Christ before us; God is moved by prayer. Christ believed this, and we believe in Christ. We do not believe that there is anything in this truth which is in the least contradictory to true science. We only say, when one comes to us in the name of science and tells us, "Your idea of prayer is unphilosophical and false"—we believe that Christ knew what prayer is, as no other man has ever known; We believe that whatever views he entertained of his person, all must confess that no one ever drew nearer to God than he, and that what Christ *found* in prayer *lies* in prayer. And how full of consolation and inspiration is this thought! Prayer is the same for us as it was for Christ. Yes, if we go to God *in* Christ, in the name of Christ, in the faith of Christ, in the spirit of Christ, we can pray to God with the power of Christ in our prayer.

But, I remark, in the next place, that the prayers of

Christ acquire great significance when taken in connection with the fact that he himself heard and answered prayer.

Because Christ was a man of prayer, it has been argued he must have been less than God. He could have been nothing more than man, nothing more, at least, than a created being. What, then, shall we say to the fact that he allowed himself to be prayed to, that he heard prayer, prayer for temporal good, prayer for spiritual good, prayer for sight, hearing, health for the body, prayer for pardon, faith, life for the soul? Can any one but God hear such prayers? Would Christ, pure and truthful, as all confess him to be, have stood in the place of God, and seemed to hear prayer, being only man?

What shall we say, moreover, to this other fact, that Christ not only heard prayer, but answered it? "Who-soever cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." No one ever *did* go to him without finding what he sought. Men prayed to him for forgiveness, they obtained it. They prayed for faith, they received it. They prayed for peace, and their peace was like a river. They prayed for Eternal Life, and it was given to them. They prayed for those things which God alone can give, and according to their faith it was done unto them. In return they gave to him the homage and devotion which God claims for himself, and Christ accepted it.

But how do you explain this, you say, that one and the same being should both pray himself, and hear prayer? We do not explain it. It belongs to the mystery of Christ's personality; for there is a mystery here, but it is the one mystery which solves for us all the mysteries of life and eternity. In him are united in an incomprehensible manner, truths, powers, realities, so far removed from each other, that they seem to be in oppo-

sition; yet we can not dispense with any one of them; each is in itself precious and necessary; and their union in Christ gives us something still more precious and glorious.

It is so here. Christ the Man of Prayer! How we cherish the thought! Christ the God of Prayer! How we rejoice in that thought! And that it is the same Christ who is both the one and the other, is there not something unspeakably precious in that thought? Think of it a moment. Behold a being who partakes so far of the lowness of our nature that he knows what it is to yearn and to agonize in prayer—who at the same time partakes so far of the exaltation of God, that he knows what it is to dispense the gifts of God to men in answer to prayer! What a bond of union between Omnipotence and weakness, between God's throne and human want! How does prayer itself seem lifted up until it becomes itself almost Divine, something akin to the Power and Love which reign on high.

Think of this again. If the Son of God heard prayer during the days of his humiliation, while he himself was wont to offer prayer—how much more is he the Hearer of Prayer now when he is exalted to the right hand of God? If when he was as a root out of dry ground, he had power on earth to forgive sins, how much more now when the light of his presence is the glory of heaven? If when he himself was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, he could give rest to the weary, and peace to the distressed, how much more now when the joys of Eternity and the blessedness of the Father's bosom are his once more? If while clothed with weakness and suffering, he could minister strength to the faint, how much more now when all power in heaven and on earth is in his hands?

If on the accursed tree he could hear the prayer of the dying malefactor, and assure him of Paradise, how much more can he hear and save now, when he is raised far above all principalities, and powers, and dominions? What encouragement to faith and to prayer then does this thought bring us?

Let us consider again what the character of Christ as a Man of Prayer suggests in regard to the dependence of the spiritual life and of spiritual progress on prayer. That prayer is indispensable to the culture and development of the spiritual life is known to all who have sought in sincerity to live such a life: its value as an element of holiness and of spiritual power has been too deeply felt by all such to be questioned. But how greatly is its importance enhanced by the reflection that even the spiritual life of Jesus, whose life was holiness itself, was dependent on the power of prayer.

It is true that in some respects, the holiness of Jesus was different from that which is possible to us. It was spontaneous, perfect, infallible, it partook of the sanctity of the Divine Life. But if Divine, it was also human. It partook in some respects at least of the growth of his manhood. It was determined by the laws and conditions of his human development. It was aided by the means which God has ordered for the culture of holy wisdom and power. Pre-eminent among these means for him as for all others was prayer. By prayer his heart was strengthened against temptation. By using and pleading the Father's promises, his faith, his trust in the Father was confirmed. By much frequenting of the secret sanctuary the beauty of his holiness was kept untarnished and undimmed. By constant communion with the Father his zeal, his activity, his love received ever new supplies of inspiration. None has ever worked for God like Christ, for none has ever

prayed to God like him. And now was prayer all this to Christ, and can it be nothing to you and me? Did he derive such great benefit from it, and can we dispense with it? We who are so full of sin, who live in a world so full of temptation to wrong, whose hearts are so susceptible to the influences of evil, who find it so hard to trust in God, to believe in truth, to be ever loyal to the right, to cherish a good thought when it comes to us, to act on a right motive when it springs up within us, to keep ourselves unspotted from the world—can we do without prayer? And yet we who need it so much more than Christ, how little we make of it compared with him!

But the character of Jesus as a Man of Prayer is still further an important link in the bond of brotherhood by which he is united to us.

This Jesus—this Saviour—this Friend—how truly he is one of us!—how truly he is our brother! Not only did he learn as we learn, think as we think, feel as we feel, talk as we do, share our lot, our infirmities, our trials, rejoice with those who rejoiced, weep with those that wept, but he also prayed as it is our privilege to pray. Not altogether indeed as we do. We have to pray for much for which he had no need to pray. He had no confessions of sin to make. The cry for mercy, the plea for pardon, the prayer for reconciliation never went up from him. Here indeed the difference between his prayers and ours is infinitely great. Sin overshadows our life here so much that our prayers here are mainly an appeal to be delivered from it: and we sometimes feel as though if we were only rid of sin there would be no further need of prayer. But surely this is a great mistake. Sin, alas! contracts, impoverishes our prayers, as it does everything: and to be under the necessity of using prayer, almost altogether

as a means of being healed from sin, is to be in the condition of the sick man who uses all his time, his property, his skill and strength, all the joys and comforts of nature and of providence to get rid of his sickness, when if he were only well he might use them all to enlarge his powers and his joys to aid him in becoming a more perfect man. Ah! if only we were well! What enlargement, what powers, what enjoyment, what life would be ours! What prayers we should offer! Prayers for opportunities and blessings of which we have no conception now! Could we but hear the prayers of heaven! What, you say, prayers in heaven? Most assuredly. We shall no more see our Father there than here. We shall be nearer to him, it is true; but that will be in part because we shall be able to pray to him more perfectly, to commune with him more lovingly. We shall not be all the time looking on Christ with the bodily eye, but we shall come nearer to him also in prayer, and in the sweet intimacy of spiritual fellowship. Could we then only hear some of those heavenly prayers!—or better still—could we have entered one of those holy shrines where Jesus was wont to meet with the Father, and have heard him pray! Then we should have known what it is to pray.—But, why wish for this? We have one of his prayers in this dear Book—and oh! how we should thank the Holy Spirit for it! one of his last prayers, offered up for his beloved ones! Ah! my friends, this is enough, and more than enough for us now. In this life we can no more than just begin to understand this one outpouring utterance of our Brother's heart, to decipher here and there a character in which is traced that wondrous mystery of Divine Majesty, Humility, Strength, Tenderness, Holiness, Love!

Yet after all—think of it!—how much do the prayers

of Jesus have in common with our own! The yearning for sympathy, the longing for love, the expression of trust, the utterance of resignation, the desire of good for others, the prayer for the Divine blessing on his labors, for strength to work and to suffer, the appeal for help, yes, the cry of a soul in darkness, forsaken of God,—all this is in his prayers. In all this we find our Brother—in all he is our Fore-runner at the mercy-seat. Ah! yes, it is our privilege to come very near to Christ in prayer. We sometimes wish that we might visit those spots which were hallowed by his presence on earth. Could we but gaze on the scene which once met his eye, could we but tread reverently in his footsteps, we fancy we might draw nearer to him than we have ever done yet. But we need not go to Palestine for that. Bethlechem, Galilee, Nazareth, Bethany, Jerusalem, Olivet, Gethsemane, we might visit them all, and be further off from Jesus than before. But before our Father's throne—there we meet, there we embrace, there his heart beats to ours.

“There is a place where Jesus sheds
The oil of gladness on our heads ;
A place than all besides more sweet,
It is the blood-bought mercy-seat.”

Think then as you go to the mercy-seat, Christ has been there before you; as you speak the name Father, Christ has spoken it before you; as you pray for consolation, for light, for Divine aid, for the Father's blessing on your labors and your sorrows, for the salvation and prosperity of those you love, Christ has prayed for all those things before you; and if ever you have reason to know that God has heard your prayer, rejoice in the thought that the same heart which went out toward his Son, is also going out in the fulness of its riches toward you.

But still further: Christ himself was brought by his prayers into closer sympathy with us. Not only does the assurance of the fact that he was a man of prayer, assist us to recognize, to trust and to love him as a brother, but it was also one of the conditions and constituents of his brotherhood and sympathy. Christ became man that he might realize more intimately the weaknesses and wants of his brethren. He can be touched with the feelings of our infirmities. As it is said that he learned obedience by the things which he suffered, so it may be said that by his human experiences he learned sympathy, and prayer was to him one of the most precious of these experiences. Forasmuch as he was tried in all things like as we are, forasmuch as he prayed in so many things like as we do, prayed to the same Father, in the same human speech, out of the same sense of weakness and want, for the same blessings, yes, prayed for us, as well as with us, his love for us is something more than it would have been without this fellowship of experience. There is nothing which conserves human love like prayer. Nothing which gives it a holier tone—a heavenly inspiration, which causes its sacredness to be more deeply felt. The love which has never clung to the Throne of Love, whose inmost soul is not a prayer, knows not what it misses. Oh! when the mother bears her child to the mercy-seat, dedicates it to God with prayerful love, she loves that child as she never did before, as she never could have loved it otherwise. She loved it before as her own, she loves it henceforth as God's also, and therefore more than ever her own; for what we give to God becomes doubly ours. My friends, if you wish to make your love all that it can become, if you wish it to attain the utmost beauty, tenderness, power and perfection of which it is capable, convert it into

prayer, take it to God, that he may seal it with his smile. If you wish to give to the objects of your affection the best, the purest, the most lasting love, take that love to God, leave it with God, commune with it in the presence of God, pray it into the heart of God.

Pray your love; thus you will deepen it, enlarge it, strengthen it, exalt it continually. For thus did Christ. His love was one which prayed for its objects. If you would know how Christ loved his own, see how he prayed for them. Read that memorable prayer which the Beloved Disciple John has recorded for us in his Gospel in the seventeenth chapter. See what things he prayed for. "That they may be one in us: one, even as we are one: that they may be with me where I am: that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me:"—and last of all and greatest of all: "that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them." Yes, and he loved them through praying for them. His prayers were prayers of love: his love was the love of prayer. And as on earth so in heaven: which brings us to the final thought of this discourse.

The prayers of Christ are valuable as an earnest of his heavenly intercession on behalf of all who come to God in his name. We may be sure Christ did not cease to pray when he left earth. A work in which he delighted so much while here, he will delight in while there is any least need of it, any least good to be secured by it, for the least of his brethren. While there is a weary, struggling, hard-beset soul in need of strength and comfort, Christ will pray for that soul. He prays for each one whom he loves; for is he not the Good Shepherd, who knows and calls by name every one of his flock?

“The names of all his saints he bears
Deep graven on his heart.”

You remember how he prayed for Peter. Foreseeing his danger, the special trial which was about to befall him, he prayed for a special blessing for him. “I have prayed for thee, that thy strength fail not.” And if for one, why not for the rest, for John, James, Thomas, Philip, for each and every one of them? And if on earth, why not in heaven? Is he not the merciful and faithful High Priest who ever liveth to make intercession? And if for each one of his disciples, why not for each one of us?

Yes, for me, for me he careth
With a brother's tender care ;
Yes, with me, with me he shareth
Every burden, every fear.

Yes, for me he standeth pleading
At the mercy seat above ;
Ever for me interceding,
Constant in untiring love.

