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SERMONS AND ADDRESSES



SERMONS AND ADDRESSES

BY THE LATE
HENRY R. HEYWOOD

VICAR OF SWINTON
HONORARY CANON OF MANCHESTER

WITH THREE PLATES

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P R E F A C E

THE selection of sermons which is here published may, at the first glance, appear to consist mainly of sermons preached on special occasions. It is, however, a really characteristic and representative selection ; for of the twenty-six sermons and addresses included in this volume, all but nine were preached at Swinton, as well as on the original occasions mentioned in the table of contents. Of the twelve sermons preached originally in St. Paul's Cathedral, Sermon II. was also preached in Chester Cathedral, and Sermons III. and IV. were also delivered in Manchester Cathedral. In fact, most of the sermons were repeated on different occasions and in different places.

Sermon XVII., on "Manliness," and the "Instruction on the Observance of Lent" appended to Sermon XI., were some time ago published by the author. The two series of Lenten sermons,

entitled respectively, "Pictures, and how they may help us," and "Religious Indifference," might possibly have been published by him at some future time ; but he did not revise them for the press, or, in fact, make any arrangements for their publication. Under these circumstances, it has been thought best to publish them, as well as the other sermons, exactly as they were written, without removing local and time references, which were a marked feature of Mr. Heywood's direct and pointed style. This fact will explain the recurrence of certain passages in several sermons. Each series—or, in the case of single sermons, each sermon—is meant to be taken by itself ; and so read, these repeated passages appear to be not only in place, but requisite to their context.

Mr. Heywood himself was scrupulously careful to acknowledge his indebtedness to authors and others from whom he consciously borrowed either suggestions or illustrations. If such acknowledgment has, by oversight, been omitted in this volume, the editor, and not the author, must be held responsible.

The course of addresses at the end of the book is reproduced with the full knowledge that all the matter is taken from well-known sources. It is given here, not as in any way representing original

work, but as illustrating Mr. Heywood's characteristic method of bringing together, for the benefit of his parishioners, telling and memorable illustrations of moral and spiritual lessons, taken from real life, from the commonplace as well as from the famous.

It was Mr. Heywood's custom in Swinton Church, when preaching on pictures, to hang in a conspicuous position an engraving, or other copy, of the painting. Accordingly, it seemed to be most in agreement with his practice to illustrate the picture-sermons in this volume, where possible, with reproductions of the subjects treated. For permission to do so, our acknowledgments and best thanks are due to Messrs. Thomas Agnew and Sons (owners of the copyright of Mr. Holman Hunt's *Shadow of Death*), Mr. L. H. Lefevre (owner of the copyright of Mr. Holman Hunt's *Light of the World*), and M. Ch. Sedelmeyer (owner of the copyright of M. de Munkacsy's *Christ before Pilate*).

J. B. S. BARRATT.

BLACKBURN,
March, 1896.

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SERMON I.

PICTURES, AND HOW THEY MAY HELP US.

I. INTRODUCTORY.

I HAVE been asked to come here and preach the mid-day sermons this week. What should be my subject, I have found it difficult to decide ; but in thinking over the sermons already preached from this pulpit in former Lents I remember that one sermon, which, as it happens, was preached exactly three years ago to-day, was a sermon, the text of which was Briton Riviere's well-known painting of *Daniel in the Lions' Den*. And so it has come to my mind that it might not be without profit to both of us—to you and to me—if I take as my subject for the week *Pictures, and how they may help us*.

And so, then, this will be my text for to-day—*Pictures, and how they may help us* ; and the remaining three sermons shall be about three

pictures, showing how three pictures in particular may help us onwards and upwards. There are many "helps by the way," to help struggling Christians to live good and noble lives: helps within the reach of all of us, if only we will be on the look-out for them and use them; helps which do really help, even as a banister helps upstairs, as a crutch helps the lame, an axe the climber, a stick the old. For example, pictures will help. Often pictures must have helped you as you passed along your way, cheering you, bracing you forwards. At least, one may ask, if not, why not?

Most of you will recollect how Edna Lyall recognises the help of pictures in her books. Donovan arriving at Liverpool, after his great resolve, did what he very seldom ventured to do—drew his little miniature of Dot from its place and looked at it stedfastly, and a fresh in-breathing of courage to go forward was the result. Frithiof, the hardy Norseman, in London, after hearing of his father's ruin and death, suddenly caught sight, in a picture-shop in the Strand, of a familiar view which stirred his heart wonderfully. It was a picture of the Romsdelhorn, with its strange and beautiful outline rising straight and sheer up into a wintry blue sky. A thousand recollections came thronging back on him; but soon again the same horrible temptations, again that terror of his own nature. Again he turned to the picture of the Romsdelhorn; it seemed to be

the one thing which could witness to him of truth and beauty, and a life above the level of the beasts ; and it prevailed. And so just the same again afterwards : the picture of his home, Bergen, in his sick-room—the evil misgivings faded as soon as he looked at it.

Yes, indeed, pictures may help us as we pass along life's way, cheering and bracing forwards and upwards.

The word *picture*, in the sense in which we understand it, does not, I believe, occur once in the Bible. It is true that in our Authorised English Version the word itself occurs three times : in Num. xxxiii. 52 ; in Prov. xxv. 11 ; in Isa. ii. 16 ; but, I think, never once in the sense in which we regard the word *picture*. And I am strengthened in this opinion by looking into the Revised Version of the Bible ; for there, in all three places where in our Authorised Version the word *picture* occurs, in the Revised Version another and quite different word is used. In Numbers "their pictures" is rendered "their figured stones ;" in Proverbs "pictures of silver" is rendered "baskets of silver ;" in Isaiah "pictures" is rendered "imagery."

However, I must be away to my special point. If pictures may be suggestive of and incentives to all sorts of things that are bad, pictures may be suggestive of and incentives to all sorts of things that are good. If pictures of one sort have helped

to bring men down to grief and shame, pictures of another sort may help to lift men up to content and to respect. But this is a fact that needs no arguing about. As pictures can be painted which are very great hindrances indeed to the Godward life, so pictures can also be painted which are very great helps indeed to the Godward life.

Some of you have read the story of Stenburg, the famous artist of Düsseldorf. It was the chance remark of a girl, who came to his house to be painted, that led, by one step and another, to his determination that his brush should proclaim what his life could not—that boundless Love which can brighten every life; that led him to pray that he might paint worthily; that led him to paint a picture of the Crucifixion that was a wonder almost divine; that led him to pray to God to bless his painted sermons. Years afterwards that picture converted Zinzendorf, the gay young nobleman, the afterwards father of the Moravian Missions. Stenburg's picture no longer hangs in the Düsseldorf gallery; for when, some years ago, that gallery was destroyed by fire the picture perished. But it had preached its sermon, and done its work for God.

Walpole, in his *Anecdotes of Painting*, says of Hogarth, that in his pictures there is always a moral. His brush warns against encouraging cruelty and idleness in young minds, and discerns how the different vices of the great and vulgar lead by

various paths to the same unhappiness. Said Garrick of this same Hogarth—

“Farewell, great painter of mankind,
Who reached the noblest point of art,
Whose pictured morals charm the mind,
And through the eye correct the heart.”

Pity, pity it is, that the pictures that help are so few, the pictures that hinder are so many! When so it is that pictures may be the means of suggesting so much that is good, and not only of suggesting, but of inciting to so much that is good, it is surprising that, whether in the annual exhibitions, or in other modern permanent galleries, the directly helpful pictures are so few. It is surprising to me that painters, who cannot be ignorant of the power that pictures have, so seldom, comparatively, paint pictures which are there and then, to all who have eyes to see, a real help to the Godward life. So, however, to me it would seem to be. Perhaps, if the trading difficulty of pounds, shillings, and pence, of demand and supply, did not come in the way, things might be different; if the public would buy pictures that would be useful to them and others, and not only pictures that are admired by them, such pictures before long could be had. My own experience and knowledge is limited enough, but for the little way that that experience can travel, its witness is that the absolutely helpful modern pictures are few. Still there are some for which

we are truly and deeply thankful ; and let me here say that, if ever you come across such pictures—pictures of noble deeds, of kindly actions, of patient endurance, of loving tenderness, of humble charity,—and the price of such-like pictures is within your power to pay, you may help yourself on, and you may help others on, by hanging up such-like pictures in your own homes, or by giving them to others to hang up in their homes. I don't know whether you will smile at what I am about to say, but, as the incident has just come within my own knowledge, and as it illustrates what I am saying, I will tell you that in a dentist's room there hung the well-known head of our Lord, called *Ecce Homo*. A patient had to go frequently to that room ; for the first day or two he proved himself a thorough coward. Then his eyes rested on that picture. He turned to it not once, not twice. He said out loud, "He bore that for me ;" and afterwards, to the end, he proved himself the bravest and most enduring of patients.

Pictures in shop windows, like pictures in churches, may help many a man ; for if pictures have helped to pull some poor fellows down,—and there are illustrated papers, which, picturing crime in a sort of heroic form, do nothing else : I remember once reading in *Punch* that there are sometimes pictorial advertisements to be seen on London hoardings, gigantic pictures of violence and assassination, which may

directly lead to crime through their action on the morbid imagination of unbalanced minds ;—if then, I say, pictures have helped to pull some poor fellows down, other pictures may help to pull them up again. Let such be given by those who can to public institutions and galleries, to churches and schools, to be the means of helping on and of cheering on to endurance and to courage and to perseverance thousands of struggling men, men often half lost as they grope amidst the shadows and mists of earth, but who may be half saved if their eyes can rest on aught that *points* even towards God. Remember Donovan in Liverpool. Remember Frithiof in London. I dare say you once read *Five Years' Penal Servitude, by One who has endured It*. “Nothing,” the writer says, “nothing at Millbank was allowed to be sent to any prisoner, not even the photograph of wife or child. This I cannot but think a mistake ; anything that tends to soften and humanise a man’s heart can do him no harm ; far otherwise. The sight, now and then, of the face of a loved one would have kept more than one man I came in contact with from breaking prison rules.” Those are the words of the writer of that book, and I think it is Mr. Smiles who says, in one of his many useful books, “ Evil thoughts have been put to flight when the eye has fallen even on the portrait of one in whose loving presence one would have blushed to own them ; ” and the same writer tells somewhere,

I feel sure, of a money-lender who, when about to cheat, put a handkerchief over the picture of his favourite saint! Yes, the portrait of a good man, hanging up in one's room, is a companionship for good, and, if we will, may be a holder back from evil. And who, I ask you, has not been strengthened and cheered and sustained as he knelt upon his knees, and gazed upon the crucified One, upon the picture of Him, upon the cross, Whose Arms were stretched to draw His people nigh,—and as he prayed to love that God and in those Arms to die? How a picture helps to impress on the mind, not only of the young, but of any, a Bible story, or the tale of some noble deed, we all know. Many a soul thanks God, I feel sure, for the realisation of precious truths, keener than ever before, in the representations of the Passion and Death of our most Holy Redeemer, shown in many a church, year by year, during Holy Week.

Think of the Passion Play, always so reverently performed at Ober-Ammergau. As after a visit to Palestine the traveller can realise Bible scenes as never before, so, after seeing the Passion Play, the Agony and Bloody Sweat, the Cross and Passion of our Saviour Christ, can, as nohow otherwise, be indeed taken to heart.

But the use of pictures for the purpose of influencing action needs no proving. The extent to which illustrated advertising is now carried is a

plain proof and ready to hand ; while, as a proof of attractiveness, see how our daily and weekly newspapers fill up considerable space nowadays with illustrations, which ten or fifteen years ago would never have been thought of. Out of some old-fashioned prejudice it has not lately been generally customary, save in the windows, to bring religious pictures into our churches. Schools have been plentifully supplied with them, to the great benefit and help of teachers and scholars. Well, I suppose for really strong teaching in geography, history, poetry, it is not too much to say that nowadays we consider pictures altogether indispensable. Mr. Ruskin says, in his introduction to Miss Alexander's *Songs of Tuscany*, "To print the text of the songs without the illustrations would have deprived them of their necessary interpretation. They could not be identified without the pictures of the people who love them." Yet churches, with rare exceptions, have been without pictures. I remember reading of the late Archbishop of Canterbury expressing a wish, at a Royal Academy dinner, that art might be less a mere luxury of the few than it is, for he said (quoting the words of a poet then present), "We are made so that we love first what we see painted ;" upon which the comment of the *Times* was, when churches contain pictures which suggested the relation between the present and the future, pictures which suggested to the people that One greater than

themselves had lived and suffered, as so many of them were living and suffering, then the highest art might be within the reach of the humblest citizen. And, good people, if reverence for bare walls had not taken such an overpowering possession of our not very remote ancestors, it might have been possible for churches now to be enriched with many helpful pictures. No agitation would have been necessary to secure the opening of the churches' doors on Sundays to enable the toilers around to see the paintings on their walls. Every church would have been rendered useful to the surrounding dwellers, not merely at service time, but throughout the day.

Yes, when worthy religious pictures—pictures, I mean, of real merit, value, interest—once more are seen within our churches, it will be possible for all who enter their doors to find what an effect upon the mind and heart and life those pictures have.

In the other sermons that I shall be preaching this week I will give you some examples of what I mean, of pictures which to look upon is to be helped onwards and upwards. Think, for instance, of Holman Hunt's *Light of the World*. Think of Holman Hunt's *Shadow of Death*. Look at them, and we cannot remain as we were. Look at them, and we must be cheered to action, or we must be strengthened to endure. O God, grant to those who sketch, draw, paint for us, the will to be the help to the Godward life that some are, and

that more might be! Listen to these words, and I will stop. In the *Songs of Tuscany* Miss Alexander has a beautiful drawing of *Our Lord and the Samaritan Woman at the Well*. Miss Alexander tells in touching language her overpowering difficulty in drawing the Face of our Lord. She went out; she went out of doors again and again, and worked with her whole soul. Some Italian peasants soon gathered round her, and looked at her picture. Some began to say how beautiful the face was. Her reply was, "Only think what the real Face will be when we see it in heaven." Then a sweet middle-aged woman said, "I hope we shall all go to heaven; it would be very hard to be driven away from the sight of a beautiful Face like that." Another said, "How I wish I could have that Face in my home to look at when I pray." "I cannot say," adds Miss Alexander, "how much I was consoled, and yet overpowered by those words. To think that anything done by my hands should have been used to make others desire that Presence more than they did before! Was I not repaid, even though the work had cost me as many years as it had days?"

SERMON II.

PICTURES, AND HOW THEY MAY HELP US.

II. THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.

“Behold, I” (that is, our Lord Jesus Christ) “stand at the door, and knock : if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in.”—REV. iii. 20.

MY subject this week, as you know, is *Pictures, and how they may help us*. Yesterday I spoke about the subject generally, and then I said that the remaining three sermons should be about three pictures in particular, showing how they may help us onwards and upwards. Thank God, there are some pictures which, to those who look at them, and give them any thought at all, are very sermons, and very striking sermons, in themselves—pictures that need but little preaching about ; to those who look at them with attention they preach their own sermons. Yet, for all that, there are some pictures—especially the pictures which are the result of years of work—



*The Light of the World,
Superintended by F. M. Cary
Proprietor of the Copyright*

which are so full of meaning that, without guidance and help and explanation, much that in the picture is to be found may after all be lost. For, as it has very truly been said, no great fact, no great man, no great poem, no great picture, nor any other great thing, can be fathomed to the very bottom in a moment of time. This being so, it is possible that some here may look with greater interest in future than ever has been the case heretofore on the most beautiful painting I am to speak about to-day, Holman Hunt's *Light of the World*. Some will have seen the original painting; everybody will know the engraving. The picture was painted thirty-five years ago, and is now in the Library of Keble College, Oxford. In a pamphlet that has been lent to me I read that Mr. Ruskin says that, for his part, he thinks this picture one of the very noblest works of sacred art ever produced in this or any other age.

The *Light of the World*. Jesus Christ is, of course, that Light. Jesus Christ calls himself "the Light of the World" several times—for instance, in the eighth, ninth, and twelfth chapters of St. John,—and thank Him for it! For though there is no chance of our being able to unfold the height or the depth of the meaning of the words, yet sure I am that those of us who feel how dark is our ignorance, how dark is our sin, will hail this title, "the Light of the World," with the joy and the

hope of a benighted traveller who catches sight of the rising sun. "I am the Light of the World." Oh, good people, how could you pull through the toils, puzzles, difficulties, disappointments of this dark maze we call the world without that "Light of the World" which teaches us, not only how to walk, but how to wait—how to wait till the full daylight comes in those bright and sunny uplands that surround the throne of God in that land where "the wicked cease from troubling," where "the weary be at rest," and where there is no such thing as night at all,—

"Where Thou, Eternal Light of Light,
Art Lord of all."

You shall notice in a moment how this truth that Jesus Christ is the Light of the World is represented in the picture. Meanwhile there see Jesus Christ standing outside a fast-closed door ; and hear Him saying, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock ; if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in." This verse, as you will remember, is part of the last of the seven epistles to the Asiatic Churches, the epistle to the Church of Laodicea, the epistle to the lukewarm Laodiceans, "neither hot nor cold." We, lukewarm Christians, may draw in big comfort from the recollection of this fact, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock." This verse is my text to-day, for it is the text of the

picture. This verse is the text of a well-known hymn—

“O Jesu, Thou art standing
Outside the fast-closed door,”

a hymn written twenty-five years ago by the Bishop of Wakefield, a hymn which surely must have been written while the picture hung before the writer. This verse, too, is the text of one of Sankey's hymns—“Knocking, knocking, who is there?”—a hymn which, whatever may be thought about its poetry, appeals at once to the heart. And for those who are fond of poetry indeed, true poetry, let them read *Brothers and a Sermon*, by Jean Ingelow, published, I dare say, thirty years ago. There, in that poem, the brothers heard one night by the sea-side a sermon from this text, “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock ;” and neither text nor sermon nor preacher could they forget. The poem-sermon takes up about fifteen pages, and every page is beautiful. One of the brothers says—

“I have heard many speak, but this one man
(So anxious not to go to Heaven alone),
This one man I remember, and his look,
Till twilight overshadowed him. He ceased,
And out in darkness, with the fisherfolk,
We passed.
Ah ! graceless heart, would that it could regain
The impress, full of tender care, that night
Which fell on me. It was as if the Christ
Had been drawn down from Heaven to track us home,
And any of the footsteps following us
Might have been His.”

But to the picture. "The Light of the World" stands at the door—notice, at the fast-closed door—of our lukewarm human heart, and knocks to be let in. The pitying, loving Saviour cannot bear to lose us. He wants our hearts; personally He speaks, "My son, give Me thine heart," and we have not done so, and so He has come out in the night to seek us. You may look with regard to this point, if you happen to see it, to the very last four pages of Mr. Paxton Hood's book about Christmas Evans, the preacher of wild Wales. That preacher once preached a sermon on the Welsh hills from this text, as characteristic as telling. In a familiar parable he delivers his message, which a man need not be a Welshman to be moved and to be touched by; for the preacher represents himself as having seen several times one who for love's sake had, again and again, and for a long while each time, been knocking at a farmhouse door, calling for admission. Once, after a long while, the door being momentarily opened, this patient suppliant was struck, and the door was abruptly shut in his face. The preacher's blood boiled with indignation at such treatment, and he besought the suppliant to depart. A face of touching tenderness was turned upon him, and these words were spoken: "The Lord is long-suffering, full of compassion, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance;" and again he knocked, but

it was in vain. The door was not opened again, and he who had longed to bring the sinner to repentance was there seen no more. The wind blew, and the sleety rain fell, and the hour of death and the day of judgment alone remained for him who was within.

But to our picture again, for you can read the parable for yourselves. The pitying, loving Saviour, "the Light of the World," cannot bear to lose us, and so He has come out in the night to seek us. The door is fast closed and barred against Him, and, notice next, particularly, there is no handle outside the door, by which to open it. The opening rests with us inside. He is outside, ready to come inside, if we will. He knocks ; it is for us to open. And notice, too, the bars and nails of the door are rusty ; it can never have been opened for a long, long time ; indeed, ivy and other creepers are growing all over the door, over hinges and all ; its threshold is overgrown with brambles, nettles, and grass ; wasted fruit lies on the ground. Still, notwithstanding all, Jesus Christ, "the Light of the World," comes and knocks.

Now look for a moment specially at Him, Jesus Christ, as Prophet, Priest, King.

As Prophet, with the power of the Holy Spirit upon Him, He wears a white robe.

Then, over that, as Priest, He wears a rich, jewelled robe, linked in front by the priestly

breastplate, which, you may notice, has precious stones on either clasp, twelve for the twelve tribes of the Old Testament, twelve for the twelve Apostles of the New Testament.

Then, as a King, He wears a crown.

“Yea, a Crown, in very surety,
But of thorns.”

And still what else do we see? He is knocking with a Hand that bears the wound-print of a nail.

“O Jesu, Thou art knocking :
And lo! that Hand is scarred.”

Yes, both Hands so wounded, pierced by those nails for us!

Once more, “the Light of the World” carries a lantern. The meaning of this has been a difficulty to explain. This explanation, I find, has been ventured: When Christ enters any human heart, He brings two lights: first, the Light of Conscience, which shows past sin; and then, after that, the Light of Peace, which is the hope of salvation. The lantern, then, carried in the left hand of Christ is perhaps the Light of Conscience; it falls on the closed door, on the weeds, on the wasted fruit on the ground. The Light from the Head of our Lord, on the contrary, is the Light of Peace, the hope of salvation, “the Light of the World;” and it springs from the crown of thorns: a light so strong that by it are lightened the trees and all

around ; nay, see, this light spreads on and out, and lightens up the far distant horizon. It is "the Light of the World" which stands at this door and knocks.

That is the picture ; look at it, when you can ; understand some fragments of its meaning, and you will not leave it without taking to heart many a lesson for practical and daily use.

May I venture to tell you of a threefold thought which this picture suggests to me—a threefold thought which may possibly bring forth good fruit ? (1) The knock is for me ; (2) The knock may come in various ways ; (3) The knock is my chance, my opportunity, which must not be missed, either for myself or for others through me.

I. The knock is for me. You remember Longfellow's translation from the Spanish, *To-morrow*. The lines are said originally to have suggested the picture.

" Lord, what am I, that with unceasing care
 Thou didst seek after me ; that Thou didst wait
 (Wet with unhealthy dews) before my gate,
 And pass the gloomy nights of winter there ?
 How oft my guardian angel gently cried,
 ' Soul, from thy casement look and see,
 How He persists, and knocks, and waits for thee.'
 And oh ! how often to that voice of sorrow,
 ' To-morrow I will open,' I replied ;
 And, when to-morrow came, I answered still, ' To-morrow.' "

The knock is for me. Make we use of that truth

when we look at this picture: "the Light of the World" has come to look for me.

2. The knock may come in various ways. There need be no difficulty in knowing when our good Lord knocks. Every disappointment is a knock, every pain, sickness, sorrow, care, loss, trial. The return of Lent is a knock; always remember the suggestive words of the Gospel of the Sunday next before Lent, "Jesus of Nazareth passeth by." The return of Lent, then, is a knock. The return of Sunday is a knock. This sermon is a knock; and yet all the time, while I say this, without the shadow of a doubt, it is Christ who knocks. The knock is His knock, though sounded now this way, now that way. Look at your picture, then, and have ears to hear your Lord, in this way or in that way, by this means or by that means, knocking, still knocking,—waiting, still waiting,—for yourself, your lukewarm self.

3. One thought more. The knock is my chance, my opportunity, which must not be missed, either for myself or for others through me. When these knocks, these opportunities, come, as we know they have come, and do come, and are at this very time coming, we may snap our fingers in the face of the opportunity, whatever it be, if we will. But, I tell you, it is a grand thing when people have eyes to see their opportunities, and sense to use them. It is the saving of some people, not missing their chance, not turning a deaf ear to the knock; and

we must keep wide awake, for chances come in very unexpected ways. In Mr. Reaney's pamphlet called *Why I left Congregationalism*, he tells how a chance—a knock, as I call it—an opportunity came to him most unexpectedly through the lips of an actress, who lodged one Sunday in the same public-house that he was in, at Brighton. Through the advice of a chance fellow-lodger, young Reaney's opportunity came, and was used with this result—no slight one—that religion was by him not given up. Oh, it's a grand thing to use the opportunities, the chances, to listen to the knocks which our Lord, in this way or in that way, sends to us. Those who have been to Ammergau will have read and been delighted with *A Village Genius*; remember how there an opportunity was seized, a knock regarded. Did I not tell you yesterday that the chance remark of a gipsy girl, whom Stenburg was painting at Düsseldorf, led by one step and another to the surrender of the artist himself, and the dedication of his work to the glory of God? He had painted a Crucifixion for a church, merely executing an order; he had to explain to this "model" of his, this gipsy girl, after some poor fashion, his notion of the story of the Cross. She thanked him, and said, "You must love Him very much, sir, when He has done all that for you, do you not?" "All that for you!" The words haunted him, pursued him; at last they conquered him, and

afterwards he with God, and his work for God was the result of that Christ's knock.

Some people pay no heed to any of their opportunities or chances, to their untold loss. In the parable of the Good Samaritan the priest lost his chance, the Levite lost his chance, while the good Samaritan himself seized his opportunity, and won for himself and another an eternal name. We are not tied to open the door when our Lord knocks ; we are free to miss the chance : but some chances never come twice. In the Gospel account of St. Andrew we have a remarkable example of how an opportunity was not lost, with this result—a blessing for himself and others. St. Andrew happened one day to be standing with his master, St. John Baptist, when our Lord passed near. St. John said something which Andrew noticed, attended to,—with this result, that he followed Jesus. A simple fisherman then, now the foremost Apostle. Whence the reason of the difference ? Simply because he used his chance. John said, “Behold the Lamb of God.” Andrew need have taken no notice, might have pretended not to hear, might easily have excused himself from following the Lord. But he did not ; he listened to the knock, and followed in the path his master pointed out ; and that path was after Christ, the Saviour of the world. And there are others besides ourselves. St. Andrew, having himself become acquainted with the Lord, his next care was to

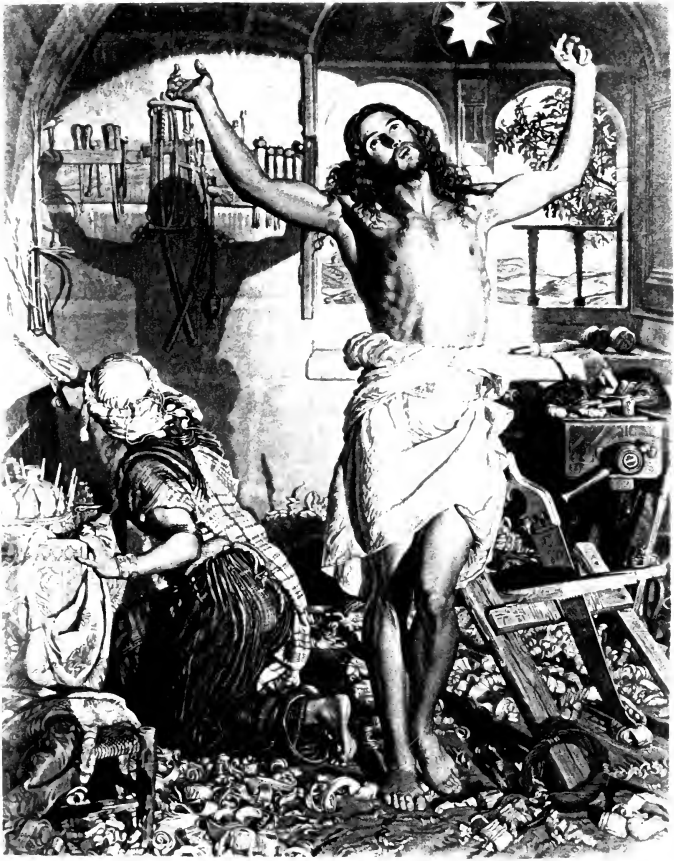
bring to Him his younger brother, Simon Peter ; “and he brought him to Jesus.” Friends, we shall pass through this world but once ; any good, therefore, that we can do for any human being let us do it now, for we shall not pass this way again. There are various means that are being tried, there are various methods that are being suggested—

“ Hoping to bend the stubborn heart and will ;
Hoping to melt the frozen, warm the chill ;
Hoping to guide the steps that go astray ; ”

but after all, to my mind, the means, the method above all others, is that suggested by the picture of “the Light of the World” Himself coming out to knock at the door of one. Let those few men and women who will come out of the crowd, and stretch forth loving hands to guide sinking fellows, let them singly, one by one, lay hold of one ; let them go forth one by one to the door of one by one, and they will prevail. Andrew found his brother, and brought him. “If every one would mend one, none would need amending.” Let living examples of Christianity go forth and gain each one, and the kingdom of God will be enlarged. There is “the Light of the World ;” He has come out to one man’s door, and knocks for one to open. There is my example if I want to follow in Divine footprints, and there is my cheer in the midst of the self-denials that this mode of working entails. Cheerily then, cheerily we may tramp along. There

is an Eye upon us. There is One Who can see afar off. The world knows nothing of us ; be of good cheer at that good sign in this advertising age. "I," says Christ, "have overcome the world." Let hand join in hand, and we will work and wait together ; and oh, if through me, one for whom Satan hath struggled, as he has for me, should ever reach that blessed shore, oh how this heart will glow with gratitude and love through ages of eternal years ! My spirit never shall repent that toil and suffering once were mine below.

The knock was heeded ; the voice was heard ; the door was opened ; the Christ came in.



The Meadow of Death
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SERMON III.

PICTURES, AND HOW THEY MAY HELP US.

III. THE SHADOW OF DEATH.

PICTURES, and how they may help us is the subject I am speaking about this week. On Tuesday, I spoke about the subject generally, and then I said that the remaining three sermons should be about three pictures in particular, showing how they may help us onwards and upwards. Think to-day of Holman Hunt's *Shadow of Death*. Very great indeed, in more ways than one, is the help to be got from that picture. I shall, before I have done, press two lessons, (1) from the shadow of the figure ; (2) from the figure : and then one resolve. Most of you will have seen an engraving of this well-known and most interesting painting. Some of you will have seen the original. It was given by the Messrs. Agnew to Manchester about nine years ago, and now hangs in the Art Gallery of that city.

The *Shadow of Death* is a picture that some people consider one of Holman Hunt's very best works. It is a picture that Mr. Ruskin calls "magnificent." It is a picture which, to my mind, is full of interest and of teaching. Mr. Hunt began his work in connection with this picture in 1868, twenty-four years ago. He went off to Bethlehem and lived there, because of the supposed likeness of its inhabitants to the earlier members of the house of David. At first he painted a smaller picture, working partly in a carpenter's shop, and partly on the roof of a house in the village. Before he started on his large picture he made a journey to Nazareth; but his task was made much longer than he expected by very many changes of weather, sudden risings of the wind, and mists hiding the sun, so that it was four years (1872) before he was able to bring his picture home to England. The work was exhibited here in London in 1873, and ten years afterwards went to Manchester, where it now is. The carpenter's shop that you see is, of course, at Nazareth—the mountain village of Nazareth, twelve hundred feet above the sea level, only to be reached by a tedious climb. This Nazareth was the earthly home of Jesus Christ; for nearly thirty years there He mostly lived—"Jesus of Nazareth." Joseph, the husband of Mary, our Lord's mother, was a carpenter; and in the sixth chapter of St. Mark, Jesus Christ is Himself

called "the Carpenter." When, where, and how Joseph died, we know not ; it is practically certain that he died before the Crucifixion. Tradition says that he died when our Lord was nineteen ; and last Saturday, March 19th, is the day that of old was appointed to be observed in his memory. It is the carpenter's shop that was Joseph's that you see. There now is Jesus Christ. You will recollect that our Lord visited Jerusalem when He was twelve years old ; after His return on that occasion to Nazareth, for eighteen years, until He was thirty, until His baptism in the river Jordan, we hear nothing about Him, save this, that "Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man," and that He was by some people called "the Carpenter." On some occasion, then, during those unknown eighteen years, probably towards the end of them, this picture is intended to represent our Lord. You see Him there as the Carpenter in the workshop at Nazareth. If you were to go to Nazareth now, you would be shown a chapel called the workshop of Joseph. It is a modern building, but a portion of an old well is seen inside. And above the altar is a picture representing Joseph at work, assisted by Jesus Christ. Well, here in this picture of ours to-day Jesus is in the workshop. The sun is setting and lights up through the windows, one of which is cleverly arranged so as to form a glory round our Lord's head, a fine

landscape outside. The day's work is over. The Toiler has had a long afternoon, busy with His ploughs and yokes. He finishes, thankful to think of the coming rest. He stretches Himself and throws apart His arms, thus relaxing His muscles, so long on the stretch. The saw still rests in the plank, and the floor is strewn with shavings. On the rack behind—notice them—are His tools,—drills, plumb-line, frame-saw, half-square, and the like,—all, I believe, faithfully painted from ancient and modern Eastern objects. Now notice, upon the tool-rack rests a shadow; the tools and rack are so arranged that they form the likeness of a cross; and thus the shadow of Christ, as it were nailed on the cross, is visible for an instant on the wall behind our Lord. Mary, our Lord's mother, kneels on His right, looking at a richly decorated casket which contains a crown of gold and an incense burner with golden ornaments for holding the frankincense and myrrh, gifts of the wise men. It is a case containing the rich presents of the wise men, and mayhap of others too, that Mary is examining. Mary's past life and experience had indeed been strange and full of wonder; her future looks as though it might be still more strange and wonderful. Suddenly she looks up, and as suddenly she seems to be startled by what she sees. What is that awful shadow upon the wall? What can that be? Tools and rack and shadow make up what resembles a

man crucified. A sword pierces through her soul ; for there is the shadow of death, even the death of the Cross. Is that mother that evening startled by a momentary accidental shadow, cast before, of the death of her son Jesus ? Startled indeed, and what wonder ! Oh, Mary, mother of our Lord, what experiences were thine ! what thoughts, wonderings, bewilderments ! what a dread ! The shadow of the death that was before that Son was on the wall before that mother.

But surely the shadow of death, noticed or unnoticed, is before every mother. But that was the shadow of such a death, for such a Son ! I told you that one of my lessons from this picture should be from the shadow of the Figure. Well, listen. Good people, have you any of you before you shadows of the death of those you love ? Have you any of you before you shadows of the death of yourselves ? Mayhap it is so ; mayhap it is well that it is so. Those shadows are not to spoil your lives ; those shadows are to sober your lives. Oh, then, get not out of sight of the shadow of death, if so be you can see it, of those you love, of you yourself ; realise it, look at it, live near it, so that when of a truth you and yours must perforce go down and walk without flinching through the valley of the shadow of death indeed, of death now come, you may fear no evil, God with you, His rod, His staff comforting you. Realise this, "Death will come one day to me."