Oh, for an interest in his intercession ; for a place in his prayers ! Is this your desire, friends ? Then all you have to do is to go to him, to trust in him, to lay your wants, your cares, your sorrows at his feet, and at once he will make them his own. He will take your prayers, make them his own, and so present them to the Father. Seek to come into sympathy with him as the Man of Prayer, and you will find yourself in communion with him as the God of prayer, receiving of his fullness. Frequent that secret sanctuary of devotion which Christ visited so constantly, and you will inherit his peace and joy.

Your Father who seeth in secret will reward you openly.

XV.

CHRIST REVEALING THE FATHER.

John 14: 6. "No man cometh unto the Father but by me."

"Lord, show us the Father and it sufficeth us," was the earnest and fervent appeal of one of Christ's disciples immediately after these words were uttered by the Master. Ah! how often has the cry gone up out of the heart of humanity! "Show us the Father!" after whom through all our misery and weakness we reach, whose infinite love alone can satisfy us, show us the Father and it is enough. We want no more. Having found him we have found our All. But have we not seen the Father? Do we not know at least where to find him? "Show us the Father," said Philip: and yet how near the Father was to him. How strangely blind were Philip and his brethren. "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." How then came Philip to ask the question? Evidently it was not enough to see Christ with the bodily eye. To see the man Jesus, was not to see the Father, for of the multitudes who did see him in Galilee, how few saw the Father! Ah, there was a knowing of Jesus which went beyond seeing him. "If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also, and from henceforth ye know him and have seen him."

But Jesus says more than this to his disciples. Not

only is it true that he who hath known Jesus, hath known the Father; but, moreover, without knowing Jesus, we cannot know the Father. "No man cometh unto the Father but by me." No man findeth the Father save in the Son. Had Christ never come into the world, the race would have lost its Father, we should have been orphans for evermore.

This seems to you, perhaps, difficult of belief, at least of comprehension. It may seem to you, perhaps, that it is only a more forcible and emphatic way of saying that Christ has made it much easier to find the Father, that in Christ much more of the Father is visible than elsewhere. It may seem to you that there is much outside of Christianity which tells us of the Father, much which points to him in nature; much which reminds of him in Providence; much which bears witness to him in the heart.

But let me ask you to think how much these evidences owe to the witness of Christ. You forget that Nature, Providence, Experience, the world without you, and the world within you, all stand revealed in the light which shines from the sun of righteousness.

Christianity fills the air. You see through it; you hear through it; you feel through it. Infidelity itself has something of this unconscious Christianity in it. It is of a higher order than it would be otherwise. That which, but for the coming of Christ, would have been shadowy, confused, discordant, has through him become clear, intelligible, and harmonious. He interprets to you the mysterious hieroglyphics of nature, the dark enigmas of Providence, the vague yearnings of your own heart.

No! these words of Jesus need no modification, no extenuation. No man comes to the Father, no man draws so near to God that he can say, "I have found

the Father," but by Christ. In the darkness into which Christ has never shone, one may ask indeed, is there not a Father? One may hope that there is a Father; one may cast himself on the unknown God, trusting blindly that he may fall into a Father's arm, but it will be a leap in the dark; no one has found the Father, no one embraces him with loving confidence, no one can know that the Highest to whom he clings is indeed a Father, who has not known Christ, and who is not in Christ, even as Christ is in the Father, and the Father in him.

For consider how many and how great are the difficulties in the way of our finding our Heavenly Father without the help of Christ.

Take first the idea of God as it seems to lie originally in the mind. Think of that mysterious being to whom the soul looks up with anxious questioning, as He is in Himself, or rather as our minds if left to themselves would be constrained to think of him. Reflect on his infinitude. Try to grasp the idea of a Being without limitations. You cannot. The mind is lost in attempting it. And still you are constrained to believe in this Infinitude. You are compelled to believe that there must be a being, to whose nature and life you can set no bounds, to whom there can be nothing beyond himself, nothing above himself, nothing without himself, who is beset by no imperfections, to whom not only nothing is impossible, but nothing is hard, obscure, remote, who sees all things, who understands all things, who can do all things, who holds all things within himself, who knows infinitely, who loves infinitely, who enjoys infinitely, who is without beginning and without end, from everlasting to everlasting. The longer you meditate on his nature, the more you struggle to grasp the secret of his personality, to comprehend the pleni-

tude of his perfection, the more hopeless does the endeavor become, the more awful, the more inaccessible, the more incomprehensible does he seem to you until the idea of him haunts you as an Infinite Spectre, or darkens it as the dread shadows of Eternity.

“Behold the nations are as a drop of the bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance, behold he taketh up the isles as a very little thing. . . . All nations before him are as nothing, and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity.” Compared with his greatness the universe is an infinitesimal; compared with his fulness of life and power, all life is infinitesimal and all power weakness; compared with the infinitude of Being in him—nothing is: HE IS: his name—Jehovah—I am—who says: “Before the worlds were, I am,” when heaven and earth have passed away, I am.

And now contrast yourself with this Being. See the limitations which hedge you in on all sides. How narrow the little round in which you move compared with the circles and cycles of his existence. How you shrink into nothingness in presence of his greatness! Which-ever way you go—how soon you find the end, the barrier which stops you, saying: thus far and no farther! How many difficulties there are which you cannot surmount! How many mysteries which you cannot penetrate! But yesterday you were not—tomorrow where, what will you be? You live in but a moment of time, the Past is gone from you, the Future evades you. All around you spreads the shoreless ocean of existence, you but a drop in its surface. Beneath you are the unfathomable depths; above you tower the firmaments and heavens, immensity rising above immensity, as Alps on Alps arise, you but an atom drifting between. That frail organism which your personality inhabits becomes a little deranged, and you are a raving maniac.

That brittle thread which holds soul and body together snaps and for you the universe is changed; Eternity swallows you up in itself.

Such is God—such are you! He the Infinite, you the finite. He the Eternal, you the ephemeral. He the Omnipresent, you the atom. He the All-seeing and All-knowing—dwelling in the light which no man can approach—you

“An infant crying in the night
And with no language but a cry.”

He, the Supreme, the All-perfect, the All-victorious, whose will is Law, whose Decree is Destiny. You the blind, the erring, the sport of circumstances, the victim of events. He needing nothing, you needing everything. Such is He; such are you. Dare you say—He is my Father! Is he not for you an incomprehensible Terror? Is he not rather one whose name, like those men of old, you dare not pronounce, a Being whom—you feel—to look on would be death, to touch would be annihilation?

But, you will say, God does not abandon us to the fancies and imaginations of unaided intellect. He has not left himself without witness. “The invisible things of him from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his Eternal power and God-head.” And this revelation of himself in nature, you will say, has in it much to soften the sterner features of the image which the mind forms when left to itself, much to bring God and man together. Nature reveals to us the Goodness of God, the interest which he takes in his creatures, the care with which he watches over them, and thus you think, perhaps, we may be led to think of God as our Father.

You will not forget, however, that we see Nature in the light reflected on it from the revelation which is

through Christ. But how is it when you confine yourself strictly to the teachings of Nature? Ask yourself what is the most obvious relation which God sustains to Nature? The answer will be that of Creator to the work which He himself has made. But is this relation one that suggests that of a Father? Is it not rather one which considered in itself alone, seems to exclude it? Take what is involved in the idea of a Creator. It involves in the act of Creation, a power unique in itself, a power which involves in itself all other power. It involves unlimited authority over that which has been created, and right to dispose of it as the Maker wills. It involves the infinite inferiority of the creature to the Creator; for it is inconceivable that God should produce another Being like himself, or equal to himself. There is, perhaps, no power in the Deity which so far transcends human power, none which so strikingly impresses on the mind the immeasurable superiority of God, as this power of creation, of absolute origination. With nothing but the light of nature to guide him, how can man claim such a power as his Father? Himself a creature, how can he claim Sonship to the Creator?

You will remember, however, that man is a creature in the image of God, and for this reason he is in a special sense, as no other creature is, the Child of God. But how do we know this? Whence have we derived that idea? Take away that revelation of which Christ is at once the center and the crown, and what foundation have we for such a belief?

Let us admit that the consciousness seems to have been felt in a measure, when only the light of nature has prevailed; that the heathen have spoken of a paternal character of their divinities; that heathen poets, as Paul quotes one of them, speak of men as the offspring

of God. But the paternal character which heathenism ascribes to its gods, has scarcely anything in it to remind us of Him whom Christ calls "My Father and your Father." The former is at most nothing more than the representation of the First Being in the order of existence, the expression of a certain dependence and subordination, like that of subjects on their rulers, or of tribes on their chiefs. The heathen Father—who was he? Oftentimes it was the tyrant who sacrificed his subjects to his cruel caprices, the chieftain who sold his dependents like cattle. Heathenism knows nothing of that filial liberty, that affectionate trust, that intimate communion, that constant sense of an ever near, ever loving Father which the Christian experiences. To the great mass of heathendom, the name Father, as applied to God, is an empty name, a dead title. But you will say, it is not in nature alone that God is revealed. History or Providence, as we sometimes call it, is a manifestation of him. In the administration of the world's affairs he displays those moral attributes, and that personal interest in the affairs of men, which incline us to think of Him as our Father.

But here again what is the aspect under which we most naturally view God? It is that of Ruler, King, Judge. He sits on the throne: the Universe is his Kingdom. All creatures are his subjects. He is the Supreme Legislator; he commands, it is the duty of all to obey. He is the Arbiter of Events; nothing takes place but by his ordinance or permission. He doeth according to his will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth and there is none that can stay his hand or say unto him: what doest thou? He is the Supreme Judge who executes all the laws of his kingdom, the dispenser of all their rewards and penalties.

This is the voice of all History, the testimony of all experience concerning God in Providence. It proclaims God not as the Father, but as the Sovereign, the Arbitrator, the Disposer, the Nemesis. We may say, indeed, that his government is a paternal government, that he rules as a Father, but what is our warrant for this? The Ruler is not necessarily the Father. In human governments, at least, the two characters are not only separate and distinct, but they often come in conflict, and what do we find then? What is the duty of the magistrate when the interests of the government demand one course of action, while the Father's affections prompt another? The latter must yield to the former. If the King, the Judge, yields to the Father, we accuse him of weakness, he is unfit to rule. On the other hand, in proportion as the Supreme Ruler of the world is invested with the more tender and approachable attributes of a Father, in the same proportion is he divested of the attributes of an absolute Sovereign. Thus it was with the Greeks, the most intellectual heathens whom the world has ever known. The more their supreme divinities were clothed with human feelings and passions, and brought into contact with human affairs, the less were they regarded as the real rulers of the world. The real god of the Greek was Fate. And so universally. To the mind which has received no light from the revelation of God in Christ the world is ruled by Fate: either by a Supreme Divinity which is no other than Fate personified, or by an impersonal Fate against which even the gods rebel in vain. No! we find no Father there. It may be, however, that distrusting the intentions and deductions of the intellect, you fall back on the instincts of the heart. You say, I believe, because I have felt—

"I found Him not in world or sun,
 Or eagle's wing, or insect's eye,
 Nor through the questions men may try,
 The petty cobwebs we have spun:
 If e'er when faith had fallen asleep,
 I heard a voice—' Believe no more,'
 And heard an ever-breaking shore
 That tumbled in the Godless deep;
 A warmth within the breast would melt
 The freezing reason's colder part,
 And like a man in wrath the heart
 Stood up and answered—' I have felt.'"

Yes, you say these feelings, these yearnings, these cravings for a love such as only a Father can give must find their justification in the reality toward which they reach forth. Far be it from me to undervalue these feelings, or to impair their testimony. Cherish it, prize it, rejoice in it to the utmost. And were that faith of the heart, that faith of instinct sufficient for every emergency that can overtake it, you might satisfy yourself with it; nothing more would be needed. But it is not so. There are times when it fails you, there are hours when those yearnings and hopes are overwhelmed beneath doubts and fears. Too much of life's pilgrimage lies through the valley of the shadow of death for a faith which is mere feeling. We live in a world where Light and Darkness, Joy and Pain, Life and Death hold divided empire. Nature secretes poison as well as honey. She nourishes the nightshade as well as the lily, the upas as well as the vine. The forked lightning shoots along the track of the sunbeam, blasting and withering. The vulture sweeps in the path of the dove; the wolf prowls in the footsteps of the lamb. Fierce engines of destruction are ever forging and launching forth: subtle elements of death are ever brewing and brooding. Tornadoes, volcanoes, earthquakes, fire and flood ravage the earth with desolating fury. Armies of creatures born to prey are tor-

turing and devouring their numberless hecatombs. If we could but hear it—one unbroken shriek of agony, one eternal wail of woe, is heard amidst the endless laughs and songs of nature. The earth is a charnel-house: the rocks are the obituaries of untold generations that have been crushed into the dust of death.

The civilizer's spade grinds horribly
 On dead men's bones, and can not turn up soil
 That's otherwise than fetid, all success
 Proves partial failure: all advance implies
 What's left behind: all triumph, something crushed
 At the chariot wheels: all government, some wrong:
 And rich men make the poor who curse the rich,
 Who agonize together: rich and poor
 Under and over in the social spasm
 And crisis of the ages.

And so the dark tragedy goes on, the strong crushing the weak, wrong often triumphant, tyranny supreme, fraud successful, bodies preyed on by disease, smitten with the pestilence, wasting with hunger, minds dwarfed in idiocy or wrecked in insanity, souls crushed beneath burdens too heavy to be borne, hearts bleeding, hopes withered, noble enterprises dashed to dust, the innocent bearing the curse of the guilty, lives of beautiful promise blighted in the bud, tears of sorrow, and sorrows too deep for tears, prayers for a blessing that never comes, and prayers for death that comes too late, blessings that turn to curses, doubt that turns to despair. Ah! not easy is it for the heart to lift itself out of the shadow which these dark problems of existence cast upon it. The mere *feeling* that God is our Father, will avail but little against these other feelings, these doubts and fears that are rolled upon the mind by the dread mysteries which are all about and within you. There is still another voice than that of the heart coming up from within to which you must give heed. It is the voice of conscience. And what does

it say? It tells you that whatever the relations at first existing between God and you might have been, these relations are altogether changed. It is not now as it was in the beginning. You are not now as when you first came from God. You have done all in your power to break the tie which bound you to God. What if it be broken *forever*? You have repudiated God's paternal authority over you, you have slighted his paternal interest in you, you have spurned his Father's love for you, your course tells you that you have deserved to be eternally disowned—why should not a just Father treat you as you deserve? You have become as unlike to your Father as darkness is unlike light, as sin is unlike holiness; how can a holy God delight in you as his child? You left your Father's house and became a child of shame. Your course tells you that you have no longer any right to his hospitalities, that to cross the pure threshold and to enter the sacred precincts where he dwells, would be sacrilege. You have dishonored your Father's name, you have traduced his glory.

Your course tells you that to call yourself his child would be blasphemy. It interprets against you all the portents of nature, and all the terrible facts of life. It bids you see in the lightning the bolt of his vengeance, and in the pestilence the scourge of his wrath. It makes you tremble when his judgements are abroad in the earth, and ever and anon whispers to your shuddering soul—"Thy God is a consuming fire." What then? Must you yield to despair? This belief in a Divine Father, is it no other than an illusion? This hope that you may be the child of an Infinite Love, is it but a mockery? Must you walk in doubt and darkness all your days, groping for a hand you never feel, seeking for a heart you never find? No! no! no! One there

is whom to see is to see the Father, whom to find is to find the Father.

Behold him! hear him! He teaches you to call God your Father in Heaven. He proclaims his Fatherhood to the world. He brings everything into connection with his Fatherhood. The earth and all its creatures are the Father's. All the events of life are the Father's dispensations. Seeing, as we all see, these dark enigmas of existence, these ills and miseries which abound, yea, looking deeper into their awful mysteries than it is possible for us to look, he still announces not only with confidence, but with joy, that God is our Father. And he is a Teacher, the like of whom the world has never seen. He speaks as man never spoke. He speaks with an authority which all acknowledge.

But this is not all. You doubt, perchance, whether the testimony of the wisest of teachers is sufficient of itself on a matter of so great importance. The wisest may err. The purest may be under a delusion. His very purity and spirituality may perchance cause him to be more susceptible to the power of dreams and ideal conceptions, beautiful in themselves, but with no foundation in reality. Here again, you receive a new assurance from the testimony of Jesus that he has come immediately from the Father to tell the world of Him who sent him. He speaks as the special messenger of the Most High, divinely commissioned to tell us what we most need to know of God. He speaks the words which he received of God. He tells us what he has seen with God. All his utterances and all his actions are such as the Father has taught him, that he may teach us. He claims all this, and you feel that his claims must be true, for otherwise Jesus himself is a self-contradiction. His life is a falsehood, his mission a delusion. This it is which gives significance to

his life, which seals his words with authority. He is from the Father to speak of the Father to men. If this be not true, nothing more is left us to believe in. History is an impossibility; character is an *ignis fatuus*; the best in human life, the deepest in human consciousness, the grandest in human aspiration is vanity of vanities. If anything is true, this must be true, that when he speaks, it is God's word that we hear, when he tells us of God, it is God telling us of himself. When he assures us that God is our Father, it is God assuring us, "I *am* your Father."

Do you need anything more than this? Do you demand an assurance from the inner depths of the Divine Nature? Do you fear that the interval between God and anyone less than himself is so immense that you cannot trust the deliverances of any inferior being? Behold then in Christ one who is not only sent forth by God, but who has come forth out of God. Yea! he is the Son of God:—not as a creature, for he was with God in the beginning, before the world was:—but the Son of God as a Divine Being—the only begotten, the Eternal Son of God. He calls God Father in a peculiar sense, He teaches us to say—"Our Father," *he* says "My Father."—"I am *the* Son of God," he says. "I and my Father are one." And if you thoughtfully consider his words and his life, you are constrained to believe in these declarations. He speaks *of* God as no other than the only and well beloved son of God *could* speak. He speaks *to* God as no other would *dare* to speak; he claims, he enjoys, he exhibits, he manifests, a oneness with God to which it would be blasphemy in any other to make any pretension. He, the Lowly in Heart, demands for himself what belongs only to God. The heart of God throbs in the life of Christ, and everywhere it is a Father's heart. *He* it is who comes to you

and says—God is your Father. He *knows* that God *is* the Father. From Eternity he was in the bosom of that Father, he lived in the love of that Father. He knows it; he has tasted it in all its sweetness; he has enjoyed it in all its fulness. He knows that the name Father when applied to God is no figure of speech, no empty title.

Is not this enough? Do you still doubt whether after all the Father of Christ can be *your* Father? Behold in Christ again your *brother*; bone of your bone and flesh of your flesh. The Son of God, he is at the same time the Son of Man. “The brightness of the Father’s glory, and the express image of his person,” he is yet one of our family. He is crowned with infinite perfection, radiant with a majesty before which heaven veils its eyes; and yet we see his brow wet with bloody sweat, and his eyes with human tears. He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and yet he is not ashamed to call us brethren. He is my Lord and my God, and yet he is my brother. He it is who says: “Go to my brethren and say unto them: I ascend unto my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.” The same God, the same Father,—the same Father’s love to trust in, and to bless you unto the end.

Do you still hesitate, do you still tremble as you approach this God? Ah! I know the reason why. You remember the sin which has alienated you from him. You feel the guilt which rises between you and him. But look again to Christ. Does he repel sinners? He calls them to him. Does he shun the guilty? He says “Come to me, and I will give you rest!” Does he give up the lost? “He came to seek and to save the lost.” Do you point to your sin? His blood cleanseth from all sin. Your guilt? His cross takes all your guilt away. Divine Justice? Nowhere does it shine more

brightly than in the sacrifice made on Calvary—The Law? Nowhere is it so fully magnified and made honorable as in the obedience, the sufferings, and the death of the Crucified One. God—He is your Father, he stands with open arms to receive you; he beseeches you to return and be reconciled to himself; the door is open, the feast is prepared, the table is spread, the welcome, the ring, the robe—all is ready. You have but to throw yourself down at his feet, crying “Father, I have sinned and am no more worthy to be called thy son,”—and that is the last you hear of your sins. They are forgotten: naught remains for you henceforth, but the smiles, the embraces, the entertainments, the companionship, the love of a Father who is yours forever.

And how have you found him? Ah! need I say? Does not your heart now respond to this declaration—“No man cometh unto the Father but by me.” Yes, it is in Christ that you find your Father, it is in Christ that the Father finds his lost child. Your Elder Brother brings you to the Father—he brings the Father to you.

You are accepted in Him. The Father receives you for his sake, and loves you in Him—“He is our Peace.” “If a man loves me,” says Jesus, and let each one listen to his words—“he will keep my words—and *my Father* will love him, and *we* will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” “The Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me.” “O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee; but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me, and I have declared unto them thy name”—Father!—“and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.”

Oh! who can comprehend the blessedness of the Sons of God? Language fails, imagination fails, Eternity alone can unfold it. “Now are we the Sons of

God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him"—Sons of God now; like the First-begotten hereafter.—The lost image restored, the lost Sonship regained.

Brother,—forget not the way, there is but one; "I am the way: no man cometh to the Father but by me." As many as received Him, to them gave he power to become the Sons of God. Receive Christ; and you find your Father.—Reject Christ and you lose your Father—you yourself are lost: you are a wanderer, an outcast, an orphan through all Eternity.

XVI.

THE YOUTH OF CHRIST.

Luke 3: 23. "And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age" [or more correctly] "And Jesus, himself was, when beginning (his ministry) about thirty years of age."

It has been remarked that there is inspiration even in the silence of Scripture. I may add that there is inspiration even in its hints. What we know about the age of Christ we learn only from a few hints scattered here and there. The text is one of these. Here we learn that Christ began his public ministry at the age of 30. From what is said elsewhere we may infer that his ministry lasted about three years, and then ended on the cross. On the third day he rose again, and forty days thereafter he ascended to heaven. And thus we learn that all the notable events of his life took place within the brief space of three and thirty years. Christ died, rose, and left the earth, while still in his youth. And in that life this surely means something.

Observe, however, that the Bible makes no parade of this fact. The biographies of those who have distinguished themselves in youth generally take pains to make the fact prominent. Not so the Bible. The text is the only passage where direct mention is made of Christ's age in connection with his ministry. It nowhere tells us how old he was when he died, or when he left

this earth. It leaves us to find that out for ourselves. Yet it lies there, one of the many proofs of its genuineness. It is just as careful, however, not to leave us in entire ignorance touching our Lord's age. The truth that Christ was, and is forever young, is full of significance, and sheds important light on many aspects of his personality and of his work. Let us make it the theme of our present contemplation.

I remark then, to begin with, that first, Christ's youth is an evidence of the innateness and originality of his wisdom. At thirty years of age he began to teach the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. From the very first all were astonished at his teaching. He taught as one having authority, and not as the scribes. Men said:—A great prophet is risen up among us. The common people heard him gladly. Members of the Sanhedrim said:—Here is a prophet come from God. Where did his wisdom come from? From India? or Egypt? or Greece? Did he, like Pythagoras, Socrates, or Plato, travel abroad from country to country, possessing himself of all the intellectual wealth of the schools of his day, and learning philosophy at the feet of the greatest masters? Not so. He never left his own land: there is no evidence that he ever heard the name of a single school of philosophy or master of thought outside of Palestine. Surely then he had learned all that was taught in Tiberias, or Jerusalem: he had sat at the feet of the Gamaliels of his own nation, and mastered their doctrines? Not even that. Until he began to teach he was known only as a carpenter, and a carpenter's son: and his own neighbors inquired in wonder: "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" Notwithstanding, the testimony of all who heard him was—"Never man spake like this man." A wisdom so penetrative, so fruitful, so clear and yet so deep, so

gentle and yet so authoritative was never known. What remains of it to us is perfect. There is in it nothing dim, nothing shallow, nothing false, nothing obsolete. The world has never outgrown it. It never will. Whence did Christ acquire it? Not, I repeat, in other lands, for he never went out of his own. Not in books or in schools, for these were denied him. Not by a lengthened experience, for when he began to display it he was only thirty years old. At the age of twelve even, he astonished the doctors of the temple with his questions and answers.

A parallel is sometimes drawn between Christ and Socrates as teachers. But Socrates lived in Athens, the center of the intellectual activity of the world in his day. He attended its schools. He was an educated man. He associated with its teachers and statesmen. He devoted himself to the life and pursuits of a philosopher. He died in the fulness of years and the maturity of experience, having reached the allotted span of man's life—died, no doubt, like a philosopher. Christ died at one-half the age of Socrates—died, as has been said, like a God. The wisdom of Socrates was human: the wisdom of Christ divine. We hear still, to be sure, of the Socratic method in philosophy: yet what is that as a power, as an influence in the world, compared with the truth as it is in Jesus, with that Divine Philosophy which the word Christianity represents? Whence then, I ask again, did Christ obtain his wisdom? There is but one answer. He could have acquired it only from above, only from within. It was the inspiration of the Godward within him, the result of his perfect communion and oneness with the Father. Well might he say: "I do nothing of myself, but as my Father hath taught me I speak these things. . . . I speak to the world those things which I have heard of

him. . . . I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me."