Mostly, as far as I can tell from my own feelings and the expressions used by others, we consider that all the world is mortal except ourselves ; other people die of this or that, but we seldom suppose that we shall. Probably they are much older, or younger, or more delicate than we are, or much poorer and weaker, or live amidst more unwholesome surroundings. In reading the list of deaths in the newspaper, he dies, she dies ; but we constantly notice, for our so-felt consolation, their age greater than ours, or very much less indeed : and even if the age should be just ours, probably there are good reasons, which do not apply to us ; and so on, comfortably, to the next paragraph. A railway accident, —but not on our line, or by our usual trains. Oh, friends, away with all this ; face your death, the shadow of your death ! There is every reason why you should ; you know as well as I do that the feeling “We must all die” is an altogether and entirely different feeling from that feeling “I am going to die.” Seeing every day of our lives death coming to others, we in imagination put a ring round ourselves, and think that we shall remain. And I do not think that it is any easier for old people than for anybody else to realise their own death. You would expect that growing old would make it easier. I fancy it does not. The mere coming on of age does not seem of itself to have anything to do with making a man live more entirely

for another world, or wind up his accounts with this. Indeed, as to its being easier by-and-by to do what I am recommending to be done now, I don't believe it at all. Do you find it any easier to realise the thought of your own personal death now, than you did five or ten years ago? I mean do you think that you can honestly say that you can face the shadow of your death less shrinkingly now than five years ago? Well, if not, why should the next five years be any different? As a rule, the next five years do not work the wonders that the last five years have failed to do. No, no, no; that would be a brittle reed to rely on. I see nothing for it but facing up, and realising, "Go I shall, and possibly before long, whatever my age, whatever my health."

In *Thomas à Kempis* we read, "If to-day I am not prepared somehow or other, I wonder how I shall be so to-morrow. Unfortunately, length of days more often makes our sin the greater than our lives better. If to die be accounted dreadful, to live long may perhaps prove more dangerous. Happy the man who always has the shadow of death before his eyes, and daily prepares himself to die." Oh, good people, I do pray you take this at least as one lesson from our picture to-day, and look upon the shadow of death yourselves; to see it in some form or another in what you read, hear; to see it constantly before you; not to turn

your eyes away from it ; like Mary there, to face it ; and if, like her, you sometimes face it on your knees, then when the shadow is past and the reality comes, it will be—do you remember in *Sintram*, do you remember in the *Heir of Redclyffe*?—

“ Death comes to set thee free ;
 Oh, meet him cheerily,
 As thy true friend ;
 And all thy fear shall cease,
 And in eternal peace
 Thy penance end.”

“ Peace, perfect peace, death shadowing us and ours?
 Jesus has vanquished death and all its powers.”

The other lesson from this picture was to be, not from the Shadow, but from the Figure itself.

Again look at the picture, and be lazy if you dare ! Where else can you point me to a picture representing Christ in full manhood, enduring the burden of common toil ? Jesus Christ a workman : see there the dignity of labour, the nobleness of labour ; see there condemned the man who worships idleness as aristocratic, who lives for pleasure, or who speaks of business, honourably conducted, with contempt. Jesus Christ laboured, working with His own hands, fashioning ploughs and yokes for those who needed them. Then—

“ Thou, Who in the village workshop,
 Fashioning the yoke and plough,
 Didst eat bread by daily labour,
 Succour them that labour now.”

And He will. And then, thus labouring, the man Christ Jesus got tired, tired. Tradition has it that St. Peter once said, "The weary soul is near God." There is comfort in that.

" We are weary of lifelong toil,
Of sorrow, of pain, and sin ;
But there is a city with streets of gold,
And all is peace within."

There is comfort in that.

" Peace, perfect peace, by thronging duties press'd ?
To do the will of Jesus, this is rest."

There, again, is comfort.

Our Lord is wearied. You and I know what it is to get wearied. You look at this picture, and then come up the words of that old Greek hymn, twelve hundred years old—a hymn which comes to us from the distant island of Crete in the Mediterranean Sea, a hymn which Dr. Neale translated for the help of thousands of Englishmen, a Lent hymn which you know well enough, and which ends with these ever-to-be-remembered words, giving strength, cheer, hope—

" Well I know thy trouble,
O My servant true ;
Thou art very weary—
I was weary too.
But that toil shall make thee
Some day all Mine own,
And the end of sorrow
Shall be near My Throne."

Truly, whichever way I look at this picture of *The Shadow of Death*, I find it a help onwards and upwards. It helps me to face the shadow of death myself, and to face it for those I love. It helps me to work on, to work away; and, when tired out, it helps me as no other picture ever did.

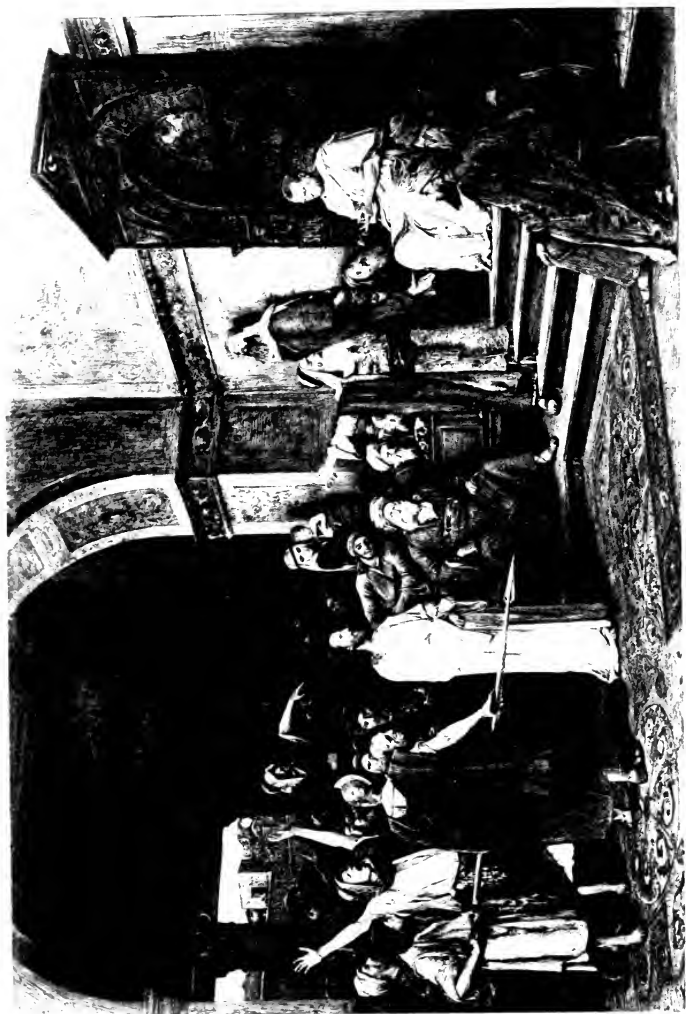
Now, lastly, a resolve. It must be fifty years, I should say, since Mr. Adams published his *Allegory of the Shadow of the Cross*. I dare say some of you have seen the writer's grave at Bonchurch in the Isle of Wight, with the cross so arranged above the grave as, in the sunlight, to cast over it there a literal shadow of the cross. Whenever you see any picture where is the Cross or the shadow of the Cross, make this rule, of set purpose never to look upon anything, anywhere, upon which the shadow of the Cross might not rest; upon no picture, no print, no paper, no book, upon which the shadow of the Cross might not rest.

You must make this rule. Is there not a cause? Four years ago a member of parliament succeeded in startling an empty House by the statement that there are rooms kept here, in town, to which young girls may and do go for the express purpose of reading indecent books and looking at prints unfit—a hundred times unfit—for their eyes. Oh, you must make this rule, of set purpose never to look upon anything anywhere upon which the shadow of the Cross might not rest. Whatsoever things are

honourable, pure, lovely, of good report, think on these things. Therefore, if you are wise you will, for example, make a resolution never, on purpose, to sit down and read in the newspapers—what newspapers are only too fond of reporting—divorce court intelligence. If you do not curb your curiosity in the matter of this sort of reading, if you let such dirt come before your eyes willingly, you run as big a risk as you can well set yourself to run, of getting your whole self lowered into a very ditch of mud ; of getting your heart hardened ; of getting, imperceptibly at first, separated from God, and of living without God in the world ; and if so, what will you do in the end thereof ? We are bound, I think, to lay this restraint upon ourselves, let others make what sport of us they choose. We dare not read these things. We say the Lord's Prayer, "Lead us not into temptation ;" and knowing well what a temptation this is, what an alluring temptation, what an attractive temptation, we dare not do it, and we will not. Anywhere, God helping me, anything upon which the shadow of the Cross might not rest, my eyes shall not willingly, without sufficient reason, rest upon. As a man makes before him every morning the sign of the Holy Cross, and says, "May the Cross of Christ be between me and all evil to-day, be between my children and all evil to-day, be between all I love and all evil to-day," so to-day let him make this his prayer, "May

my eyes, may their eyes, rest upon nothing upon which the shadow of the Cross might not also rest."

May the mighty power of that Cross go before you, be before you, warding, shielding, guarding you, whatever you do, wherever you go.



Christ before Pilate.
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SERMON IV.
PICTURES, AND HOW THEY MAY
HELP US.

IV. CHRIST BEFORE PILATE.

“Jesus stood before the governor ;” in other words, Christ before Pilate.—ST. MATT. xxvii. 11.

PICTURES, and how they may help us, is the subject I am speaking about this week. On Tuesday I spoke about the subject generally, and then I said that the remaining three sermons should be about three pictures in particular, showing how they may help us onwards and upwards. Think to-day of the picture by Michael Munkacsy, called *Christ before Pilate*. The picture was exhibited in London ten years ago, and is now, I fancy, in America. I dare say many of you saw it ; anyhow you will often have seen the engraving. The painter, an Hungarian, born forty-eight years ago, began his picture in Paris in 1878, and it was finished three years later, when the artist was only thirty-seven, just the age of Raphael, you remember, when he died. When

you see the picture, remember that it is Good Friday morning, early, at Jerusalem. Now I will ask you to imagine the scene, looking first on our Lord, then on Pilate, before whom our Lord stands, and lastly on the people around.

1. Look first at our Lord Jesus Christ, and think of what had gone before. The agony in the Garden of Gethsemane was last night. The betrayal by Judas Iscariot was last night. Then all His disciples left Him, and fled; that was last night. Then Jesus was led to Caiaphas, the High Priest, during the night. Then Peter's denial, "I do not know the Man,"—think of that; think what heart-strings a lying answer like that will break. Oh, good people, never, never desert a friend when he is down, in adversity! Afterwards, early this morning, Jesus is brought before the High Priest and the Jewish Council, and illegally condemned; struck by one of the officers with the palm of his hand, mocked, smitten; and some began to spit on Him, and blind-folded Him, and struck Him on the face, and spake many words blasphemously against Him. One word here, as I pass along. I sometimes wonder how we can read these words, "Then did they spit in His face"—I sometimes wonder how we can sit still and listen to these words, "They spit upon Him." Terrible, heart-breaking words; and yet I doubt not it has been with you, as I assure you it has often been with me, that those words, which to utter

even almost seems shameful, have pulled you through the scoffs of men, the worldly clap-trap of newspapers, the countless hardships, injustices, neglects of daily life. Anyhow, use the words for such a purpose.

Then, about seven o'clock on Good Friday morning, was Jesus sent unto Pilate, the Roman governor, to see if he would give orders for His death. Our Lord was sent, it is said by some, with a cord hanging loosely round His neck, as a sign that He had been condemned by the Jewish Council; and here, by the way, a very old tradition (it is mentioned, I have read, by a very early Christian writer) derives from this circumstance the use of the stole by the clergy of the Church, this narrow strip of silk passed round the neck and hanging down in front,—one of the most ancient of the ornaments and emblems connected with ministerial vestments.

There, then, is Jesus; His fifth or sixth trial, almost within so many hours; alone, unfriended, surrounded by enemies thirsting for His blood, His hands bound before Him, heedless of insults, answering no accusations,—there He waits for the inevitable end,—

“ Jesu, Who for us didst bear
Scorn and sorrow, toil and care.”

2. Now look at Pilate. Pilate tried to get Jesus free, but could not succeed. However, he found an

excuse for sending Him to Herod Antipas, Tetrarch of Galilee, who was then in Jerusalem. That device failed. Jesus was sent back to Pilate, dressed in a gorgeous robe, the long, white robe He is in now. Pilate is puzzled above measure what to do. Look at him there. Look at Pilate; he is finely painted in this picture. There he sits, the representative of Cæsar, clothed in the white toga, wrapped in thought. He knows no evil against this Man, but he dare not resist the popular cry, and, say what he will to the people, the mob cries out, "Crucify, crucify!"

3. Look at the people around. We will come back to Pilate afterwards. Look at our Lord's accusers; some of the more important, as the world counts importance, seem to have reserved places at the foot of the judgment seat. Pride and insolence are seen in many a countenance. The faces of all near the judgment seat are very studies in themselves. Look at that scribe, leaning his back against the wall, standing on a high stool, his arms behind his back; tired of the whole job, he only wants to see the end out of idle curiosity and indifference. Then a young fellow of evil look leans forward, and jeers at our Saviour before His face. A single Roman soldier stands there, as guard, with his lance in his hand. One of the mob has pushed to the front, stretching out his arms and shouting as loud as he can, "Crucify, crucify!" This

soldier keeps him back with his lance. Behind presses the crowd. In the extreme background, seen through an open arcade, is a beautiful glimpse of the country, bright and peaceful, a strong contrast to the stirring scene that is going on within. Yet I have not said quite all about the picture. Just behind that young fellow who is jeering at our Saviour, and in strong contrast, is seen, raised above the heads of the crowd, a young mother with a child in her arms. This is the only female figure in the picture, and on her face alone of all inside is there any expression of compassion with the defenceless Christ; and I am wondering, have we ever, anywhere, any Gospel representation of a woman hostile to Jesus Christ? That saddest sight, as the Bishop of Derry says, has been reserved for later times. Oh, women, women, keep, hold fast on to your power of soothing, cheering, helping men by your sympathy, affection, love! One woman there was with compassion for the defenceless Christ. Mayhap she is some poor person, come in by chance, attracted by the meek and humble look that she sees on the face of Jesus Christ. The poor never had cause to hate Christ; and here, anyhow, there is one poor woman who turns on Jesus a look of sorrowing sympathy.

So much for this picture of *Christ before Pilate*.

Many things, in this busy world, fade away from our forgetful memories; but who that has looked

upon this same scene at Ober-Ammergau can ever forget it? Pilate on his balcony, and below—Christ, a prisoner; and also below, another prisoner, Barabbas, both before Pilate. “Look at one, look at the other,” says Pilate; “and, though I care neither for you nor your religion, yet surely you will set Him whom they call Jesus free. If the choice lies between these two, let Jesus go.” But no, no; again and again, with wilder and wilder vehemence, the mob rends the air with hideous shouts, “Loose to us Barabbas! Away with this Man; to the cross with Him; to death with the Nazarene! Crucify, crucify!”

I said I would come back to Pilate. Look at him, think of him; and see there, as Mr. Aitken has put it in his sermon on the *Three Preferences*, the preference of the world to Christ. Pontius Pilate was greatly impressed with Jesus Christ. There was a majesty in the silence of Jesus Christ before the judge, which awed him and filled him with uneasiness. Pilate made up his mind to try and release Jesus Christ if he could. The Jews tried every argument in order to bend his will. “This will never do; if things go on like this,” they said, “Pilate will never condemn Him.” At last they hit upon an argument that would do it. “Governor, if you let this Man go, Cæsar shall hear of it.” Says Ezekiel to Pilate, “They will be astonished when they hear at Rome that Cæsar’s

viceroys has taken under his protection a traitor, whose death the whole people desired." That argument has told; Pilate's relation with Cæsar would not be worth much if He who set Himself up as a King was by Pilate let go. Pilate disappears. He soon returns; he dare not resist the popular cry. And then Pilate sends for water. A basin is brought; he publicly washes his hands before the multitude, and says, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person; see ye to it." But all the water of the world could not wash off the blood of that Just Person. Did he really think, I wonder, thus to wash away his guilt? But there was no time for thought; a cry, the most awful, memorable that history records—a cry arose: "His blood be on us, and on our children." Then Pilate gave way, and he delivered Jesus unto them that He might be crucified. So Pilate made his choice: he had to choose between Christ and the world; he could not afford to have the imperial Cæsar turn his back upon him, and so the fatal order was given, and Christ was taken away; and Pilate was left there upon the judgment seat, and there he sat. He had made his choice of the world, and the Christ must die. What do you think of that choice? (I am giving you the substance of Mr. Aitken's most impressive words.) Do you think that Pontius Pilate was the last man that ever made such a choice? Do not we know what it is to feel in our

hearts that Christ is what we want, but between us and Christ there lies the shadow of the world? It would never do to lose that friendship. It would never do to turn our backs upon him or upon them, to leave this company or that. If only it could be God *and* the world! If only Christ need not have the first place! Ah, there it is! Jesus Christ can accept no place in our hearts but the first place; and the first place we are not willing to give. A place we do not grudge our Lord; but that place the Lord cannot accept. It is because there can be no kind of compromise between the power of evil which hems us so tightly in, which so dangerously surrounds us—this on the one hand, and the lawful authority of God in heaven on the other—that Christ was and Christ is with so many unpopular. If Jesus Christ had been ready to form a compromise between Himself and Satan, Christ would never have died on the Cross; mankind would never have cast Him out then. But no, Jesus Christ will admit no such thing as a compromise. He will be satisfied with no kind of second place. Recognise His claim to the first place, and you there and then cease to be in the fashion; the world turns its back upon you: but, on the other hand, if you are content not to have this Man as your altogether Lord and Master, if you are content not to have Him absolutely to reign over you, then you may do a great many things which are regarded

as very respectable and all right, and the world will not anyhow pick a quarrel with you—it may smile at you, but it will not abuse you. For this has been written, “The man that is content to put Christ second will be popular with the world ; but then, let that man understand that when he puts Christ second he puts Christ nowhere ; for Christ will never be second, come what may. It cannot be God *and* the world ; our trusty guide says, ‘No man can serve two masters.’” Well, Pontius Pilate felt that it was a great risk losing the friendship of Cæsar, and he washed his hands ; yet, if we may trust tradition, all the washing of his hands did not allow him to escape from what he dreaded. He lost the very thing for which he sold Jesus Christ. By-and-by the favour of Cæsar was lost. Pilate was recalled, and, it is said, perished by his own hand in the agony of disappointment and shame. Does not his name still linger on that cloud-collecting hill near Lucerne, known to so many, and near the summit of which, according to a wild tradition, Pilate drowned himself? According to popular belief a form is often seen to emerge from the gloomy waters and to go through the action of one washing his hands, and, when he does so, dark clouds of mist gather, first round the lake, and then, wrapping the whole of the top part of the mountain within its fold, a tempest is sure to follow. Look at him ; look how ends his choice, and court neither

judgment seats nor position,—neither grandeur, that doubtful dower,—nor rank, that radiant woe. Be far-seeing, and do, oh dearest brothers, “what will best and longest please.” With wisdom look on to the end, and know what must be the issue of that man’s choice who, for the sake of the world, will reject Christ. Is it possible that the great story of the Passion may be so borne in upon us as to clear away any such world preference from us? Oh, if Jesus Christ has by us, by the world’s influence over us, been kept only too long standing outside the fast-closed door,—if Jesus Christ, Whom we may have, like Pilate, left to His fate, by loving the world instead of Him,—if He has by us been asked to keep in the background, the opportunity is at this season with marked impressiveness given to reform. The opportunity comes, and the opportunity will go. “Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.” “Now is the accepted time;” soon, only too soon, “too late, too late!” “Jesus of Nazareth has passed by.”

So much for Pilate. The figure of Pilate in the picture is a fine and worthy one; not so the figure of our Lord. Nevertheless, that figure also has its teaching for us. There the Lord stands, alone, unfriended, surrounded by enemies thirsting for His blood, His hands bound, heedless of insults, answering no accusations, waiting alone for the inevitable end. Fear not to stand alone. Dare to

stand alone. Briton Riviere's picture of *Daniel in the Lions' Den* preaches us that lesson, and so does *Christ before Pilate*.

And yet again, think not that a cause which seems to be unpopular and is shouted down is necessarily an unworthy cause ; and, above all, think not that a cause is lost, even though its upholder perish. You may be alone, yet not alone. Your work may be Christ-like, yet nothing accounted of midst the shadows and mists of earth. You may even have to die in order that success may be assured ; "that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die." The world at the moment may seem to have the upper hand ; the world may be on the judgment throne ; the world may be seated round that throne, and may jeer and hoot and blaspheme one single man, bound, conquered, silenced—for the moment, but only for the moment. Listen : "Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried, He descended into hell ;" but—*but* "the third day He rose again from the dead, He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God." Except a corn of wheat die, no fruit ; but if it die, it bringeth forth thirty, sixty, an hundred-fold. Then have faith in God, look on, look up. "The world passeth away," but he that doeth the will of God abideth. You need fear neither great nor small, neither many nor few, neither rich nor poor. You need be dismayed neither by

derision nor by injustice, by opposition, nor unpopularity. For, looking to the end, you can rejoice with exceeding joy ; for if you are Christ's and Christ is yours, great will be the reward in heaven, where in eternal peace your penance you will end. All was not lost when Christ stood there alone before the governor. All was not lost when Christ was beaten and blindfolded and mocked. All was not lost when Christ was nailed to the Cross. All was not lost when He said, "It is finished," and, bowing His head, gave up the ghost. You might think so. It looked like it ; but it was not so. Then you whose failures dishearten you—you to whom prizes are unknown—you who are weary and broken in heart, working, but seemingly never winning,—you join with me in singing (my last words here this Lent)—

"The hymn of the conquered, who fell in the battle of life ;
 The hymn of the wounded, the beaten, who died overwhelmed in
 the strife ;
 The hymn of the low and the humble, the weary, the broken in
 heart,
 Who strove, and who failed, acting bravely a silent and desperate
 part,
 With death swooping down on the failure, and all but their faith
 overthrown.
 While the voice of the world shouts its chorus, its pæan for those
 who have won,—
 While banners are waving, hands clapping, and jostling and hurry-
 ing feet
 Thronging after the laurel-crowned victors—I stand on the field of
 defeat,

Holding hands that are helpless, and whisper, 'They only the
victory win,
Who have fought the good fight, and have vanquished the demon
that tempts us within ;
Who have dared for a high cause to suffer, resist, fight—if need be,
to die.'
Speak, History, who are life's victors? Unroll thy long annals,
and say,
Are they those whom the world calls the victors, who won the
success of the day?
The martyrs—or Nero? The Spartans, who fell at Thermopylæ's
tryst—
Or the Persians and Xerxes? His judges—or Socrates? Pilate—
or Christ?"

SERMON V.

CHRIST OR DIANA.

“Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend [R.V. stumble] in one point, he is [become] guilty of all.”—ST. JAMES ii. 10.

I HAVE had kindly lent to me by one of our sidesmen, in order to hang up in church to-night, a print of Mr. Long's well-known picture, called *Diana or Christ*. It is one of the two pictures in which, it has been said, Mr. Long is at his best,—a picture which is not only a fine work technically, but also full of dramatic interest. I want to say something about that picture. Most of you have seen it somewhere or other ; only a few of you will be able to see it now. If any of you care, after service, to come up to the picture, I will show you one or two of its details, which can only be seen close to. I should like to-night to make the sight of that picture to you more interesting and more profitable in the future than, possibly, may have been the case in the past.

It will be a help to the better understanding of

the picture and the lesson that it teaches, if you will first for a moment consider what St. James says in the text : "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is become guilty of all." Now this cannot mean that the breaking of one commandment is as sinful as the breaking of all : but it clearly does mean that the principle of duty and of obedience to all the commandments is one ; so that if we choose for ourselves nine commandments to keep and one to break, we are not doing God's will, but our own, because all the commandments are alike expressions of one Divine will, and rest on one Divine authority. "Love is the fulfilling of the law," inasmuch as it would try and keep, not one commandment or another, not this or that, but every one alike ; and therefore it is that, if a man keeps nine out of ten points of the law, and yet stumbles at the tenth, he becomes guilty of all, he comes within the grasp of the law, he becomes guilty of that which the law forbids, liable to, in danger of, the penalties of the law. Clearly a man is not free to obey what he likes, and to set aside what he dislikes. If God speaks man must give heed to all He says. He who wilfully breaks what he knows is part of God's law, denies God's authority and makes his own will his god ; and yet God says, "Thou shalt have none other gods but Me." God asks for whole-hearted obedience :—

“Either resolve for all, or else for none.
Obedience universal, God doth claim :
Either be wholly His or all thine own.”

Clearly that girl in the picture realised to the full, realised in its entire and complete fulness, that great truth. “Let her cast,” we read, “the incense, but one grain, and she is free ;” let her stumble, let her offend, in one point only, and she is free ; only this once, only in this one seemingly little point ; only one single grain of incense offered to the heathen divinity, and she is free and all danger past. She must have realised, as we ought to realise, “whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is become guilty of all.”

Well, now to the picture itself. It was painted by Mr. Long. The original was exhibited at the Manchester Jubilee Exhibition in 1887. The picture is very powerful and very dramatic. It represents one of those sad events which so often happened in the heathen world during the early days of Christianity. The scene of the picture is laid at Ephesus, great Ephesus, once situated about the middle of the west coast of the peninsula commonly now called Asia Minor. The “Asia” of the New Testament was simply the Roman province which embraced the western part of the peninsula ; of this province Ephesus was the capital. It was a vast place, a wealthy place, an important place,

a place of terrible voluptuous sinfulness. We read much of Ephesus in the New Testament. Both St. Paul and St. John and Timothy carried on Christ's work there. St. Paul wrote a letter to the Ephesians. In the Book of the Revelation the first of St. John's epistles to the seven churches is to Ephesus, and this Ephesus. This great city of the Ephesians—you can read for yourselves something about all this in the nineteenth chapter of the Acts—was the headquarters of the worship of Diana, or Artemis. There was the great temple of Diana, at one end of which Diana's image was kept. Then—for all Ephesus has gone now; marbles which then were part of the great temple are believed now to be, some of them, built into Italian cathedrals, and into Constantinople's great mosque of St. Sophia;—but then, conspicuous at the head of the harbour of Ephesus, about a mile inland, was the great temple of Diana, the guardian deity of the city. Ephesus considered herself to be, and was considered to be, the warden, the sacristan, of Diana. The word which implies this is a technical word. The word equals "temple-sweeper," originally an expression of humility, afterwards a title of the highest honour, a title which came to mean practically the guardian, the sacristan. The temple was very great, 425 feet long, 220 feet wide. There were 128 columns, all of them 60 feet high. It was the largest of all the Greek temples. Near one end

stood the great altar, behind which fell the vast folds of a purple curtain. Behind this curtain was the dark cell, or room, or shrine—I don't know what properly to call it—in which stood the most sacred idol of the time, the image of Diana, or Artemis; while behind this, again, at the extreme end of the building, was the strong room or safe, under the protection of the deity, which was regarded as the securest bank in the ancient world. That room was, as it were, the "Bank of England" to those people, where their treasures were safeguarded.

Now, then, for the image of Diana or Artemis. It was so old that the people believed it must have come down from heaven. It seems even to have been uncertain what it was made of—vine wood, ebony, cedar, or stone. It is believed that the image was hideous to look at. You should know that this Ephesian goddess was held to be the goddess of fruitfulness, the goddess of the productive and nourishing powers of nature. The hideous, uncouth image was regarded as the symbol of fertility; hence the many breasts with which the whole upper portion of the image was profusely covered. Thus what I tell you the image was regarded as the symbol of, explains, what otherwise you would not understand, the appearance of the upper part of the image. Then there was a crown, a crown shaped somehow like a wall, on the head.

The hands were stretched out, and the lower part of the image ended in a rude block, covered with figures of animals and inscriptions. And so the image really, to look at, was something like a mummy. The month that we call May was the month of her special celebration. A great "May fair" there was at Ephesus. You can well believe that, though St. Paul, during his sojourn at Ephesus, abstained from blaspheming that goddess, yet he would have regarded it as pollution to enter her temple; but many a time on coins, paintings, or in direct copies, statuettes, he must have seen the strange image of the great Artemis of the Ephesians, a goddess whose worship ere long the preaching of the Christian religion swept away entirely and utterly. Ere long the temple of Diana was sought in vain; the city prostrate, the goddess gone. And that was one triumph of Christianity there. There was a man, a Jew, many years after St. Paul's time, who was called "the Weeping Philosopher," and he wrote some words to explain why he was called "the Weeping Philosopher," and why he was never seen to laugh. And why do you think it was? Because of what he knew of sinful Ephesus. He said the whole Ephesian population deserved to be throttled man by man. For Artemis and her worship he has no scorn too intense. The dim twilight of her shrine is symbolical of a vileness that hateth the light. Her image is idiotic and

Who was the

brutish. He says that the morals which flourish under her protection are worse than those of beasts. Her festivals and rituals are the cloak for every abomination. These things had rendered him a lonely man. This was the reason why he could not laugh. How could he laugh when he heard the noises of those infamous priests, and was witness of all the nameless iniquities which flourished in consequence of their doings—the murder, waste, lust, gluttony, and drunkenness? There are crowds of people represented in that picture; that is what is written of them by a Jew. //

But Ephesus had other buildings besides her temple. She had a great amphitheatre for the contests of gladiators and wild beasts, and she had a fine *stadium* for games and foot-races. Seats, tier above tier, surrounded both of them. Either in the amphitheatre at Ephesus or in the stadium at Ephesus—I know not which; perhaps in the stadium—the scene of Mr. Long's picture is placed. The stadium at Ephesus was a long building for foot-races, round, apsidal at one end, square at the other. The stadium at Ephesus was 687 feet long.

Christianity had made some way. There were then Christians up and down in the city. There were then Christian men and women, boys and girls, mixing with the crowd; in that world, but not of that world. Games or foot-races or shows

for the entertainment and amusement of the people are taking place, while at the end of the stadium a copy or representation of the image of Diana is set up, and people, as they pass, show their devotion to her by casting into the fire that burns before the image a handful of incense. The old image is in the temple. Copies, statuettes, representations (see Acts xix. 24) were made for outside purposes, for carrying about, for placing in houses, for placing in public situations, for public adoration, and little ones for charms. This statuette in the picture is one such copy, statuette. You see the mural (wall-like) crown on the head ; you see the many-breasted image, the personification of the fruitful and all-nourishing powers of nature. You see the outstretched hands, and you see the lower part of the image ending in a rude block, covered with figures and animals ; as used to be said, a mummy-like image. There is the image, a garland—perhaps it is the month of May—round the pedestal. Incense, the offerings of passers by, is burning before the image. They take just a little incense in their fingers from the box or case that the girl there holds, throw it into the flames, and pass on. That is all. That is their tribute to Diana. She is their goddess who perform that action of a moment. She is their goddess—so much may seemingly depend upon so little!—who perform that action of a moment to please a friend, to please a lover, to

please a neighbour. Just this once, only this once, and you have had the chance of bearing witness to your Lord, and lost it, if you offer one grain. The girls behind play their pipes. Somebody, a man in authority, a magistrate or governor, sits by on one side, one of the heathen priests on the other. A man, perhaps an informer or a formal accuser, holding in his hands a list of suspected persons or a document of accusation, stands ready.

We know not why or how, a Christian girl is brought up; one who has had her eyes opened to see the beauty and truth of the teachings of Christ, one who is loyal to her Church, and does not, like so many, play fast and loose. Possibly that noble-looking Roman who is with her is her lover. She is bidden to put her hand into the incense-box and cast some grains. "No!" What, no? Her lover takes out the grains for her, and says to her, "But take one grain, one grain now out of my hand, and cast it into the flame, and all is well." Those people of "gods many and altars many," to whom a god or two more or less made no difference, could not understand—were exasperated by this, to them, Christian obstinacy. "No!" The pathetic expression of the girl's face as she turns from her lover's pleading, and refuses to offer incense to the heathen goddess, is one of the chief interests of the picture.

• • • "She beholds a face beyond the skies;
A voice, which she hears only, gently cries,

'I shall be thy reward ; my love exceeds
The world's weak adoration of a day.'¹

The girls behind stop playing ; look at their anxious, pitying, wondering faces. The child holding the incense-box well-nigh cries. The governor, or magistrate, anxiously begs her to comply. Those governors, some of them, did not search for Christians ; but if they were formally accused by an avowed accuser the penalty had to be inflicted. Some put the question three times to each person, giving full opportunity for repentance, anxious to avoid inflicting the penalty of death. Her lover never dreamt of this difficulty. The priest wonders what will follow. The man with the document of accusation waits impatiently. The soldiers peer about, wondering what to do. The crowd of men and women further off know nothing. The silent image stands there a silent image. That Christian girl is in the midst of a terrible temptation. It has suddenly become a question of life or death ; but one grain of incense means purchasing her life at the cost of her belief. She has only to cast one grain of incense, and she is free ; stumble only in one point, and she is free. But that one grain, that one stumble, means Diana and not Christ. You see how under certain circumstances it is easy to be disloyal to your God and to your Church. Nobody can serve two masters, and no such two

¹ From a sonnet, *Diana or Christ*, by Mr. T. Smith.

masters as Diana and Christ. One grain of incense means giving up the faith of Christ. One grain of incense in itself need mean nothing at all ; but one grain of incense, then and there, means Diana. This girl—we are not told, but we feel sure what her end was—her faith would not be denied, and her life would in those early Christian days be taken from her. The usual course was to utilise condemned criminals for the public games. It is only fancy, but you will hear in the lines I will read that fancy has represented the girl as losing her life almost at once.

“The theatre at Ephesus is thronged,
 ‘Great is Diana!’ her proud votaries cry,
 And cast, into the brazier standing nigh,
 Their incense-offerings, amid shouts prolonged.

“Not all ! for one, the loveliest maiden there,
 Unawed by menace, uncajoled by priest,
 Held back : and suddenly the clamour ceased,
 And a scared silence followed the loud blare.

“‘One grain of incense cast and thou art free !’
 Her lover pleads, close-pressing to her side ;
 Despairing, yet intent his fears to hide,
 Lest in his eyes she read his agony.

“‘Tis but a trifle, none the act could blame,
 When life and home and lover are at stake ;
 If all else fail, yet, *dearest, for my sake!*—
 Not e’en *thy* God such sacrifice would claim.’

“““For my sake,” dost thou say? Oh, love, forbear !
 Those words are echoes of my Lord’s own plea,
 Sent in this trial-hour to strengthen me,
 Lest my weak heart should yield to thy fond prayer.

“Tempt me no more. Not *one* grain will I cast,
Denying Him who gave His life for mine ;
Farewell ! to Him my spirit I resign :
Lead on : the bitterness of death is past.’

“And then she prayed ; her hand upon her breast,
Her face transfigured, God and heaven in view :
‘ Father, forgive ! they know not what they do,
Let not *this* sin be added to the rest.’