2. The youth of Christ is an element of importance in determining his moral character. Christ, as we know, laid claims to holiness, such as have been presented by no other. He claimed absolute immunity from sin. "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" So he challenged the men of his day, who knew him, who watched him, who thirsted alike for his blood and for his reputation, and the challenge was never taken up. His most intimate associates declared that he knew no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth. With humility, with gentleness, and yet with incomparable dignity, he said to those whose righteousness was their pride: "Ye are from beneath, I am from above." What now was the nature of his holiness? Was it the condition of one who was tired of sin, in whom the passions had expended all their strength, whose sensibilities were blunted by time, on whose senses the world and its pleasures had begun to pall, who was wearied of all its vanities and follies? Far from it. Was it the holiness of one who had been engaged for long years in the conflict with evil, who had gained the mastery over sinful inclinations and habits only after a prolonged and fluctuating struggle, in which the victory had not always been with his better self? Nay, indeed, not that. Was it even the holiness of one from the first predominately, although not absolutely good, gentle, simple, pure, benevolent, who by the diligent cultivation of these graces grew more and more good, pure, gentle and loving, until not a vestige of their opposites remained? Not even that. Mark it. It was not the holiness of a faded [blasé] life, of a decayed animalism—if that could be called holiness. It was not the moral character of a spiritual veteran, who by dint of a long

and hard struggle had fought his way into holiness, and who carries in his soul the scars of many a doubtful battle. It was not the purity of culture: it was no product of art. What was it then? It was the holiness of one who in childhood had recognized as the paramount obligation of his life the doing of his Father's business, who in youth grew up in wisdom and in favor with God and men, who was never overcome by the most fearful temptations, although they assailed him when he was most susceptible to their power. When all his sensibilities were liveliest, when his capabilities of enjoyment were keenest, when the instincts and impulses of his manhood were most vigorous, when the world made its strongest appeals to the love of power, the love of happiness, the love of praise, even then it was his meat and his drink to do the will of his Father in heaven. Such holiness must have been spontaneous, inborn, Divine: not derived, not created, not developed, but inherent in himself, identical with himself, inalienable from himself.

And this is something which stamps Christ as a unique personality in the history of humanity, which distinguishes him from all others. This Holy Child Jesus, this holy youth, this holy young man, Jesus of Nazareth, of whom we cannot think as being ever at any stage of his life, other than holy—this is a phenomenon which the world has never elsewhere seen. It is a miracle, one which makes every other miracle possible, which justifies Christianity itself as the greatest of all miracles.

3. Again the youth of Christ is of peculiar significance in connection with his mission as one of sorrow. Christ came into this world to suffer. "The Son of Man came . . . to give his life a ransom for many." "He is despised and rejected of men, a Man of Sor-

rows and acquainted with grief." Was ever grief like His? Gethsemane with its cup of agony! Calvary with its cross of woe! More bitter agony, darker woe, earth has never known, never will know. "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." "My God, my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" If Christ must needs suffer these things, was it not well that he should suffer them in his youth when all his powers for endurance, whether of body or of mind, were at their highest and best. And yet if Christ must live the life of the cross, as well as die the death of the cross, is it not a relief that His agony was not prolonged through three score years and ten? Do we not feel grateful to remember that if he suffered intensely, he did not suffer long, that so few years sufficed to enable him to say, "It is finished."

At the same time the thought of his youth gives increased reality and intensity to his sorrow. He suffered when his capability for suffering, as well as for enduring, or for enjoying, was at its highest. When to most men hope is brightest, enjoyment is keenest, life is richest in promise—then it was that the darkest cloud rested on Jesus and his soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. Can you doubt the reality, the depth, the keenness of his anguish?

But thanks be to God! Death is swallowed up in victory! The cloud parts, heaven opens; and we behold the Conqueror of Death, radiant with immortal youth, ascend the throne forever. And this leads me to say in the next place that

4. Christ's undying youth makes him a fitting representative of Heaven and Immortality. Christ has brought life and immortality into light. Is it not fitting that He who is come to reveal them, to be the embodiment of heaven and eternity's highest excellen-

cies and glories, should be thought of as forever young? Without Christ, what should we know of the hereafter? Take Christ away and what remains? The witchery of the soft blue sky, you say, remains, the stars shed their gentle radiance, the ocean murmurs its deep-toned harmonies, and the mountains lay their mighty spell on the soul, the grand processions of nature move on, evolving phase after phase of beauty and sublimity—but wherefore? What is the end of all? Alas! all these processes of life, glory, and joy, hasten into an abyss of darkness. Over all death reigns. Ah!

“That one word death comes over my sick brain,
Wrapping my vision in a sudden swoon,
Blotting the gorgeous pomp of sun and shade.”

Its dark shadow bounds our vision. Beyond it we can not see. It is the last word of life. “Man dieth, and wasteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he? Where is he? Is he at all? Who knows? Where Christ is unknown what is the future but a vast unknown, a guess, a Perhaps? What is death but a leap in the dark? But lo! Christ comes, and all is light. He comes as the very spirit and author of light. He comes that men might have life and might have it more abundantly. He comes from heaven into our earth, and brings heaven with him. He is the representative of the glory that is beyond, the glory that is to be revealed. He stands before us in immortal youth, in the beauty of the life to come. To behold him is to gaze on immortality. To have him is to have eternal life. To be with him is to be in heaven. Christ has come to show the world that there is no old age in heaven, that eternity is everlasting youth.

5. The youth of Christ again gives peculiar meaning to the title—“Son of God”—so often given in Scrip-

ture. When we think of God in his Infinite Life, we naturally think of him as existing from eternity. He "only hath immortality" as an essential underived attribute of his Being, and yet man too hath an immortality which God has given him. But of God alone can it be said that He is without beginning, as well as without end. "Before the mountains were brought forth, or even Thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even *from everlasting* to everlasting, Thou art God." There never was a time, there never was an eternity where God was not. While the earth was forming during those long æons, which were like waves on the ocean of eternity, each wave itself an ocean, itself an eternity almost—God was. Before all material existence, while only heaven and its spiritual hosts lay in the shadow of the Divine Glory—God was. Before all created existence, before there was a creature's eye to see, or ear to hear, or mind to think—God was! alone! reigning in the boundless empire of his own infinity, self-subsistent, self-sufficient, all in all! What, then, shall we call him? Let us name him with Daniel, "Ancient of Days." With Moses and Isaiah let us call him Eternal God! But shall we therefore think that his eye ever waxes dim, that his ear ever grows heavy, that his arm becomes faint, that age clouds his intelligence, enfeebles his activities, diminishes his joy, or chills his heart? Nay, verily, the Ancient of Days is also the Youthful of Days forever. For behold him who calls himself the "only begotten Son of God," whom the Father calls "My beloved Son." Do you see aught of decay, of decrepitude, of age in him? Not the faintest shadow. His are the fulness, the strength, the glory of perpetual youth. Such, therefore, as he is, such is God. For what do we mean when we call Christ the Son of God? Do we mean

that he is less than the Father, that he is younger, that his eternity is not the equal of the Father's? Nothing of the kind, and they who think so have failed to grasp one of the most beautiful truths in Christ's revelation of the Father. But the meaning is that Christ is the perfect representative of the Father, that he is the exact embodiment of his attributes, the express image of his person, the reproduction of his infinite perfections, the full heir of all his glories, who can say to his Father: "All things are mine!" In his Sonship he embodies accordingly the life of God, let me say, the youth of God. In Christ we see that God is forever young, that the Intelligence of God is forever young, that the Power of God is forever young, that the heart of God is forever young, that the Eternity of God is eternal youth. Yes—in the face of Jesus Christ the awful mysterious reality of God's eternity smiles upon us with the sweet attractive loveliness of youth, winning our unshrinking confidence, our unfaltering trust. Once more:

5. The youth of Christ is a fact of inestimable preciousness in assisting our conception of Christ's brotherhood. How easy it becomes for us to think of Christ as our brother, as we remember his youth when he ascended to the right hand of God. "I go to your Father, and to my Father," said he to his disciples, just before leaving them. And so he parted from them, as a brother from his brethren. But such as Christ was when he ascended to heaven, such he is to-day—our brother!

He is there as the first-born of the family of God, as the bond which unites all the members of that family in one heavenly brotherhood, which also unites that brotherhood to the Father of all. As on earth he was the representative of the Fatherhood of God, so in heaven he represents the brotherhood of man. From Eternity

the Son of God—through Eternity, the Son of Man—made in all things like unto his brethren, who is not ashamed to call them brethren. He is the Perfect Man—humanity in its highest state of beauty, of glory, and of strength. He is the unchangeable type of the race, to which each one of his brethren will be exalted. “For whom God did foreknow he also did predestinate to be *conformed to the image of his Son*, that he might be the first-born among many brethren.” What then do we learn in regard to the Future of Humanity, as we contemplate this one Elder Brother? We learn that as the Eternal Life of the Godhead is Youth, so also is the Eternal life of perfected humanity Youth. “Now are we the Sons of God, and it doeth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him.”

Like him in eternal youth: like him in the bloom, the vigor, the freshness, and joyousness of immortality. No more weariness of body or of mind, no more dimness of vision, no more feebleness of sense, physical or spiritual: no more vacancy of thought, no more exhaustion of feeling, no growing infirmity of intellect, or debility of will: no deepening of the shadows as the night approaches: no passing away of the summer of the heart: no withering of life's glories as the winter draws nigh: no alienation, or unbelief, no sin or despair to blight with hopeless age.

Perennial youth is the prerogative of every one of Christ's brethren—a youth ever renewing itself by partaking of His Fulness, who is the Fountain of the Life Immortal.

XVII.

BEARING EACH OTHER'S BURDENS.

Galatians 6 : 2. " Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."

You are all familiar with the picture set before us by the opening lines of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, "I dreamed, and behold I saw a man clothed with rags, standing in a certain place, with his face from his own house, a book in his hand, and a great burden upon his back." That burden was indeed a special burden. You remember how the bearer was delivered from that burden. "I saw in my dream, that just as Christian came up with the cross, his burden loosed from off his shoulders, and fell from off his back, and so continued to do till it came to the mouth of the sepulchre, where it fell in, and I saw it no more." The burden of which Bunyan dreamed is doubtless the most serious burden of life, the burden of sin and guilt. It is not, however, the only burden which is laid upon us all along our earthly journey. They are the inseparable accompaniments of our sinful mortality, and of our life discipline. We are freed from them only by death. These are the burdens of which the text speaks. These burdens vary much. Each one's burden is not the same with that of his neighbor. The burden of one is lighter than that of another. There are those who

are almost or quite unconscious of their burdens, and their case is the saddest of all. These words imply that all have one burden. From them we may infer the Bible theory of life. What is life? Is life worth living? These are the questions. There are those who picture it as a gay holiday, made up of mirth and music and sunshine; not a cloud overhead, not a thorn in the way, no burden to bear, no weary, footsore march, nothing but the present, seizing the day, basking in the sunshine, dreaming.

Others paint it in dark and dismal lines, as a day of clouds, and rain, and chilling storms; as a valley of shadows, a desert of dead hopes, a Golgotha of perished and perishing travelers, who have fallen by the way, crushed by their loads.

The Bible picture of life is neither this nor that. It is neither a gala day, nor a day of lamentation; neither idle play, nor hopeless agony, neither the laughter of fools, nor the wail of the despairing. It is indeed a pilgrimage, a sad and weary one to many, yet not without its joys; a long pilgrimage it may be, yet not without its rests, through the wilderness, yet by many an Elim of fountains and palms; a burden-laden pilgrimage, and yet the toil of which may be lessened and its pleasures enlarged, if we heed the voice of wisdom, and seek to "bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ":

" Not enjoyment and not sorrow
Is our destined end or way,
But to act that each to-morrow,
Find us further than to-day."

Find *us* further, find our *brother* also further than to-day, helped by us to bear his load, and to take some steps forward which without our help he could not have taken.

What each one's burden is he best knows himself. "The heart knoweth his own bitterness." "Every man shall bear his own burdens." There are physical burdens which many have to bear. Their life is loaded, handicapped down with infirmity or disease. There is a limitation of sense, or of function, which narrows for them the channels of enjoyment or of culture. A constant sense of pain adds a drop of bitterness to every cup. Brain, nerve, limb, heart, lung, cries out its discord. A shadow, like that of death, is not far off.