• • • • •
“One pitying moment held the crowd at bay,
Gazing, incredulous, on the fearless maid :
Then the fierce tide of passion toward her swayed,
And her sweet martyr-spirit passed away.”¹

Well, some go home quietly, some go home
roughly ; but when it is “safe home,”—

“When the shore is won at last,
Who will count the billows past ?”

It is not six months ago since the “Cry of Armenia” sounded in our ears, that in a certain place the proposal was made to several of the more attractive women to change their faith, in which case their lives might be spared. “Why should we deny Christ ?” they say ; “we are no more than these,” pointing to the mangled forms of their husbands, brothers before them. “Kill us too !” And they did. The other women soon saw that they could never fight their way through the ranks of the enemy. Then the wife of the leader stepped on a rock, and cried, “My sisters, you must choose

¹ *Diana or Christ*: lines by Mr. J. B. Greenwood, reprinted by permission.

between two things—either fall into the hands of these Turks and forget your husbands, homes, holy religion, and adopt the Mahometan faith, and be dishonoured, or you must follow my example.” With these words, holding her year-old baby in her arms, she dashed herself from the rock into the abyss. She was followed by a second, third, fourth woman; without a sound one body fell after the other.

Good people, still comes this query to us all, “Christ or Diana?” And also, whether it be Christ or Diana depending upon so little. Surely the picture emphasizes this elementary truth. Cast the incense—but one grain—and the result is, we kneel before Diana’s shrine and not Christ’s. Who-soever shall keep the whole law and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty. Great events hang upon little things. What bonfires last Monday were set ablaze by a single light! A match allowed to fall and left can set a house on fire. Judas coveted, and before he had done Jesus was betrayed. Eternity may hang upon the conduct of an hour; while, as to sin, unless first beginnings are extinguished, there is little hope; unless temptations while little are resisted surely we are undone. No temptation is little if looked at as a link in a chain. Stumble not in one point; cast not one single grain of incense; resist at first; refuse at once; control yourself in time, and there is safety: but it is there

alone. One grain of incense cast, and that girl had been undone. "'Tis but a trifle," did the tempter say? "None that single act could dare to blame." "Oh, love, forbear! Tempt me no more. Not one grain will I cast; not stumble in one single point, lest it should lead me on unto denying Him Who gave His life for mine."

Brethren, Diana or Christ—which? Cast the incense, but one single grain, and the reply is given—*Diana*. Keep all, and stumble only in one point, and the reply is given—*Diana*. If sin allures, if temptation presses, resist at once, or the reply is given—*Diana*.

Brethren, Diana or Christ—which?

Why, *Christ*—at once, now, and for ever, come weal or woe, come hot or cold, come fine or wet, come soft or hard! *Christ*, that one only Name under heaven given to men, whereby they may be saved; *Christ Jesus, King, Redeemer, Lord*. Thank God! And then when the strife shall be over, and then when the victory shall be won, shall be heard echoing down from on high, "Well done, well done, good, faithful servant; enter now into the very joy of your Lord."

SERMON VI.

RELIGIOUS INDIFFERENCE.

I. SAINTLINESS IMPOSSIBLE FOR ME NOW.

THE Dean of this Cathedral has, to my surprise, thought well to ask me, for the sixth time, to give the mid-day addresses here during one of the weeks of Lent. Solely in submission to his judgment I venture, then, once more to speak to you. Naturally I have with anxiety thought about what subject it would be helpful for us to consider. I have decided to speak about *Religious Indifference : some causes of it, some cures for it.*

May I beg you with all the energy I possess to bear in upon your minds the terrible spiritual danger, because so all unperceived, because so all unrealised, of religious indifference, of lukewarmness: that is, being neither hot nor cold, not very decided, takers of no particular line; enlisted soldiers, but not on service anywhere, betwixt and between, neither this nor that, a nondescript between two positives, indefinite? "Blessed," said Jesus Christ,

“blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness.” The religiously indifferent and lukewarm feel not that hunger, neither are they acquainted with that thirst. That is something of my meaning when I speak of *Religious Indifference*. And this religious indifference is rampant—indifference to religion, indifference to the grace of God, to worship, to sacraments, indifference to everything save the present. Now, for this religious indifference there are many causes. I will mention some. I will mention five in my addresses this week. Here, then, for to-day, is one cause of religious indifference—saintliness, holiness, regarded as altogether out of our personal reach in these days; hence, as a result of this state of mind, religious indifference. Religious indifference feeds and fattens upon this common but most untrue notion that holiness is now impossible, that saintliness is a virtue altogether of ancient times, that religion is no business of mine now.

Now, in speaking on this matter, I will take as a text, or a motto, one sentence from the *Te Deum*, from that ancient and glorious hymn, which anyhow is fifteen hundred years old, and which has been sung in English churches anyhow since the Conquest: “Make them to be numbered with Thy Saints in glory everlasting.” Make Thy servants, O Lord Jesus Christ, to be numbered (to be rewarded) with Thy Saints in glory everlasting.

These words, a father once told me, were his daily

prayer for his children. Fathers of children, mothers of children, let the words be your prayers for your children: "Make them to be numbered with Thy Saints in glory everlasting."

Good people, holiness is not impossible now; saintliness is not a virtue altogether of ancient times; to be an earthly saint now, in training, in apprenticeship for the rewarding and numbering of God's Saints in glory everlasting, is not impossible. There is not all the difference in the world between the saint of the Bible while on earth, the saint of the Prayer Book while on earth, the saint of the early Church while on earth, the saint of picture and of glass while on earth, and ourselves. You and I can be, as St. Paul expresses it, "meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in light." I do not deny the difficulty; I do altogether deny the impossibility. To live the saintly life anywhere is difficult, in towns very difficult. God seems to be so much pushed aside, left out. God seems to be so much kept in the background. God seems to be so little wanted. Life seems to be lived so much without any practical reference to God. God seems to be so little consulted. God so quickly fades out of the daily life of those who do not pray. Life, hurrying life, it is so very easy to live apart from, if not without, God. I know all this; I know it as well as you. I do not deny the difficulty of personal holiness; it is the impossibility which I

altogether deny: for I believe that in every one of us, somewhere or other, there is a vague, misty desire, first, after a holy life, and secondly, for some practical religion. Then grip hold of that misty desire, cherish it, feed it, nourish it, fan it, and you will indeed come soon to realise that Christianity is an altogether possible, workable, usable, religion for this world, for this life; that it is not to be postponed into the next. Would Jesus Christ have taught us to say, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven," if to pray that prayer meant nothing now in this world? The Sermon on the Mount tells us what sort of lives—here, now—the subjects of His kingdom can live, and Christ gives principles to guide the conduct of those lives. It is as plain as plain can be that Christianity is a religion for now, for to-day; that holiness, without which no man is to see God, is to be an everyday companion. Why, the plainest account we have of the great Judgment that is to be hereafter tells us that we are to be judged by how we have conducted ourselves and behaved to one another here. Christianity not a gospel for everyday life! Holiness impossible now! Christianity not a gospel to regulate conduct! Jesus Christ yesterday, Jesus Christ to-morrow, but not Jesus Christ now, to-day! Why, there is no religion that has ever been preached that is more so, and backed by this tremendous strength—first, One Heavenly Father for all the children;

secondly, One Divine Pattern, Example, Guide for all the brethren ; thirdly, One Holy Spirit for the stay, cheer, strength, support of those who either falter or fail. "Looking unto Jesus"—why? wherefore? To remind us of some old story long ago done with? To sketch out some fanciful picture all in the clouds? No, no; but with this aim those words were written: to bid us to lead a noble life now, to make men happier now, to spread brightness around now, to leave the world a little better for our having been in it, according to the well-known lines of Kingsley—

"Do noble things, not dream them, all day long;
And so make life, death, and the vast 'forever'
One grand, sweet song."

Christian people, our lives now may be saintly lives; if you don't believe it, you will be lukewarm all over. Christian brothers, it is possible to be a saint now as much as ever it was; if you don't believe it, you will be indifferent altogether. Have you ever noticed what is the passage appointed as the Gospel for All Saints' Day, that day commemorating all the numberless heroes who are nameless, that day when the Church gathers up all her glories of lives that have been "hidden with Christ in God," that day empty of any special history, but full, all the same, of glorious memories and glorious examples? Have you, I say, ever noticed what is the Gospel appointed for this All

Saints' Day? It is taken from the Sermon on the Mount, from that sermon which tells us what sort of lives Christians should lead. Well, that Gospel tells what are the earthly and present and possible qualifications for being numbered with the Saints in Paradise. Listen: "the poor in spirit," the humble; "they that mourn" for sin; "the meek;" "they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness;" "the merciful;" "the pure in heart;" "the peacemakers;" the "persecuted for righteousness' sake," and content therewith. Now, here are qualifications for personal saintliness now. No money is required to be a saint; no learning is required to be a saint; no rank or position is required to be a saint. The conditions, the qualifications are within the reach of every Christian man, woman, child, who, claiming the help of God, wills to be a saint. The All Saints' Day Gospel will show any honest, impartial, unprejudiced inquirer not only the possibility in general of present saintliness, but whether he is personally likely himself to be numbered with God's Saints in glory everlasting. You will not read that Gospel and go away and say the saintly life is easy, but you will say that it is entirely possible, possible for any. It is possible for the most commonplace lives to be saintly lives. What reason can you give why it should not be as possible to be a saint now as ever it was? "Difficult?" Oh yes, difficult;

but what are difficulties? The stones out of which God's buildings are builded up. Sainly lives are just up-stream lives, with a Cross for guide and a Christ for goal. Oh, believe me that what look like very commonplace lives may be the very stepping-stones to God's welcome to heaven, if lived consciously, of set purpose, Godwards. This must be so; because, of course, no idea could be more foolishly untrue than that a man may live as others live, do as others do, think as others think, swim with the stream, then die, and find himself "rewarded with God's Saints in glory everlasting." Men do not so slip into the Kingdom of Heaven. There should be no mistake on this point; "no cross, no crown."

"Who are these like stars appearing,
These, before God's Throne who stand?

These are they who have contended
For their Saviour's honour long,
Wrestling on till life was ended,
Following not the sinful throng;
These who well the fight sustained,
Triumph by the Lamb have gained."

The saintly life is difficult, but it is not impossible. Very well then, have it clearly in your minds that everyday, town-living lives may be saintly lives, that it is quite as possible to be a Saint now as ever it was, provided we live our lives of set purpose Godwards. Do you mean to say that we are going

to let A.D. 100, 200, 300 see saints, and not A.D. 1800, 1900 see saints? Do you think the faith which once inspired the early Christians, that inspired those to whom we are wont to give the name of Saint, do you think that faith is not now, to-day, to give courage, joy, saintliness, perseverance to thousands of faithful, but not famous, Christians round about us? Do we believe that what seem very plodding, commonplace lives cannot be stepping-stones to God's welcome to heaven? Away with the thought, then, and know that plod and grind, grind and plod here, if we will, may be our earthly apprenticeship for being numbered with God's Saints in glory everlasting. We believe that the same Lord, Who is to be the Judge of the Saints of old, is to be our Judge. And we believe that that Lord will help us, His servants, as He helped His servants of old; and so we will mean what we say, when we go on to beg Him to "give us grace so to follow His blessed Saints" in the past, "in all virtuous and godly living," that we may come, in the future, to be rewarded with them "in glory everlasting." I have referred you to the Gospel for All Saints' Day, for it gives us some of the requirements, the qualifications for saintliness. The Collect for that day gives us a receipt for saintliness; for is it not, as that Collect expresses it, in the "virtuous and godly living" of individual Christians, unfeignedly loving God, in the daily routine of their home,

business, professional lives, that unfamous yet faithful people are growing into saints, and more and more showing forth "the righteousness of saints"? Perhaps we have not thought of this. Perhaps religious indifference and lukewarmness has been feeding upon the notion that saintliness is an obsolete virtue, only in vogue in olden days, that saintliness is out of reach now. We have not, perhaps, thought of saintliness as a present, personal need; for even, possibly, we may have forgotten that without saintliness no man is to see the Lord. Well, "it is never too late to mend;" and my advice to those who feel in a fashion they have not realised before the cold grip of religious indifference, the chilly atmosphere of lukewarmness, to be upon them—my advice is, believe firmly that holiness is possible for you now. Turn to the Collect for All Saints' Day, and see there a receipt for holiness. Turn to the Gospel for that day, and see there the qualifications for holiness. Face them, assure yourself of their importance, and be not stopped by difficulty. With resolution plod on and plod away; sometimes it will surely be along a painful path; sometimes—it must be so—doing a discouraged work, and only too often apart from recognition or reward, from thanks or sympathy. So be it; possess your soul in patience. A Christian looks for the resurrection of the dead, a Christian hopes for the life of the world to come;

and then you may be one of the heroes to be crowned in that land of the great new birth, and, when are reached those bright and sunny uplands that surround the Throne of God, your welcome may be the welcome of all the Saints, and with the Saints you may be numbered, and with the Saints you may be rewarded in glory everlasting ; and when at last that shore is won—that shore where indifference is unknown, where lukewarmness is unheard of—when that shore is won at last, who will count the billows past ?

“ Strive, man, to win that glory.”

SERMON VII.

RELIGIOUS INDIFFERENCE.

II. NOT REALISING THE PRESENCE OF GOD.

MY subject this week is *Religious Indifference : some Causes of it, some Cures for it*. One cause of religious indifference I have already mentioned, regarding saintliness as ancient and not modern, a possible virtue long ago, but not in these days. To-day I come to a second cause, namely, of set purpose trying to hide from the presence of the Lord. "The man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God."¹ Yes, a very frequent cause of religious indifference is "hiding from the presence of God." That presence of the Lord, which may be the very fulness of joy, men actually, of set purpose, hide themselves from ; the means of grace naturally come to be neglected, and those means of approaching to and realising

¹ Gen. iii. 18.

God's presence being disregarded, then that which under these circumstances must come, comes—religious indifference—caring for none of these things. Mrs. Annie Besant says in her *Autobiography* that God gradually fades out of the daily life of those who never pray. If God fades out of our daily life,—if God is unthought of in business, and His realised presence would be entirely unacceptable,—and if God is not wanted in pleasure, if His realised presence when we are entertaining ourselves would be a most unfortunate and embarrassing circumstance,—if in business there is to be no time for God, and in pleasure there is to be no taste for God, the cold chill of religious indifference will only too soon make us of set purpose seek for hiding-places from God. Oh, listen, I pray you, for a few minutes, as I beg of you for your comfort, cheer, help, to see the foolishness, the uselessness of trying to get out of the way of God. Do you know what trying to get out of the way of God really means? It means trying to get out of the way of One Who in your business all-engrossing, in your pleasure too enticing, would pursue you, first in order to find you, and then in order to lead you back home with Him rejoicing. I do not attempt to explain the fact, and yet fact it is, that so unwelcome to many is the presence, I mean the felt, realised presence of God, so embarrassing the recollection of the haunting words, "Thou God

seest me," that by various well-known plans men do their best to hide themselves from God. Some attempt it by pleasure, some by business, and some by the popular but desperate effort to persuade themselves that sin is not so bad as God has said it is. Now, why this conduct? Why this behaviour? Because, as it was of old with Adam and Eve, God's presence by so many is regarded both with shame and fear; that man and his wife we are told "hid themselves from the presence of the Lord amongst the trees of the garden." They were now—it was after what is called "the fall of man"—afraid of the Lord. God's presence, which heretofore brought happiness and security, now—now that sin had come upon man—God's presence now regarded both with shame and fear! Once far sweeter than honey were the glimpses of God's presence; but now when that man and his wife heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden amid the cool breezes of the evening, they hid themselves from the presence of the Lord; at least, they tried to do so, they wanted to do so, and they would have been most thankful if they had been able to do so. Think of the old story; it may come to some hearts with a new, with an uplifting force. Adam and Eve had done wrong; they felt it, they knew it, they were ashamed of themselves, and so they tried to hide themselves, they tried to go where they hoped they would not be seen by

God. It was very foolish of them, but very natural ; for they forgot, as we forget, that we all of us—in business and in pleasure, whether we will or no—must live always in the presence of God. We cannot help ourselves. We may forget the Presence to our loss ; but there it is. We may try to hide ; but there it is. “The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good,” the sinful action and the noble deed, the lie and the truth. There is no creature which is not manifest in His sight ; but all things are naked and open to Him with Whom we have to do. For ever one truth there is which must remain a truth for all, for young and old, for rich and poor, for good and bad ; and that truth, that fact, is that wherever I go, wherever I am, “Thou, O God, seest me.”

That man and his wife “hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden.” The trees of a garden to hide from the presence of God—a childish notion ; but that was an early age, and to hide from the presence of God had not then been worked out into the regular accomplishment—at least, imagined accomplishment—that now it is. That which that man attempted, tried to do, by getting under the branches of some trees or under the cover of some bushes, is now attempted, is now tried to be done, by various well-known plans, as I said ; by—first, pleasure ; secondly, business and occupation ; and, thirdly, by the

scheming to find out and to believe that sin is not so bad after all, that the written Word is not to be interpreted quite so literally. Yes, yes ; and men do thus build up within themselves a false conscience, and this as a hiding-place from God, as a hiding-place from Him in Whom, do what they will, somehow they cannot but believe. Conduct like this soon advertises in a man religious indifference. Do we here, now, do we know nothing in our inner self of this feeling?—accepting the precepts of Christianity as far as they suit one, but keeping clear of the track of self-denial, self-discipline, high views of duty, responsibility, and the like. We build a hut for ourselves, we get inside it, we sit down, we make believe we are very comfortable, we take a free and easy view of life and duty ; and all does very well for us as long as it lasts. As long as it lasts ; and how long is that ? Well, it will last to hide us under it, inside it, from the presence of God, just as long as the trees of the garden lasted to hide Adam and Eve from the presence of God—just as long, no longer—which was, as you know, not for one single moment.

Good people, I need not say it again, there is no such thing as flying from God. God is everywhere, all up and down this city ; each one of us in Him lives and moves and has his being. God would not be God if it were not certain that to Him “all hearts are open, all desires known” ; that

by Him all transactions are seen and all words heard, and that from Him no schemes are concealed nor any secrets hid. Read Psalm cxxxix., and see what it says there ; see how that Psalm places the creature everywhere, at all times, in the full light of the presence of the Creator—

“ O Lord, Thou hast searched me, and known me.
 Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising ;
 Thou understandest my thought afar off.
 Thou searchest out my path and my lying down,
 And art acquainted with all my ways.
 For there is not a word in my tongue,
 But lo, O Lord, Thou knowest it altogether. . . .
 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me ;
 It is high, I cannot attain unto it.
 Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit ?
 Or whither shall I flee from Thy Presence ?
 If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me,
 And the light about me shall be night ;
 Even the darkness hideth not from Thee,
 But the night shineth as the day :
 The darkness and the light are both alike to Thee.”

No, to attempt to fly from God is only to practise a trick upon one's self. We cannot do impossible things yet. We can do very wonderful things : we can, doubtless, build engines which will travel a hundred miles an hour ; we can, doubtless, set up a tower a hundred feet high ; we can, doubtless, construct for our amusement a wheel that will as it revolves take us a hundred yards aloft. But mortal man cannot yet circumvent the Eternal God.

The impossible is not yet possible ; but, unfortunately, it is possible to persuade ourselves to forget what is impossible. Though we know that God exists, that He is everywhere—within us, without us, by day, by night, at home, away from home—yet do we not sometimes think to get out of His sight, to fly from His presence, to hide ourselves from Him? It cannot be done. If we have ever thought we have managed it, if we have ever thought that we should have liked it, it is no good ; it cannot be done. No roof, no walls,—and for myself, I think the knowledge of this ought to be a blessing, shield, succour, help, defence,—no doors, no blackest night, no dark side of a street, no lonesome lane can hide from God.

But now just think, supposing we could hide ourselves from the presence of God, how extraordinarily foolish, how madly short-sighted! If in this life God follows us with His watchful Eye and loving Presence, so that we continually have signs that He is moving near and round about us, why is it? Why does He thus track the steps of His weak and sinful creatures that His Hands have made? Why does He, as it is expressed, hold us in His Hand, walk in our midst, invisibly indeed, but none the less really and truly? Why is He sacramentally present with us, Sunday by Sunday, in the Holy Communion? Why is He pleading with every one of us this very day? I ask you,

why is all this? Why does Almighty God thus track our footsteps even when we would elude His Presence? Has God anything to gain by seeking us? You may put that thought away for ever, and see in a human father's love for his boy or girl, see in the human mother's love for her child, a faint shadow of that boundless Charity, which, having freely given us life,—which, having hung upon the Cross that the gift of life might not be lost,—pursues us with ceaseless care, urges us to meet love by love, and to return as children to the Arms of our most tender Father. “God so loved the world” (that is, you and me) “that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” “Therefore,” saith the Lord, “turn ye to Me with all your heart; . . . turn unto the Lord your God: for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness.” Is it the presence of this God we would escape from and hide from? Why, of this God I find it written that “in His presence there is fulness of joy,” that “at His right hand there are pleasures for evermore!” This God is represented by His Own Word as searching for us—not for a day, not for a year, but until He finds us; this God is represented, not as standing somewhere a long way off in cold, unsympathetic isolation, beckoning from a throne; no, but as Himself out seeking for us; our faith, our love, our service, our endless life, His

dearest wish. It is actually the daily prayer of very many that the "perpetual light of the countenance" of this God may shine upon all His faithful servants, living and departed. I do pray you, mould your lives so that that Presence cheers you, not frightens you. Look not out for what may screen you from Him ; rather, in all your efforts, in all your struggles, in all your discouragements, remember His nearness. I tell you—you know, you must know for yourselves—that it is a thought, that, that will see you safely over many a danger, see you safely through many a trial, keep you back from many a sin and unstained by many a wickedness: "The Lord is near;" "He walketh in our very midst."

Do you, any of you, feel at a distance, but want to draw near? Read the fifteenth chapter of St. Luke, and you will be much encouraged. But of one thing be for ever aware, that to weave a veil, to build a hut for yourself, to scramble under some bushes which prevent your seeing God, but which by no means can prevent God from seeing you, is not only the trick of a simpleton, but the folly of a fool.

Brethren, on purpose to hold on to, to hold fast by, the right hand of God in busy life is a support which only he who has tried it knows. "Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden."

May no man and his wife here ever think of doing the same ; and may no man, woman, child, ever try to do the like.

For encouragement in right, for restraint in wrong, think thou of God ; and God, Who sees thee, will think of thee.

SERMON VIII.

RELIGIOUS INDIFFERENCE.

III. THE "FAR-OFF AND FAR-AWAY" FEELING.

Two causes of religious indifference I have already mentioned: *first*, regarding saintliness as ancient, not modern, a possible virtue long ago, but not in these days; *secondly*, of set purpose trying to hide from the presence of the Lord.

To-day I come to a third cause, very common, very real,—the "far-off and far-away" feeling. I will explain myself directly. You will find the single word of the text in Rev. iii. 16: "Luke-warm."

The second and third chapters of the Book of Revelation contain what are commonly called the Epistles to the Seven Churches of Asia Minor. The messenger was St. John, but the Sender was our Lord, Whose Own words we may still read in these seven epistles to the Asiatic Churches; yes, we are able carefully to read them, for St. John

was expressly bidden to write what in the vision he was told. The single word which I have chosen as a text is taken from the last of these seven epistles, from that to Laodicea; and Laodicea seems to need rebuke, and that for one reason,—because of her religious indifference, because of her lukewarmness: “Thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So, because thou art lukewarm, I am about—I have it in My mind—to vomit thee out of My mouth;” that is, “Thy lukewarmness hath made Me well-nigh sick of thee.” Yet, in speaking even thus plainly, it would seem that our good Lord speaks in love and not in anger; for He says, “As many as I love, I rebuke;”—I say, therefore, because I love, “be zealous, repent.” And then listen to the end, to the conclusion, of this epistle. I want you to listen, as you shall hear what is the attitude of Christ towards lukewarm Christians, towards Christians even girt about with lukewarmness, so terribly dangerous. That attitude is the attitude of a Christ come out in pursuit; it is a Christ standing outside; it is a Christ knocking; it is a Christ waiting. “Behold, I stand at the door and knock,” at the door of the lukewarm; “if any one shall have heard My voice and opened the door, I will both come in to him and will sup with him, and he himself with Me.” And more, for this is added,—but then, now of course lukewarmness must be a thing of the past;

for lukewarmness can never win battles ; lukewarmness, however respectable, as men count respectability, can never conquer ; but for one who ventures for victory this is added : " He that conquereth, I will give to him to sit down with Me on My Throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His Throne." Thank God for that good cheer, for that Gospel news for those who dare to venture out of tepid waters and away from lukewarm surroundings. The Laodicean Churchmen are by our Lord, and because He loved them, rebuked for lukewarmness. I will not discuss to-day how it is possible for our Lord to say that He would prefer that they should be cold even, rather than lukewarm. I will not discuss to-day how it is possible for the state of lukewarmness to be in itself worse than coldness, the Lord saying He preferred coldness to lukewarmness. I will not discuss to-day how it is possible that having only half a heart in the things of God is worse than having no heart at all. I will only again beg you to strive from all this to make real to yourselves the very terrible spiritual danger of that religious indifference which is here called lukewarmness, and which can, as it is here written, make the Lord well-nigh sick of those that are clothed therewith. Lukewarm, indifferent, not very earnest ; not workers for, not even witnesses for Christ or His Church when inconvenient, when troublesome ; Christ's enemies

possibly not our enemies, His friends possibly not our friends ; hearing of sin, and, if we do not laugh, we are not shocked ; prayers without heart, alms without love ;—this is religious indifference, indifference to the grace of God, indifference to the means of grace, indifference to everything save the present. And this religious indifference,—we feel it, we know it,—is rampant. In all our evangelistic work, in all our Church-helping work, morning, noon and night, here, there, everywhere, we are beaten back by this great, big, disheartening, puzzling, wide-extending, progress-hindering, repelling wall of religious indifference.

Now, for this religious indifference there are many causes. I have mentioned two already ; let me now tell you what I consider to be another, a third cause, and a very powerful, very real, very common one,—the “far-off and far-away” feeling. Let me explain myself. I mean when any thought of sickness, age, religion, God, death is banished to a distant future ; I mean when everything that has not to do directly with present pleasure or present profit is looked upon as “far-off and far-away.” I want to beg you to-day, as you would protect yourself from the chill grip of religious indifference, to trample down this “far-off and far-away” feeling. The expression is a good one. I got it from an address by a Mr. Salt, reported in the newspaper one day ; and I suppose it means all thought of sickness, age,

religion, God, death banished to a misty or doubtful or distant future. When this is so,—and how often is it! who is free from the temptation?—the result, of course, must be now religious indifference. This is the “indifference to right,” as was said only the other day, beginning in the individual and then propagated like dry rot through the mass, that ruins society. No Church, no State, no smaller society, no power can stand the creeping rot of indifference. When men begin to say “It will last my time,” “It is no concern of mine,” “I shall let it alone,” then the rot has begun. The one thing that keeps a country, a Church, a town, or any society alive and sweet, is the absence of indifference in its members. The reckless politician thinks that the evils which threaten the Church and society will not come in his day; the man who neglects the laws of health, hopes that typhoid will never reach him; the young man who wantonly spurns the blessings that surround him in his youth, looks upon sickness and age as mere shadows in the misty vista of a long life; and so men and women calmly put aside any realisation of sickness, age, religion, self-sacrifice, God, death, to some more convenient season, to a distant by-and-by, a long, long way off. I ask you, is not this “far-off and far-away” impression a very real cause of religious indifference? Do we not know and feel it to be so? And will it not be a likely cure and a safe

remedy to bring nigh what was far off? Oh, foolish, foolish Christians that we are, actually feeding and fattening our lukewarmness, when we put sickness out of present calculations, when we will not realise or allow that we grow older, when we look upon religion only as something to have in bed with us when we die and not as a life to live; who forget that putting God anywhere we put God nowhere, because a second place God, Almighty God, can never accept; who will not ourselves realise the inevitable fact that death will come one day to me. O foolish, tepid, lukewarm Christians, religion is for now; God is for life: religion is not a death to be died; religion is a life to be lived.

In a lodging-house where I spent two nights during my summer holiday last year, I slept in a room wherein were no pictures, only one framed text on the wall opposite the bed. The three words of that text naturally caught my attention when I went up to the room, and as I awoke in the morning they were there before my eyes. The three words illuminated and framed were, "Looking unto Jesus;" the present tense, Jesus Christ now,—not only Jesus Christ once, "far off and far away;" not only Jesus Christ by-and-by, "far off and far away;" but Jesus Christ now, Christianity a religion for life, for every day; Jesus Christ, religion, not banished to a doubtful future,—a sign of religious indifference indeed, a token of lukewarmness within

our doors,—but Jesus Christ, religion, associated with the present affairs of life, with the present interests of life, with the present duties of life: “Looking unto Jesus.”

It is perfectly true there has been a great Christian past; it is perfectly true that there will be a great Christian future: but “Looking unto Jesus,”—and there is also a great Christian present, a Jesus Christ for to-day. Then banish Him not afar off, then send Him not far away; else how shall you fashion your lives after His pattern? And it is in our lives that our religion must show. If God’s will is really to be “done on earth, as it is in Heaven,” religion must overshadow everyday actions. Lukewarmness is the certain result of any other line of conduct. The idea of religion for Sundays alone is all crooked, just as crooked as the mistake of those tepid Christians who banish their religion till the doctor lets it out on their sick-bed that they will not get better. If “looking unto Jesus,” my lodging-house text, means anything, it means that the realisation of personal death, the love of a living God, must be a present habit and not a future possibility. For instance, good people, if you and I would beat down lukewarmness in matters pertaining to that “life which is life indeed,” we now must realise death,—that death which so certainly lies before us; not just death in general, but our own personal death. It is easy enough

with youth, good health, and some money, for years together to plod through a life of business or to trip through a life of pleasure, forgetting one solemn fact, that this night one's soul may be required. The ever-present sense of this possibility has been a weight that the lukewarm have striven to shake off; and when they have succeeded, as so many have, religious indifference has invariably enveloped them. We will think that all the world is mortal except ourselves. We read the list of deaths in the newspaper;—he dies, she dies, but either he is much older than we are or she is much younger, and so I am safe. Yes, and my lukewarmness grows and fattens. A railway accident somewhere, but not on our line, not to one of our usual trains; and so we can pass on to the other news of the morning, pushing aside any anxiety about our own death. Yes, and our lukewarmness grows and fattens, and our religious indifference comes on apace. Seeing every day of our lives death coming to others, we in imagination put a ring fence round ourselves and think that we shall remain. We look upon death, somehow, as people look on starvation. Sometimes, unhappily, people die of starvation; but it is no part of our programme to think that that sort of death will overtake us. No; meanwhile our lukewarmness grows, fattens, and our religious indifference comes on apace.

Now, in asking you, in order to combat religious

indifference, as a cure,—in asking you to give prominence to the thought of personal death, I am asking you to do what I believe is no easier at all for old-growing people to do, than for anybody else. You would fancy that growing older would make it easier; no, the mere coming on of age does not make the difference you would naturally expect. Old people find it as difficult to get a good, vivid, practical comprehension of death as ever they did. As a matter of fact, do you find it easier to face the thought of your personal death now than you did ten years ago? Do you feel that you can face your death less shrinkingly now than ten years ago? If not, what likelihood is there that it will be any easier at all five or ten years hence? None at all. As a rule, the next five years do not work the wonders that the last five years have failed to do. Do not, then, trust that brittle reed. If honesty compels you to think that you have not in the last five years, say, grown any less lukewarm, any less religiously indifferent, not grown into any greater oneness with God, come to be “nearer, O God, to Thee, nearer to Thee,” oh, use some violence with yourselves, use we some violence with ourselves (for I am like you in this matter), to get out of the tepid atmosphere of aimless lives, to get out of the ruts into which we have dropped, and to be Daniels “with a purpose true” and willing to be so known.

“Far off and far away:” sickness, age, religion, God, death—pushed aside, pushed away; hence, of course, religious indifference, a very reason for it, a very cause of it. “Stir up, we beseech Thee, then, O Lord, the wills of Thy faithful people,” that they postpone, put-off, no longer into uncertain mists what should be realised as present verities; that they now “look for the resurrection of the dead;” that they now look for “the life of the world to come.” Good people, to whom I am called to speak, so living, and what was a mountain when your eyes were never off the ground becomes a mole-hill under your feet when you gaze upwards; so living, and not extinguished, certainly, but dwarfed, are the troubles, trials, sorrows, the noise of earth; so living, and you will be less blinded with earthly dust, more mindful of swift-speeding death; so living, and abandoning self to God, dying to what itself will die, you will bring forth fruit unto holiness, and the end will be everlasting life.

SERMON IX.

RELIGIOUS INDIFFERENCE.

IV. NON-OBSERVANCE OF THE LORD'S DAY.¹

I AM speaking this week about *Religious Indifference*: some causes of it, some cures for it. Religious indifference surrounds us, reaches us, chills us; indifference to religion, indifference to the grace of God, to worship, to Sacraments, to everything save self and the present. And this religious indifference feeds and fattens on various very unwholesome foods that we, even we ourselves, supply. I have already mentioned some of these causes. To-day let me beg you to feed no more that powerful tempter with a food that it very dearly loves, namely, forgotten Sundays—forgotten Sundays, a very potent cause of religious indifference.

“The Lord’s Day”²—I interpret the expression to mean the first day of the week, the

¹ The substance of a paper read at the Manchester Diocesan Conference, October 22, 1891.

² Rev. i. 10.

day of the Lord's Resurrection, what we call *Sunday*. It is an expression, this, "The Lord's Day," for the first day of the week, which is used nowhere else in the New Testament; but when you hear people call Sunday *the Lord's Day*, remember that it is St. John's word for that day, and that though only occurring once in the New Testament, yet once it does occur. For myself, I think that it is really a much better and more fit name for the day than *Sunday*, because *Sunday* is a heathen name for the day, and *the Lord's Day* is a Christian name for the day. And then in *the Lord's Day* you have a reminder of one of the great objects and uses of the day, namely, thinking about and worshipping the Lord. It is an expression, *the Lord's Day*, which was very commonly and very soon used by Christians for the first day of the week, which fact alone shows how generally and how soon one day of the week was dedicated specially to the Lord—the first day, the day on which the Lord rose from the dead.