There are mental burdens, burdens of mental infirmity or disease, the source of which is rather in the body, and which becloud the life with apprehension and pain, burdens also which are more purely intellectual, doubts, discouragement, perplexity, from dealing with the dark problems of being. There are spiritual burdens which come upon us through our spiritual shortcomings, through the infirmity of will, the prevalence of passion, the power of temptation, through conflict with the world without or with self within. There are burdens which form part of our heritage. We inherit them from those who have gone before, by the laws of hereditary transmission, social liability, repressive responsibility. We are born into the world, many of us with fetters on our limbs, with weights around our necks.

There are burdens which are rolled on us by Providential dispensations—business perplexities, financial embarrassments, failures, family troubles, national calamities, losses, death. There are burdens which others lay on us by their follies, unkindness or unfaithfulness, suspicion, calumny, ill-will, injurious dealing. With many of us the great question is how to get rid of our own burdens, or if not how to get rid of them altogether, at least how to lighten them, how to carry

them with the most ease and comfort to ourselves. I am far from saying that we are not to consider this question. The right disposition of our own burdens is one of the most important problems in life. It is a question of infinite practical moment to each one of us—how shall I deal most wisely with that which God lays on me to bear as part of life's discipline? How shall I secure that my burdens shall not hinder me, crush me, wear me out? How shall I avoid getting bitter or rebellious? How shall I bear my load, when bear I must, so as to learn patience, to grow more humble, to gain strength, to build up my manhood? I say this is a legitimate question to ask.

But that is certainly a low view of life which stops with our own burdens. The selfish motto—"every man for himself," is abhorrent to every generous instinct. It is earthly, sensual, devilish. The dictates even of natural humanity protest against it. The man who hardens his heart against the appeal of suffering and want, who holds back his hand from lightening the load under which his brother is staggering, is a reprobate anywhere, even heathendom repudiates him, much more does Christianity condemn him. For as the text says, to bear one another's burdens is to fulfill the law of Christ. Christ's law is Love. All His teachings inculcate the obligation of mutual service. Nay, more, He is our example. "Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses." Bear ye one another's burdens, and so "fulfill the law of Christ." What then does this precept imply?

1. It implies that first of all we should acquaint ourselves with one another's burdens. It is a common proverb that one-half the world does not know how the other half lives. To some extent this is unavoidable. It is not to be expected that every one should

know all about every body else. This is not practicable, neither would it be desirable. It is not for us to pry into the closets which hold our neighbor's skeletons. There are secrets too sacred to be laid open to the public gaze. There are loads which no human hand can lighten, much less remove.

If we only did all the duty that comes to hand each day in the way of helping others, how much more radiant with active sympathy our lives would become! We certainly do not make the most of the opportunities which our knowledge brings to us. But after all, can it be denied that there is much criminal ignorance and insensibility on our part touching the sufferings and want of others? We do not do all that we know ought to be done, but do we know all that we ought to know? Do we not willfully, or at best thoughtlessly, shut our eyes to the facts—the sad, tragic facts which are all about us? Within eye-range and ear-range of our homes and of our daily walks, sin and misery are busy, their victims are many, the need of help is urgent, and we dream, or try to dream, that all is well, and do nothing. Sometimes a case comes to light, the hidden evil reaches a climax; the veil is rent, and we get a glimpse of the abyss of corruption and wretchedness festering beneath, and we are shocked, our conscience smites us, and we blame ourselves that we had not known of the evil in time, and done what we could to prevent it. But too late!

This is not the law of Christ. He came “to seek and to save.” The spirit of Christ seeks when and whom it may help. In true Christlike sympathy there is a spirit of discovery, a holy enterprise of love, which goes forth to *find* its object, which is not satisfied while there is one soul anywhere who needs help, one want anywhere which can be relieved.

2. It is not enough, however, to become simply acquainted with one another's burdens, we should *interest* ourselves in them. This sentiment was not unknown even to the heathen heart. You are all familiar with the utterance of the Roman poet, "I am a man, and nothing pertaining to man is without interest for me." You remember how that sentiment filled a Roman theatre with acclamations.

Shall it be said of Christian communities, that they are insensible to the burdens which crush the hearts and lives of those about them? But you will say it is not true that they are thus insensible. It cannot be so! But are you so sure of that? Do you sufficiently take into account the influence, e. g. of the law of familiarity? We become accustomed even to moral deformity.

"Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,
As to be hated needs but to be seen,
But seen too oft, familiar with her face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace."

We may not go quite so far as that, but the tendency is that way.

In like manner we become accustomed to suffering, our sensibilities are dulled by use. Misery comes to be a matter of course. We pass by a degraded hovel, the abode of filth and wretchedness, the lurking place of vice and brutality, one of hell's caricatures of that heaven on earth, home. But we go by, and beyond a momentary sense of disgust, it may be, what do we feel?

There goes a drunkard, that living satire on God's image in man, alas! the sight is so common it scarcely affects us at all. With besotted face and maudlin words, he staggers on his way, he reels into the gutter, and we make a jest of it perhaps and pass on, and think no more of it. See the faces which come forth out of the crowded tenements of our cities, wan, poverty-stricken, vice-bleared, epitomes of a life of woe, advertisements

of days and nights of beastly degradation, photographs of all evil lusts and passions, we look at them, they look at us—and what do they say to us? how many of them awaken even a passing emotion of interest, of genuine thoughtful interest in our hearts?

They are to us little more than weeds by the wayside, or blasted trees in the landscape. Now I do not say that this is altogether blameworthy. We are all conscious of it, even the best, most humane; and to a large extent it is unavoidable, the natural result of the law of familiarity.

But it does show the danger to which we are all exposed—a danger too, I venture to say, into which we all fall more or less, of becoming culpably indifferent to the burdens with which our brothers and sisters are struggling, and which claim our attention and help wherever we go. We must be on our guard against this hardening process. We must fight this tendency to apathy and self-indulgence, this fatalistic selfish acquiescence in the crushing out of others, provided only that our own burdens are easily borne. We must keep our hearts tender and soft.

Let us never forget that we are members one of another; that if one member suffer all the members suffer with it.—He who liveth in pleasures, who liveth in and for himself, is dead while he liveth, that, after all, selfishness is suicide, and he who is dead to the interests of others, sacrifices, murders in the end his own. “Who-soever will save his life shall lose it.”

3. It is not enough, however, to be interested simply in the burdens of others.

The text enjoins sympathy which is more than a feeling of interest *towards* those who need our help. Sympathy, as the word denotes, is fellow-feeling, feeling *with* others, not simply toward, with regard to them, and

taking their burdens on ourselves so that we shall feel them to some extent, as those do who bear them. "Remember those that are in bonds, as bound with them, and them who suffer adversity as being yourselves also in the body." Put yourself in his place, as an old proverb has it, or in the more precise language of inspiration, "Put your own shoulder under your brother's yoke." Realize for yourself the conditions, the trials, the weakness, the want, the weariness, the embarrassment, the sorrow of your brother.

This is one of the sacred uses of imagination. This faculty is not given us for æsthetic or artistic uses merely. To fill the mind's gallery with pictures of beauty and sublimity, is not its only, perhaps not its highest function in this state of trial and suffering. It has also an ethical vocation. It is one of the factors of life's moral discipline. It may be, and it should be the agent of conscience, the hand-maid of love. It should be trained to picture, to realize for us the moral conditions and necessities of others, so that we may wisely and efficiently aid them.

You can not give a man moral help or spiritual relief, unless you understand and feel his case, appreciate the peculiarities of his situation, and know through fellowship just what his trouble is, where the burden presses most heavily. You may not be able to do this fully, to enter completely into the experience of him you would relieve, but there must be something of it. One who has known nothing whatever of debt, can render but little service to the debtor. He whose own heart has never been heavy with sorrow, can do but little toward lightening the heart of another. The heart that feels with another, must prompt and guide the hand which brings help to another.

It was the recognition of this principle which led

John Howard to visit the prisons of Europe, and to take up his abode in lazarettos and pest-ships, that he might see with his own eyes, and realize to some extent in his own experience, the suffering of those whom he would befriend. So Christ, our Great High Priest, identified himself with our nature, and with our lot, entered into all our mortal experiences, came down into the lowest walks of weakness, loneliness and sorrow, that then, with the power of Divine sympathy, He might help and save his brethren. And thus he has left us an example that we should follow in his steps.

As Christ is introduced as saying in the vision of Sir Launfal:

“The Holy Supper is kept indeed
 In whatsoever we share with a brother's need,
 Not that which we give, but that which we share,
 For the gift without the giver is bare,
 Who bestows himself with his alms feeds three,
 Himself, his hungering neighbor and me.”

4. But even this is not enough. We must go one step further yet. To feel the burden of another, is not to bear that burden. There are those who find it easy to indulge in sympathy, who enjoy it as a sentimental luxury, but who are never led by it to do anything for others. What does it profit the poor seamstress in the alley, who is putting her heart's blood into her stitches, that the fine madame around the corner rocks herself while reading the song of the shirt, and revels in the sweet pathos of tears for the unfortunate? A thin skin is easily affected, and there is a sympathy which has no more merit in its suffering, and which is only skin-deep.

How, then, are we to bear one another's burdens? Can you take the burden of another directly on your own shoulders? In some instances evidently you can. If a friend is staggering under a heavy load of debt,

you can if it should seem best to do so—assume the debt and pay it for him. But ought you to do this, supposing it to be in your power? That would depend on circumstances. It might be a noble thing to do, provided the aggregate good resulting from it should sufficiently outweigh any incidental damage or grief attending it. The cases are manifestly few, however, where there can be an absolute transfer of one man's load to another's shoulders. In most cases the load is so much a part of the man himself, of his personality and life, that it can not be shifted. It is of such a load that Paul says just below: "Every man should bear his own burden." How, then, can we bear these burdens? Or what is it to bear one another's burdens when we can not make them absolutely our own? I answer—it is to undergo that amount of suffering, of sacrifice and of toil, with and for another, which may be necessary to relieve him of his burden, so far as that may be practicable, or if not to relieve him altogether, at least to enable him to bear it. This is the law of Christ of which Paul speaks, the law of love, in other words, the great Christian law of sacrifice, the highest law of the moral universe, the law of which the life of Christ is the Divinest illustration. This law requires not that a man should take on himself the individual sufferings of another, but that he *should* take on himself that kind, and that degree of suffering, of toil, of sacrifice, which is necessary to secure his neighbor's good.

The rich man is not required to strip himself of his wealth, to live in a hovel, to clothe himself with rags, to shiver and to famish in want, but he is required to deny himself somewhere, to live for something else than personal ease and gratification, to make sacrifices at the call of charity and duty, to undergo whatever

toil and anxiety the administration of his property may lay on him in the spirit of true stewardship, with a view not to serve himself, but to help those who cannot help themselves.

The man of culture is required by this law to hold his attainments and powers at the service of others, to sacrifice even some of the fruits, rewards, and enjoyments of culture in himself so as to redcem others from ignorance, grossness and superstition. Those to whom God has communicated of the riches of his grace are to bear these riches to the perishing, and in doing this are to be prepared to encounter loss, obloquy, privation, to crucify their own feelings, to sacrifice their prospects, to lose, if need be, their lives. So the Son of God gave up the throne, and took up the cross, laid aside his glory, and clothed himself with shame, that he might take away our burdens, and give the weary and heavy laden rest.

Thus did he fulfil the Law of Love. The truest and wisest sympathy, I think, is that which will teach or help others to bear their own burdens. Is the burden one which may be entirely removed? Then the wisest sympathy is that which will teach the bearer to rid himself of it. Here is a pauper, whose soul is pauperized even more than his pocket. What is the best thing you can do for him? Teach him to respect himself, to aspire to a life of self-reliance and industry, to make a man of himself. This may cost you something, more labor, more anxiety, more weariness of heart than if you should buy him a cottage, and set him up in it; but can you doubt which would be the better way of bearing his burden?

That ignorant man whose mental barrenness makes him more helpless than the brute creation, for he has not the instinct of the brute to educate himself—what is

the best thing you can do for him? Help him out of his imbecility and stupefaction into capacity and usefulness. Help the vicious to throw away the shackles which fetter them, to overcome the habits which enslave them, the appetites which degrade them, and to practice self-restraint, purity, and manly endeavor. Thus do you not only bear the burdens of others, but bear them away, aye, and roll them into the sepulchre.

If however, the burden may not be laid down until death comes with rest to the weary, then that is the wisest sympathy which teaches the suffering in humility, resignation, and silence, or even with trustfulness and joy, to carry the burden until the Father's hand which laid it shall take it away. For there are burdens which can be laid down only with the life. They who bear them know what they are. You or I cannot bear them for another, nor take them away—and yet we may do much to lighten them, if our own lives but shine forth with sympathy, with patience, with cheerfulness, with courage, with faith in Christ. The very presence of Christ is rest to the weary: and what is true of Christ is true of Christ's spirit, wherever, in whomsoever found.

In our selfish moods we are tempted, it may be, to complain of this arrangement, which makes us our brethren's burden-bearers. "Where is thy brother?" said God to Cain. "Am I my brother's keeper?" was the reply. Ah! that old question, how it keeps jumping to our lips! Have I not my own burden to carry? and is not that enough? Why should I worry myself about another's? In our better moods, indeed, we are ashamed of this spirit, ashamed that we have to fight so against it. But is not this Divine arrangement a beautiful and a loving one? What if the world were consti-

tuted on that Cain theory, that selfish principle, every man his own keeper? What an unlovely place it would be! Misery is bad enough, but selfishness is misery in hell.

On the other hand, this law of reciprocal sympathetic help, sheds the fragrance of the rose, even over the thorns of the wilderness. Brighter than the sunbeam is the answering look of gratitude from relieved distress. Sweeter than the droppings of the honey-comb are the yearnings and tears of pity. More thrilling than the song of triumph, is the conscious joy of rescuing the perishing.

The poor we have always with us, and so the weak, the suffering, the struggling, the heavy laden, we have always with us. The more we feel for them and with them, the more lovingly and absolutely we surrender ourselves to their service—the stronger shall we be, the gentler, the purer, the more helpful, more godlike shall we grow.

And do you not know this, moreover, and I close with this thought: To bear each other's burdens is the best way to bear your own? Sometimes a man gets rid of his own burden altogether, as soon as he addresses himself to the relief of others. This is especially true of those burdens which grow out of a selfish life, or at least out of a life too much occupied with self. And how many of our burdens are of this class? We dwell in the shadow of our own thoughts and feelings; we think of ourselves; we plan for ourselves; we judge of everything by its relations to ourselves, and we thus heap up for ourselves doubts, anxieties, disappointments, failures, which well nigh crush us. And the more we live in and for ourselves, the more we mope, and pine, and fret, and fume, because of these grievances, the heavier do they become, and

the more do they chafe and weary us. But let us forget self, let us go to the help of others, and lift at their burdens, and lo! we lose our own; our doubtings, and fearings, and strivings vanish; we are free men. And whatever may be the burden, the law is the same. Do your part in bearing your brethren's burdens, and your own will be, if not wholly removed, at least made much lighter. There is the reaction of mutual sympathy; there is the inspiration of love; there is the joy of helping others; there is the assurance of the Divine favor; there is the sense of liberty, elevation and power, which comes from conscious sympathy with God, and conscious nearness to Him. How much better this than to be staggering and stumbling under your own load, thinking only of your own miserable self! Ah! my hearers, there is no service so poor as the service of self. There is no such poor paymaster. There is no life so fruitless, so joyless, and, in the end, so helpless, as the life which has never brought help to another, which has never been touched by the spirit of Christ, which has never throbbed with his love for God and man. He who cares only for the world, who lives only in the present, only for pleasure, wealth or power, what is there to hold him up when he feels all giving away under his feet? When the load is too heavy, what is there left for him but to sink under it in the dark depths of despair, it may be to seek refuge in the dark depths of eternity? I know in another city a Missionary, aged, poor, crippled and blind. For more than forty years he has loved and lived for God's poor in that city, hobbling about on his crutches day by day, feeling his way along through the reeking alleys and rickety tenements, to comfort, help and save the needy, the sick, the degraded, the dying. The thousands of those for whom he thus labors know, and

love, and bless him. There is not a happier man under God's sky to-day than he, for every day he is doing Christ's work, and every day he finds his reward in doing it. He does not know oftentimes where to-morrow's loaf is to come from, and yet all the gold of California could not tempt him from the work he loves. Heavy as are his own personal burdens, he knows nothing of them; the only burdens he knows are those of others, which in the fulfillment of the law of love he is striving to bear for them.

I think I would rather be that poor, old, sightless cripple, than to be the money-king of the market, with all the power which gold can bring, but without the love which the lust of gold devours, and without the hope which the gold of the universe can not buy.

Oh, for grace to be more like Him who pleased not himself, who took on him the form of a servant, who bare our burdens in his own body, who became poor that we, through his poverty, might be made rich.

PREACHING CHRIST.*

My desire to-night in opening this new Seminary year, is to speak a word which may tell to some good purpose on the work of the year, and through the work of the year, on the work of your life. You are here to learn to preach, to prepare yourselves for the business of preaching. What is it to preach? What are you to preach? These are two questions of supreme interest to each one of you. The second question is that which I would consider with you to-night, and the answer to it will carry with it the answer to the former question.

At the same time a brief preliminary examination of the description which the New Testament gives of the act of preaching, will prepare the way for an answer to the question, what are we to preach?

I. Preaching is, let me say to begin with, a specific act in the generic category of teaching. This act of teaching is, perhaps, the highest practical function of the human intellect. The antecedent process of learning that which is to be taught, is doubtless of extreme importance, involving some of the loftiest speculative activities of the mind. But the process of teaching is of paramount practical importance. In it is attained

* Although not technically a sermon, this address (delivered at the opening of the Seminary year, Sept. 9, 1886,) is so full of the highest and noblest kind of preaching, that it was thought best to add it to this volume. As the mature expression of the author's idea of preaching, moreover, its title was chosen as the title of the volume. The *sermons* are examples of how to "preach Christ."

the highest manifestation of mental power. The spiritual giants of the race have been its teachers. And this is the fundamental conception of preaching: teaching. The great commission is, "Go ye and teach all nations." Bring all into Christ's school, that they may learn Christ, and the things of Christ.

Learning Christ—that is practical Christianity. As the Apostle writes to the Ephesians, "Ye have not so learned Christ."

II. Another important New Testament term (*καταγγέλλειν*) describes preaching, as *announcing, proclaiming, publishing abroad*. "Christ whom we preach, (proclaim) admonishing every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom—that we may present every man perfect in Christ." This term suggests a solemn, authoritative announcement of something which is of general moment, of something which requires to be publicly promulgated. It is a term which specially befits the Gospel Proclamation, as a Divine Revelation, as a Divine Message, to be carried everywhere.

III. Another term in frequent use (*ἐυαγγελίζεσθαι*) describes preaching as specifically the proclamation of Glad Tidings. The Gospel is good news to men. The preacher is a messenger of joy that brings the message of life to the dying, and speaks the word of hope to the ear of despair. "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, thy God reigneth."

IV. Still another term, perhaps, the most common of all (*κηρύσσειν*) describes the preacher as a herald. So in one version of the great commission: "Go ye into all the world and preach (herald) the Gospel to the whole creation." "Preach (herald) the Word: be

instant in season, out of season." This term describes preaching still more definitely than the preceding, as a mediating agency, a representative function. The preacher is a representative man. He is the ambassador of a Higher Power. He stands for God, and speaks in the name of God. "We are ambassadors, therefore, on behalf of Christ, as though God were entreating by us, we beseech you on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God." This description emphasizes the peculiar personal relations of the preacher. He represents not a system, not an institution, but a being—a personality; not himself, but another. He is to speak, not his own words, but the words which are given for the purpose. He is to declare, not his own notions, not his own thoughts, but the thoughts, feelings, desires, purposes, of Him who hath sent him forth. There is still another class of terms of considerable extent and variety, which describes the work of preaching as a work of serving, ministering, helping. It is the preacher's special function to serve others, to advance their interests. He is by way of pre-eminence **THE SERVANT, THE MINISTER.** The law of self-subordination, is the distinctive characteristic law of his calling. It is his peculiar privilege to encourage, warn, nurture, comfort, to apply the gospel to the ever-recurring, ever-varying needs of humanity, both in its social and individual life. "Every Scripture is inspired of God, and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work."

So much for the act of preaching. Let us turn now to the contents of the act. What are we to preach? In one word, we are to preach Christ, "Every day in

the temple and at home they [the Apostles] ceased not to teach and to preach Jesus, as the Christ."

"I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified."

"We preach Christ crucified, unto Jews a stumbling block, and unto Greeks foolishness, but unto them that are called—both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God."

"We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord."

This then is preaching according to the Apostolic model—to preach Christ, or, taking the above terms, according to the definition given of each:

I. To preach Christ is to teach Christ. Christ is the wisdom of God, and we are to instruct the world in that wisdom. Paul speaks of "The dispensation of God, which was given to him, to fulfill [fill to the full] the Word of God, even the mystery which has been hid from all ages, and generations which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." "I strive that they may know the mystery of God, even Christ in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden." It is the preacher's mission to unfold the mystery, to unveil the treasures of Divine Wisdom, which are stored within it, to initiate men into this blessed secret of God, which to know is life eternal.

II. To preach Christ is still further to announce Christ, to spread abroad His glory, to proclaim Him as King, as Savior, as Judge—the One for whom the isles have waited, for whom the centuries have prayed.

III. And so, to preach Christ is to proclaim Him, as the Joy of the world, God's Evangel of peace on earth—and glory in the highest.

IV. To preach Christ is to herald Him—to voice His invitation, to mediate His thought, to interpret His life

and work to the world, to go before Him, to prepare His coming.

V. And finally, to preach Christ is to apply Christ as the panacea of the world's maladies, as the Bread of Life for its hunger, as the Water of Life for its thirst, as Heaven's answer to earth's questioning, as God's solution of life's enigmas. "In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and in Him ye are made full."

Having thus glanced briefly at the act of preaching in its relations to the theme, let us direct our attention more particularly to the theme itself.

What is it to preach *Christ*?

(1.) It is not of necessity to be all the time using the name of Christ in our preaching. "Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven."

Not every one that saith of Christ, Lord, Lord, shall preach the Gospel of His Kingdom. There may be a dry formal mechanical use of Christ's name, which is utterly devoid of the spirit and life of Christ Himself. It has often been remarked that the name of God is not once found in the book of Esther—although the book of Esther is from beginning to end, full of God. So it is conceivable—I do not say it is probable—or that unless in very exceptional circumstances, it is at all desirable—that a sermon may scarcely once mention Christ, and yet be full of Christ, all the way through.

(2.) To preach Christ is not of necessity to be all the time making Christ the specific theme of the preaching. The sphere of which Christ is the center is a boundless universe: He irradiates with His own light, every point in that sphere. There are in the Word of God, themes without number, which in their Biblical connections, receive a Divine consecration. Indeed

there is no legitimate object of human thought or interest, which, when contemplated in the solar light of this Divine Centre, is not transfigured with a new glory.

Historic events and epochs, the rise and fall of Babylon or Rome, the mission of Cyrus, of Charlemagne, of Cromwell, the thought of Plato, the song of Virgil, the vision of Dante, each and all will to the Christian thinker, reflect Christ—as to the Christian eye of Paul in Athens, the inscription of an altar, and a line of Aratus shone with the truth which Christ had taught him. On the other hand, one may take Christ for the formal theme of his sermon, and yet fail of preaching Christ. To be the pulse of the preacher's thought, Christ must be the pulse of the preacher's life. He must be more than the figure-head of the sermon. The sermon must flow out of the head of Christ, as the stream came forth out of the rock, when smitten by the rod of Moses. Thus let men today drink of that spiritual rock, which follows them—that rock which is Christ.

(3) And so I remark, once again, there is a difference between preaching *about* Christ, and preaching *Christ*. A man may preach a great deal *about* Christ, without preaching much of Christ himself. What is said *about* Christ, is largely the shell. It is—to borrow the nomenclature of philosophy—the phenomena in Christ, as distinguished from the noumena; the circumstantial in Christ, as distinguished from the essential; the exterior as contrasted with the interior. It is what *they* have thought and said about Christ, rather than what the preacher himself has found in him. It is Christ as a creed, rather than Christ as a reality; the halo, not the living sun. The business to which the preacher is summoned is—let us never forget—to preach Christ Himself.

But to look at the subject a little more in the concrete, let us particularize. Christ as the subject of preaching, may be regarded: I. As a Personality; II. As the Truth; III. As the Life.