Good people, Sunday comes to us as a good gift from God. The return of Sunday is a knock at the door of our hearts by the hand of Him Who is the very Light of the World. Sunday comes to us as an ordinance of the Christian Church with venerable authority. Sunday comes to us as an absolutely needful refreshment for body, mind, and spirit; and because I look upon Sunday as a good

gift of God to us for our refreshment, as one of the various potent cures for religious indifference, therefore I hold it to be a gift which if Christians refuse themselves to make use of, they are most culpably foolish ; which if Christians hinder others from making use of, they are most culpably selfish ; and therefore, to the Sunday question, viewed as a part of personal religion, we are bound to give some honest consideration and thought. We are bound, if the gift of Sunday is a gift from God, to face the question of its observance for ourselves, to consider what shall be our own personal conduct on that day, to come to some decision, as in the sight of God, as to what we had best do and not do. Other people—

“ They to their own masters stand or fall : ”

let every man judge himself and not another ; “ let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind : ” but for ourselves, let our conduct be the outcome of a thought-out principle. Undoubtedly, the Sunday question is one of the very disturbing problems of the present day. Two points I want to press ; first, Sunday, the Lord’s Day, is for the refreshment of body, mind, and spirit ; not of one only, not of two only, but of all three ; and secondly, Sunday, the Lord’s Day, is for worship, and therein especially for Holy Communion. I take the first point to-day, the second to-morrow.

When I consult others for any advice or help in speaking on this subject I get but poor comfort. I am told that it is "a very difficult subject;" "a very puzzling matter to speak about;" "a subject bristling with difficulty." I am told it is a subject that had much better be left alone. I think otherwise. I think, as I have said, that the question should not be shirked: but you may, of course, understand that I go on, full of respect for those whose views do not coincide with my own; I go on, feeling every sympathy with toilers, with town dwellers, with those who find life hard, monotonous, unlovely; full of sympathy with young people and with little children; and if so be that I view the question, in the opinion of any, from an ecclesiastical standpoint, I should like to think that it is also from a large and human standpoint. You will understand that, as a Christian, I cannot hold that the Fourth Commandment in its literal sense is binding upon us; but of course there is a principle of moral obligation there. As the Lambeth Conference Resolution has it: "The principle of the religious observance of one day in seven, embodied in the Fourth Commandment, is of Divine obligation." True, the day has been changed, but the principle has been preserved; and so we can all agree in this—that Sunday comes to us every seven days from God, and as a good gift from God; and it comes for two great purposes, one of which is

the refreshment of body, mind, and spirit. Men need their Sundays. I dare say some of you remember a remarkable passage in the first volume of Darwin's *Life*, a passage that can easily be applied to this subject: "If I had to live my life again, I would have made it a rule to read some poetry and listen to some music at least once a week; for perhaps the parts of my brain now atrophied would thus have been kept active through use." Darwin, then, saw the need of a seventh-day refreshment for his mind; a seventh-day refreshment for bodily health and spiritual health is as essential also. If, then, Englishmen are wise, they will be careful how they make light of their Sundays; for Sunday is one of the most precious gifts that has been bequeathed to them. Voltaire, I believe, once said that he could never succeed in destroying Christianity unless he destroyed Sunday. A great many people seem to be hard at work destroying Sunday now; refreshment for the *mind* is hardly thought of, for the *spirit* not at all. The day is secularised among all classes, but not the least so amongst the richer, for whom no excuse can possibly be made, as is possible for poor, hard-worked toilers the week through. Sunday is coming by many to be just forgotten, for many to be just rubbed out; Saturday and Sunday coming to be like twins, Sunday observance a grandmotherly observance. Surely there is no feature of our times

which thoughtful Englishmen will more regret to see.

Christian men and women, you who would not be religiously indifferent, you who do "look for the Resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come," do not level down Sunday to your standard, rather raise up your standard to Sunday level. Of course, for those who do not profess to look for any resurrection from the dead or any life of the world to come, no appeal can be made on any personal grounds of loss to themselves and to their own spiritual interests ; but such people little realise how, by their Sunday parties and entertainments and picnics and pleasures and amusements, they are robbing others of the chance of reaping any benefit for themselves from the day. Miserable to think that there are numbers and numbers of people who, so long as they themselves are amused, care very little whether what is amusement to them is death to others. Let no man needlessly trespass on the Sunday refreshment or on the Sunday worship of others.

And here a great many people are very thoughtless about their servants on Sundays, giving them scant leisure or rest. Think of the matter when you travel, at home or abroad ; and for your own sakes and for your neighbours' sakes keep quiet on Sunday. Remember, wherever we are and wherever we go, we are witnesses for or against England,

the Church, Christ. Let Sunday pleasure-trippers think of the needless trespassing on the Sunday refreshment of others, and, for the sake of their neighbours, as often as they can and if they can, keep quiet on Sunday. But, mind you, I do not call by the name of "Sunday pleasure-tripper" the town-dwelling, hard-worked professional or business or tradesman, who thankfully gets into the country for a breath of fresh air on Sunday. And surely, also, those who dwell in stifling courts—there were none at Sinai—may, if they can, reach once a week a region where may be the companionship of trees and fields; and surely, also, the young girl at service may visit now and again the home that she has left and the mother that she loves. But, to my mind, it is impossible to dogmatize on the suitability or unsuitability of this or that on Sunday. No hard-and-fast rule can be laid down to suit all cases; what is possible for one may not be at all possible for another. What we have to do is to face a decision for ourselves and for our own families. "What ought I to do as an individual?" and "what ought I to do for the sake of example at home?" example having a tremendous power.

Nevertheless, I will allude to one or two practical points taken almost at random out of many others that have come before me; this, anyway, may help in the clearing of the ground. A man holds, as I do, that if the people let their Sundays go, then go

with them the people's religious duties. Practically there can be no religion without public worship, and there can be no public worship without Sunday. A man holds that Sundays must be carefully observed. Has such a one any business to invest his money in concerns which, largely and unnecessarily, bid for Sunday traffic ; which secure such traffic, and out of the proceeds pay their shareholders ? It is not an easy question ; but for yourself I should not consider this answer satisfactory : " Do they pay you good interest ? Then leave your money where it is, and be quiet." That would make a lumpy sort of bed to die on.

Again, a friend, hard-working and diligent, is devoted to his garden ; this business claims his personal, fostering, Sunday care. Sundays, surely, he may have to himself and his garden ? What have I to say ? Sunday is for the refreshment of body, mind, and spirit. The worship of God must not be on that day spurned ; that within a man must not be starved, which, unlike these earthly friends of his, will neither fade nor decay away : something besides his garden needs attention. Again, " you complain," says a friend, " because I spend a good deal of Sunday in reading novels, and because I buy a sporting paper ; you say ' Don't.' Now, I ask you, is this wrong ?" Harrow helps me to frame a reply. Granted that Sunday cannot alter the great laws of right and wrong,

granted that nothing that may be right on Monday can be wrong on Sunday, yet it may be intensely foolish in reference to your life's purpose ; and so I do not say to you, "O sinner, you sin!" but, "O foolish one, a thousand pities that the Sunday refreshment of your mind and your spirit is only that!"

Sundays you find tedious, do you? Many men do. I have been told of a man who used to like Wednesday the best of all the days in the week, because it was the furthest from Sunday. Some men have to yawn every seventh day through dominical dulness ; one day's break sufficient to overwhelm them with a sense of their vacuity! Well, such men have a great big job to tackle before they can relish the joys that make Sunday Divine ; but I say to my friends, big though the job be, buckle to it. Be not despicable weaklings, lowering, as I said just now, Sunday to suit your littleness, but, like men, exalt yourselves to suit Sunday. You hear of some monster concert on a Sunday evening. Well, I am not here at the moment unhesitatingly to protest ; for if I am beaten back by difficulty, I am urged forward by sympathy. But, mind you, what humanises will not necessarily Christianize. Christianity will humanise ; it is not at all so sure that humanising will Christianize. If Sunday evening concerts were to become general, so would, practically, the enforced labour of others.

Sunday concerts mean Sunday labour. The tendency of Sunday concerts and Sunday amusements is to bring the great army of persons engaged in the amusement industry into full operation on Sunday. I read that a man was enjoying his Sunday excursion on a Thames steamer, and saying how pleasant it was ; but when he heard how the engineers and stokers loathed it, he began indeed to wonder how to act. Of course, there must be a certain amount of necessary Sunday labour both in town and country. What we have to do is to curb the selfishness which is the cause of unnecessary Sunday labour of others ; and there are numbers of Churchmen who would do well if they would lessen that selfishness which represents Sunday religion to so many. Omnibus and tram men in London can make their remarks on their Sunday church-going customers ; and certainly, here in town, all cabmen seem to know the way to the churches—to the out-sides, I mean.

Then, I say, let this Sunday question be faced. I grant that there must be some Sunday labour ; I grant that the few will have to minister to the wants of the many : but let men do what in them lies that that labour be not continuous but alternate. Alternate Sunday refreshment for Sunday toilers is a partial loophole for escape from a difficult problem. Would that men would put themselves to this much trouble regarding the Lord's Day

—scheming for the substitution of *alternate* for *continuous* Sundays' work. It would also be a sign that religious indifference had not quite circumvented men, if they would let their conduct be the result of a thought-out principle, guided by conscience and by common sense. Let every man judge himself and not another ; "let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind ;" and as in other matters, so in this, to-day may the Lord, good people, give you a "right judgment."

SERMON X.

RELIGIOUS INDIFFERENCE.

V. NEGLECT OF WORSHIP AND HOLY COMMUNION.

“O come, let us worship and fall down, and kneel before the Lord, our Maker.”—PSALM xcvi. 6 (P.B.V.).

THE ninety-fifth Psalm, from which these words are taken, we call in the Prayer Book, the *Venite*, from its old Latin beginning. It is a very old custom to sing this Psalm in the place where it now is, at the commencement of the service. It is a Psalm inviting to the worship of God, stirring to the praise of God. Whoever wrote it clearly intended it as an anthem for public worship. Now I have been speaking this week about *Religious Indifference: some causes of it, some cures for it*,—indifference to worship, indifference to sacraments, to almost everything save self and the present. And this religious indifference feeds and fattens on various and unwholesome foods, that we, even we ourselves, supply. Yesterday I spoke of forgotten Sundays

as a cause of religious indifference, and I said that on that subject there were two points to be pressed : *first*, Sunday, the Lord's Day, is for the refreshment of body, mind, and spirit ; and *secondly*, Sunday, the Lord's Day, is for worship, and especially, as a chief part of worship, Holy Communion. The first point only I spoke about yesterday ; to-day I take the second.

Sunday is for worship, and especially Holy Communion. Neglect worship, heed not Communion, and the sure and the certain and the speedy result is religious indifference. Sunday, then, is for worship ; and yet, there being still so much human nature about mankind, mankind has need to force itself to use Sundays as stepping-stones to the hereafter. Mankind has need to force itself to sanctify one day that the other six may abide in the shadow of it ; to specially consecrate a part of life with a view to raising the whole life ; and so, then, Sunday should be the Christian's special day for worship. There can be no religion without public worship, and there can be no public worship without Sunday. And think of the opportunity if made use of, think of the loss if neglected, of the gift of Sunday ; seven years of nothing but Sundays in fifty years of life ! I ask you, how can we men, whose minds day by day get entangled with the things of earth, distracted with the follies of earth, polluted with the sins of earth, how can we become meet for a

heavenly inheritance unless we purify and polish our dull and dusty souls? In our homes, in our business, there are days and hours for this special work and that. Is there to be no Lord's Day for helping men to grow brighter in His eyesight, and for worshipping and adoring Him? I pray you let Sunday, God's good gift to us, be our special day for worship. And when we speak and think of worship on the Lord's Day, we have no right to leave out of the reckoning, as an important part of the observance of the day, that service which the Lord Himself specially appointed. And yet how markedly is the Holy Communion left unheeded! Good people, will you join with me to-day in giving a concluding thought to worship, I mean to worship including Communion?

The text speaks of worship in the sense of prostrating one's self upon the earth in adoration of God. It is needful to remind ourselves of this aspect of worship. It is our duty to approach the Presence of God in order to give to God as well as to get from God, to give an outward and bodily reverence as well as the worship and reverence of the heart. Now, to worship is not easy, nay, it is very hard; and so the question, "How do we worship?" becomes a very serious one. Read over, in the sixth chapter of Isaiah and the fourth chapter of Revelation, the Old Testament and the New Testament accounts of how worship is conducted in heaven—with the

utmost possible reverence and devotion. Divine worship, to be real, means body, soul, spirit paying honour and glory to Almighty God. If the worship of the Church on earth means that God holds a court from time to time to receive His faithful subjects, and those subjects assemble to do Him honour, go to adore a present, and felt to be present, God, then with marked bodily reverence, then with marked spiritual devotion it becomes our bounden duty to worship, to fall down, to kneel before the Lord our Maker. Here, in Church, is God, in His House holding a court, inviting into His Presence those who own Him Lord, to give Him thanks, to give Him praise, to pray to Him, to hearken to His Word. Think of it, and you will feel disloyal, an outcast, if you on purpose hold aloof. Surely attendance at public worship would never have come down to us in an unbroken chain from the very earliest of times if the instinct of worship had not been Divinely implanted. Through Old Testament days, through New Testament days, public worship had to be maintained, and was maintained. The duty was entirely acknowledged. Christ and His apostles constantly took part in it. It may very well, then, claim our reverence, our devotion, our care, our affection. It has borne every reasonable test of excellence and genuineness ; and the worship of the Church on earth will continue until the last great day, then to give place to what in some little

degree has been made known to us—the worship of the Church in heaven and of the angel hosts throughout eternity. Of course a man can worship God after a fashion at home, alone, in silence ; but it needs great resolution and much strength of will. Very few people indeed, I take it, who talk after that fashion do privately worship God. It is very true what Paley, in his *Moral Philosophy*, said long ago : “ If the worship of God be a duty of religion, public worship is a necessary institution, forasmuch as without it the greater part of mankind would exercise no religious worship at all.” We, if we are wise, shall regard public worship as a necessary institution. True, our Lord did not bequeath a liturgy to His Church ; but He gave that Church a Sacrament which Christians could only have as they knelt and worshipped together. Whatever other portions of our worship may be solitary, this our Lord has made it impossible for us to have alone—this, the highest, most solemn part of our religious worship. The early Church consisted of communicant members. From the very earliest beginnings Holy Communion has been looked upon as an essential part of Christian worship. In early days to be a Christian was to be a communicant ; exclusion from Communion would have been more impossible than voluntary exile from home and family. His Master’s command constrained him, his Master’s promise encouraged him. How could

he stay away, with the tender words ringing in his ears, "This do in remembrance of Me"? How could he be mad enough to despise the precious promise of life and strength made over to him in the solemn words of institution, "Take, eat; this is My Body:" "Drink ye all of it; this is My Blood"? I will tell you what it was. Those early Christians felt that there was a life to be had in their coming together that could not be had elsewhere, that they needed that life of Christ to sustain them, and that they could not live without it. That was the secret of the constant attendance at Divine worship of the early Church. And if that was so, can we not see one secret of a rarer attendance now? The majority of modern Christians have devised for themselves a modern Christianity, slender and weak, because deprived of the Divine food, which strengthens men to endure, suffer, live, die for God. Thus a leading motive for public worship is put aside, and public worship has lost a leading place. Now, men put edification as the prevailing motive; but if men come to church only for edification, then this motive will prove too weak to overcome temptations to stop away. For how if I be not edified, if I find the services tedious, the sermons not to my mind—how if I dislike the parish priest, his ways, his theology,—how if this expresses my thoughts: "I do not care about church-going; the preacher does not edify me, his

teaching does not suit me. I prefer to edify myself at home" ? Possibly this is reasonable if edification is the object of church-going ; but if the purpose is to meet the Divine Lord, if the Presence of the Lord is to be sought, because it is to be found there as not elsewhere, and if the Bread of Life is to be broken there, and the hungry soul to be fed there as it could not be fed elsewhere, then neither dull minister nor dull service would keep away worshippers who went there for what they needed and could not get elsewhere,—who went there to make offerings to Him Who had given Himself for them,—who went there to bow down with their brethren in public, owning before all and in the face of all that the Lord, He is God, that "heaven and earth are full of His glory," that glory must be given and shall be given publicly to God most High. Oh, good people, in those words of wise counsel from the lips of the Blessed Virgin Mary, "Whatsoever He," the Lord Jesus Christ,—“whatsoever He saith unto you, do it.” A childlike, self-denying, unhesitating, unquestioning obedience to His clearly expressed commands, be they what they may, this is the sum of a Christian's duty. "Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it." Very few of the Blessed Virgin's words of counsel have come down to us, but here—and well worthy of recollection—is one charge at least of our Lord's earthly Mother ; while His own words are, "If ye love Me,

keep My commandments :” “ Take, eat ;” “ Drink ye ;” “ Do this.”

Listen to this old legend ; you will easily apply it to what I speak about. God grant it an abiding lodgment in your hearts.

Many years ago now, in a land far away, a man was condemned to death, and it was for a number of crimes, of which any one was enough to deserve the sentence he got. The mode of death was crucifixion. The day arrived. The culprit, with his hands pinioned and his feet bound, was taken from prison, placed between two soldiers appointed to guard him, and set on the way to execution. Now, in that country there was a law that, at the place where the culprits died, a crier should go round among the people assembled, proclaim the prisoner’s crime, and invite any one of those present who might be so disposed to come forward as a substitute for him who was doomed to death, and die in his stead. But no one had ever taken advantage of the permission. But now there arose a cry, “ Make way ; a man to the front.” An opening through the crowd was made, and there stood a mysterious stranger in Asiatic costume, calm, collected, looking the very personification of courage and love. No one knew who he was, or whence he came. He walked slowly onward and offered to die for the criminal. It was past the comprehension of the bystanders that any one should thus sacrifice

himself for another. Many and various were the questions and conjectures made relating to the man who had thus sacrificed himself for another. But no clue could be found. No motive would he give save this, "The prisoner is not fit to die ; death to him would be ruin." He requested a private interview with the prisoner, but all he said to him was this : "Repent. Think upon him who died in your stead. Forget not why he died for you—to save your soul from that ruin which is your desert. One request I make, that you may not lose the benefit of my death : commemorate that death in a special feast once a week, and keep it always fresh in your memory." This said, they parted. Several years passed. The man who had escaped death at the expense of another was growing old. At first he was so much impressed with his escape that he led a thoughtful, religious life, and felt such a lively gratitude towards his benefactor that he never missed commemorating week by week the death by which he had lived, in the way appointed by the stranger. But by degrees the good impression faded away. His commemorations of the stranger's death grew less frequent ; he forgot the fate he had escaped ; he forgot the love of him who died for him. Nevertheless, he grew richer, year by year, and more and more thought of in the town where he lived. His house was the best furnished one in the place ; his plate the heaviest,

his carriage and horses the handsomest, his wines the finest. Then thoughts of death, then the commemoration of that event by which he lived, he troubled himself not about.

Again time passes. The night was wild, thunder and lightning and rain and darkness. He who had been the condemned prisoner, but now the wealthy noble, was returning home from a great feast held at a neighbouring castle ; the spot, almost the very same, where he had been once dragged up for execution. Is it a dream, or a vision ? He sees before him the stranger who had died for him, the same calm majestic look, the same gracious face, the same loving voice, but now, oh, so overpoweringly sad ! “Where are thy promises, where thy amended life ? Hast thou forgotten me ? My death has been worse than useless to thee ; I have no choice but to leave thee.”

In the morning the servants all went out to search for their missing master, and found him dead, at the very spot where he was standing bound when the great stranger freed him years before.

The burial was sumptuous, and on his marble tomb were recounted his wealth and his greatness. But on the morning after the inscription was written, that inscription was blotted all out, and in its stead was engraved, in letters that none could rub off, “Unthankful.” Some said, at the time, that an angel had written this word in the night, as a warning to

others ; but no, said others, Satan, the accuser, had done it, as a condemnation of the man.

That is the legend. You see its lesson. Treasure it ; and whether we need warning, or whether we need encouragement, or whether we need perseverance,—whatever it be that we need, God of His goodness grant that, in the matter of Holy Communion and worship, never, never shall one of His angels write on our gravestones the heartbreaking epitaph, “Unthankful.” Such a climax of religious indifference God save all here from.

Brethren, between you and all evil, between you and all forgetfulness of the surpassing love of Christ, may His Holy Cross for ever stand—that Cross on which His Arms were stretched, “to draw His people nigh ;” God grant that you “that Cross may love, and in those Arms may die.”

SERMON XI.

ASH-WEDNESDAY.

YOU have seen our list of Lent Services and Preachers. You have seen, then, that I have arranged with some brother clergymen to help us by preaching here on the Wednesday evenings of this Lent. You will understand that, if I ask others to come, I have myself to go. I wish much it were not so; but it has to be so. Therefore you who are going to try and come here every Wednesday evening all this Lent, you will understand the reason of my absence on alternate Wednesdays, and you will know that I am away because I have to be away; for to be amongst those who know me and whom I know, is where I like to be.

Now, I want to-night to urge you to use this present Lent as a means of better realising the badness of sin, and so aiming after a real repentance. The Church of Christ has a special commission, a commission given to her by Him Who is her Divine Head, and that commission is *to bring*

souls to Christ. As a means, as a help thereto, she, guided in this matter by the Holy Spirit, has appointed times and seasons, whether for fast or festival ; Lent is one of the fasting seasons. Therefore good Church people who believe in their Church, and who think their Church more likely to prescribe well for them than their own natural inclinations or previous habits, will, if they are good for anything, make some account of Lent. I therefore ask you to make some account of this Lent, and to use it in gaining a deeper fear of sin, in more realising the badness of sin, and then in aiming after a real repentance.

I have had reprinted for this year a Lent paper¹ that, several years ago, many of you had from me. I should like, after service, if you have time and patience, to give with my own hand this paper to every one of you who would be willing to read it carefully. There may be some here who will not care to have the paper at all. There may be some who will like best to take a copy from where I have placed some, the chair in front of the Font. There will be some who will let me personally give them the paper which I have prepared, hoping it will help them. I would ask you to read the paper very carefully and often. And more, I would ask you, when you come to make your resolutions, only

¹ *An Instruction on the Observance of Lent*, reprinted at the end of this sermon.

to make a few, perhaps a very few, perhaps only one or two ; and then put forth all your courage, and all your strength, to keep those few. One single resolution kept is worth twenty neglected resolutions, all hanging and dangling about, loose, half unkept, half forgotten. And think of this especially when you come to write down your resolution or resolutions on the second paper prepared for that. This second paper is not of my drawing up. I wish I could draw up so excellent a one.

Many resolutions (twenty) are suggested, but then many people have to be thought of. You attend with all your might to your resolutions, not to other people's ; and don't make too many. Don't go up to your Easter Communion half ashamed, with ever so many half-kept resolutions ; but go up glad with one or two resolutely observed.

I would like to help you now in this Lenten work of gaining a deeper fear of sin, realising the badness of sin, and then aiming after a real repentance ; and I would like you to help me. Then think of me saying every day for you, "The Lord be with you ;" and let me think of you saying every day for me, "And with thy spirit." By this means, by this mutual prayer, we can help one another, and I shall want your help just as much as you will, possibly, be glad of mine. Then let me count on your help, as you shall count on mine.

Now, this is to be our motto for Lent : "I will

arise, and go to my Father, and will say unto Him, Father, I have sinned against Heaven and before Thee, and am no more worthy to be called Thy son.”¹ This is to be our motto this Lent, as we aim after real repentance : learning our sins, being heartily sorry for them, confessing them, willing to be better, and so using helps. I suggest as a daily text this Lent, I suggest as a personal motto this Lent—“I will arise, and go to my Father, and will say unto Him, Father, I have sinned against Heaven and before Thee, and am no more worthy to be called Thy son.” Accept it as such, learn it as such, use it as such, and we shall have a motto to point out a road for us to walk in this Lent, we shall have a sort of key-note for our personal observance of this Lent. To mend our rickety selves, to straighten up our crooked selves, to tidy up our badly arranged selves, this is our task for this Lent, and this motto for the very purpose. “I have sinned : I will go back to my Father ; I will confess my sins : mayhap He will forgive the wickedness of my sin ; and if so” —for this follows—“I will use more carefully His loving and proffered help, and stay more at home, and leave Him not again.”

Dear people, do you want to aim after a real repentance? To make a good use of Lent is a most helpful thing to do ; but then, it is not very easy, because some trouble must be taken, and sin

¹ St. Luke xv. 18, 19.

must be very badly thought of. Indeed it must ; for sin separates from God. That is what the Commination Service says. The word "*cursed*" means—what all sin makes us to be—separated from God. There is that which separates from God, sin. And the Commination Service only tells us what the Bible tells us, that sin separates from God. And yet God wills not the death of a sinner. God wills all to be saved ; but if we will not, for all God does for us, if we will not turn our face from our sin, God tells us, God has to tell us, that sin persisted in, unforsaken, brings a curse, brings what is a separation from Him. Never think of applying the Commination Service anywhere save to self. When sentence after sentence is read, you say "*Amen,*" that is, "So it is written ;" and you mean, or should mean, "God save me from falling into that sin ; or, if I have fallen into that sin, God help me out as quickly as possible." We have nothing to do with our neighbours in the Commination Service. Oh, it is good for us to come to Church to-day and think about those sins which are the real source of our troubles, and get at the bottom of them, and tell about them all to God, and be forgiven. Indeed, indeed we do not think enough about sin. We are so accustomed to sin, so accustomed to read in the newspapers about sin, or in story books about sin, to see sin, to look at pictures of sin, that we lose the keen edge

of being shocked at sin. Now, if we live in an atmosphere of sin winked at, smiled at, written about, talked about, we get to look upon sin as inevitable, and we forget its terribleness in God's sight. How terrible, how great, you can only realise when you remember that nothing save Jesus Christ and Him crucified, God coming down into the world to live and die—nothing save that could atone for sin. The immense greatness of the remedy shows the immense danger of the disease. If ever you want to know the sinfulness of sin in God's sight, think of the greatness of the Love which would pardon it. Good people, remember our motto for this Lent, and anyhow this Lent don't think lightly of sin, don't read about sin, don't laugh about sin, don't talk about sin, don't wink at sin, don't play with sin; for sin separates from God. "*Amen*: so it is written." But, then, this too is written, that Jesus Christ "came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Thank God, through Jesus Christ, I will arise, then, and go to my Father, and will say unto Him, "Father, I have sinned; I am no more worthy to be called Thy son."

You will try, then, and not think so lightly of sin; and you will not shirk some trouble in order to get the help that a profitable Lent will be to

you in this matter—that is, in your aim after a very real repentance. But here it may be quite possible that we, though confessing that we are sinners, yet do not know our sins, do not feel our sinfulness to be any burden, are not anxious about ourselves, comparing ourselves so seldom with patterns of what we might be, contenting ourselves with merely comparing ourselves with one another, contenting ourselves with living in the rut, groove, that we have lived in, and that others around us seem to be living in. I expect I am quite right when I ask you to aim this Lent after a real repentance. We do not know our sins, and so how can we be heartily sorry for them, how can we confess them? And so some of us may be passing our time with no anxiety regarding sin; and when this is the case, we do not feel the need of a Lent. The use of a Lent is only really felt when we realise the badness of sin and the need of repentance. We may feel that it is quite the proper thing there should be a Lent, but that is not at all the same thing as feeling a personal need of Lent. I always think of those words in the Gospel for last Sunday, the Sunday before Lent, “Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.” I like to think of those words as a sort of reminder that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by during Lent. Well, it is so; but suppose it makes no difference to us? By-and-by Jesus of Nazareth has passed by, and possibly we have neither

observed nor regarded Him. I pray you, regard Lent. Let this be our Lenten work, to aim after a real repentance, which means leaving our sins—*our* sins, not other people's.

If you want help, do stop and ask me to-night for self-examination helps.

Leaving our sins, being heartily sorry for them, confessing them, willing to be better, we probe, we mourn, we ask for pardon: this must follow—a growing effort, a strong will to live the life that needs no repentance, and, in order thereto, to use the helps, the means of grace. Suggestions on this point you will find on the paper I have to give you. You will find these suggestions divided under three heads: Prayer, Almsgiving, Self-denial. They are merely suggestions. If you can do better for yourself, do; but do something. If no cross here, can there be a crown there? It is they who sow in tears, that are to reap in joy. It is he who now goeth on his way weeping and bearing handfuls of seed, that doubtless will come again with joy, bearing his sheaves with him.

AN INSTRUCTION ON THE OBSERVANCE OF LENT

(ADDRESSED TO HIS PARISHIONERS).

Next Wednesday is Ash Wednesday. I have prepared this Instruction especially for those who want some help as to how to make a good use of Lent. I have not prepared

an Instruction to prove the desirability or the duty of observing the season of Lent in some way, but an Instruction to help those who already feel that it is right to try and make a good use of the season, but, perhaps, do not exactly know how ; and, also, to help those who have not been accustomed, but may be willing, to regard the season of Lent.

Lent is a season appointed by our Church for you and for me, and we are bidden, for our help, to regard the season as a season of fasting or abstinence. In what the fasting or abstinence is to consist we are not told. It is a matter, that, which we must settle for ourselves, or upon which we must take the advice of any in whose opinion and judgment we have confidence ; for this is quite clear, that if we do not do anything in Lent that may fairly be described as fasting, or as abstinence, or as self-denial, in some way or another, we are not doing what, for our help and good, we are intended and advised to do. The Collect for the first Sunday in Lent would be a most unreal prayer for all who do nothing.

Abstinence and self-denial of some sort, you know as well as I do, is a Bible-commanded and Church-suggested help, means, towards living that life of happiness which is described as a "life hidden with Christ in God." Therefore, good Church people who believe in their Church, and who are humble enough to think their Church more likely to prescribe well for them than newspapers, or natural inclination, or previous habits, will, if they are good for anything, make some account of Lent.

Now, I am not wishing, as I said, on this occasion, to argue with those who would fence off the bringing home to their consciences of the need they have, or of the help they would gain from any Lenten discipline ; but what I am disposed to do is to make certain suggestions to those who, feeling themselves to be so little like what they would be—who, feeling their sinfulness—who, understanding the meaning of "gaining a deepening fear of sin"—who, feeling

good desires, yet fail so over and over again to bring the same to good effect—who, feeling themselves to be at a distance from God, yet, at the same time, long to be closer to Him ; long to realise more and more the presence of God ; long more and more to find a Friend in Jesus Christ—who, confessing their sins, would forsake them—to such like persons I would venture to point out one or two ways of so rightly using a season like this coming Lent as that the mercy of the Lord may be shown to them, and the goodness of the Lord felt by them, and so that, as it were, to others, through them, the Lord may be represented.

It is, however, very difficult to give helpful individual advice to a congregation in public ; your circumstances, your position, time, capacities, all vary. If I say or suggest much, it is unsuitable and disheartening to those who can only do very little. If I say or suggest little, it is quite too meagre for those accustomed to do more. I could give much better individual advice, like a doctor, if I knew the needs of each.

Now, in making out a Lenten Rule for ourselves beforehand, which must be done—if there is no rule there will be no Lent, you may be quite sure of that—it is wise to be very definite, very simple, and, for beginners, very short. We must determine, God helping us, what we propose to do—if possible, write it down on paper ; and then, God helping us, try our best, all through Lent, to keep our resolution or resolutions.

Two things are all-important : (1) Perseverance ; (2) Courage. Both are needed, even if what we propose to do is very slight. To keep even *one* resolution continuously needs constant perseverance, and courage is needed for doing *anything* we are not accustomed to do. For example, is not courage needed for taking notes of an Instruction ; for raising the hat when passing a funeral ; for saying " Grace ;" for getting up five minutes earlier than usual ; for coming to early Communion ; for reading the Bible ; in the

case of men, young men, for coming to Church on a week-day ; for kneeling ; for giving at Collections? Very well, then, understand that you will want (1) Perseverance, (2) Courage. If you feel incapable of giving one or the other, or both, you and Lent will not agree.

Next, as to the *object in view*, *not* just to do the correct thing ; *not* even to have the satisfaction of feeling that something is being done ; *not* to be seen ; *not*, even primarily, to train one's self in self-denial ; but (i.) The correcting of faults ; (ii.) The deepening of sorrow for faults.

Then see where we are exactly. My object this coming Lent : (i.) The correcting of some fault or faults ; (ii.) The deepening of sorrow for that fault or those faults ; and for this I shall need (1) Perseverance, (2) Courage.

Now for i., The correcting of some fault or faults, I shall need (a) Self-Examination ; while, for the deepening of sorrow for that fault or those faults, I shall need (b) Careful prayer.

(a) *Self-Examination*—[There are some useful helps to self-examination for those not accustomed to the exercise, which I can give, and]—You must mind and pick out, *for fighting with*, the darling sin or indulgence, the alluring one, and not just mere surface ones. It is no use indulging yourself in your favourite sin, and trying to satisfy your conscience by fighting against some other sins which do not tempt you so much. These are the sort of questions by asking which you can get down to the right place for fighting.

What do I think most of when I wander in prayer? At night? In bed? What has my conscience been most uneasy about? What fault do I wonder most if others commit? What fault makes me oftenest determine to begin a better life? What fault do I wonder if it is as bad as people say?

We must not fight just lesser sins which are on the top, but besetting, alluring sins nearer the foundation. The top

will give way, whatever you do to it, if the bottom is rotten. Driving along Pall Mall once, I remember being told why the roadway (wood pavement) was in such a deplorable condition. It was because having been laid on boards, not on concrete, the boards underneath had rotted, and so the pavement above had, of course, given—sunk into countless holes. Find out by self-examination, *the* sin or sins—not just any sin or sins; make a note of it or them; and drill into your very self the need of (1) Perseverance and of (2) Courage in the correcting thereof.

For the deepening of sorrow for faults—for a deepening fear of sin:—

(*b*) *Careful Prayer*.—Pray more; more carefully; in a reverent posture; use a form of prayer (which I can give, and one for your children also). The Collects for Ash Wednesday and the first Sunday in Lent are very good. Understand, Prayer is your means for gaining greater sorrow for faults—a deepening fear of sin.

Now, do not be vague; settle your plan. *When* is this self-examination and this prayer to be? How long is it to last? It must not be too long. Write down your resolution, in order to see, day by day, how you fare in keeping it. Are you to get up any earlier? or, if that cannot be, are you to go upstairs to your room sooner? or for a few minutes any time in the evening? Just fix it all. Are you coming to Church on week days? To what services? On what days? Which is it to be? Fix. Then (1) Perseverance, (2) Courage. For remember *the object*—a very worthy one—(i.) Correcting some fault or faults, (ii.) Deepening of sorrow for the same; and the way and means thereto—for i., (*a*) Self-examination; for ii., (*b*) Careful prayer.

Now, what *self-denial* will you practise to prove the reality of your desire to correct a fault, and to deepen your sorrow for it? You must not be afraid of *giving up* something; also, in whatever self-denial you practise, it must not make you *conceited*. Think no better of yourself because you

observe Lent in *some* fashion than of others who observe it in *no* fashion. On the contrary, humbly think how little you do compared with what many do; and mind and be pleasant about it. "They took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus." Whatever your self-denial is, it must not make you less faithful and cheerful in fulfilling your common daily duty, but *more so*.

Now for my suggestions. Take one, or two, or (if you can suit yourselves better elsewhere) none.

Almsgiving.—More. Regularly. Save for it. If you really have no money, give some kindness instead.

Change of Reading.—Give up story-books for the sake of useful books.

More to Church—or, possibly, with some, *less to Church*, that others may be free to go.

Early Communion oftener.

Needlework for others.

Learn Passages of Bible or Hymns.

Read the Daily Lessons. (I can give you a Kalendar.)

Teetotal for Lent. Courage needed.

Less smoking, or none. Courage again.

But "if a man will come after Me," said Jesus Christ, "let him deny himself," and let him keep under his body.

Lastly, I will tell you what is as hard as it is good.

No *grumbling*, no *captious fault-finding*; but instead, to praise, to thank, and to be cheerful. And always remember that it is a great gain if others are benefited by what you give up or do; and remember that one simple rule kept faithfully is far better than a more severe one kept negligently. But anyway, persevere. If you fail, try again. Go on. Do not give up.

The mark of a **X** after your resolution on your paper means that it has been kept; a round O means that it has not been kept. If you have a dozen failures, be sorry, be ashamed—but try again; do not give up.

These are suggestions. Make what use of them you can, or what use of them you like, but fix all beforehand.

Now hear the conclusion of the whole matter, and then I will stop.

Two Essentials.—(1) Perseverance. (2) Courage.

The Object.—(i.) Correcting of fault or faults. (ii.) Deepening of sorrow for them.

The Way thereto. (a) By self-examination. (b) By earnest prayer.

Self-denials as Proofs of Reality.—Take only one or two—Almsgiving. Change of reading. More (or less) to Church. Early Communion. Needlework for others. Learn Bible or hymns. Read Lessons. Teetotal. No smoking. No grumbling or fault-finding; but, instead thereof, praise, thanks, and cheerfulness.

Note your Lenten Rules on paper. Resolve morning by morning. Examine night by night. If you have stumbled get up.

“Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.”

“Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.”

“They took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus.”

NOTE.—This instruction is not intended only to be read over once and then put by, but to be made daily use of throughout Lent.

SERMON XII.

EASTER DAY.

“I look for the Resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.”

I TAKE as my text these concluding words of the Nicene Creed which we have just this minute been singing.

Lent is over and past. The glorious day of Resurrection has dawned ; and as we would in some material fashion show forth our joy inside as well as outside our church, so we would in some pleasant and kindly sentence or in some genial and friendly act show forth to-day our Christian feeling of brotherhood. “Love the Brotherhood” is our new motto for St. Peter’s School, Day and Sunday. “Love the Brotherhood:” the words were read in the lesson last night. To-day we would not limit the application of the motto only to those directly connected with St. Peter’s School ; no, to-day, here, we would express our Christian feeling of brotherhood with all who “look for the Resurrection of the

dead," with all who aim at "the life of the world to come." It is a feeling, this, which between neighbours and neighbours it never comes amiss to express ; but, somehow or other, on a day like this, we come to feel a wish to express it. We have our Christmas greetings, we have our New Year's greetings, we have our birthday greetings ; permit me, then, to imagine myself to be the medium of passing round an Easter greeting from all to all, a greeting of goodwill to all, a prayer for every blessing upon all.

There is never much time on the morning of Easter Day for many words to be spoken from the pulpit, but there is time just to remind ourselves of the assured future that the revelation of Jesus Christ puts before each one of us. It is because I believe that on the third day Jesus Christ "rose again according to the Scriptures," that I look myself "for the Resurrection of the dead." It is because I believe that Jesus Christ "ascended into Heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father," that I look for "the life of the world to come." All this in the future must influence the present, and I am quite sure that the two concluding sentences of the Creed express the real and living faith which guides the lives of many and many amongst us. St. Paul says, if dead men are not raised at all, why do we run in danger every hour ? Unless men "believe in the Resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come," why do they toil for

their God and Saviour in this way and in that? Why do they deny themselves in this fashion and in that fashion? Why do they run to and fro, helping here and helping there? Why do they pray? Why do they seek out the will of God? Why, having found it, do they love to follow it? Why, if dead men are not raised at all, why should they thus "stand in jeopardy"? Why should they thus toil? There is but one answer: Dead men will be raised. Even in the Old Testament, as I read it, I find now and again hopes expressed concerning a resurrection of the body; but in the New Testament I find shown what before was only in part anticipated. "Verily, verily, I say unto you," our Lord declares to the Jews, "the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, . . . and shall come forth, they that have done good, unto the Resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the Resurrection of judgment." And not only did Jesus Christ say there would be a resurrection, but He gave proofs of its possibility. He restored to life the daughter of Jairus. He raised the son of the widow of Nain. He called for Lazarus from the tomb. But the most glorious instance was His own conquest of death, when, as to-day, He rose triumphant from the grave Himself, and "showed Himself alive after His Passion by many infallible proofs." And the Resurrection of Jesus Christ is the pledge,

the earnest of the Resurrection of all men ; Christ's Resurrection is the pledge of ours. For, as it says in the Easter Anthem, as by virtue of our union with the first Adam we all die, even so by our union with the Second Adam shall we all be made alive. And as it is a fundamental article of our Christian faith that the Saviour first died and then rose, "even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him." This Resurrection of Christians is as sure as the Resurrection of Christ ; I, therefore, "look for the Resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come." And then that life to which the righteous shall rise at Christ's coming, the life everlasting, "the life of the world to come," we know but little of what this life will be. In the words of that beautiful song, *The Better Land*—

"Eye hath not seen it, my gentle boy ;
Ear hath not heard its deep sounds of joy ;
Dreams cannot picture a world so fair ;
Sorrow and death cannot enter there.
Time doth not breathe on its fadeless bloom.
Beyond the clouds and beyond the tomb—
It is there, it is there, my child."

But this we know : there there shall not be hunger or thirst or pain, sorrow or suffering or death. There are those connected with this congregation to-day who are feeling the sorrow of the separation of death. There what up-fills this life with care and anxiety will be done away. Tears there will be

wiped away from all eyes, for God will make all things new, and in the new heaven and new earth we read that there will be rest, peace, joy. Our poor bodies fashioned after the pattern of Christ's glorious body: after some sort of a fashion we are to be like unto God, and see Him as He is. Oh, indeed the life that springs out of death will be "life indeed." Truly there is a sense in which there can be no joy like the joy of Easter, because the joy of Easter links to, and is sure of, the Resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

What splendid happiness it will be hereafter to spend Easter together! Then—

"Strive, man, to win that glory;
Toil, man, to gain that light;
Send hope before to grasp it,
Till hope be lost in sight."

Yes, venture for that life. Creed needs character; faith without works is dead. Venture for that life if you are for reaching it. There must be ventures here for eternal life there. To talk about a Resurrection, to dream about a life to come, to stand in no jeopardy for it, to run in no danger for it, to do nothing for it, is a measure as full of folly as it would be to stand in much jeopardy and to run in much danger and do many things, with no Resurrection to follow, and no life of the world to come. "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept."

“ The strife is o’er, the battle done ;
Now is the Victor’s triumph won.”

“ Death’s mightiest powers have done their worst,
And Jesus hath His foes dispersed.”

We venture, then, with good heart, we stand in jeopardy without trembling, we face danger without flinching.

And before I stop let me ask you one and all to join with me, to join with one another, in thanking God this morning for His wondrous love in thus now opening the kingdom of heaven through Jesus Christ to all believers. How can we do this better, how more fitly, than in unitedly singing together the *Swinton Churchmen’s Hymn*, the words of which are so especially appropriate? We meet together this morning in church as one united congregation of Swinton Churchmen ; St. Peter’s, Holy Rood, St. Stephen’s, All Saints,—here this morning we all are, the one morning in the year when it is so. Let us, as it were, imagine hand joining hand as we sing our united song of thankfulness and praise.

When, in 1864, thirty years ago, I preached my first sermon in Swinton Old Church as incumbent of this parish, I took as my text those words of Jesus Christ, “ That they may all be one ; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee ; that they also may be one in Us.” I said then, that for pastor

and people to adopt that verse as a motto for the days of our intercourse together, be they many or few—they have certainly been many—might be helpful to us both. “That we might be one, even as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are one ; that we might be one in God, united together and united to Him, by that greatest of all bonds, the bond of Christian love ; ‘endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.’” That was thirty years ago. As a bond of union now between Swinton Churchmen a hymn has been chosen. By a very large majority of votes, Hymn 299, *Hymns Ancient and Modern*,¹ has been chosen—to be sung, of course, to the tune known as *Bennett’s* ; a hymn the text of which is taken from the fifth chapter of Revelation ; a hymn written by Dr. Isaac Watts, in 1707, during Queen Anne’s reign ; a hymn which all Swinton Church people, young and old, are asked to learn by heart ; many have already done so. All Swinton Church people who can play piano, organ, harmonium, violin, or any instrument, are asked to learn the tune. Let the hymn be looked upon as our hymn ; whenever we may sing the hymn together, whether in church, school, home, let us feel it to be a bond uniting us together. If when away from home, when far away from home, we hear the hymn sung, let it remind us of home ;

¹ “Come, let us join our cheerful songs
With Angels round the Throne,” etc.

on any special occasion, at any special gathering, let this hymn be sung, and let it be on record that at church on this very Easter Day, the one Sunday morning in the year when we meet in church as one body, the hymn was, in its new character as our hymn, for the first time sung.

I look upon this hymn this morning as the conclusion of the sermon. The alms, therefore, will not be collected while we sing it; we will sing again another hymn during the collection.

SERMON XIII.

CALLED AND SENT: AN ORDINATION SERMON.

BEFORE I begin my sermon let me do myself, what I always would recommend other clergymen to do—tell at once the subject of the sermon. It is a helpful custom to observe, both to preachers and hearers. My subject is the bracing encouragement which the two words *Called* and *Sent* give to a parish clergyman.

For my text I have chosen two words, and two words only,—the word *Called* and the word *Sent*. In the first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, and in the first verse, is the word *Called*. In the tenth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, and in the fifteenth verse, is the word *Sent*.

Called, Sent: that is the motto for this sermon, and that is the motto that I would ask you who are come here this morning to be admitted into the holy office of the Priesthood, and you who are

to be admitted into the order of Deacons, to accept as a motto for your ministerial lives. In the lesson for last Monday evening you will find one word, in the lesson for next Saturday evening you will find the other word ; and elsewhere in the Bible will you find the two words over and over again. As you read your Bibles, underline those two words as you come across them ; they were the text of one of your ordination sermons, and if you remember nothing else of this sermon, remember its text, remember its motto, for the bracing encouragement, for the helping cheer of your whole future lives, you who are *called*, you who are *sent*, into the ministry of Christ's Church.

You will all of you know well enough that I can now only touch upon some one little corner of the great big subject that on such an occasion as this lies before me. I must leave entirely untouched many matters that need your earnest care every bit as much as what I may speak of ; but since "one thing at a time" is a rule as useful to observe in matters spiritual as in matters temporal, therefore I set myself simply to show you one thing, namely, how in every-day parochial life you may bring into practical use this ordination sermon motto, "*Called, Sent, by God.*"

1. *Called, Sent.* The mission is from the Lord to represent Him as we go about our parishes. Having chosen, He sends from Himself. You will

feel the strength, power, comfort of this Divine mission. Christ has sent me no less than the Apostles of old, and He is no further off; the Presence is veiled, but none the less is it Himself, because veiled. My mission is from Him. And this thought is extremely helpful, helpful both in ministering and in preaching. But for the fact of this calling, this sending, it would be an impertinence in a young priest or deacon to minister to, or preach before, those older, wiser, better, in the parish. But being *called, sent*, it is far otherwise. We are *called, sent*, to represent Christ Jesus in our parishes. Often look at Him on the Cross; have often before your eyes Christ on the Cross, with arms in tenderest love extended to draw all men unto Him, for it is He Who has *sent* and *called* us to represent Him. The very thought beats one down to the ground, and yet the very thought sends one bravely on—a power in every direction. Lowly enough, as the world talks, may be the sphere of our mission. Elijah was sent to the widow of Sarepta. “Is all the grandeur of the calling, of the sending, to end in visiting a poor widow? Surely that is a waste of force.” Never give such a thought even an entrance into your minds. Elijah, who was taken up to heaven, was sent for many a long day to the poor widow of Sarepta. You may be *called, sent*, to poor and lowly people only,—of course you may; I am

inclined to say you may thank God if you are. You are sent to them with a purpose worthy of the Divine Word. I much dislike to see men advertising for curates to work in "important" parishes. I should be very shy of a man who invited me to come to him under the plea of coming to an important sphere. With God is no respect of persons. We are getting altogether out of a healthy atmosphere if any trappings of humanity affect us, the ambassadors of Christ,—affect us who are *called* and *sent* to be representatives of the Crucified One. An honour—yes, of course, you know, you feel it is an honour to be *sent* on this mission, to be *called* with this calling; but it is one to which in itself you must not think of attaching any earthly glory at all. It is one, the reward of which, and the cheer of which, though absolutely sure and immeasurably great, you must be content to look forward to, and to find, only amidst those beauties and those joys which are upon the other side. Banish now for ever a thought of individual importance. "The disciple is not above His Master;" thankful if allowed to be "as his Master," if accounted "worthy to suffer shame for His Name" Who was reviled, buffeted, was spit upon, was crucified. Yes, and actually again in last Friday's lesson; "they mocked Him," "they spat upon Him," "they smote Him." I cannot tell you how often those words have pulled me through

the scoffs of men, the worldly clap-trap of newspapers, and what we sometimes feel to be the hardnesses of parochial life.

2. Again, *Called, Sent*, to be in our parishes men of prayer as well as men of action : and this is so very, very hard ; but “where there is a will there is a way,” and it must be so. Active, energetic, hard-working, if the devotional side of our own lives drops low down, then our example will not win over our people to be devotional too, and then certainly our words never will. The blind never lead the blind, and to pass as men of prayer, if we really are not, is impossible ; and yet, with the hurry and fever of life, with the cry of duties that press on every side, there comes the fear lest we should abuse that proverb conspicuous over the fireplace in a room which you know well, that proverb which tells us truly that “*laborare est orare*,” a saying of St. Augustine—there comes the danger lest we should rest content with being hard-working clergy, and not necessarily men of much prayer ; the danger lest this essential part of our office, as priests, become a subordinate one, instead of a chief one. Probably those to whom we are *called* and *sent* to minister will reap more benefit by prayer made daily to God by us for them, than they will do by our activities and our preaching ; as it has been quaintly put, “God is more respectful to the prayers we make for the people, than

ever the people are to the sermons we make for them.”¹ “The highest and most effectual work is being done by the priest when he is commending his people to God.”

And here, good people all, one word to you: do you pray for us? Do you feel it binding on your consciences to pray for the Bishops, Priests, and Deacons of your Church? We need your prayers that we may incline to pray more for you. With what a refreshed spirit do we go forth when we know that some of our people are praying for us, that young children are praying for us! Much is expected of us, and yet, mayhap, few prayers are prayed for our help.

3. And here next, following on this, one word about sermons. We are *called, sent* to preach; but if you, the people, complain sometimes that you do not get good sermons, part of the fault is your own. Possibly you do not pay for enough clergy to do the parish work, possibly you do not help enough to work parishes yourselves, but possibly you never pray, like a little child once prayed on a Saturday night, “O God, may the minister say something to-morrow that I can understand.” Who knows but that if the people ask, it shall be given them? And you, my brethren of the ministry, bear that child’s prayer in your minds in connection with your own sermons. I

¹ Bishop Cosin,

have found it very useful to myself. "O God, may the minister say something to-morrow that I can understand." When you baptize children you will have to tell godparents to call upon their god-children "to hear sermons:" always say to yourself, "And may I take care that they are worth hearing." Be perfectly natural, be perfectly straightforward, be full of love and humility. Tread not in the ruts of a past century, banish formality. Incline rather to teaching than to preaching—fewer sermons, more instructions. Teach what is of interest to yourself. Let there be something in what you say which will be information to your people, or something which, since last you preached, has come as information to yourself. Do not preach a written sermon until you have previously read it out aloud, certainly twice—three times is best. Try all you can to make religion interesting, and to put it interestingly.

4. *Called, sent* to be a minister—doing ministerial work before aught else. I come to a matter on which there seems to be difference of opinion. I can only speak for myself, and I shall have no time to explain myself, and guard myself from misunderstanding. Make your people clearly understand that God did not call you, that God did not send you, to be primarily concerned with every social, philanthropic, instructive and recreative movement in your parish, but that He called you and sent you to a very weighty work, even one pertaining directly

to the salvation of souls ; that He called you and sent you before all else to set forth the eternal praise of His Holy Name. For example, if your sermons are to be profitable, you must have time—and you must explain this—to prepare them ; if you are to visit, that most telling, most useful of parochial works needs not only time but freedom of mind ; if you are to go to your schools and be any good there, you must have time to get ready, and no over-tired head to carry there.

You are not being ordained to-day in order that you may have time to be the chief manager of football clubs, cricket clubs, lads' clubs, reading-rooms, gymnasiums, weekly entertainments, dramatic performances, classes for technical instruction, and this and that and the other useful and proper parochial organization, yet not, to my thinking, the special work for clergy. If the young clergy take these positions, to which they will be largely invited, I see not how they can pray, preach, visit, look after the schools, and meet their classes and guilds either with regularity or preparedness or devotion. Who expects to see our parish doctors doing all these sorts of things ? If the laity are not going to see to the carrying on of these good works themselves, and if, as is the fashion now, the clergy are to become chief movers in them and spend their strength thereon, it will be useful, it will be reported in the papers (a remarkable attraction to

some people), it will help to brighten dull lives, it will be on the side of morality ; but, because there are only so many hours in every day, because there is only so much strength in every man, it will be to the detriment of that which is our first call—to live for the glory of God in the salvation of souls, pointing our people to the means of grace, to the Resurrection of the dead, to the life of the world to come. Read over the ordination services of this day with careful attention, and see from them in what track a clergyman is to find, I say not his only, but his first, his chief duty.

The laity are bound, in the interests of their Church, to protect their clergy from being compelled to do laymen's work ; and then their clergy ought, must, repay them by doing their proper work : this by all means ; for I have no kind of remote sympathy with clergy who can be constantly at half-past-four o'clock "afternoon at homes," constantly at tennis, who can throw up parochial duties for cricket, and give up a class for a dinner party. That sort of conduct is at once fatal all round, for "preachers who preach heaven but live earth" command no attention, do untold harm.

Hug your motto. Buffet yourselves with it. *Called, Sent.* Get not yourselves entangled with the increasing craze for amusement, for recreation, for entertainments : for this—and a great deal of it is in connection with the Church—is blunting

the keenness for religious duties ; and the fashionable philanthropy of the day is pushing into the background the care by Churchmen for the Sacraments and Ordinances of the Lord.

5. But I must be drawing to a close. My motto, "*Called, Sent,*" aids me all round : it helps me to keep within bounds the time to be spent in mere pleasure, hinders me from being too much entangled with work that is not my special work, with work the doing of which certainly never needed episcopal ordination, and gives me courage and strength and cheer in the endeavour to perform my chief work.

Called by God—the knowledge that it is so,—*Sent by God*—the certainty that it is so,—what else can pull us through our many difficulties, our many shynesses, our many awkwardnesses, our many duties, our constant drudgery, our night after night work? Plod, plod, plod—hour after hour—mile after mile—tired, wearied, disappointed, misunderstood! Oh, how your steps will be quickened, your energies revived, your will uproused, your down-heartedness cheered, by this recollection—*Called, Sent.*

St. Paul had branded on his body the marks of Jesus. We are not *called* and *sent* only to read the story. It is not to content us to look at the Cross of Christ, to point to the Cross of Christ ; it has to be taken up, and time after time we are tempted to shift the sharp edge of the Cross from off our

shoulder before it has had time to make any mark there, but "*Called and Sent*" overmasters the temptation. Good brothers, you will have to do what you never could do unless you were *called* and *sent*. There is a picture, here, in Manchester, which often gives me help—Holman Hunt's *Shadow of Death* in the Art Gallery. You see our Lord as a carpenter at Nazareth, wearied, stretching Himself: our Lord wearied. I know, you know, what it is to get wearied. So be it. Tradition has it that St. Peter once said, "The weary soul is near to God;" and there come up to one's mind the words of that old Church hymn, twelve hundred years old—a hymn which comes to us from the island of Crete, a hymn which Dr. Neale translated for the help of thousands of Englishmen;—

" Well I know thy trouble,
 O My servant true ;
 Thou art very weary,—
 I was weary too ;
 But that toil shall make thee
 Some day all Mine own,
 And the end of sorrow
 Shall be near My Throne."

" Not yet, not yet ; to-morrow I will rest
 The weary head and limbs, but not to-day :
 Did He not say
 ' I came to serve, not to be served ; and you,
 ' If you would do My work, must serve like Me ?'

" Let me work on
 Till comes the welcome order to lie down and sleep ;

And I, unworthy servant that I am,
Shall win on battle-field the victor's crown
For simply doing His beloved behest.
Let me work on ; to-morrow I will rest."

And if one for whom Satan has struggled, as he has for me, should ever reach the blessed shore, then how this heart will glow with gratitude and love! Through ages of eternal years my spirit never shall repent that toil and suffering once were mine below,

SERMON XIV.

VOTERS.

“Fear God.”—I ST. PETER ii. 17.

“Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.”—I COR. x. 31.

IT will not, I think, be out of place if I, this afternoon, say a few words on a matter which at this time has a special interest and importance,—I mean the responsibility of a voter. Only first let me say how far I have a right, here, to enter upon such a subject. If I were to do so as a partisan of one or other of the political parties in the State I should be without excuse. A clergyman must, of course, make up his own mind and have his own opinion on these matters, like other men; but if he were to seek to press them upon his people from the pulpit, he steps down from his own proper place as a Christian teacher, he is no longer able impartially, as before God, to put before his people those great leading principles of truth and justice, of right and wrong, from which each man may

make up his mind for himself. I do not speak as a champion for any party ; I keep wholly clear of this. My sole point is, *the responsibility of every voter*. "Fear God ;" "Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." If a Christian man has a vote for a Member of Parliament (and a great many people will be able to vote for Members of Parliament at the forthcoming election who never had votes before), that man is bound, as a Christian, in giving that vote, to "fear God," to do it "to the glory of God." It may be under certain circumstances a man's duty sometimes not to vote at all ; "fearing God," he declines to vote. The circumstances are possible and at times arise. But out of laziness, out of carelessness, and not from any consideration of duty at all, to go and act the part of the unprofitable servant who wrapped his Lord's talent in a napkin and buried it in the ground when he ought to have employed it as a sacred trust ; to say, "Why should I trouble myself about this matter?"—to say, "I will take my ease, eat, drink, and die, whether the commonwealth be overthrown or the heavens fall," is clearly to leave undone something which we are bound to do, is clearly the opposite to that fear of God which ought to lead a man to act "to the glory of God." We have, in having a vote, a solemn trust committed to us ; we ought to use that trust conscientiously, as before God, with a single eye to His honour,

the good of His Church, and the peace and happiness of the nation at large. We ought to send men to Parliament who will consult for the advancement of God's glory, the good of His Church, the safety, honour, and welfare of our Sovereign and her dominions ; "that all things may be so settled by their endeavours upon the best and surest foundations, that peace and happiness, truth and justice, religion and piety, may be established among us for all generations."

The time, then, is at hand when we shall be called upon to discharge a trust, a duty which God lays upon us as members of a civilised Christian community. Each individual seems to count for very little, yet the votes of individuals will make up the utterance of the nation's voice, and upon that utterance mighty issues depend. No man may say that his own vote counts for so little, that he may be excused, merely because of the trouble, from exercising it ; for, be our opportunities great or small, we shall answer to God for the use which we make of them.

And here one word by the way, and altogether apart from voting for Members of Parliament. With regard to vestry meetings ; Church people should make a point of attending them. No man should say that his presence there would count for nothing ; that, as it would be troublesome to go, so he may be excused. Church people are the guardians

of their Church, and Church people should be "on guard," at the post of duty. They may have nothing to do ; they may have had to come out into the night air—uselessly it might seem ; not so at all. To be "on guard" is not useless, and no man ever knows what may happen ; we are in charge, and while in charge must not go to sleep. Now, if I had just given notice of some vestry meeting, and had said these words, you would have supposed that I had some special reason for so speaking ; and therefore I have taken the opportunity offered me to-day, in connection with what I am talking about, to give this my word of advice when there is no vestry meeting at all in sight. It is a general rule that I want to impress upon you all ; and I have thought I might best press it "out of season" rather than "in season." Forewarned, forearmed. Every Churchman is in charge of his Church. Be ready, when the notice is given, "Churchmen are requested to attend,"—be ready to obey the summons. "Ye know not what shall be on the morrow." Excuse this digression ; I go back.

One man's vote is worth as much as another's, and I read that there never has been a general election in England in which the unrecorded votes were not sufficient, had they been so cast, to reverse the whole policy of the country ; that is to say, the "unprofitable servants," who have the franchise, but wrap it in a napkin and bury it in the earth,

are always enough to change the whole course of our social and political history. God has given us talents many and various—time and money, voice and vote; and we acknowledge that in all things we possess we are His stewards, and shall have to give account of our stewardship. But if we are answerable before God for the use which we make of our money, shall we not be equally answerable for the use which we make of our political franchise? If for “every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account” before God, shall they not much more give account of the voice, or vote, by which they influence, according to their ability, the counsels of the nation? And how much more still shall they give account, if by their silence—not from any conscientious silence at all, not from any silence wrought by the fear of God—but if by their silence, which is but the silence of carelessness or of laziness, they refuse to utter the voice and to give the vote by which their country might have been delivered? In the wisdom which God has dispensed to us, we may differ in our views regarding politics; and it is not the part of the clergy, in the pulpits of Churches, to tell the people seated before them how to go forth and vote; but it is their part to set before the people the duty of voting conscientiously, the duty of fearing God when they give their vote, the duty of including the giving of a vote as amongst those things which are to be

done "for the glory of God," the duty of guiding themselves, not by considerations of personal advantage, but by regard for the welfare of the Church and State. Some may wish to see abuses remedied in a spirit conservative of every noble tradition; whilst others may regard the ancient institutions of the country as altogether out of date, no longer capable of being adapted to modern needs, but, like a dead tree, fit only to be torn up by the roots. But whatever be your wisdom, let your country have the benefit of it; whatever seems to you, after gaining the most trustworthy information within your reach, and not believing that, because a statement is in print, it is therefore infallible, whatever seems to you the righteous policy—support it. In a large and catholic spirit promote the true interests of the whole country. Let it not be said—or, at least, let it not be said with any truth—that the upper classes are only roused when the privileges of the aristocracy are in question; that the clergy are frantic when the rights of their own order are threatened; and that the working men care for nothing but the class interests of working men. Be Englishmen, be patriots; seek that justice be done between nation and nation, and righteousness between man and man. No good cause needs to be supported by wrong and robbery; least of all can the cause of our Lord Jesus Christ be furthered by political or by social

injustice. Let the party that will "fear God" prevail. Let that party that will "do all to the glory of God" prevail. Let the party that will do right prevail—right, whatever it may cost; right between the oppressor and the oppressed, right between nation and nation, right between party and party, between class and class. Right—it can never lower our honour or degrade our name, for "righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people." May God defend the Right.

You have, I dare say, many of you, read the letter of our two Archbishops, addressed to the public on the forthcoming election. It is a grave and a temperate letter, and it contains advice entirely becoming the position of the writers as leaders of the Church of England, since it lifts our thoughts above the strife of party politics—as I would do to-day,—and directs them to the great ends for which all government is ordained. I will read part of the letter to you, and you will see that the advice therein given may be summed up thus:—

Think for yourself.

Do not transfer your individual responsibility to a party.

Trust known character rather than promises.

Be honest yourself and in others respect the secrecy of the ballot and the independence of the voter.

Remember the great issues that hang upon your vote.

“The votes now to be given will probably govern the Empire for some years to come, and we are persuaded that many voters do not sufficiently realise their individual share in the solemn responsibility of such governance. It is too often forgotten that upon these votes must necessarily depend in great measure the happiness and prosperity, not of the home population only, but of the dependencies, amounting in all to more than three hundred million souls, of many creeds and various languages, and with wants not very perfectly realised among us. This is a serious duty, and a heavy responsibility in the sight of God and man.

“The duty and the responsibility are somewhat obscured by the way in which an election is usually conducted. Each rival candidate is tempted to declare that no good thing ever has proceeded, or could proceed, from the party which he opposes; and to promise every form of prosperity, and the removal of every evil, if he be himself elected. We urge the peril of the temptation to which the voter is liable, to look exclusively to self-interest, and to neglect the juster view. Weigh with caution all such ready promises, and require some explanation of the manner in which their fulfilment is to become possible. Instead of preferring the man of

most promises, give your support to one whom you can trust for his character and work ; one who has shown an interest in the great social improvements which must largely occupy the next Parliament.

“ It has been said that, in order to conceal your vote from some inquirer who might injure you, you may speak falsely of your intentions. That doctrine has been condemned, as it ought to be. But such a temptation should not exist. The law gives the right of secret voting, and it is unjust and ungenerous to the weak to ask from them any pledge which deprives them of that protection. No less culpable would be all vindictiveness or unneighbourly conduct towards those who act or speak as independent citizens and electors, in support of candidates or political opinions different from your own.

“ Our desire is to urge upon all electors the plain duty of thinking for themselves, the impossibility of transferring their responsibility for their several votes to a party or association, and the duty of considering the lessons which the history of our own country and the conditions of foreign countries impress on us as to the great issues, religious, social, political, which are now before us. We purposely avoid dealing with party questions. One indeed tempts us . . . the question as to the disestablishment and disendowment of the Church. . . . We will only say here, that among social questions it is, perhaps, the highest in importance.

“The occasion is momentous, and should be met in a serious spirit, and with a resolve to do in the sight of the Almighty what is best for the United Kingdom, and for the millions that depend upon it. God is in the midst of us, and we will not fear. . . . Let us renew in our prayers our faith in the Divine government and protection, and let our vote be given with the firm purpose of advancing the glory of God and promoting the good of our country and people.

“EDW. CANTUAR.

“W. EBOR.”

Now, my brethren, the fact that this address has been issued at all—a very unprecedented step—bears witness to a deep and anxious sense of all that is depending on the votes to be given, thousands of them for the first time, before the end of this month. The appeal is, of course, not directed to the special issues to be determined by the votes given, but to the spirit and temper in which so serious a business ought to be carried on. It is an attempt to lift a general election to its true moral and political level. A general election has long been a byword for much that is discreditable; an occasion for tricks, and lies, and slanders. It is well for all honest men of all parties to hear from lips which speak with authority, in the name of religion, a fearless condemnation of those evil ways

which society is apt to take so lightly. May the words addressed to the people of England awaken anyhow some voters to the responsibility of their trust. And that is my point to-day, the voter's responsibility: "Fear God;" "Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

And the Archbishops have done right to put on record in a very emphatic manner their disapproval, not only of the strange doctrines about the lawfulness of deceit and falsehood in voting, but also of that more ancient and more wide-spread system of interference with the voter's liberty of voting which has taught him to tell lies to protect his rights, and has been made the excuse for giving him a license to cheat, which must prove ruinous to him both as a man and as a citizen.

One important question which will divide the electorate, the Archbishops, considering what their object in issuing the address was, have only mentioned, and have neither expressed nor urged their own views upon—I mean disestablishment and disendowment. They only record their conviction that amongst social questions the disestablishment and disendowment of the Church is perhaps highest in importance. So it seems to many lookers-on besides them. If it does not, at the present time, so seem to all, anyhow so it seems to the Liberatorists, whose manifesto, just issued, you may have read; so it seems to a vast number of Englishmen

to whom the question of religion in its many forms, whether they are zealous for it or hostile to it, is the most interesting and exciting of all questions ; so it seems, rightly or wrongly, to a number of the best-known men on the moderate Liberal side, who have stepped courageously forward, and, without renouncing in the least degree their own political opinions, have proclaimed that this matter stands in the front rank, and that they will not sanction by their assistance or support any parliamentary candidate who will not promise to support the Church.

Yes, very big issues indeed the present course of politics is bringing before us, and we have need to brush aside all petty partisan, parliamentary calculations, and to hold ourselves ready, when need requires, to support without stint and without faltering that cause before which every other consideration that governs us must be sacrificed. The issue, as it was said the other day, is in other hands than ours ; but, at all events, this shall be said, that, so far as unsparing action and resolute determination can carry us, so far as the staunch upholding of our own most cherished beliefs can gain our purpose, so far as our mere will and exertions can go, we, at all events, whether in the near present or in the dim and misty future, will not prove ourselves faithless to the sacred deposit which the piety and wisdom of many generations of ancestors have handed down to our time.

Brethren, I, in my official capacity as your clergyman, know no politics except in so far as they affect the Church ; but no Churchman, whatever his politics, can be indifferent to an attempt—which, if not to be made now, is going to be made, as every newspaper warns us—to divert the property of the Church to secular purposes, and thus to cripple the Church of England in the great work in which, throughout the length and breadth of the land, she is everywhere engaged for the salvation of souls.

I ask not if you are Liberals, I ask not if you are Conservatives ; but I pray you be Churchmen—be Churchmen before all else. And if this coming Parliament is not to test your Churchmanship, as we are told, yet nevertheless stand not too much at ease, cast not your armour upon the ground ; and thus it shall be true of us, clergy and laity alike—

“ In Jerusalem below,
We are workers at God’s call ;
Each with one hand meets the foe,
With the other builds the wall ;”

fearing God,—doing all to the glory of God.

SERMON XV.

THE SACREDNESS OF PROPERTY.

“Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no room, and ye be made to dwell alone in the midst of the land!”—ISAIAH v. 8 (R.V.).

IN the church of the parish where I live, near the West door, is a question-box. In this box are placed from time to time papers containing requests of one sort or another. I open the box every Monday. Recently I found a request from a working man, that I would preach a sermon upon the eighth verse of the fifth chapter of Isaiah. This sermon is the outcome of that request.

Whether, or not, the sermons answer expectations or deal with texts in the way desired, I hardly know; but of one thing there can be no doubt—the gladness of the clergy to have topics suggested to them which they know will be of interest to their people.

The subject of my sermon, then, is *the Sacredness of Property*. Property-owners—and property-owners does not mean only land-owners—are God’s stewards.

The writers who have helped me are Dr. Smith, Dr. Dale, Mr. Llewelyn Davies, and Prebendary Eyton.¹

“Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no room, and ye be made to dwell alone in the midst of the land!”

The words are the words of the prophet Isaiah, though, as you will see directly, they are words handed on by him to the people very directly from the Lord. The date is about 730 or 740 B.C. Isaiah was a native of Jerusalem. Jerusalem was the very centre of all his thoughts. The prophet speaks to the people of Jerusalem and to the people of Judæa hard by. It has been written that, it is interesting to notice how, with Isaiah, Almighty God is not only the infinitely high, but also the infinitely near; exalted in righteousness, but likewise concerned with every detail of the politics and social behaviour of the people; a God not to be confined within the walls of the church, but by His prophet meeting the people in their markets and their councils. God is represented by Isaiah as having an interest in every detail of practical life. Moreover God is represented as sorely tried by the stupid inconsistency of His people, who acted as though their God were hardly a reasonable God. “O you people,” Isaiah says,

¹ Payne Smith, “Isaiah;” Dale, “Laws of Christ for Common Life;” Davies, “Social Questions;” Eyton, “The True Life.”