I. Let us consider the significance which attaches to the preaching of Christ in His personality:

I. At once the uniqueness of this personality, transfixes our attention. He is the God-man; He is the man-God. As man, He is God; as God, He is man. Here we have personality in its most complex organization. We have personality at the same time in its most real, its most energetic, its most vital manifestation. Here, if anywhere, we may hope, will the mystery of personality be solved. Here, at last, we shall find its life-secret—that in personality, which imparts to life its sacredness, and to duty its divineness. I need not remind you of the difficulties which we encounter as we explore the realms of personality.

You look at man—what do you see? On the one side his nature reaches so low down—he is so earthly in his affiliations, he is so bound up with his physical environment, he seems to be so much a part of the world of cause and effect—as to raise the question: whether any special spiritual significance attaches to man's being or destiny, whether personality is not after all a modification of matter. On the other hand, you look at personality in God, and you encounter difficulties which meet you from the opposite side. You carry personality up into the region of abstract infinitude, and you are beset with metaphysical perplexities and contradictions—which suggest a doubt whether an Infinite Personality is possible. But you look at Christ and what do you see? Here you behold a personality which is so decisively, so unmistakably supernatural, that it is impossible to regard it as a mere phase of

natural development—a personality which is inexplicable on any materialistic hypothesis. Here is a consciousness which loses itself in the infinite. Here is a Being using the personal pronoun I, who addresses the Father as Thou, who speaks of Himself and the Father, as We, who is at the same time, so completely identified with our human experience, who touches at so many points our common human consciousness, that all metaphysical difficulties vanish in His presence. Here, in a word, is a Being who unites in Himself all the attributes of a human personality, with all the attributes of Deity. Every instinct of our tempted humanity, clings to Him as our Brother. Every instinct of our redeemed humanity, cries out to Him as our God. What is the inference? Necessarily, that God in His infinite life, is a person, and that man in his finite life is a person. By His mere personality, by the reality of His personality, Christ vindicates the right, the dignities, the prerogatives of personality in the realms alike of the Infinite and of the finite. In preaching this personality, we provide the surest antidote to the negations of materialistic, agnostic, pantheistic doubt touching this fundamental fact.

2. Look again for a moment at the expressiveness of this Christ-personality. We have in it the concrete embodiment of the greatest spiritual realities, such as, apart from Christianity, would exist for us simply as abstractions. He personalizes for us the great divine forces of the Universe. Let us look at one or two of these.

To the modern intellect, there is, I suppose, no force more overwhelming in its impressiveness and fascination, than Law. The thinker of to-day lives under the reign of law, and glories in his chronology. “The perception of this” [reign of law,] says the Duke of

Argyll, "is growing in the consciousness of men. It grows with the growth of knowledge, it is the delight, the reward, the goal of science. From science it passes into every domain of thought." Surely to the eye of science, Law is a mighty sublime force. You all recall Hooker's noble panegyric: "Of Law there can be no less acknowledged, than that her seat is the bosom of God, her voice the harmony of the world. All things in heaven and earth do her homage, the very least as feeling her care, the greatest as not exempted from her power, both angels and men and creatures of what condition soever, though each in different sort and manner, yet all with uniform consent admiring her, as the mother of their peace and joy." But you cannot help observing how much of the dignity and impressiveness of this eulogy, as well as of its rhetorical stateliness and glow, comes from its personification of law. It is no blind, impersonal force, which is here portrayed before us; it is the Queen of the universe, the mother of our peace and joy, whose tender care of the least and the greatest, combined with her awe-inspiring power, commands our homage and admiration. How much more winning is such a representation of Law, than that which science idolizes; that inexorable impersonal fatality, which executes its changeless decree, without love, or pity, or remorse. Before this latter you tremble—you cannot love it. And yet, where the law is not loved, there can be no true moral perfection. To obey the law, only because you fear it—to obey it when perchance, indeed, you hate it, that is to be a slave. Hooker's law, one could love—if such law there were; but alas, it is only an allegory. There is no such Queen, there is no such mother. Have we then no impersonation of law? Let us see—what says the Book? "In the beginning was the Word—and

the Word was with God—and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by [through] Him, and without Him was not anything made that hath been made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.” Or, according to the margin of the revised version, “That which hath been made was life in Him.” What is this Word—this Logos? The term explains itself—it is the expression of the Divine Thought, the Divine Intelligence, the Infinite Reason, as we see it voiced in the life, in the order, harmony, movements of the universe. But what is this Infinite Reason? It is no impersonal principle—no It. The Apostle describing the Logos, says HE, HIM—not It. Nay, more, he goes on to say: “And the Word became flesh (became man), and dwelt among us full of grace and truth.” Here we have, Law Incarnate, the Divine Law, speaking, acting, moving among men; overflowing with grace and truth and glory, as of the only begotten of the Father; crowned with the majesty of an absolute authority. The Supreme authority for man must ever be a Supreme Will; not a letter, not a force, not a mere impulse or instinct, but a person, in whose every word is the thunder might of God. “One is your Master, even Christ.”

“We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord.”

“Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time, thou shalt not kill—but I say unto you.” “I came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill—to fill up its outline, to vivify, to energize it, make it a thing—nay, rather a being—of life and power.”

“In His life, the law appears,
Drawn out in living characters.”

The whole law is summed up in love. Where will you find love? Where, if not in Christ? What is

love? What but Christ? "We love because He first loved." In Him is the possibility of love, in Him is the inspiration of love, He is the Law of love. You ask, what of the Decalogue? I answer, it is an invaluable, Divine epitome of duty. Yet the Bible itself argues that the New Covenant is better than the Old, in that it writes the law, not on tables of stone, but on the living tablets of the heart; and that the law on the heart is *Christ in the heart*. In the same line of thought, we might show that Christ is virtue personified. For ages, philosophy has exercised itself about the question: what is virtue? We may doubt whether the final answer has yet been found, we cannot doubt, however, that the more of Christ is put into the solution, the more satisfactory will it be. Take the idea of manhood: what is man? You listen to the rhapsody of Hamlet: "what a piece of work is a man; how noble in reason; how infinite in faculties; in form and moving how express and admirable; in action how like an angel; in apprehension how like a God; the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals!" The description dazzles you perhaps, but leaves no permanent impression or inspiration. The next moment you are tempted to ask with the same Hamlet, "To me, what is this quintessence of dust?" You turn to the inspired account of man's creation. "God said, let us create man in our image, after our likeness"—or read Paul's definition—"Man is the image and glory of God." Ah! you say, "here is something much more definite and satisfactory"—but alas: this is a world of sin, a world of moral wreck and ruin. The image of God is shattered and buried in the debris of the awful catastrophe, where will you find the Divine man? You look to this one and to that one, whom the world has called great—to its sages and heroes, its avatars and apotheoses.

But no, each one is a broken mirror, marred beyond recognition. But in Christ you see the image, aye, the very image of God—His glory, aye, the effulgence of the Divine glory. Here you see humanity at its highest, its largest, its best. The good in each and in all, in Him reaches its best, and that in a form to compel admiration, and to inspire imitation.

Look at the practical ends, the ideals of life, what shall we aim at in living? You say: we have various answers—Perfection, Nobleness, Symmetry, Self-culture, Self-effacement: live for greatness, live for glory, live for love. Well and good! But after all, how shadowy, how vague, how ineffectual are these ideals as motive powers for the heart? But what says the Gospel? "Live for Christ!" "Live so as to gain Christ—to realize Christ, to make Him yours, to show Him forth, to glorify Him, to lose yourself in Him!" You live not for an abstraction, but for a Person, and in living for that Person, you live for greatness, goodness, power, love, self-humiliation, self-exaltation, life—finding the life in losing it. Here the ideal and the real meet. In Christ, the idealist, the mystic, the man of contemplation, the realist, the scientist, the man of action—each finds his goal. "As many of you as were baptized into Christ, did put on Christ." "There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female, for ye are all one man in Christ Jesus." This leads to the remark:

3. That to preach Christ, is to preach character. The poet tells us that "the proper study of mankind is man." Most assuredly it is the central study. None is more attractive, more popular, more universal. Culture, itself, has taken the name of *humanity*. History, biography, poetry, fiction, owe much of their hold upon us to the charm of character, the spell of heroism.

The heroic song of Homer, the dramatic verse of Shakespeare, the historic page of Tacitus, or Gibbon, never lose their fascination. The page which photographs a human soul, is immortal. The throb of human passion thrills the ages. The crystallization of a tear outshines and outlasts the diamond. In preaching Christ, the pulpit appeals to this universal and imperishable instinct. It presents a heroic, a Divine Ideal, such as no imagination has conceived; a character, the charm of which is deathless, which, the better it is known, the more it fascinates, from age to age. The world is never wearied with the study of the personality and the life of Jesus. The growing light of the centuries, but reveals more and more its impressiveness, its beauty, its power.

4. No less true is it, that to preach character, is to preach Christ. This is implied in what has been said already, respecting the abstract idea of character. To the question: "What is character?" there is, as we have seen, but one definite, tangible answer. You get the clearest, fullest analysis of character in the analysis of Christ. But, so also, where we come to the analysis of individual character. A large part of the Bible, is biography. Christ as the centre of the Bible, is the centre of its biography. The lives of the Saints are so many broken lights of the "Strong Son of God, Immortal Love." The key of the life of Abraham, of Moses, of Joshua, of David, of Paul, Peter, John, is found in the story of the Man of Nazareth—and so of the saints of all ages. It is the Christ in Augustine, the Christ in Bernard, the Christ in á Kempis, the Christ in Luther, in Zinzendorf, in Fénelon, in Wesley, that gives the burning focus of life. He preaches Christ, who preaches the reflections of Christ in the life of His Church, who interprets His thought and spirit,

in their purifying and illuminating agency, in the beauty and character of His beloved. So, also, the antichrist, the mystery of iniquity, finds its key in the life of Christ. The false is known by the true, while at the same time, it serves in part to the better definition of the true. The Pharaohs, the Herods, the Pilates, the Iscariots, the Neros of history, the abnormal developments of character, are to be measured and judged in the light which falls on them from the Holy One. The revelation of holiness is the revelation of sin. Christ is the ultimate test of manhood, the touchstone of character. By Him every man must stand or fall. "Behold this child is set for the falling and rising up of many in Israel, and for a sign which is spoken against, that thoughts out of many hearts may be revealed."

II. But, I remark, in the next place, that the preaching of Christ is an element of universal significance in the proclamation of Revealed Truth. Christ says of Himself: "I am the Truth." Let us dwell for a moment on the value of such a personalization of Divine Truth.

1. A personalized idea is, as we have already seen, far more definite and palpable to men's apprehensions, than an abstraction. Personality translates the idea into form, materializes it into substance. The dictionary of heroism is found in the life of a hero. You learn the grammar of patriotism in the self-devotion of a Leonidas, a Tell, a Washington, or a Lincoln. Imperialism finds its exponent in the Cæsar. The Papacy has its living embodiment in a Hildebrand or a Boniface. Christianity has its own complete expression in the Christ.

2. But, still more, in the person the idea comes before us not in fixed, rigid outline, but in its living development. Here you have not merely the statics of truth,

but its dynamics. A true Christian theology is not the anatomy of a skeleton, but the biology of a Divine Life. Electricity, slumbering in the cloud, or in the earth, is one thing. Electricity, riding upon the storm, flashing in lightning from east to west, leaping in thunder from crag to crag, is quite another thing. So truth in the Book, is, indeed, power, but truth in the life, truth in the miracle, truth in the Cross, is the power of God. The truth speaking in the Book is mighty to save, because it is the Truth which died on the Cross.

3. Again, in its personal developments, the idea presents itself in its organic relations to other ideas. Here the statements of Paul apply: "As the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the body being many, are one body, so also is Christ. The eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee, or again, the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much rather those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness, whereas our comely parts have no need. But God tempered the body together." You dissect any joint or organism by itself on the table, and you have a far less vivid idea of its uses than you have by studying it in its action, as part of a larger organism. To understand the working of the brain, you must understand the anatomy and functions of the nervous system. So, conversely, to understand the nervous system, you must understand the brain. Fully to measure the brain and nervous system, you must understand the action of heart, lungs, vein, muscle, cell, tissue, in a word, of the entire physical man. So in personality, above all in Christ, you have the living organism of the truth, and you have the organic complements of each particular truth or member. Thus,

if you were to study the grace of humility by itself, you would be liable to take a very one-sided view of it, possibly (with the old heathen world) to despise it, as a belittling of manhood. Its true significance and beauty are to be seen only in the living combinations of a Perfect Life. Mark, for example, in Christ, the Divine dignity of humility. His very meekness and lowliness attest His Kingship. "Take my yoke upon you, for I am meek and lowly in heart."