“don't you act as if there were a fool on the Throne of the Universe? For indeed you do so act, when, for instance, you adopt meaningless forms of worship as your only intercourse with Him ; when you afterwards go away from your church and practise outside, elsewhere, rank iniquities, as if there God did not see nor care.”

Religion is not a uniform which we can take off when we are off duty ; it is not a set of words which we can recite and have done with : it is a character, it is a creed vivified into life.

Several are the passages in which the prophet stings and startles the people with the sense that God Himself takes an interest in their deeds, and has His own working plans for their life. Well, witness the land question in the text. Isaiah, in delivering his message on this very point, says it has been whispered to him by the Lord Jehovah. God is acquainted with our affairs ; God takes His own interest in them. Yes, God is both holy and practical, God is both high and near.

Now, the text is taken from the eighth verse of the fifth chapter of Isaiah. In the beginning of the chapter Isaiah teaches or tries to teach the people a lesson by a parable—a parable of a vineyard. The people to whom he was talking seem to have thought it impossible for God to abandon their State, which He had so long and so carefully fostered. The teaching of the Parable of the

Vineyard shows that under certain circumstances this is not impossible. It may come to pass that no rain will come down upon the vineyard, and then what will happen? People have responsibilities tied up with their civilisation. If people, like the vineyard, are to be tended by God, then they must, amongst other things, see to this—that they aim after fulfilling the intentions of the Almighty. Do they produce those fruits of righteousness for the obtaining whereof alone God cares to set apart and cultivate the peoples? On the answer to this depends the question whether the State, civilised as it considers itself, is secure. “Take care, then, my people, take care; because, when I come to look at the vineyard of the Lord, that is, when I come to look at you, I find,” says Isaiah, “wild grapes here and there and up and down.” And then Isaiah begins, as it were, to catalogue these wild grapes in a series of woes. It is a fine chapter, this fifth chapter, but full of sadness; for six woes are pronounced against various sins, the people being so bent on not listening unto God. One of the wild grapes was the love of money. Isaiah tells how that sin showed itself; for his first woe has to do with the abuse of the soil: “Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no room, and ye be made to dwell alone in the midst of the land! In mine ears saith the Lord of Hosts, Of a truth

many houses shall be desolate, even great and fair, without inhabitant." For ten acres of vineyard (two-thirds of ours), instead of yielding, as they might and ought to do, thirty-two thousand pints of wine, shall only yield sixty-four pints; and ten bushels of seed, instead of producing five hundred bushels, as they might and ought, shall yield but one. There was a warning—a warning indeed! There was depopulation! There was barrenness, as a result of their sin! What sin? The sin of the Church forgetting her trust; of the members of the Church forgetting that they are "members one of another." And so the abuse of the soil was one of the features of corrupt civilisation in Judæa two thousand six hundred years ago; even as, over and over again since, civilised communities have always in one way or another had to deal with what they have called their *land question*. Every civilised community, it has been written by Mr. Smith in his book on *Isaiah*,—"every civilised community develops, sooner or later, its land question and its liquor question." *Questions* they are called by the superficial opinion that all the difficulties may be overcome by the cleverness of men: yet problems, through which there cries for remedy so much misery, are something worse than questions; they are sins, and require all the zeal of which a nation's conscience is capable. *Isaiah* is not facing questions of State

merely, but sins of men. He has nothing to tell us of what he considers the best system of land tenure, but he enforces the principle that in the ease with which land may be absorbed by one person, the natural covetousness of man has a ready opportunity for working mischief upon society.

“Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no room, and ye be made to dwell alone in the midst of the land!” The prophet Micah, who lived about the same time, tells us how the actual process which Isaiah here condemns was carried out, often with cruel evictions and disinheritance. Isaiah does not touch on its methods, but exposes its effects on the country—depopulation and barrenness; and then, in the middle of his words, showing that God takes His own interest in our affairs—“All this was whispered to me by Jehovah;” “In mine ears saith the Lord of Hosts.” My friends, “Behold, your house is left unto you desolate” is the mournful legend written over every life that puts rights before duties, and is found, in its day of trial, with no sense of social obligations.

During recent agitations in our own country the “land laws of the Bible” have been held forth by some thoughtless agitators as models for land tenure among ourselves; as if a system which worked with a small tribe, in a small land they

had all entered on an equal footing, and where there was no opportunity for the industry of the people, except in pasture and tillage—as if such a system could possibly be applicable to a vastly larger and more complex population with different traditions and very different social circumstances. Isaiah says nothing about the peculiar land laws of his people. According to the constitution of the Jewish State land was strictly entailed, and might not be alienated; and this Jewish law was based on the fact that the land was the Lord's, the people being only feudatory tenants, or even sojourners with Him. And this "holding" was well understood; even Ahab, of all men, shrank from the seizure of Naboth's vineyard. Isaiah lays down principles, and these are principles valid in every civilisation. God has made the land, not to feed the pride of the few, but the natural hunger of the many, and it is His will that the most be got out of the country's soil for the people of the country. Whatever be the system of land-tenure—and while all systems are liable to abuse, it is the duty of the people to work for that which will be least liable—I say, whatever be the system of land-tenure, if it is taken advantage of by individuals to satisfy their own cupidity, then God will take account of them. There is a responsibility which the State cannot enforce, and the neglect of which cannot be punished by any earthly law; but

all the more will God see to it. A nation's treatment of their land ceaselessly has an interest to God, Who ever holds individuals to answer for it. The land question is ultimately a religious question. Those who own or manage estates are responsible to God ; theirs is a sacred office. When one not only remembers the nature of land, how it is an element of life, so that if a man abuse the soil, it is as if he poisoned the air, as so many do in my neighbourhood ; but when one remembers, too, the multitude of personal relations which the land-owner holds in his hands, one feels that to all who possess or manage land is granted an opportunity of patriotism and piety open to few, a ministry less honourable and sacred than none other committed by God to man for his fellow-men.

Property-owners are stewards, and they are bound in the sight of God to act as faithful stewards of the possessions which God has entrusted to their stewardship. Men have need to remember that they will have to answer for themselves at the day of judgment—the most solemn of truths.

The Kingdom of Heaven knows no other theory of ownership but the theory of stewardship. The theory makes no distinction between land and other things. It does not abolish private property. It said of a piece of land, before the early Christian communism had died away, "Whiles it remained, did it not remain thine own? and after it was sold,

was it not in thy power?" Clearly, then, no man, on submitting to baptism, came under any engagement to surrender his property to the Church. Every man had a perfect right to retain as much of his property as he thought fit; if he chose, he might retain it all. But Christian men who had property then, for a while held it with a light hand—regarded it as a trust, and, since many of their brethren were poor, sold houses and lands to create a fund for their support. They regarded the Kingdom of Christ a *societas*, Christians *socii*, companions—fellow-citizens of a higher kingdom than any on earth. What God does is this: He fastens upon the individual a definite personal responsibility for the employment of whatsoever he has. His control over land, or house, or money, whatever it be that the law of his country secures to him, is one of the opportunities of action afforded him, and all these opportunities are talents committed to him by His Lord, that he may make them bear interest. He may use the phrase "my own," but it is one which will fill him with a solemn rather than a self-complacent feeling. "This is mine—because from me, and not from anybody else, my Lord will demand an account of its use." The Lord Jesus Christ never suggests that private property should be abolished, but tells us to use it as God's stewards. He was once asked to arbitrate between two brothers, the younger of whom

thought he had not got his share of the estate. Remember the memorable reply, "Man, who made Me a judge or a divider over you? . . . Beware of covetousness; for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." Our Lord declines to go out of the province of spiritual teaching into that of earthly law. A great German defined the difference between Socialism and Christianity in a very clever epigram. "Socialism says, 'What is thine is mine.' Christianity says, 'What is mine is thine;' the difference is infinite." But the epigram needs correction: Christianity really teaches us to say, "What seems thine is not thine, what seems mine is not mine: whatever thou hast belongs to God, whatever I have belongs to God; you and I must use what we have according to God's Will." I feel quite certain of this, that the idea of stewardship, which the Gospel commends, would be far more powerful for all social good than the idea of absolute ownership; that the habit of asking, not, "May I not do what I will with mine own?" but, "Must I not do what God wills with that which He has lent to me?" would be the motive that would best lead to a right use of property. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof."

"May I not do what I will with mine own?" That reminds me: I have read of a man quite gravely and unconsciously alleging as a reason for

clearing his property of inhabitants, that he was acting in accordance with the Scriptural doctrine that he could "do what he liked with his own." The Scriptural doctrine! Is Isaiah's woe in the text to-day forgotten? By all means let us say, "Property is holy;" but property held on what terms? Property held as a trust for the good of all, or property held as a right for individual gratification? "The earth is the *Lord's*, and the fulness thereof."

And, think you, does this conception of the sacredness of property—of the stewardship of property-owners that I have put before you, impoverish us, and leave us with a sense of destitution? On the contrary, if we accept it frankly, we only part with our right to very poor, short-lived possessions in order to enjoy wealth a hundred-fold; we come to understand the great paradox, which is so unintelligible until it is fulfilled in our own experience—a paradox which I will end with, and beg you to contrast with the text that I begun with: "There is no man that hath left house, or sisters, or mother, or father, or children, or lands for My sake, and for the gospel's sake, but he shall receive a hundred-fold, now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life."

SERMON XVI.

BEING OF SOME USE IN THE WORLD.

“Come and help.”—Acts xvi. 9.

I WANT to speak this morning about *being of some use in the world*, about *doing useful work*.

When St. Paul, in his second missionary journey, travelling through Asia Minor, had come down to Troas, near Besika Bay, there one night he had “a waking vision ;” a man of Macedonia—a Macedonian soldier, it has been thought—stood before him, and said, “Come over into Macedonia, and help us.” Macedonia, you know, is in Europe ; and so it was in response to that invitation that Christianity was first introduced into Europe. St. Paul, we are told, understanding this invitation to be a call from the Lord to preach the gospel in Europe, sailed thither forthwith.

“Come and help,”—a call to us from the Lord to go to the front and help and work for Him. The great central fact of Christianity, whatever

else we may make of it, is a life poured out for the good of others. The motto of every living Christian should be the motto of the Prince of Wales, *I serve*. "The Lord hath need of me."

"Not many lives, but only one have we,
 One, only one:
 How sacred should that one life ever be,
 That narrow span!
 Day after day filled up with blessed toil,
 Hour after hour still bringing in new spoil."

Christians are Christians for some good purpose or other, not merely to be born red and die grey, but, living with and for a purpose, to try and leave the world a little better, brighter, happier, more full of sunshine for a noble life and a work well done.

Think for one moment of the opposite of this. An example will show the contrast most clearly. How not to do a thing is often no bad way of showing how it should be done. The warning notice "Beware," on the bank of the river, tells where it *is* safe to steer. Once, in the *Illustrated London News*, under the heading, "People I have met," there was an account of an old bachelor's life here in town. It was worth reading. It was not intended to be a sermon, but a sermon it was; and to compare the life of Mr. Richard Wise, for that was the man's name, with the lives of some of our useful church workers—ay, even to compare

the two pictures which illustrated that life with the lives of those who, by God's grace, recognise the principle of all helping in a common work, was a comparison very profitable, if very terrible, to read. It would be laughable, if it were not immensely sad, to read how Mr. Wise pampered and petted his luxuriously preserved body; but life, so ends the sketch—"but life was so good a thing to him, that he did well to preserve it; his outlook might be less exhilarating by-and-by." Not that Mr. Wise was a bad man; he was neither good nor bad; he was nothing,—Nothing personified. He had neither wife, children, nor friends; he had only acquaintances and amusements. When Mr. Wise died, some men at his Club put down the paper which announced his decease, with a yawn, and said, "No news to-day. Wise is dead at last, I see." Then one or two others, standing round, began to yawn in sympathy, and lazily said, "Ah!" A few desultory questions were asked about his money, will, heir; after which he was forgotten as though he had never been, leaving no void in any human heart, no record of his thoughts or deeds, save that he was not, and is not.

I suppose Mr. Wise would be one of those persons of whom Dr. Arnold, in a sermon of his upon *The Moral Certainty of the True Christian's Resurrection*, might believe that, after their death,

without it seeming in any way shocking or impossible, they had perished ; that they had lived out their time, and were now gone for ever. Yes, Mr. Wise would be one of that large number of persons who live without thought of what they are living for ; to whom a practical answer to the Lord's appeal, "Come over and help us," would be ludicrous beyond conception ; to whom the comforts and amusements of their daily lives supply all that they care for. Look at such persons in their early years and in their manhood : how seldom do any deep thoughts seem to possess them ! how completely do they live in the society around them, speaking its words, listening to its opinions, doing its bidding instead of their own or God's ! They just trot about the world to all intents and purposes with a notice tied round their hats, "Here are we, ready to become the possession of whatsoever shall make captives of us." No backbone in them, no flint-stone near them, no "dare to stand alone" about them—soft as a sponge, elastic as india-rubber : pullable, drawable, enticeable anywhere ; like those magnetic fish—magnetic ducks we used to buy for our little children to play with. Can we discover anything in them which does not find its proper food in the life that now is ? There are those who would not think it marvellous to suppose that there was no other life reserved for them ; they have given some pleasure in their day,

and have received some ; they have filled a place in society not unamiably, but they have, in turn, shared the enjoyments of society, and others are now coming forward on the stage, better able, from their time of life, to give and receive its pleasures. Their time is over, and they go. They have lived out their time, and now they have gone for ever. What a life! What a living death! What a personified nothing! "Wise is dead at last, I see." "Ha!" "Come and dine with me this evening." No void in any human heart, no record of his thoughts and deeds, save that he was nothing, and is not. What an answer to the appeal of the Lord to His people, "Come over and help us!" Lay that life to heart ; compare that life, not with others, but with your own ; and when again the call of the Lord does come, asking, "Whom shall I send? and who will go for us?" let the ready answer be, "Oh, use me, Lord, use even me. Here am I, send me ; send me somehow, to do something, somewhere, whereby the lives of others, as my own, may indeed be helped onwards, upwards, Godwards." There are thousands who might be such a help, cheer, encouragement to other people ; men to other men like themselves, if only they would not degrade themselves by yielding up their individuality to suit the whim of the useless and the vulgar. Thousands do no good to anybody, not only because they never formed the resolve to help

a brother to live usefully, but because they never formed the resolve to live usefully themselves. Thousands are simple nonentities, personified nothings—so far as doing any good work is concerned, so far as being of any use is concerned, so far as giving any help is concerned—because they never resolved to give their life a meaning, and themselves to do something really useful.

Oh, good people, you who would be of some use in the world, you who would be occupied in some useful work, “come and help ;” the harvest truly is plenteous, but the willing labourers are so very few. Find out, ask for, seize hold of some useful work to do—something definite, some one thing ; because the useful life is the life you would should be yours, and consequently whatever helps thereto. “Come over and help.” But, since “forewarned is forearmed,” you must count the cost—and of course there is a cost ; nearly everything valuable costs ; for the sluggish may sneer at you, the empty-sailed ones laugh, the wicked scoff. But the younger ones, the wavering ones, the hesitating ones,—those who, in their inmost hearts, would be what by themselves they hardly dare to be,—those who are ready to follow a lead, if only you dare and if you will lead, but who are too weak to lead themselves,—those, I mean, whom Kingsley, in his quaint classification of the human race, calls “white fools” (“white fools” are men who would rather

do right, but dare not unless it is the fashion ; “black fools” would rather do wrong, but dare not unless it is the fashion), these, the younger, the wavering, the hesitating, will, through your help, which is God’s help given them through you, leap over the wall.

Come, then, definitely, in some way or another to the help of the Lord against the mighty—for your own sake, for other’s sake. Victory is possible ; but victory needs courage. The courage of the battle-field is grand ; but far grander, because so far harder, is that which for the sake of being of use in the world, for the sake of being some help in the world, braves the tyranny of false custom, and dares to be true, and dares to be good.

“Come over and help!” “The Lord hath need of you.” But, once more, counting the cost again ; forewarned will be forearmed. You must not be discouraged because your usefulness in the world, your helpfulness in the world is largely out of sight, is in ways unseen by all but God, and also is largely—probably very largely—made up of ordinary, plodding, commonplace routine. Have you seen—perhaps some of you have—a quaint and suggestive paper that has come to us from the other side of the Atlantic, called *Blessed be Drudgery?* If you get hold of it (it is published by Bryce of Glasgow) you will be shown how, in your “being of some use in the world,” in the “useful work,”

whatever it is, that you undertake or have in hand, —you will be shown how you must not allow yourself to be discouraged because your work is so very largely made up of ordinary commonplace routine. Most of us know how hard it is to be undisturbed by, to overcome, either with cheer or with hope, the difficulties connected with the drudgery, toilsomeness, loneliness, disappointments mixed up with almost any useful work we have taken in hand. If this is so with any here, remember the title of that paper, *Blessed be Drudgery*.

Cannot some of you soldiers here tell me what was the reality of some gloriously described victory? Well, for instance, these are some of the words written in a newspaper about some of our men returning home after a campaign: "What heart would not swell with pride at the sight of these bronzed heroes, returning home covered with glory; or at the tale of their noble exploits, the grand forced march which secured their position, the adroitly held outposts, the perfect discipline which covered the final charge with a glorious victory?" One of the soldiers happened to read the account, and was never more surprised in his life than to think that the simple things he had done should be so described. As viewed from the ranks, "the 'grand forced march' was plod, plod, plod, hour after hour, mile after mile; it was lying down on damp cold ground; it was the sun beating down on our

heads, and longing for a good night's rest in our beds at home. For holding posts, it was a dull time as ever there was, sticking in one place for weeks. 'Glorious charge?' well—that was work; but not such work as you would think. Do as you are told, that is what war is, and never to flinch." Yes, good people, do as you are told, that's what *life* is, and never to flinch. The men who are of real use in this world have to grind away at the details of work; the men who are a blessing to their neighbours have to tackle the drudgery of routine. And it is just this side of the work which too soon, too easily dispirits and disheartens; because men forget that if a whole building is to be finely built at last, commonplace brick-and-mortar detail work must be done first. Believe me, then, when you have to turn out to do some work you have undertaken, and when you would be truly thankful to stop at home, you will be pulled contentedly through the job when you recollect that the brick that has to go into the building must not only be put in, but must be put in by you; when you recollect that the completed building will lack something if you do not put it in yourself. That building won't be complete without your individual work. "The Lord hath need of *me*: *I* have to go and help."

Stradivarius was the old violin-maker. Says Stradivarius in the poem—

“If my hand slacked
I should rob God,
Leaving a blank instead of violins ;
God could not make Antonio Stradivari’s violins
Without Antonio.”

That is just as true of you and me as of our greatest brothers ; for it is to us as individuals that the call to the front is sounded, “Come and help!” “The Lord hath need of me.”

Like the tapestry weavers, then, plod on, while you work out the design of the Lord above—a design too big for you to grasp at present, but not too big for you to find out some day that that design your individual toil, self-denial, perseverance, punctuality have helped to fashion.

Cheerily, cheerily tramp along : there is an Eye upon you. Small thanks you feel, sometimes, to get for what you do ; well, but there is a Heart that is thinking about you. The world knows nothing of your work ; then be of good cheer at that good sign ; “For I,” says Christ, “have overcome the world.” “Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in Heaven.”

“Come and help!” Let hand join in hand, let brother help brother, and we will work—

“Till comes the welcome order to lie down and sleep,
And I, unworthy servant that I am,
Shall win on battle-field the victor’s crown
For simply doing His beloved behest.
Let me work on : to-morrow I will rest.”

SERMON XVII.

MANLINESS.¹

“Add to your faith virtue.”—2 ST. PETER i. 5.

CHRISTMAS, my brethren, is once more at hand, and with it comes to all of you, I would hope, some share, at any rate—for God divideth to every man severally as He will—but some share, I trust, in that happiness, in that merriness and in that joy which so specially belongs to Christmas. Now, what is the meaning of wishing one another, as I wish all of you, a merry Christmas, a bright, happy Christmas, if God so will? Whence comes the reason of all Christmas joy? We must go back nearly one thousand nine hundred years, for it's an old, old story, though it's ever new—we must go back for the reason of our thankfulness,

¹ This sermon was published separately with the note,—“For the aspect under which, in the words that follow, part of the great subject of Manliness is viewed, I am indebted to a sermon preached one Sunday, many years ago, by a clergyman, unknown to me, at Dolgelly, in North Wales.”

for the reason of our parties, of our presents, of our gatherings, of our holidays—we must go back to the great mystery of the Incarnation, the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ the eternal Son of God, God and Man, “God of the substance of the Father begotten before the worlds, Man of the substance of His Mother born in the world;” the second Person in the ever blessed, glorious, co-equal Trinity, made Very Man, without spot of sin to make us clean from all sin; Jesus Christ in the form of God, equal with God, taking upon Himself the form of a servant, and made in the likeness of men. This, all this is the well-spring of our Christmas joy. In the words, more or less, of Dean Burgon, Easter were nothing without it, Good Friday could not else have been, and how could our nature have ascended up to Heaven unless Christ had first come down to take it upon earth? Brethren, see how central is the doctrine of Christmas, see how entirely Christ’s Incarnation deserves to be regarded as the foundation truth of the whole system of our Christian faith. What an immensity of Divine Love is implied by such an emptying of glory! Why, although the Passion of Christ is a very miracle of love, although that full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction which He made for the sins of the whole world goes beyond every other recorded thing in respect of wonder, and His Resurrection sounds

almost past understanding, what were it all without Christmas! That which gives meaning to all, the underlying truth on which everything else depends for its very existence, is that the eternal Son, of the same substance with the Father, and co-equal with the Father, that it was none other than He who took our nature upon Him *and was made man*, born as this very night of a pure Virgin. Brethren, feed on this great truth, and live by it, confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh in order that, believing, you may have life through His Name. So reason with yourselves, so think of Christmas and of the events of Christmas. You'll have much else to think of, for secularities over-run our Christian festivals; but let those other thoughts come after, not before, the central verity itself has claimed our freshest, chiefest thought, has called forth our heartiest, deepest praise; after, not before, we have professed with our mouth that we believe in our heart, and would let influence our life, that Jesus Christ, "the only begotten Son of God, Begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, Begotten, not made, Being of one substance with the Father, By Whom all things were made: for us men, and for our salvation, *came down from Heaven, And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, And was made Man.*"

That is the reason of our Christmas joy. That is the foundation of our Christmas holidays. That, believed in, clung to, held fast by, is the pledge of our Christmas blessing. Emmanuel, God with us ; *God made Man.*

My brethren, you have heard these wonderful surpassing words sung to plaintive pleading music, and you have seen men bow the knee, as the strains fell upon their ears, or, in some way or another, by some sign or another, you've seen made lowly reverence at the wonderful announcement. Have you only seen it? Have you only seen it to remark unkindly upon it? Have you, in lightsome words, said, "They go down upon their knees, there, as the story of the Creed tells of the Incarnation." "They make the sign of the cross, there, as they sing or say the words of this marvellous tale." "They bend the knee, or they bow the head, at the saving Name of Jesus, God Man, there."

God forbid that any here should scoffingly so have spoken. Let no man dictate. Let individual men be left to use what individual tokens of respect seem to each most fitting, but men are hardly men who can stand cold, and hear unmoved, without a sign of reverence, of humiliation, and of respect, of that love which, "so amazing, so Divine," demands one's soul, one's life, one's all.

"And was made Man." I want now just to

speak a few words to you about manliness. In a most kind letter which I received last week with reference to my presence here to-night, the writer was good enough to say that he felt sure that I should speak some words that would help to make many a home happy on Christmas Day. Thank God, the happiness of your homes at Christmas-tide depends not upon me. If I had thought that possible, even at the eleventh hour, I should have been sorely exercised until I had found release from this night's engagement. But one thing I seem to know, namely, that every man who *plays the man* at Christmas-tide will, at that season, need no study of the Lamentations. Many different subjects have suggested themselves to me for to-night, but somehow or other the Christmas portion of the Creed, "and was made Man," kept ringing in my ears, and I thought then, after all, I would speak on this the eve of the birthday into the world of the Perfect Man, of the manliness which those who regard Him also as Perfect God are bound to show at once for the sake of their Saviour, their brethren, and themselves.

"Add to your faith virtue." I have spoken about our Christmas faith. I go on to speak about our Christmas virtue. I dare say you have, most of you, noticed the passage in the first chapter of St. Peter's Second Epistle, from which the text is taken. It is a passage which represents a sort of

Christian step-ladder. St. Peter rears up a sort of Christian step-ladder before us, and tells us not only to try and climb it, but how. Christians cannot be perfect all at once, any more than Christians can get to the top of a ladder all at once. Christians have to fight their way heavenwards as Christians have to go up to bed, step by step. So says St. Peter, ye upclimbing Christians, add to your faith virtue, and to virtue something else, and then something else again, and then again, and then again ; and so, in this manner, by these upsteppings, one after another, by these continual growths one upon another, may we hope that so an entrance may be ministered unto us into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. But I will confine myself now to one point, and that is this, that though faith must lie at the foundation of our whole Christian life, there should be given all diligence, that faith may not prove a barren faith, but be attended by acts of virtue. "Add to your faith virtue ;" and I'll bring down my subject into a yet narrower limit, and, as I have spoken of Christmas faith, will now speak of Christmas virtue, of that virtue which will tend as well to a merry Christmas as to a happy New Year. Virtue. What does this word mean? I dare say you'll know that it is a word which has a very wide meaning indeed. Richardson, in his English dictionary, gives two and a half columns

to the word. Well, virtue is from the Latin *virtus*; there is no difficulty about that; and the Latin word *virtus* means manliness, strength, bravery; and so the first literal meaning of virtue is manliness, strength, courage. I don't know whether any of you are interested in the derivation of words, perhaps some of you are. Well, my English dictionary says virtue is from *virtus*, and *virtus* is from *vis*, which is the Latin for strength. But my Latin dictionary says, *virtus* is from *vir*, a man, the Latin for a man. I'm not going to say which is right, mayhap neither is wrong: but, anyhow, whether you go back to *vir*, a man, for the meaning of virtue, and so get manliness; or whether you go back to *vis*, strength, and so get virtue to mean courage or strength, you get to what, undoubtedly, is the meaning, manliness, or courage, or strength, and so add to your faith, courageousness, manliness. However, St. Peter did not write either in English or in Latin, but he wrote in Greek. What is the meaning of the Greek word he uses, and which is translated in our Bible—virtue? Well, the meaning of that word is, as nearly as possible, the meaning of the Latin and English words—manliness. It is a word that means excellence of any kind, but specially of manly qualities. It is a word (in Greek) that comes from the name that the old heathens gave to their god of war, to that god

whom they represented as a gigantic warrior. There is, then, no doubt about what sort of quality, about what sort of character you should aim after in desiring to step up this one step on the Christian step-ladder—add to your faith virtue, Christian manliness, Christian courageousness, and to your Christmas faith be prepared to add a Christmas manliness. Very well; what, then, is manliness? We come to this question now; we must find out for ourselves some sort of pattern of manliness. If virtue is from *vir*, it is manliness as distinguished from what is womanish, or from what is boyish. Even more, it is a sort of soldier-like quality, as distinguished from the character of a civilian. Or if virtue is from *vis*, strength, it is a sort of strength that you make use of when you strive with all your might; it is a strength which is sometimes violence; it is a strength which shows itself in strife, in battle, in victory. Ah! where shall we find a pattern of Christian manliness then? Imitating whom shall we be imitating a perfect pattern of Christian manliness, and so be adding virtue to our faith? Copying whose life shall we be copying the perfection of manhood? Brethren, copying the life of the man Christ Jesus, the life of Him Who was born on this very night into the world, to set us, while here, an example that we should follow His steps, Who is Perfect God, and yet Perfect Man. The imitation of

Christ is the imitation of perfect Christian manliness ; is the imitation, therefore, of that Christian manliness which is the virtue we are told to add unto our faith, and which, being added thereunto, leads Christians, standing fast in faith, to quit themselves like men and fight, like men who being no more children have put childish things away. Believers by profession in our Saviour Christ, believers not only with our lips, but striving, I should hope, to be also believers in our lives, let us add unto this our Christian faith Christian manliness.

Now, are there any here who are tempted to think of manliness only as apart from (away from) godliness, who are tempted to think the rules of the Christian life effeminate, while only the customs and fashions of more worldly life are manly ?

Add to your faith virtue—manliness. The fashions of this world pass away, but he that doeth the will of God abideth ever. Fashion! the fashions! How some people, men as well as women—some say women especially—plume themselves upon being fashionable—upon doing as others do. Whether to ordinary intelligences the fashion is modest or immodest, sensible or foolish, manly or effeminate, it is a fine thing to be in the fashion ; it is a fine thing to hurry-scurry over, by, past what the Bible says—well, even about dress and adornment, because, you know, though

of course we are Bible Christians, and believe in an inspiration of the Bible, and take it, professedly, as our guide in the day and our lantern at night, and so forth; yet we must remember, this has been said, that St. Paul was not a married man, and that women's advice is very sparingly given us in the New Testament, and we cannot, neither women nor men, we cannot pretend, in these days, to glue ourselves down to every particular instruction given all that while ago. You see, then, we are Bible Christians after a fashion. I'll tell you what we are, we are sixpenny Bible Christians, crowds of us; as we can buy a Bible that costs us next to nothing, so we can follow that Bible so far as following it costs us next to nothing. Just think over what we do or what we don't do; how we dress or how we don't dress; how we behave or how we don't behave; not with the pattern and words of the Perfect Man, Christ Jesus, before us, but with the patterns of the shifting customs and fashions of the day. And that is manliness, is it? modern manliness. To be as manly as a flock of sheep going through a gap in a hedge—all follow where one leads—no matter who or what that one is; and if one leads into a ditch who'll say that the others will not follow? Manly, is this? or, if you look at the matter, putting prejudice aside, is it not simple cowardice?

Dear friends, add to your Christian faith Christian

manliness. "*In* the world," that is inevitable, but, please God, "*not of* the world."

"Many mighty men are lost,
Daring not to stand,
Who for God had been a host
By joining Daniel's band.

"Dare to be a Daniel,
Dare to stand alone,
Dare to have a purpose true,
Dare to make it known."

Again, are any tempted, say, to think of manliness only as apart from Godliness, to think the rules of the Christian life effeminate, while only the customs of more worldly life are manly? For instance (forgive me for the commonplace character of my illustrations,—we most of us, however, have to live very commonplace lives, and so, instead of soaring aloft, I prefer to stop at home; instead of going up on the roof, I prefer to stop down in the rooms we live in), are any tempted by the temptation at certain times, or in certain places, or in certain company, to use bad language, thinking it rather a fine thing than otherwise not to be over careful about the words used or the expressions uttered? I mean, are any tempted by the thought that it is a fine manly sort of thing to give as good as you get, and to render railing for railing, and to scatter up and down the conversation or the talk expressions intended to show the company that the speaker is not a baby just

started walking out of the nursery? My brethren, do none of you ever look upon a sleeping child? Will none of you look upon a sleeping child this very night? As you thus sometimes look, do you never wish you were that child, and had its innocence, and had its unstained life, and had its certainty of Heaven, if you were called away to-night? Bad language, doubtful language, coarse language, language and words suggestive of what is impure, have nothing of Christian manliness about them; none here can prove them to be manly; but anybody can prove them to be devilish.

I have been told that it is well for a clergyman when travelling about, at public dinners—if he dines at the *tables d'hôte* of the hotels he stops at—so to dress as that others present might know his profession, for that it often stopped language being used by some of the company which otherwise would not be stopped. That is a curious thing, if true. One could not place the manliness of one so stopped very high; for what a man, what manliness,—afraid of the minister of God, but not of God! I remember quite well, in Swinton, two men suddenly coming round a corner, just in front of me. One was evidently put out about something. I knew it from what I heard, from the words he used. I am not going to repeat them now, but no man ought ever to talk about the devil, or about hell, in common talk, neither should the name of our

Lord God ever be taken in vain. Well, the words that were used by one of these men were words that ought not to have been used. His companion made no pretence of saying "Hush! hush!" and then he pointed over his shoulder to me. My brethren, what was I to them? Why should they "hush" for me? He pointed over his shoulder, as much as to say, "There's a parson there." But what did those fellows care for parsons?—and yet "Hush, hush!" for me, and not for God! Fine example of manliness that, brethren! It is no manliness to despise the words of the Perfect Man Christ Jesus, that "for every idle word that men shall speak they shall give account thereof in the Day of Judgment; for by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." "If any man among you seemeth to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain;" for, so far from acting the man, he acts the very devil.

Dear friends, add, this Christmas, to your Christmas faith Christmas manliness; let the words of your mouth be always acceptable in the sight of that God Who is at once your Strength and your Redeemer. Quit yourselves like men.

Add to your faith virtue—manliness; and yet can some boast, ay boast, concerning the sinful lusts of the flesh? They can, they do. There are men who can drink so much, and boast of the

quantity, and others can boast of it for them and on their behalf. Now, when the veriest child can see the desolating ruin caused by drink, men and women ruining themselves, body, soul, and spirit, desolating their homes, starving their children, driving love and tenderness and affection from their firesides, and all through drink—to dream of boasting of the quantity that can be taken! When the Festival of Christ, when the Festival of the Holy Ghost, when Christmas-tide and Witsun-tide are profaned, as they are profaned, by intemperance and drunkenness, my brethren, it is no unmeaning protest to restrain your lawful liberty and take nothing during those seasons (and weekly or fortnightly pledges for those seasons are to be had); or, if it so pleases you, as it pleases me, take nothing during any season, if, please God, you might save some, perchance (but this depends upon circumstances) yourself amongst the number. And then there are those who laugh at being kept to the bounds of purity marked out by our religion; they make no pretence of being particular about trespassing over the fence. They go here and there, they do this and that, and grudge if they be not satisfied. Manly, isn't it? Such an one is not a baby just set loose from the nursery, and he likes to show that he is not. My brethren, do none of you ever look upon a sleeping child, and wish you were that child, and had its innocence,

and had its purity, and had its certainty of Heaven if you were called away to-night? The sinful lusts of the flesh, whether it be in the matter of meat, of drink, of purity, or what not, have nothing of Christian manliness about them. None here can prove them to be manly, but anybody can prove them to be brutish, for they that live on doing such things can no more inherit the Kingdom of God than the beasts that perish. The body of each one of us is a Temple of the Holy Ghost, and "if any man defile the Temple of God, him shall God destroy." It is not that the body shall be hereafter, but now *is*, a Temple of the Holy Ghost. And what say we—what says our public opinion here about men and women acting before marriage as if they were married? If there is no fruit of their sin, is no wrong done? If they get married before a child is born, is there no wrong done? It seems to me that public opinion should let itself be known on these matters, and sound with no uncertain sound. If there is no fruit of the sin, the sin nevertheless is there in all its blackness, for fornication is a deadly sin. You wouldn't think so if you had not got your Bibles. Men get to disbelieve their Bibles, so as not to think so; but, know you for a certainty, that it is so. And, if occasion arises, let others know that you say that it is so; and that just marrying before the child is born can make the sin not one whit

less black. No; nothing but Christ's atoning blood, and tears and days of repentance can take that away. But, thank God, that can. For "this is a true saying, and worthy of all men to be received, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." A man may have committed adultery, fornication; a man may have stolen, been a drunkard; a man may have lied, cheated; a man may have been of the world, worldly; of the flesh, fleshly; of the devil, devilish; but he is invited to return, to come back, to cast down the burden of his sins at the feet of Christ, to leave them there, and to return to his Father. To every soul here this evening, notwithstanding all its carelessness, irreverence, sinfulness, selfishness, He, Christ, Emmanuel, God with us, in His boundless love utters this invitation, "Return and come to Me."

Dear friends, add then, this Christmas, to your Christian faith Christian manliness; "let your moderation be known unto all men." Be sober, be temperate, restrain yourself, refuse; in a word, quit yourselves like men.

In the world's broad field of battle
In the bivouac of life,
Be not like dumb driven cattle,
Be a hero in the strife.

My brethren, I could go on, but I have kept you long enough already, yet I should like you this Christmas to give some thought to this subject

of the adding of Christian manliness to your Christian faith. It has been the one idea that I wanted to urge in this sermon. I have only had time for one or two examples which may apply to you, or which may not; anyhow, you can, if you choose, find others that will. It seems to me that a great many of our lives could well bear the addition of a manliness which would make them brighter, happier, ay, merrier, in consequence. If much that I have said seems hard, I have nowhere said that it is easy; but, at our Baptism, when we were signed with the sign of the Cross, were we set apart to sit still or to lie down? Were we not rather appointed to fight against sin, the world, and the devil? Adding to faith manliness is not altogether like sitting in an easy-chair, or lying down on the grass, or riding in a carriage; no, more, it is like unto a difficult race, unto a wrestling in contest; it requires some labour, some pains, some real, not fancy work, real determination, and real energy. The battle is not to be won for us; but yet, on the other hand, we are not left to win the battle alone. Here, the running, resisting, striving, the battle, the warfare, the alarm. Hereafter—and is it not worth a hundred times the cost?—hereafter, the better land—

“That bright and happy land,
Where, far amid the blest,
The wicked cease from troubling,
And the weary are at rest.”

“ Safe home ! Safe home in port !
Rent cordage, shattered deck,
Torn sails, provisions short,
And only not a wreck.
But oh ! the joy upon the shore,
To tell our voyage perils o'er.

“ The lamb is in the fold,
In perfect safety penned ;
The lion once had hold,
And thought to make an end,
But One came by with wounded side,
And for the sheep the Shepherd died.

“ The exile is at home :
O nights and days of tears,
O longings not to roam,
O sins, and doubts, and fears,—
What matter now, when, so men say,
The King has wiped those tears away ? ”

SERMON XVIII.

ALMSGIVING.

“Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He Himself said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.”—ACTS xx. 35 (R.V.).

ST. PAUL is on his third missionary journey, returning towards Jerusalem. At the end of a most touching and tender address to the elders of Ephesus, the Apostle says, “Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He Himself said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.” St. Paul is here quoting a saying of the Lord Jesus Christ’s, probably familiar to those who heard him, a saying of the Lord which, though not recorded in any of the Gospels, yet had been remembered, and handed down from one to another. The words have an application far more extensive than the single case of almsgiving. Nevertheless, to-day I shall confine myself to that Christian practice, for it is a Christian practice of exceeding value.

For my pattern to-day¹ I have chosen the poor widow of whom we are told that, on a certain occasion, she put into one of the alms-boxes in the Temple at Jerusalem two mites, which make a farthing. And certainly the beautiful story of what is commonly called "the widow's mite" is a very interesting and a very instructive one. The story refers to an incident which took place on the Tuesday in the week which we call Holy Week. Our Lord is at the Temple at Jerusalem, and there for the last time. He has been speaking many words, and some of them severe enough. But His last words when leaving the Temple for the last time are very gracious.

And here one word by the way. Whenever we leave home, whenever we leave the room, let our last words always be gracious. The concluding words of our New Testament are, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all." Leave persons and leave places with a gentle word, a gentle action. A man I know well enough goes off to his night work in the coal pit, but never without saying, as he leaves home in the evening, "Good-night, all." Leave with a gentle word; leave with a gentle action. Neither literally nor metaphorically "slam the door" as you go out, lest, as often happens to men in risky situations, there be no returning.

¹ This sermon and the next were the third and fourth respectively in a Lenten series entitled, *Patterns for Christian Practice*.

Our Lord's last words, when leaving the Temple for the last time, are very gracious.

But to return. It was the Tuesday before the Crucifixion. Our Lord had gone and sat Himself down over against the treasury, and He observed how the people put money into the treasury. Our Lord was sitting near to a place where there stood thirteen brazen vessels, shaped like trumpets, into which those who visited the Temple put their offerings; and these thirteen trumpet-shaped vessels were labelled according to the purposes to which their contents were respectively appropriated; but all, more or less, for Church expenses, for maintaining the Temple and its worship. They were placed in the wall, or against a wall, that bounded one of the outer courts, and in a situation that was accessible to the women. Well, our Lord sat hereabouts, and noticed the people putting their money into these—what I may call—brass money-boxes, and many that were rich put in much. And then there came a very poor widow, and she put in two mites, which make a farthing. Her action was noticed. Verily the Lord is gracious, noticing, with expressed approval, a single act of liberality in a very poor, in an altogether unknown giver. Even in the midst of crowds there are single individuals, poor, unknown, objects of His peculiar regard. No one act of loving obedience, no single farthing which is in very deed the offering of faith

and love and self-denial, escapes the Saviour's notice ; for

“The heart of the Eternal
Is most wonderfully kind.”

Our Lord calls His disciples to Him, and says to them—these are His last Temple words, gracious words—“That poor widow has put in more than all the others which have put their offerings into the boxes. They put in of their abundance, but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living for the day.” All that she had at that moment to live upon, it would seem, she gave ; and our good Lord measured her gift, as He measures all gifts, whether of mind, body, or estate, by the self-denial and labour and purity of intention with which they are accompanied : and so measured, the widow's gift was not found wanting.

Such is the last picture that comes down to us of our Lord's proceedings in His Father's House. The Lord Jesus left the Temple, in a few days to be crucified, and the very last thing He did in His Father's House was to speak words of grace, to commend the poor widow, and, in her, to pronounce His eternal approval of all true devotion and self-sacrifice.

Here, then, I think, we have a pattern for the Christian practice of almsgiving. It would seem, from the Sermon on the Mount, that almsgiving is not only a Christian practice, but more, that it is

a bounden duty, not merely a voluntary duty. It would seem also to be true, that, strictly speaking, our money is not our own ; that, strictly speaking, there is no such thing as absolute property under heaven. A man's money is from elsewhere, not from himself. In the book of the prophet Haggai we read, "The silver and the gold is Mine, saith the Lord of Hosts." Every coin we have is, in a certain sense, our Lord's money. It is given into our charge, directly or indirectly, for Him ; we are but as stewards of what we handle. If a man gets wealth honestly, it is God that gives him power to get it ; and after all our giving of what we have got, we must say, "All things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee." We must on no consideration ever forget this foundation fact with regard to our money. We are just in the position of servants who have been left in charge of their master's goods till he comes again ; stewards, remember, not possessors. It is a very real and substantial help to people to bear this fact in mind when they are handling their money. Every man is a channel, more or less, of God's property. Almsgiving, therefore, is the intelligent and conscientious use of God's money. The matter of prime importance is not, "Have I much or little to spend?" but "How does that which I have, go? What is done with it? For it is something in the spending of which I have to be faithful." And

one amongst the many great advantages of keeping strict private accounts is this, that we then can see how much or how little we thus spend faithfully. You have heard before this of the man with an income of two or three hundred pounds, who did not keep accounts, and who thought he was giving away ten pounds a year in charity ; but when he was pressed to put down his gifts, he could not quite get up to three pounds in black and white. That was what he knew ; the other was what he thought. People who don't keep accounts, don't know.

Now, by *almsgiving*, ordinarily speaking, I suppose we mean giving in charity. The word *alms* is derived from a word that means mercy ; not merely showing mercy by gifts of money, but showing mercy by any means. Nevertheless now, in common conversation, if I talk about *almsgiving* I mean giving money to help the poor of Christ, or to help the Church of Christ. It is one of the principles of the practice of Christ that we should do this, that we should do this regularly, on some fixed plan, as a necessary part of our Christian life, and, as far as possible, without unnecessary telling and talking, publishing and advertising.

Now, with regard to almsgiving in Church, giving is an essential part of worship ; worship is not complete unless something is given to the Lord in offering, unless of course the worshipper has not wherewith to give. The Jewish requirements

in worship were perfectly plain: "Bring an offering and come into His courts;" "None shall appear before the Lord empty." The Christian Church has certainly never consented to draw back. Offerings are distinctly provided for; almsgiving is taught to be a part of worship, as prayer, praise, thanks. The offertory, in the Holy Communion Service, is a witness for the ancient, the universal idea of worship, that an essential part thereof is the placing of gifts upon the altar. Offerings are a part of worship; money is to be connected with religious ideas; the gain of money is to be linked with religious associations. Now then, here you must put yourselves to the trouble of thinking and planning; use your conscience, use your intelligence. You know how much a month, a quarter, a year, you have at your personal disposal. You know that it is your duty to give in proportion to your income, much or little. You know, more or less, the calls that are likely to be made upon you, and which it would seem to be your duty to regard. So be it. If you will, and I want you to will, you then can decide what you can afford to give in alms, using your conscience, using your intelligence. You may please yourself, whether you subdivide your available money so as to give less, frequently; or divide it, so as to give more, less frequently. But make out a plan for yourself, come to an understanding with yourself, as between yourself

and God. For instance, fix deliberately on Saturday what you can afford to give on Sunday. And, by the way, when you are kept away from church by bad weather or other causes, don't let the collections suffer. You should not let your absence lay a heavier burden on others, in the way of supporting Church and parish expenses. Wet Sundays—smaller collections and congregations! But the expenses of the Church have to go on. Then, if you go away from home, or if aught keep you away from Church, don't allow the Church to lose thereby. There are some people who, when they are going to be away, or when they come back, put into the collection what, if they had been present, they would have done. Can any other arrangement be honourable? Many people don't think of this, but let others pay what should be their share, but which they shirk because they are away. But to continue: we know what our income is; some of us consider that at least one-tenth of that should be spent for the poor, for God, for the Church, in alms. If people have very small incomes and very much to do with them, they certainly cannot give one-tenth. But this is what I mean—don't leave your giving to chance or impulse; for feelings are very uncertain in matters of duty. If you have much, give liberally, and always cheerfully, and always courteously; for he is much to be sympathized with, who has to do

much begging for Church or charitable objects; the task is an arduously trying one. If it could be possibly true, say to him: "and thank you for calling, and giving me the opportunity of helping on the work." If you have little, gladly give of that little. If you have nothing, ask God to put you in the way of so labouring that you may have wherewith to give something to him that needeth. Indeed this is one of the objects of labour, that out of what we earn we may be able to aid others: not to be able to build up our own castle, in solitary isolation; but to be able to share with our brothers and to strengthen our Church and to glorify God. Some tell us that collecting bags bring in less than boxes or plates; that coppers and silver dwarves go into bags which the givers dare not put into open boxes or plates! I have nothing to do with this now. I am not speaking to those who want to shirk their duty, and who, if they can, will break the eighth commandment by robbing God. Box, or plate, or bag will make no difference to us. We know what we are about; our almsgiving is according to a plan that we have made, and made after having asked God to help us to make it rightly; and so we need feel no shame when what we have given is taken to the altar of God, there to be offered up with prayer to God to bless the givers, and accept their gift. And further, we are

quite content that our almsgiving shall have this result—that we cannot do altogether the same for ourselves as we should be able to do, if God did not lay this duty of almsgiving upon us. And then, this wonderful fact, though it astonishes us, yet is full of cheer—that almsgiving in church is an act of worship, wherein all mysteries meet in this, the deepest mystery of devotion, that mortal man can give to the Eternal Lord, and have his gift accepted. Oh, there is plenty of cheer for Christians who want to do their duty! Those who give to others—that is, those who make offerings to Jesus Christ—will never thank you to urge them to change places with those who spend all upon themselves. Never; for they, of a truth, in the suppliants before them, see Christ presenting Himself to them for their love. And what a crowd of deserving and needy objects for our help surround us, not only in connection with our own parishes or churches; but here, there, everywhere there is some sorrow or some pain or some cruelty to be lessened, and this by us. Well may I feel sure that many and many of you are sharing, and delighted to share, and thankful to be able to share, in this blessed ministry of love; well may I feel sure that your kindness is not withheld when the calls of the Hidden Christ thus sound around you. Sometimes—are we apt, any of us, to think—too frequent calls? Oh no; if these are chances,

thrown in our way, of showing our love to God, of forgetting ourselves and helping others, we will not grumble, lest we should lose the reward we might otherwise win ; “for God loveth a cheerful giver.”

And here, may I say, never, under any circumstances, mention about giving your “mite ;” a hateful expression whenever used by those who give what they will not miss. Unless it happens that we give in some proportion as the poor widow gave, no talking about “mites” for us ! “This poor widow cast in more than they all ; for they gave of their abundance, but she of her penury hath cast in all.” That was a real sacrifice ; but this was not, when a rich man was much stirred up by the report of some missionary work, and said, “You shall certainly have my mite. I can give £5 and not feel it.” “I give my mite :” it has passed into a proverb, which in some people’s mouths is ridiculous, and in other’s profane. Another man, a rich man, as men are counted, gave an absurdly inadequate offering for a Church purpose, and he too called what he gave a “mite.” “If you like,” said his friend, “to call a pound a ‘mite,’ do so ; but if you are referring to the woman in the Gospel, kindly remember she gave *two* mites, and that it was all her living. Besides, sir, you are not a widow, are you ?” He, the “mite”-giver, looked at his friend for a moment, and then said, “Well, I believe I have

often talked of giving my 'mite ;' but it never struck me till this moment what ridiculous nonsense I was talking."

Lastly, "remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He Himself said, It is more blessed to give than to receive." There are those who have but little silver or gold to give, and yet who, like St. Peter and St. John at the Temple gate, can give such as they have in rich abundance. So be it. Jesus Christ did not give this thing or that thing to mankind, but He gave Himself without reserve. It may be our part, some of us, herein to follow His footsteps, "Who went about doing good," Who did not just send gifts to others, but, emptying Himself, Himself came where those others were, and there Himself Himself did give. That same Jesus Christ you and I are members of. He invites us to do what He has done, when we can, and as we can ;—good! In this sense true, most true, are the words of the Lord Jesus, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." You and I are members of Christ ; He invites us to do what He has done, when we can, and as we can. If He became poor that we might be rich, gladly will we suffer some loss for other's gain.

Good people, have often in your minds, and in a very uppermost place there, these rescued words of the Lord Jesus Christ, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

SERMON XIX.

HELPING OTHERS.

“Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these My brethren, even these least, ye did it unto Me.”—ST. MATT. xxv. 40 (R.V.).

THE King of Kings and the Lord of Lords is speaking. He is speaking to the peoples gathered before Him for judgment ; and He tells that mercy and lovingkindness shown to others for His sake will then, in the Great Day, be reckoned as shown unto Himself. If, in this day of probation, men have helped others, done good, been loving, kind, sympathizing, the Saviour and the Judge of those men will, of His boundless mercy, account all as done unto Himself. Thus, then, *Helping Others* becomes a very Christian practice indeed. Now, my pattern to-day¹ for the Christian practice of helping others shall be St. Christopher.

You will recollect that we have one scriptural story, one Bible story, which tells how once Jesus

¹ See the note on p. 203.

Christ was carried, was held, by a man in his arms. Forty days after the birth of Jesus Christ into the world, in the Temple at Jerusalem, Simeon, an old man, a righteous and devout old man, received into his arms from the arms of His mother, the child Jesus ; and then it was that Simeon uttered the ever-remembered words, " Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart, O Lord, according to Thy word, in peace ; for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation." There is another story, not scriptural, not in the Bible, which also tells how Jesus Christ was carried, was held by a man in his arms, or on his shoulder—a story which, as it has been quaintly said, if it is not true ought to be true,—the story of St. Christopher, who is generally represented carrying the child Jesus through a rapid and boisterous river.

This is the old tale ; this is the legend of St. Christopher : It was about three hundred and fifty years after Christ, and the day on which he used to be commemorated was July 25th. Christopher was of the land of Canaan, and the name by which he was there known was Offero, *the bearer*, a great giant, and proud of his strength. He was resolved that he would serve no other than the greatest and most powerful monarch that existed. So he travelled far and wide to seek this greatest of kings, and at length he came to the court of a certain monarch who was said to exceed in power and riches all the

kings of the earth, and he offered to serve him ; and the king, seeing his great height and strength, received him gladly. One day a minstrel sang before the king, and Offero noticed that when, in the song, the name of Satan was mentioned, the king made the sign of the Cross.

“Why that gesture ?” inquired Offero.

The reply of the king was, “I make that sign to preserve me from the power of Satan, for I fear lest he overcome me and slay me.”

“Then,” said Offero, “if thou fearest Satan, thou art not the most powerful prince in the world ; thou hast deceived me. I will go seek this Satan, and him will I serve ; for he is mightier than thou art.”

So he departed ; for he would serve only the most powerful. He sought for Satan. He found him only too soon. He explained his purpose to serve only the mightiest, and they two went on together, master and servant. They came to a place where four roads met, and there was a large Cross by the wayside. The evil one was seized with fear, and would not pass it, but made a great wide circuit round.

“Why so ?” said Offero.

After a while he got his reply, “On the Cross died Jesus Christ ; by dying on the Cross, Jesus Christ overcame me, and when I behold the Cross I fly, for I fear Him.”

“Then,” said Offero, “I must perforce leave thee, for this Jesus thou speakest of must be more powerful than thou art ; I must go seek Him and serve Him.”

So he went, and he travelled, seeking Jesus Christ. And he came to a river, deep and wide ; and, at the bidding of a Christian to whom he said he was seeking Jesus Christ, he spent his time in helping to cross that stream those who could not do so by themselves ; for he was told that in doing that he would be doing so well that perchance Jesus Christ would manifest Himself to him. Said Offero, “This will I do ; 'tis a service that pleaseth me well.” So he rooted up a palm tree from the forest, and he used it as a staff, and day and night he aided and helped those who could not cross that stream alone. He never wearied of helping those who needed help, and he was always ready for his task.

So the thing that Offero did pleased our Lord, Who looked down upon him out of heaven, and said within Himself, “Behold this strong man, who knoweth not yet the way to worship Me, yet hath found the way to serve Me.”

One night the voice of a child cried—so he thought,—“Offero, come forth to carry me over.” Offero arose : the Child, Offero received Him into his arms : the Child, Offero lifted Him on to his shoulder and started, staff in hand, through the

river. The waters were deep, the storm very great, and the Child seemed to grow heavier and heavier. But the task was accomplished, and Offero said then—

“Who art Thou, Child, that Thou hast placed me in such peril? Had I carried the whole world upon my shoulders, it would not have been heavier.”

And the Child replied, “Wonder not, for thou hast not only carried the world, but Him that made it.”

Then Offero fell on his face and worshipped Christ, and he knew that he had carried Christ upon his shoulder; and the Child vanished away. And *Christopher* he was called, for *Christopher* means *the bearer, the carrier of Christ*.

For long years Christopher continued in helping others to serve the Lord, and at length he died for His sake. And as he died he prayed that those who might look upon, think, remember him, trusting in God, the Redeemer, should not suffer from flood or tempest, from earthquake or from fire. And so, in after times, it came to be thought that those who looked upon St. Christopher were exempt that day from peril of earthquake, fire, flood; and the mere sight of his image, that type of strength, was supposed to inspire with courage those who had to struggle with the dangers of life or the toils of life. “Whosoever shall behold the image of St. Christopher,” it was said, “on that day shall

not faint nor fail." Hence, it became a custom to represent St. Christopher outside churches, or in a conspicuous position against the gate of a city, so as to be seen from far; to carve large stone representations of the old saint, that those going in or out of church, in or out of town, in or out of doors, might see and look, and—according to their fancy—not meet with sudden death that day, be safe, and strong, and well. Such is, in short, the old story of St. Christopher, a story which has been told among men for hundreds and hundreds of years, of which no one knows whence it came, and of which it has been said, as I have told you, if it is not true it ought to be.

There, then, is our pattern to-day for the Christian practice of helping others. Christ is our Master, and, like Christopher, we may serve Him by helping others, by helping our fellow-men. I speak to those who already own Christ as Master, which was not the case with Christopher when he first sought Christ; but, as he was bidden to use his strength to aid and to save those who struggled with the stream and those who were about to perish, and as he was bidden to look for some manifestation to himself of Jesus Christ in consequence of doing those good deeds, so are we, in so many words, distinctly told, not only that Christ is our Master, not only that He is a Master Who permits Himself to be served by us, but, furthermore, One Who

permits Himself to be served by us when we for His sake serve others. Thus, thank God, whatever be our place in the world, there we may find Christ if we will, and Him serve. Christopher's work was by the side of the river ; he was faithful to it, and there he served others ; and so there he found Christ. Our work may be here or elsewhere, some with the head, some with the hands, some with the feet ; here "be thou faithful," and there is the crown. Just simply to go and do a good turn, to carry a cheery face, to lend a helping hand—I care not how, I care not where, I care not when ; the occasion may be the simplest, the work the lowliest ;—but "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these My brethren," said Christ, "even these least, ye did it unto Me."

"Even these least!" You have, some of you, read the *Reminiscences*¹ of Lady Augusta Stanley, reminiscences of "that blessed life of service and of love." Do you remember how often on Mondays, the free day at the Abbey, Lady Augusta would go in and out amongst the various groups of people, explaining the history of the chapels and shrines and monuments ; and how "on one of these occasions a grey-headed working man, with a fine erect soldierly bearing, was carrying on his shoulder a crippled boy. Lady Augusta went up, and said

¹ *Lady Augusta Stanley : Reminiscences.* By the author of "The Schönberg-Cotta Family," pp. 16, 61.

some kind words, and found that, though not related to the child, he was in the habit of coming from his home, some way off, in Lambeth, two or three times a-week, and carrying the boy about to something that would interest him. The little fellow had been thrown out of a perambulator in babyhood, and crippled for life, he said ; ' but the little chap likes to go about with me, and it makes him enjoy his victuals.' She went round with the two, and told them many things about the Abbey ; and, as she left them, she said softly, ' St. Christopher.'

Again I quote from the same *Reminiscences*. " Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these, even these least." " The gateway leading into the cloisters and to the Deanery, from Dean's Yard, seems an especially hallowed place to those who remember how Lady Augusta used to be carried, helpless, through it ; and how once, when the little children pressed near to see, and people would have sent them away, she would not have it. ' Let the children come,' she said ; ' it gives them pleasure.' Simple words, but meaning something more than even St. Christopher, in his giant strength, carrying the Lord Jesus through the river. To be carried helpless and suffering herself, and to be content, through it all, to give the least pleasure to children, was surely having stamped into her being, not merely the likeness of St. Christopher, but of Him Whom St. Christopher was bearing." Oh help, I

pray you, others, even the least ; aid them, soothe them, cheer them as you can, when you can ; keep both eyes open, to see how you can. Yes, good people, take good care that you shall be missed by others when you die ; take good care that you shall be missed by others when you leave your present homes or your present business. Take good care that your absence causes a blank, a void, which your going will necessitate the upfilling of by another. To die, and leave no void in any human heart, would be misery indeed. Yes, God grant that you be missed when you go, when you leave. God give you the determination and the will so to help others while you are where you are, that you shall be missed when you are called elsewhere ; and then you may be sure that the Christ is not so very far off you. For it is He Who has so made Himself and His will known to us, has so brought the possibility of our serving Him altogether within our reach, has so taken all excuse for inability to serve Him out of our hands, that now we know that, not helping others, we neglect Him, but that, serving others, we serve Him : "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of these, the least, ye have done it unto Me." You remember James Montgomery's poem :—

"A poor wayfaring man of grief
Hath often crossed me on my way,
Who sued so humbly for relief
That I could never answer, nay.

“Perishing from want of bread—I fed him ;
 Dying of thirst—I gave him drink ;
 Out in the cold—I took him in ;
 Wounded by the roadside—I revived him.

“In prison, to meet a tyrant’s death—
 My friendship’s utmost zeal to try,
 He asked if I for him would die.
 The flesh was weak, my blood ran chill,
 But the free spirit cried, ‘I will.’

“Then, in a moment, to my view
 The stranger darted from disguise ;
 The tokens in His hands I knew ;
 My Saviour stood before mine eyes.

“He spake, and my poor name He named :
 ‘Of Me thou hast not been ashamed.
 These deeds shall thy memorial be :
 Fear not ; thou didst them unto Me.’”

Oh yes, then, help others !

“With weary human feet, Christ, day by day,
 Once trod this earth, to work His acts of love ;
 And every step is chronicled above
 His servants take, to follow in His way.”

The pattern of the Good Samaritan we may ever keep before our eyes, when we think of helping others. He went out of his way for the sake of the wounded traveller ; he came where that traveller was ; he did not send, he went. He did not toss down from his seat or saddle this piece of money or that, but he got down off his own beast, he tore

up his own clothes, poured out his own wine and oil ; he put the poor man up in his place, he trudged himself on foot. Note that pattern. And so, I tell you, the motto of every living Christian must be the motto of the Prince of Wales, "I serve." The proudest motto the proudest man can take is, *Ich dien*. And so, I tell you, the great central fact of Christianity, whatever else we may make of it, is a life poured out for the help of others. I know, as I speak thus, what thoughts arise in many minds ; I know what thoughts sometimes come into our own minds : why such need for all this helping others—this toil, this trouble, this worry ? Why such need for all this scheming to shield or to guard our neighbours from the dangers that surround them, or to help them upwards towards the reward that awaits them ? Why ? Why may we not take our ease in these matters, and let the world swim as it lists ? Why need we put ourselves about in this fashion, instead of stopping at home by our own firesides ? Why not look upon ourselves alone, and leave others to look upon themselves ? Why not seek our fill of personal pleasure, and leave the sick to die, and leave the poor to starve, and leave the children to cry, and leave the drunkards to perish, and the libertines in their mud, and leave the young to trip, to stumble, and to fall ? *Why ?* Because we are brothers, members one of another ; because we are members of that great brotherhood,

the Church of Christ,—Christ's servants, to do for others as He has done for us, to spend and be spent for others, to see in any whom we can in any way help for Christ's sake—there to see the hidden Christ Himself. Some spend their nights and days in one way, some in another: some in pleasure and in ease; some in diligent business; some in hardest toil; some in active ministries of love to the poor, tempted, dying. Which do we do? We who profess to look for the Resurrection of the dead, and to venture for the life of the world to come, to hope for those things which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive,—which do we do? I judge no man; but, for all that, do let us judge ourselves, lest we be judged of the Lord. For I do tell you that when we come, as we shall be coming, to lay us down to die, it will be a boundless comfort to know that somebody will lose a friend; and it will be sweet, at the beautiful gates of Paradise, to find some waiting and watching for us. I expect that those whom the sick, the sad, busy, hard-worked, needy, the little children do not weep to lose, God cannot joy to welcome.

“ There are little ones glancing about on my path
 In need of a friend and a guide :
 Will any of these at the beautiful gate
 Be waiting and watching for me ?

“ There are old and forsaken who linger awhile
 In the homes which their dearest have left ;

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And an action of love or a few gentle words
Might cheer the sad spirit bereft :

Will any of these at the beautiful gate
Be waiting and watching for me ?

“ There are dear ones at home I may bless with my love,
There are wretched ones pacing the street,
There are friendless and suffering strangers around,
There are tempted and poor I must meet :

Will any of these at the beautiful gate
Be waiting and watching for me ?

“ Oh, I think I should mourn o’er my selfish neglect—
If sorrow in heaven can be—
If no one should stand at the beautiful gate
Waiting and watching for me.”

“ No one ! ” Oh, good people, stretch out a
helping hand, and mayhap you will touch the very
Christ.

SERMON XX.

THE MARKS OF JESUS.

“The marks of Jesus.”—GAL. vi. 17.

WE are living through another Lent. I choose this text because it is Lent, in order that, if we are so minded, we may make a personal use of Lent by a personal use of the text. A great many people pay no attention to Lent; a great many people would much prefer that Lent and Lenten discipline were not talked about from the pulpit; there are those whom the subject worries, fidgets, when it is talked about or pressed. But such persons must remember that it is no order of their clergy that there is a Lent in every year. It is an order of their Church, a Church which has a special commission, a commission given to her by Him Who is her Divine Head; and that commission is to bring people to Christ, and suggest aids to people to get nearer Christ. Just as you give your

arm to an old man, just as you use a stick yourself, just as you grasp a banister upstairs, that commission is to help very helpless people, with careless or distracting surroundings, to get closer here to Jesus Christ, and hereafter safe home. And as a means, as a help to this, she, guided in this matter by the Holy Spirit, and knowing that what may be done at any time is often done at no time, has appointed times and seasons for humiliation, self-examination, and prayer. Lent is such a time. Therefore, good Churchpeople who believe in their Church, and who think their Church more likely to prescribe well for them than their own fancies or their own tastes might do, will, if they are good for anything, make some account and use of Lent. Very well; now one of the especial Lenten exercises that we are over and over again recommended to attend to is self-examination. I use this text, "The marks of Jesus," in order that we may, if we are so minded, make a personal use of it, by putting this personal inquiry, "Do I 'bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus'?" The words are the words of St. Paul to the Galatians: "They deny, do they, that I am Christ's servant? On that matter henceforth let no man trouble me, for I bear branded in my body what these Judaising, busy-body teachers certainly do not, and, whatever they may say, the marks of Jesus, scars which mark my bondage to Jesus;—marks, these, which prove

that my authority is sealed by Jesus." The word translated *marks* means, literally, the scars of the wound made upon the body of a slave by the branding-iron, by which he was marked as belonging to his master. "I," says St. Paul,—“I, however it may be with others,—I at least bear in my body the true marks which show that I am the slave of, that I belong to Christ; the scars, not of circumcision, but the scars of wounds received in the service of Christ.” Now, what sort of marks, scars, brands, were these, think you, that St. Paul alludes to when he says in the text, “I bear branded on my body the marks of the Lord Jesus”? Listen: “Once, twice, thrice, four times, five times,—and each time with the thirty-nine stripes,—have I been scourged by the Jews,”—scourged with that scourging one infliction of which not unfrequently killed a man; “I bear in my body scars of wounds received in the service of Christ and for the cause of Christ.”

But St. Paul, it is said, was set apart for a very special service of Christ, and to labour in a very special manner for the cause of Christ. Well, well! I am not aware that at our baptism we were set apart to sit still, to lie down, to lounge in easy-chairs,—nothing of the sort; but to fight against sin, the world, and the devil, and to continue Christ's soldiers, doing our duty in whatever circumstances God should place us. Do we carry about with us any proofs of having been in active service?

Do we bear about on our bodies any marks of Jesus?

“But again, besides the five Jewish scourgings, on three separate occasions,” says the Apostle, “have I been beaten by the Roman magistrates with rods. But again, besides the three Roman beatings, once was I stoned, and all but killed.” Ah! notice how St. Paul taught what he believed. He underwent all this voluntarily for the sake of Christ, to show that he believed what he talked about. Might he not well say, “I bear branded on my body the marks of Jesus”? “Eight times beaten, once stoned; and, if you press me to tell you *why*,—well, simply because I would make Christ’s Name known unto the people that knew Him not.” Oh, friends, think what these words mean; think what they meant to St. Paul; think if they mean anything to you: “I bear in my body the marks of Jesus.”

But even yet we have not finished. St. Paul continues: “Three times have I been shipwrecked; once for four-and-twenty hours, in an open boat or on some raft, I have been upon the deep sea. Many is the time, too, that I have been in perils of swollen rivers, of robbers, of Jews and Gentiles, in town and country; hungry and thirsty, cold, naked, tired,—all this have I been, all these things have I suffered, to say nothing about thoughtful, careful anxiety about all the Churches”—and some of you must know that care, thought, anxiety can

make as plain a mark as any, in their way ;—"all these things have I suffered, all these things have I voluntarily undergone for the sake of Christ and Christians. From henceforth let no man trouble you or me with doubts and fears as to whether I am indeed an Apostle of the Lord ; for I tell you,—nay look, you can see for yourselves,—I bear branded on my body the marks of Jesus."

Marks—properly, as we have seen, marks made with a hot iron as brands, as badges, as tokens of possession. As tokens of possession! Now, in this sense, we surely do bear on our bodies a mark of the Lord Jesus, a mark which He can see ; for have not we, when we were baptized, at any rate, been signed with the sign of the Cross, sealed in our foreheads, in token that we should not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, that we should manfully fight under His banner, and continue His faithful soldiers ; marked, then, by Christ as His ; marked so that Christ can plainly distinguish us from others ; marked as tokens of possession? Friends, as we go about our daily work, remember we that we bear on our bodies that mark, a mark by which we ought to be distinguished from others? Oh, God help us over and over again to remember Whose we are and Whom we serve ; for the mark is a token of possession. If we do not remember, if we act as though there were not that mark upon us, there

is only one name whereby we may be truly called,—and it is the world-wide ignominious name *deserter*. Set apart for Christ,—signed with His sign, the sign of the Son of Man,—marked with His mark, the mark of the Lord Jesus, such an one must be a deserter, whose thoughts, words, deeds are as though his enlistment had never been, his Captain had never lived. And then, whether in late years or in years long past and gone, you have been confirmed; you have, that is, said that you know you were marked. In the House of God, in His presence, before His ministering servants and a congregation of His people, it may be years and years ago (but a thousand years are but as yesterday with God), you have stood up and said for yourselves that you know you are marked with a holy mark as a token of possession; and that, knowing this, you offered yourself up to God, body, soul, and spirit, to be a holy and living sacrifice (mark the word) unto Him, humbly beseeching Him to give you strength to be able to do what you said you wanted to do; so—

“ That having all things done,
And all your conflicts passed,
You might obtain, through Christ alone,
A crown of joy at last.”

Ah, we are very apt, in the hurry of life, amidst the press of engagements, as we grow older, to

forget all about baptism and confirmation, and it is not unnatural that we should quietly acquiesce in the feeling that perhaps God forgets all about them too. Is it unkind to say,—I do not mean it to be unkind,—that perhaps it would not make some people very unhappy if they could be assured that God's memory was as short as theirs? I pray you, in your present busy life, in that life which it is so really difficult to live with God, forget not what was said and done at your baptism, at your confirmation, unless you wish to try and persuade God that those rites had no lasting, life-long meaning at all ; that baptism may be forgotten at confirmation, and confirmation at first communion, and first communion or any communion forgotten altogether now.