4. Once more, the impersonated idea gathers about itself a more vital human interest. Men are generally much more interested in personal than in impersonal entities. Even the lovers of abstract thought find their interest in it enlivened and enriched through more intimate acquaintance with the personal channels through which it has flowed. The thoughts of Philo or Spinoza, have a fresher interest even for the philosopher, when read in the lives of the men. In like manner this Divine philosophy which we call Christianity, arrests the attention, and commands the interest of men, as no other philosophy has ever done, because of the transcendent grandeur of the personality through which it speaks to us. Let us for a moment contemplate this Personality as the embodiment of Divine Truth. "I AM THE TRUTH." What does this declaration mean?

1. It signifies first of all, and speaking comprehensively, that Christianity as a system, means nothing apart from Christ. There are those who would resolve Christianity into a creed, an abstraction, a code of laws, a sermon or a parable, a poetic idyl, a social revolution. Not so; Christianity means Christ; and Christ, not as a preacher, not as an ethical idealist, not as a stern legislator, not as a reformer, but Christ in all that He is—Christ as the Son of God, as the Son of Man, as the Savior of the world: Christ as Prophet,

Priest, King of humanity. In Christianity, Christ is everything. There is no dogma apart from Christ. Its ethics have their conscience only in the cross. Its laws have their "categorical imperative," only in the authority of the Master. Its social creed has its inspiration only in the spirit of the Carpenter of Nazareth. Its uplifting forces have their nerve center in His sublime passion. Its philosophy has its Divine Light in the Divine Heart, from which it flows. One more creed in the world, one more school, one more system of morals, one more philosophy, one more Utopia—what were that? There is enough; more than enough of all that. The world is crowded with precepts and rules. The air is thick with speculations and bubbles. The day is full of dogmas, and the night is full of dreams. What we need is substance, reality, the living tongue of fire, the living heart of flame, the magnetic quickening touch, the pulsating throb, the saving grasp of an Almighty Hand; the Creative Power, the Resurrection Power, which comes from personal contact with a personal God.

Christianity means that, or it is nothing.

2. And what is true of Christianity as a whole, is true of each particular truth in Christianity. *Every* gospel truth means Christ. Apart from Christ, it is barren, impossible, or false. The subject is too vast for more than one or two brief hints. Let us take by way of illustration, the three great truths, which Kant has declared to be the cardinal principles of religion: God, freedom, and immortality.

(1.) Take the truth respecting God. How vivid and practical does this become in Jesus Christ! I have already adverted briefly to the significance of Christ's personality as a factor in His revelation of God. The man who has known the personal Christ, has seen, in

His truest Shekinah, the personal God. "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father." "No man hath seen God, the only begotten son [or God only begotten] which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him"—*exegeted* God, drawn Him out, and set Him forth, so that He may be personally apprehended by men. But take another aspect of the Divine Being. Take the Infinity of God. In the abstract conception of God, this Infinity is a metaphysical notion which is beset with many speculative and logical embarrassments. So serious are these embarrassments, that the late lamented Dr. Henry Smith, of this Seminary, in his recently published critique of Spinoza's Ethics, has felt called upon to repudiate the philosophical infinity, as an unscriptural notion, in its application to God. From this position, indeed, I must withhold my own assent.

I believe, however, that our earnest and brilliant Professor was quite correct in teaching that the metaphysical side of this Divine Quality is not the one which the Scriptures make prominent. The Divine Infinity, as we see it in Christ, is certainly not the transcendental infinity of the logician, but the moral, the spiritual infinity of Supreme Perfection—a positive, mark it, rather than a negative reality. Here, for example, we see Truth as an infinite quantity, Truth as the field of Omniscience, Truth as the product of the Divine Thought, Truth as a Divine Infinite Force in the moral history of the universe. In Christ we see the Infinite of Holiness, the Infinite of Righteousness; that is, we see these qualities as omnipotent energies, put forth for the suppression of evil, and for the restoration of spiritual order and peace. In Christ we see the Infinite of Patience, the Infinite of Pity, the Infinite of Love; these qualities, that is, as moral omnipotencies, with an energy mightier than light or gravity, with a potency more subtle than the

sweet influences of the Pleiades, winning a lost world to its fealty to the eternal throne. For such a stupendous manifestation of God, no thought, no word, of smaller compass can suffice than this—*Infinite*—Infinite in every possible sense of the word. And this Infinite means Christ.

(2.) Take Kant's second cardinal principle of religion, *Freedom*. Man is free, He stands outside the chain of causality and necessity. This must be so, we believe, if religion, nay if morality, is to exist at all. But as an abstract dogma, how difficult to establish this freedom. How liable we are in discoursing about it to become lost in the wandering mazes of "fixed fate, free will, fore-knowledge absolute." "He must be free!"

Aye, but nevertheless he is in bondage. But, you say, "he is conscious of responsibility, and of guilt for wrong-doing." Very true; the argument is in itself conclusive. But how difficult, nay, how impossible, to make this sense of guilt practically effective. Man, alas! is a sinner, and one most disastrous curse of sin is that it deadens the sense of guilt; and one effect of this insensibility, is to weaken the force of the argument for responsibility and freedom. But what do we find in Christ?

First of all, in His own personality, representing as He does the most perfect humanity, we see a practical illustration of the Law of Liberty, which puts its reality beyond question. Next we find, that in the presence of Christ, and under the active influence of His personality and love, sin becomes a reality, human responsibility becomes a reality, and therewith human freedom becomes a reality. Finally in active spiritual union with Him, through the participation of the Divine Nature, which comes through the incorporation of our souls with Him, man is lifted above all the limitations of his

sinful estate into a royal realm of liberty and power, wherein he walks, wearing on his brow the crown of a son and heir of God.

“The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and of death.”

(3) Take the third Kantian principle—Immortality. There is, I doubt not, a distinct witness to our immortality, impressed upon the very constitution of our being. There is an ineradicable instinct, which tells us that as our personal identity is independent of the mutations of the body in life, so it is independent of its final dissolution in death. A man can not, without doing violence to the facts of his being, bring himself to believe that death ends all. And yet, it must be confessed, there are difficulties connected with our belief in immortality, which make it exceedingly desirable that some more sure witness should be found to it. We need that this vague instinct should be exalted into a clear and well defined hope; that this hope should be strengthened and intensified into a steadfast and vigorous belief; that this belief should be organized into a positive, practical force, in shaping and uplifting the life of the present. This service only Christ can render us. He is Himself a living witness of immortality—“I am the Living One, and I was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore.” He demonstrates the congruities of manhood and immortality. In Him we see a type and grade of life of which immortality is the worthy sequel and crown. “He brought life and immortality into light”—first life, then immortality. Men have lost their faith in immortality, because they have lost their faith in life. Christ reveals to us a life which is worth living now, and which, because it is worth living now, is worth living forever. Note how, that here again, Christ brings to us a con-

ception of immortality of far higher value and potency than any merely metaphysical notion. What do we learn from metaphysics? Mark the word *Immortality*, the negation of death, the negation that is of a negation. But what does Christ give? Eternal Life. "Because I live, ye shall live"—a Christ-life which is the necessitating cause of the human life; a human life which is the responsive parallel of the Christ-life. The life which Christ gives and inspires, is a life which requires immortality, as its scope and outcome. Thus we see, that in Christ alone, do we have the certitude and fulness of religious truth. I do not say that Kant preaches his religious trinity altogether in vain, but something more is needed to silence the world's doubts, and to satisfy the needs of humanity. Whether we seek to know God, to realize freedom, to be assured of immortality, Christ is the Truth. In Him we have not a truth, not some truth, not certain truths, not truth and truths about God—but in Him we have THE TRUTH, the Reality. He is God, He is Freedom, He is Eternal Life.

When we advance to the truths which are more specifically characteristic of the Christian System, we see still more clearly how the substance of all these Divine Realities, inheres in Christ. Let me give by way of illustration, one brief passage from Paul. Mark in the reading of it, how every fact, every reality on which the Apostle touches is identified with Christ. "Blessed be the God and Father OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST who hath blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places IN CHRIST, even as He chose us IN HIM, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blemish before Him in love; having fore-ordained us unto adoption as sons THROUGH JESUS CHRIST unto Himself, according to the

good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us IN THE BELOVED, IN WHOM we have our redemption THROUGH HIS BLOOD, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace, which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure, which He purposed IN HIM, unto a dispensation of the fulness of the times, to sum up all things IN CHRIST, the things in the heavens, and the things upon the earth, IN HIM, I say, IN WHOM also we were made a heritage, having been fore-ordained according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His will, to the end that we should be unto the praise of His glory; we who had before hoped IN CHRIST, IN WHOM ye also having heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, IN WHOM having also believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is an earnest of our inheritance, unto the redemption of God's own possession, unto the praise of His glory." How thoroughly *en-Christed* is the whole chain of redemptive acts and processes which here stretches out before us. Christ is the Alpha of the series, and the Omega of the series, and every link lays hold on Him. And so, throughout the Epistle, at every step and turn, fifty times or more: "In Christ," "In Him," "In Whom," "through," "because of," "with," "for," "unto," "into" Christ. If now we were to analyze each of these specifications in its own connection, we should find boundless vistas and horizons opening before us. Look at the central statement of the passage just read; the *general purpose* of God is *in Christ*. The regnant idea of the Divine Plan as it runs on with increasing volumes through the ages, is Christ. The controlling

law of the movement of the world is the thought, the life, the will, the movement, which we see impersonated in Christ. He is the archetype of the universe. In Him all things were created. In Him all things subsist, cohere. All the forces of cohesion, interadaptation, co-operation, and correlation, have their center in Him. In Him all things culminate. What Paul calls the *anakphalaisios*, the summation, the unification, the final expression of Being in absolute harmony and perfect beauty, is to be realized in Him: "To sum up all things in Christ." As Whittier calls Him the flower of man and God, so we may call Him the grand consummate flower of the universe.

So again, of the Particular Purposes of God. Believers are chosen, fore-ordained, adopted, constituted God's personal property—all in Christ. Those mysterious redemptive processes, which our theologies refer to the Divine Sovereignty, were all "in Christ." What does this thought imply? They are not to be regarded as arbitrary processes, partial, exclusive, cold, hard, but in them all the attributes of God act in joyous and loving harmony. Nay, more, all these attributes thus act, as we see them impersonated in Christ—the same unerring insight as in Christ, the same comprehensive wisdom, the same impartial righteousness, the same discriminative purity, the same unspeakable gentleness, the same transcendent perfection. The fore-ordaining love of eternity is the redemptive love of time. The heart which shaped the counsels of the God-head, is the heart which bled on Calvary. Election, fore-ordination, justification, adoption, remission, re-unification—all are integral acts of the one great redemptive process, throbbing from everlasting to everlasting, with one eternal, universal purpose. In election, itself, there is the same largeness of benevolence,

the same tender yearning of pity, the same tearful anguish in respect to the lost, that we see in the whole redemptive work of Jesus; the same that thrills the soul on Olivet, in Gethsemane, on Calvary. For all is IN CHRIST, and we are not to interpret Christ by the Divine Decrees, but to interpret the Divine Decrees by Christ.

We are only on the threshold of our theme, but we can not particularized any further in this direction. Nor can we stop to consider at all, the third division of our theme: Preaching Christ as the Life.

The many practical applications of our theme we must also pass by. Let me simply, in conclusion, urge you, my brethren, to keep this subject distinctly and constantly before your minds. Let it shape your thoughts and studies, your work and life, in the Seminary.

As preaching Christ is to be the business of your ministerial life, so let learning Christ be the business of your Seminary life. Let every lesson be learned at His feet. Let every deed of service be performed under His eye. Let every heart-throb beat with your bosom close to His. Seek Him in every study. Seek Him in every duty. Seek Him in every truth you learn, in every fact you master, in every ability you acquire. Seek Him in every struggle with self, with sin, with the world. Seek Him in every experience of sorrow or joy, of success or failure. Make Him "the light of all your day, the master light of all your seeing." Let every thought be Christ. Let every prayer be Christ. Let every purpose be Christ. Let every sermon be Christ. Let every action be Christ. And may it be yours, each one of you, to say, now, hereafter, and forever: for me to live is Christ. And to Him be the glory, world without end. Amen.

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