But I must return. *Brands*: St. Paul was *branded* with the marks of the Lord Jesus. Are my marks altogether different? Have I turned back when I undertook to go on? Have I been playing when I said I would work? Have I been sleeping when I said I would watch? Have I been doing as those around me do, when I said distinctly I would not do this, but would do as God alone should bid me? Trembling, fearing, shrinking, coward-like, world-bound, am I afraid of being led on, afraid of giving up some sin which I enjoy, afraid of finding religion dull, afraid of giving up the fashions of the world, afraid of

being too strict ; ready for some religion, but not ready for all ; ready for five minutes' in the morning, and possibly for ten minutes' at night, and hoping that that will give absolution for a worldly, selfish day ; ready to give up what I don't want, but to keep what I do ; ready to swim with the tide and to run with the crowd ; content to let others fashion my life for me, not content to fashion my life for myself ? Carlyle says somewhere, that he would like to stop the stream of people in a London street, and ask every man his history ; but, "No," he says, "I will not stop them ; if I did, I should find they were like a flock of sheep, following on in the track of one another."

Oh, why, if there must be fools, why should we make up the complement !

Good people, the call to the enlisted Christian soldier is, "Come out here and fight ; be separate from the crowd, 'in the world, but not of the world.'" You have played, some of you, with a bit of string, at what we used to call *cat's cradle*, with your children ? In and out ; up and down ; now this, now that ;—a game which a well-known weekly paper, speaking of the childishness of many grown-up people's amusements, says that it verily believes, if only somebody would start the fashion, that then the world would be quite ready to play between the courses of dinner : bits of string could

be apportioned to the guests, and they would amuse themselves with, and sharpen their intelligences by a turn at *in and out*, at *up and down*, at *now this, now that*. It is the playing of that game by a professing Church with a non-professing world that makes the non-professing world a blasphemer, and makes the professing Church a hypocrite. Undistinguishable conduct, "in and out" conduct, "play with the world" conduct, makes the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, makes the professed servants of the Lord to dissemble. If we are not prepared unreservedly to follow Christ where Christ leads and as we feel to be by the Holy Spirit drawn, why do anything? Manners and customs neither mark the body with the marks of the Lord Jesus, nor justify in the day of judgment. Earthly traditions may by no means take the place of holy commandments; and if we are prepared to do nothing but what is, for the most part, usual, then I say, why do anything? Then I say, why not take altogether a life of ease? Why not escape entirely the despicable smile of the worldly? Why not shift from off the shoulders the sharp edge of the Cross before it has had time to make a mark there? Why not gain fully, openly gain the world, its praises, its smoothness, its comfort? For then only God would be lost, His praise, His love, His peace; that would be all!

“ ‘ Too late ! too late ! ’ will be the cry—
‘ Jesus of Nazareth has passed by. ’ ”

That would be all ;—and the door would be shut, and it would be night. That would be all.

Fine soldiers, we,—brave soldiers, we,—fit only to strut up and down upon parade, if, when the alarm is sounded and the battle comes, we are for changing our regiment, we are for throwing up our profession, we are for rushing home, like the children of Ephraim, “ who, being armed and carrying bows, turned themselves back in the day of battle, ”—without a scar, wound, mark !

“ The marks of Jesus. ” I beg you to remember the text, and to examine yourselves by it ; call to mind St. Paul and his scars, his brands—and all for Christ’s sake ; call to mind Christ Jesus our Lord Himself, and His scars, His brands—all for our sake ; and then question yourselves as to the likelihood of a crown hereafter without a cross here. All that will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution of one sort or another. “ Some marks of Jesus, ” I take it, must be upon His loved ones. Not all the same marks ; not all branded on the body in the same way ;—our bodies, in these easier days, will never be scourged, beaten, stoned, burnt, for the sake of Him Whose Body was pierced for us :—but we must make up our minds that they shall be marked somehow for His Name’s sake Who was marked for us. And

this can never be if we allow ourselves to be blown about like a feather in the wind, to be tossed about like a boat upon the waves; but this can be, if, stopping not to play with shadows or to pluck earthly flowers, we make duty and not self, duty and not pleasure, the object of our lives.

Listen here, for I have an example to cheer you on. I got it from the newspaper only last week. You have heard of the devoted Father Damien and the colony of lepers that he lives with and ministers to, away on one of the far distant Sandwich Islands in the Pacific. A young Roman Catholic lady, Miss Flavin, left Liverpool only the other week, to join Father Damien on that lonely island, there to nurse the dying lepers and take charge of the young orphaned lepers of that terrible colony. She has gone seeking neither notoriety nor reward, except the spiritual consolation of knowing that she is doing for those poor creatures what their terrible disease keeps others from doing for them.

“But have not you any specific,” she was asked, “to avoid infection?”

“Oh no!” she replied; “I shall be contaminated like the others.”

The priest has become a leper and his doom is sealed. She, like the priest, contemplates with calm courage a fearful death. An immense devotion, truly! “The marks of Jesus” there. “The blood of heroes and martyrs,” it was truly said

the other day, "is not yet gone from us." Branded on the body "the marks of Jesus." Think of this young woman—not in a moment of excitement, but calmly, after two years' special study, at a hospital, of this ghastly disease—cutting herself off from home for ever, and going to do battle with it for sheer love of God and her fellow-creatures. "I shall be contaminated like the others." That is what she plainly sees and serenely accepts. She asks for no words of astonishment and admiration from us. It is in mere obedience to the Divine voice that she is now going forth to her work: in its whisperings will be her support, in its final and assured benediction will be her unspeakable reward when the work is done."

Brethren, brethren, bear in your body "the marks of Jesus." Fear not; for henceforth it matters not if storm or sunshine be your earthly lot, bitter or sweet your cup; for when you come to stretch you at the last, it will be sweet that you have toiled for other worlds than this. Through ages of eternal years your spirit never shall repent that toil and suffering once were yours below; that, when below, were branded on your bodies again and yet again, for the sake of Christ and Christians, "the marks of Jesus."

ADDRESSES.

PATTERNS OF HOLINESS.—I.

THE FORTY MARTYRS OF SEBASTE.

YOU will remember, my friends and neighbours—friends and neighbours whom it is a great pleasure to see here now,—you will remember that, during the mission a year ago Mr. Woodward used to attract into this church a large number of persons for a short service every day at dinner time. After the mission was over, the one-o'clock service was continued every Friday throughout the succeeding Lent. From the attendance on the Fridays last year I have been led to think it might be well to hold a short service again on the Fridays of this Lent. Come then, if you can without great inconvenience, regularly, and invite others to come too.

The subject of the short addresses given last year was *The Lord's Prayer*. This year, for our help and encouragement, I shall call attention to some *Patterns of Holiness*, and, in so doing, to the

records of some deeds of faith or endurance which may, through God's goodness, nerve and brace us to fight manfully, to endure patiently, to love devotedly ; stories which shall make us tread boldly in saintly footsteps gone before ; while, at the same time, and in consequence of our so doing, we leave behind us, for the cheer and help of others, footprints which they seeing may take heart again, and so shall follow after us, as we follow after others, who in their turn have followed after Christ the Lord.

Patterns of Holiness. My brethren, we are Christians : let us, then, as Christians, learn to endure for Christ's sake ; learn to endure what to us may be hardness of some sort, for Christ's sake ; and this contentedly, trustfully, without a murmur. The hardnesses which we may have to endure may not be fit to be named on the same day with the hardnesses which other people have had to endure ; but, whatever they be, let them be endured for Christ's sake, cheerfully, promptly, lovingly. Little things are hard to little saints. It is hard to get out of bed on a cold morning gladly, soon enough to leave time for prayer. It is hard to be pinched in food, in clothes, to lead a life of daily toil and drudgery, to work long and get little, to do the bidding of another rather than do one's own likes. There are plenty of little hard stones of one sort or another in everybody's shoes. You know what is hard to

you. Play the Christian, then ; and listen here for your encouragement.

Patterns of Holiness: the forty martyrs of Sebaste. This for to-day.

Far away in the East of Asia Minor, or between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea, in Armenia, was the city of Sebaste. It was A.D. 300 about, in the month of January, and a terribly hard winter: deep snow, cold winds, biting frost. Amongst the heathen Roman soldiers quartered there, were forty Christians—valiant soldiers, but Christians. Their comrades might bow down unto their gods and idols, but never they ; no, not that, at bidding of either governor or general. All military obedience gladly, but no desertion of Christ! “We’ll bend those forty Christians to our will, or end their lives,” so said the governor. Cruel scourging got not one of the forty to sacrifice to heathen gods. Imprisonment answered the purpose no better. Shall this do? A terrible sentence! It was winter, the snow, I say, lay thick upon the ground ; the ice bound every lake and pond. Upon one of those frozen pools let the forty Christians spend the night naked. Kindle a bright fire in a small building near, and provide there warm baths. Leave open the door, so that the blazing fire and steaming water be well in view of those upon the ice. Any one of those forty soldiers who attempts to warm himself shall be

considered as having renounced his Christian faith, and be freely pardoned, have clothes and food and wine, and on the morrow good promotion. Night came, an intensely cold night, the bright moon and the stars gleaming in the wintry sky. There, on the ice, stood the forty martyrs of Sebaste, cold, shivering, naked; and before them, within easy reach, was the bright warm fire, glowing in the darkness. Soon death came to some of that brave band; they fell down asleep upon the ice, and knew no waking save in the Paradise of God. The others stood brave and firm, praying that they might endure to the end, praying that all of them, all the forty, might together receive the crown. "Better this cold," they said, "than the fire that never shall be quenched. Now are we the true soldiers of our great Captain. There is no more cold where He now is. There is the perpetual sunshine of His Presence. God grant that none of us turn back."

Well, one only amongst them all had not strength to endure the temptation; one only of them all approached the cheerful fire, and warmed his cold, stiff limbs in the bath; one only out of those forty brave soldiers lost his crown.

Yet there were forty martyrs of Sebaste. The heathen soldier on guard had wrapped his cloak around him, and lay down to sleep before the fire, and he dreamed a wonderful dream. An angel came down from the sky with a golden crown, then

with another, another ; nine-and-thirty crowns he brought, but he came not with the fortieth. The soldier looked in vain for the fortieth ; it did not come. And then he awoke, and saw the poor, tempted, failing Christian entering the hut where the fire burned, and he understood. Then came into his mind a wish to win the crown which that Christian man had lost. He heeded not the cold, he did not care for the pitiless wind, if only he could be blessed enough to die for Christ's sake. He went to the governor. He professed himself a Christian. He stood himself upon the frozen pool, a confessor amongst the other confessors of Jesus Christ. He was not baptized ; but in those days martyrs received the baptism of blood, and so were made heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven. The virtue of baptism was supplied to him by the grace of that martyrdom whereof he was counted worthy. Then forty athletes entered the arena, and forty victors received the prize. The forty martyrs of Sebaste won their crown of victory together.

Patterns of Holiness! "Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation ; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him."

PATTERNS OF HOLINESS.—II.

BISHOP PATTESON.

I SAID last week that the subject this Lent of these Friday dinner-time addresses should be *Patterns of Holiness*; that, for our help and encouragement, I should call the attention of those who care to come to Church at this hour to some patterns of holiness, to some records of deeds of faith or endurance, which might, through God's goodness, nerve and brace us to fight manfully, and endure patiently, and love devotedly. Thus, last Friday I spoke about the forty martyrs of Sebaste, and this to encourage us to endure after the Christian fashion, contentedly, trustfully, gladly, and for Christ's sake, whatever of hardness may be appointed for us. "You," I said, "you know what is hard to you; then play the Christian." That, last week, was a story of Christian endurance, endured nearly sixteen hundred years ago, and by men who would have been strangers and foreigners to us. To-day hear about a martyr bishop of our

own land, and of our own time. It is not yet eight years since, in the islands of the Pacific Ocean, the spirit of John Coleridge Patteson was called away. Endurance for Christ's sake was our lesson last week; to-day it is giving up for Christ's sake. "The good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." Patteson, for the sake of Jesus Christ, and for the sake of Him alone, gave up all,—home, prospects at home better than the prospects of many, country, society, self, life; a brother in very deed of ours, but a brother who ventured, shall I say, as we his brothers have no notion how?

Far, far away in the southern hemisphere lies a tract of the Pacific Ocean thickly studded with islands. Those of the islands which lie to the North of New Zealand are called Melanesia. It is now just thirty years since Bishop Selwyn, then of New Zealand, first visited those islands. The difficulties of carrying on there any mission work were enormous; each island had a different language. Englishmen could only live six months each year amongst the islands. Sailing, because of reefs and currents, is very dangerous; and there was the well-known character of many of the islanders, fierce and prompt to revenge upon any white man the injuries they had sustained from European or American traders. However, in 1855 Coleridge Patteson, aged twenty-eight years, went out to help Bishop Selwyn, by working amongst those islands; and in 1861, when he was thirty-four

years of age, Patteson was consecrated Bishop of Melanesia ; and then, on till the day of his death, ten years later, he carried forward his work with a marvellous devotion and extraordinary courage. For the inhabitants of these islands, what are they ? I say again, wild, naked, armed with spears, clubs, bows, poisoned arrows—arrows a yard long, headed with human bone, acutely sharp, so as to break in the wound. They think as little of shooting a poisoned arrow at a stranger as a school-boy would of throwing a stone at a bird. Well, well might Bishop Selwyn in the consecration service pray, “John Coleridge Patteson, may Christ be with you when in His Name you go out to these needy people. May Christ ever be with you, may you feel His Presence. May Christ ever be with you, and make you feel that ‘He ever liveth to make intercession’ for thee, ‘that thy faith fail not.’”

It was in September, 1871, not eight years ago, that Bishop Patteson was in his little vessel, *The Southern Cross*. He was preparing to land at an island where he had been once or twice before. It was a difficult place at which to land. The bishop saw four canoes lingering near. He ordered his little landing-boat to be lowered, and then he told his men to pull towards the canoes. They did so, and the black men asked the bishop to get into one of those canoes. He had often trusted himself to them before, and he did not hesitate now. He

went off alone with them in one of their canoes. The others remained until the tide should rise sufficiently to enable them to follow in their own boat. In about three-quarters of an hour, suddenly, from the other canoes, which still stopped near, arrows were fired into the boat belonging to the bishop's ship. The bishop himself was now ashore. Instantly, treachery was suspected, and a party was got together to follow the bishop. They had a long time still to wait, before the tide was high enough for them to cross the reef. They crossed at last, and then they saw two canoes coming out from the land towards them. One went back to the shore, and the other one, which looked quite empty, drifted out towards the sea. There was a heap of something lying in the middle of it, they could not at first see what it was. They lifted it out of the canoe into their boat. It was their dear bishop's dead body; another martyr gone, on that September afternoon, to wait before the golden altar! They went back to their vessel with their sad burden. As they pulled alongside, they murmured but one word, "The body." The islanders had wrapped it in native matting, and thrust a palm frond into the breast. The right side of the skull was completely shattered. The top of the head was cloven with some sharp weapon, and there were numerous arrow wounds about the body; but beside all this havoc and ruin, the sweet

face still smiled, the eyes closed. There was no sign of agony or terror. The smile gave only the sign of peace.

The body was buried next day in the deep blue sea. The sun was shining brightly ; but the martyr bishop had gone to live for ever and ever in the sunshine of God's Paradise. "John Coleridge Patteson. Aged 44. 'The good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.'"

"He that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal."

"If any man serve Me, let him follow Me, and"—what more do you want?—"where I am, there shall also My servant be."

Ah, my friends, when such as these depart, we may away with our black gloves, black scarves, black palls ; we may away with all our black trappings of hopeless despair ! For a brother has made a venture of faith, a brother has become a witness to the people, a brother has been hastened to the eternal sunshine which plays around the Throne of God.

What may *we* do for Jesus' sake ?

PATTERNS OF HOLINESS.—III.

JANE PARELLE.

YOU all know what is the subject this year of these Friday dinner-time addresses—*Patterns of Holiness*. To encourage us to endure after a Christian fashion, contentedly, trustfully, gladly, for Christ's sake, whatever of hardness may be appointed for us, I, upon the first Friday this Lent, spoke about the forty martyrs of Sebaste. To encourage us to make a venture at the call of Christ, to encourage us for the sake of Christ to give up our will, our time, our strength, our life, I last Friday spoke about Coleridge Patteson, the devoted Bishop of Melanesia. The martyrs of Sebaste were to us as Englishmen foreigners, and lived in far-off times; while the martyr of the Pacific islands was a fellow-countryman indeed, and lived only the other day. But this, my third address, will in its practical lesson perhaps come still closer to us yet; for it is about a woman, and about what St. Paul, writing

to Timothy, calls "showing piety (or kindness) at home." Standing shivering on ice may teach us a lesson of endurance ; but we shall not have to do it. Giving up a life for a barbarous people may teach us a lesson of Christian venturesomeness ; but probably we shall not have to do it. While as to showing piety or kindness at home, dear friends, before we meet here again next Friday, we every one of us ought to have been doing it most literally, most exactly, and over and over again. Then listen to the tale of the piety at home, towards her parents, of the French peasant girl, Jane Parelle.

The story of the winter night of Sebaste may have been a striking story. The story of the island Bishop may have been a touching story. The story of the dutiful daughter will be most commonplace. But our lives are commonplace, our homes are commonplace ; you then, who are for copying these patterns, apply the commonplace story to your lives at home.

In the year 1820 a French lawyer left by will at his death a large sum of money to be given in annual prizes to persons who had in various ways done good to their fellow creatures. One of these prizes was a sum of £400 for the poor French person who in the course of the year should have performed the most virtuous action. This prize was called "The Prize of Virtue," and in the year 1835 was awarded to Jane Parelle.

The prize might either be given entire, or divided into lesser portions among a number of claimants. You'll understand the woman didn't work for the prize ; she was heard of, found out, and thought worthy. In these few minutes I can only show you the sort of woman she was. Jane Parelle was in service ; her mother became paralytic, and she came home, and thenceforth devoted herself to the care of her parents. A few years after her father had a sort of fit, in which his teeth were closely locked together ; but his mouth filled with blood, and he would have been choked but for Jane's readiness in forcing them apart with her hands, at the cost of being severely bitten. The attack came on every night, and as regularly did Jane expose her hands to the dreadful bites of her unconscious father, until sometimes the flesh was torn almost to the bone. And yet she cheerfully went about her work all day endeavouring to prevent her father from seeing her injuries. It was ten years before the poor old man died. Think of that !

Well, Jane was left with her mother, who was deaf, blind, and hardly able to move from her chair. To show you Jane's patience and cheerfulness with the poor old childish woman, listen here. One festival day the old woman wished to go to church. Jane, now a hard-working woman of forty-five, made no difficulties, but petted and caressed her, promising that she should go. And on a hot August day she

was seen with a great chair on one arm and her mother on her other. She dragged the old woman three steps and then sat her down in the chair to rest, then lifted her up, led her a little further, and put the chair down again. They were three-quarters of an hour in going the distance Jane would have walked in five minutes, and after they got back Jane was full of delight. "Well, mother, did you say your prayers well? Are you glad? Are you tired?" And the laborious journey was cheerfully renewed on the old woman's least wish. Once Jane was advised to send her mother to the workhouse.

"It breaks my heart to hear them talk so," she said.

"But, Jane, your mother would be well cared for."

"Oh, likely enough; but tenderness—who would give her that?"

And another time she added, "God leaves us our parents that we may take care of them. If I forsook my poor mother I should deserve that God should forsake me."

This woman's tenderness for her mother seems never to have failed. She saved all the best of the food for her mother, the worst for herself. Once when the parish priest had sent her a pie, it seemed to last a long time.

"Don't you eat it, then?" somebody said.

"It would be a great pity for me to eat it, and nibble away her share, poor thing; it's her treat,

and she has but few pleasures, neither hearing nor seeing, and always in pain."

In a cold winter the daughter was found trying to cover her mother with an old worn pelisse of her own, and looking quite melancholy ; so a good thick woollen wrapper was sent to her. On the next visit the old woman was found wrapped up in it, and the daughter beaming with delight. " Bless those who have warmed my mother," she said ; " God will comfort them in Paradise." A pair of old, warm flannel sleeves were given her for herself ; but she was seen again with bare arms in the extreme cold.

" Did not the sleeves fit you ? "

" Oh, I picked them to pieces. My mother had pain in her knees, so I sewed the flannel on to her under petticoat. It's warm, you see ; she likes it, poor thing."

And there the pieces were, laid out neatly so as to thicken the petticoat.

For two months in the winter the daughter had never gone to bed, and though her own health began to suffer she never complained. My friends, for five and twenty years, when the prize was given, had Jane Parelle been the unwearied nurse and bread-winner of first two and then one parent. It seems a small thing that man should attempt to reward such exertions, yet, on the other hand, there is something touching in this hard-handed, untaught,

toiling, moiling woman being chosen out to receive honour due by the first men in intellect and position in her country, and all for the simple, homely virtues of humble life.

My friends, learn we from this story—I told you it was only a commonplace story of a commonplace life in a commonplace home ; it will suit us then—learn we from this our pattern of to-day to show piety, that is, kindness, at home.

“ What can we do for Jesus' sake,
Who is so high and good and great ?
We need not die ; we cannot fight :
What may we do for Jesus' sake,—
What little work of love and praise
That we may do for Jesus' sake ?

“ With smiles of peace, and looks of love,
Light in our dwellings we may make ;
Bid kind good humour brighten there,
And still do all for Jesus' sake.”

PATTERNS OF HOLINESS.—IV.

FATHER THOMAS.

TO-DAY, my friends, I have a fourth good Christian pattern to set before you. To encourage us to endure after the Christian fashion whatever of hardness may be appointed for us, I spoke upon the first Friday this Lent about the forty martyrs of Sebaste. To encourage us to make a venture at the call of Christ, I on the next Friday spoke about Coleridge Patteson, the martyr Bishop of Melanesia. Last Friday, to encourage us to show piety or kindness at home, I told you somewhat about the French peasant girl, Jane Parelle. To-day our lesson is to be one of self-forgetfulness, of seeking not one's own good, but the good of others, of preferring others before one's self.

Father Thomas was a Portuguese; and about three hundred years ago the Portuguese, who were Christians, had sent an army across the Straits of Gibraltar into the North of Africa to fight against

the Moors, the Mahometan natives of Morocco and Algiers. The Portuguese seem to have had it in their minds in this way to bring those infidel followers of the Prophet Mahomet under the obedience of Jesus Christ. The King of Portugal, Sebastian, was with his army, and, in a manner as chaplains to the forces, a proud Portuguese archbishop and a humble, lowly priest, called Father Thomas.

Before the battle two sets of counsellors gave different advice as to the best course to be followed. The advice given by Father Thomas and two or three others was not followed. A terrible battle was fought—the Christian Portuguese against the Arab Moors. At first the Portuguese seemed to sweep everything before them; but the Moors regained their courage, and before the day was ended the Christian army had ceased to exist. Half of its numbers were prisoners, Father Thomas among them; the other half were lost or dead. Ah, there was wailing and lamentation over Portugal, wailing and lamenting for the dead and for the captives. To raise ransoms for the captives many a family were ruining themselves. In every church collections were made for the captives, to raise money to pay the victors to set the Christian captives free. An order of men, founded for the redemption of Christian captives, spread themselves over the whole kingdom, praying for alms, and

telling doleful tales of those who were kept bound in Africa. After a time a treasure ship sailed off with the ransoms of most of the nobility, of all the ecclesiastics and of many of the sons of the richer families who, it had been ascertained, had survived the battle.

While this ship is on her voyage, let us look into one of the African dungeons, in which the Christian prisoners were confined. It is a chamber in the common prison, principally below the ground, and containing twenty or thirty prisoners stretched uneasily on the mud floor in every posture of misery and fatigue. One of their number alone stands upright: it is Father Thomas. With ink made of soot and water, and with nothing better than a wooden pen, he is writing about "The Labours of Jesus Christ;" and night by night he delivered from memory to his little congregation what he has composed for them in the day. Amongst the others in that cell is a boy of some thirteen or fourteen years, whose father fell in the battle, and who has himself been at the very door of death from the fever, and who at the moment is enjoying a little uneasy sleep. The huge lock of the dungeon creaked, the door opened heavily, and there entered one of the order of men whose business was, as I told you, the redemption of Christian captives. The prisoners started to their feet; they knew what this man's errand was, and

hope whispered to each that he might be one among the number to be set free.

"God's blessing on you all," said the visitor: "I hope to come on a happier errand e'er long; but now, I grieve to say, my business is with but one of you. Father Thomas, I have here your ransom; I have negotiated the matter with the authorities, and you are free."

"I am beholden to them and to you," replied the father; "but it shall never be said that while one of my companions was in misery here, I would return in freedom to Portugal. Good brother, 'we have not so learned Christ.' If I refuse the ransom for myself, I may doubtless name one in my place?"

"Assuredly you may; but I would have you bethink you well what you are doing."

"I will do so. Ignacio"—the poor boy half roused himself up—"Ignacio, would you like to see your mother and your dear little sister again?"

The boy sat upright, and looked around him as if bewildered.

"You have good reason to thank God," said Father Thomas; "your ransom has been sent, Ignacio, and we are going to lose you; but I am sure you will not forget us when you are in Portugal."

How the child threw himself into the good man's arms, and protested that he would never,

never forget any of his companions, that he would do everything he could. "And who knows," he said, "though I am so young, but that I may be able to do something to persuade others to send ransoms?"

And so with the congratulations of those who were unselfish enough to rejoice in his happiness, notwithstanding their own disappointment, the poor child departed.

Again and again that ransom-payer returned to Africa ; again and again he had the satisfaction of restoring husbands, fathers, brothers to their homes ; again and again was the ransom of Father Thomas sent, but as perseveringly he persisted in redeeming some unhappy prisoner by his own spun-out captivity. At length, however, by the special intervention of the ambassador, he was, against his will, set at liberty. Twenty-five years old when he began his imprisonment, fifty years old when he was set free ; or, as he himself expresses it, "in the fiftieth year of his exile from the heavenly country." When set at liberty he went to labour amongst the Portuguese slaves. But his course was well-nigh run ; for he had been set free on or about New Year's Day, 1582, and on the Sunday after Easter in the same year, with the Name of Jesus on his lips, he entered into the joy of his Lord.

This, then, my friends, is our fourth good

Christian pattern, our pattern of holiness for this, the middle Friday in Lent. Hard! yes, hard to body, soul and spirit, to tread in these saintly footsteps; but love makes hard things easy. It is not impossible to forget one's self; it is not impossible to seek the good of others rather than our own; it is not impossible to prefer others before one's self. This parish can afford examples of those who have proved, who are proving, its possibility. I gave you for an example a Portuguese in Africa three hundred years ago; but you may think of examples, in degree alike, at home to-day.

Be this our strife: unselfish enough to rejoice in another's happiness, notwithstanding one's own disappointment; unselfish enough to forget one's self in remembering others; unselfish enough to seek out what may be for the good of others, seeking not out one's own; unselfish enough to prefer others before one's self, and to keep fast hold of a generous love, a burning charity.

PATTERNS OF HOLINESS.—V.

EMMA WILLOUGHBY.

TO-DAY, my friends, I have a fifth good Christian pattern to set before you. Already, this Lent, we have had a pattern of Christian endurance ; a pattern of venture-making at the call of Christ ; a pattern of showing piety or kindness at home ; a pattern of preferring others before one's self. To-day comes our fifth good Christian pattern, a pattern somewhat akin to last Friday's ; it is of self-forgetfulness for the sake of little children—ay, self-forgetfulness for children's sake, even unto death. All that I shall tell you is true. I am only giving you examples from real life in all these Friday addresses. Therefore, for us, what man has done man can do. Others have done this ; why should not I ?

“Go forward, Christian soldier,
Fear not the gathering night ;
The Lord has been men's shelter,
The Lord will be thy light.”

Our pattern to-day is an English girl, aged eighteen, named Emma Willoughby. What I shall tell you took place in America, twenty years ago last December—in December, 1858.

Emma:—now do you know what the name *Emma* means? Some of you are called by this name yourselves; most of you know some one else who is. Well, as it happens, fitly for what you will hear, *Emma*, the name *Emma*, means a “nurse” or a “helper,” and therefore points out at once the duty of kindness to the young and helpless, or to the sick and suffering. Those who bear the name of Emma will always find sorrow enough in the world, which their care and kindness can lighten, and their very name should appeal to them to do so. *Emma*, “a helper,” one who is kind to the young and helpless, as our Emma Willoughby indeed was. She had been brought up in an English Church School. You know, it’s not so very, very long ago. You’ll understand I was born before this girl was born. She went out to service, and with a family to which she became very much attached—a family of the name of Kindersley. The family went to America. Emma would rather not have gone, but she had no father nor mother, nor brother nor sister, and so she was advised by her friends to go, as she was so happy with the family, and the family with her. Now, if you look in the map of North America sometime, near the

mouth of the great river Mississippi, which comes down from the North between three or four thousand miles, you'll see where the town of New Orleans is. Here in December, 1858, the English family, consisting of father, no mother, two daughters (thirteen and eleven), a son (eight), and Emma, embarked on a steamer for their new home, two thousand miles away up-stream, in the cold North-West. It would take twelve days steaming up the great, broad river, with dense forests on either side, to get to their destination. After three days the weather became colder; by-and-by, as they got further North, they began to see patches of snow here and there. The days shortened very much. On either side of the river were great, gloomy pine forests, groaning and moaning in the winter wind. It is the tenth night.

"A cold night, captain," says Mr. Kindersley.

"Cruel cold," replied the captain; "there will be snow before the morning."

And so, after a few more words, Mr. Kindersley went down, kissed his children, and was soon in bed himself. Emma still sat up, reading by the light of the saloon lamp. It was eleven o'clock. The children had long been asleep. Suddenly a frightful yell from the engine-room; a great cloud of steam: "The ship's on fire!" The passengers must not stop to dress; the ship must be run on shore. Catching the children up as they were, in

their night-dresses, screaming to her master to awake, Emma hurried them upstairs. Mr. Kindersley, with scarcely anything on, was by his children. In less time than it takes me to tell it, the ship touched the ground, and lay there for a moment. In that moment Mr. Kindersley had placed the children, Emma, and himself on one of the branches that lay over the water. The huge ship drifted on. In one half of an hour, out of the two hundred on board all but fifteen had perished, and the vessel had sunk. True, the survivors were safe for a moment—but how? The children dragged out of a warm bed, having only their night-dresses on, exposed to the bitter wind of a December night. There was but one hope—another steamer would pass in the morning; if they could but hold out till then, they might be saved. Emma asked her master about this coming steamer.

“Yes,” he said, “it’s true; but how can the children hold out till then? I have nothing that I can give them,”—he had neither coat nor waist-coat on—“nor have you. They must die of cold.”

“Not if I can keep them alive, sir.”

Emma was dressed, you remember, but for indoors, not for out-of-doors. No shawl, no cloak; she had only her gown and underclothing to wrap the children up in. Her gown and all her underclothing that she could in simple decency spare she spared for the children. One thin garment alone,

remained to cover herself ; and those three little ones clustering together, and each to Emma, thus held on for life, the snow falling, darkness everywhere, for some two or three hours. Mr. Kindersley, though suffering as much as anybody from the cold, did what he could to keep the children awake and amused ; he did everything that man could do, to make that long, fearful night seem shorter. The two girls, thirteen and eleven, held out the best ; the little boy, eight, soon gave signs of sinking. Emma did whatever she could ; but she was as cold as ice herself, and could not warm him. The father again and again thanked her, in such words as could only come at such a time ; he reminded them all of that land where the winter of this world would be over, and in that black night he told them of the sunshine of God's Presence. But the life of the little boy was ebbing away, and long before the sun arose that which Emma held was only the casket, from which the jewel had gone forth. Meanwhile, for the love of Christ, that girl was giving herself up to one of the most painful of deaths. After the little boy had gone, she was preserving the two girls at the cost of her own life ; for when the cold and bitter wind could no longer hurt the little brother, then the wraps that had been put round him were put round the sisters. And so the night wore on, and slowly at last the dawn crept in.

If the ear of man could hear what the spirit of man saith, it would then have heard a spirit cry, "Let me go, for the day breaketh." For all those hours Emma had struggled in every way for the children, literally keeping only one thin garment to herself; she had given everything else, even her stockings, to the children. At last the muscles could do their work no longer. There was a splash, just as the morning was light enough for the others to see her fall; but there was no scream, no struggle in the water. Most probably she went home in a state unconscious of what she was suffering. But by her means the two little girls were saved. The expected vessel at last was seen; the shouts of the wrecked passengers were heard. The vessel brought to, and they were rescued.

The body of that girl Emma was carried down by the stream for miles and miles and miles; at last it was washed on shore, close to a small town. And when the story of the English girl's endurance became known, and how she had stripped herself of almost all her clothing for the sake of the children, they who had committed that body to the grave knew what were the circumstances under which it had been carried down the Mississippi. And there it now rests by the side of the broad river; and Emma has forgotten her miseries, remembering them only as waters that pass away.

Dear friends, self-forgetfulness for the sake of

little children, indeed! Ay, self-forgetfulness for children's sake even unto death! What can we do? I doubt it cannot be as much as this; but something let it be—something for His sake Who is the “children's King;” for His sake Who took children in His arms to bless them, and has promised a reward to him who even gives to drink a cup of cold water to one of those little ones that believe in Him.

“To do good, and to distribute, forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.”

PATTERNS OF HOLINESS.—VI.

PRASCOVIA LEPONLOFF.

TO-DAY, my friends, on this the sixth Friday in Lent, I have a pattern of perseverance to set before you. We have only one more Friday before Easter—Good Friday,—and on that day the pattern must be that of Jesus Christ Himself, that greatest ensample of all of godly life. To-day, then, will be our last saintly pattern, for next Friday, you see, the pattern will be Divine.

A pattern of perseverance. About ninety years ago, at the end of the last century, a captain in the Russian army was sent from St. Petersburg, for some unknown reason, some supposed political offence, into exile for life, to the remote district of Siberia. His wife and little girl, aged three years, accompanied him. You know, the climate is a fearful one ; winter lasts nine months, the sun unseen for many weeks at a time. The little girl, however, managed even in that wild, dreary home to be happy enough until she was nearly fifteen, when she

began to understand how wretched her father was in his banishment. His despair awoke Prascovia from her childish enjoyments. She daily prayed that he might be brought home and comforted; and, as she said herself, it one day darted into her mind, just as she finished saying her prayers, that she might go to St. Petersburg and obtain his pardon. She could not rid herself of this thought. Hundreds and hundreds of miles St. Petersburg was away. Her parents laughed at the very idea. For three years she never failed to add to her daily prayer a petition that her father might let her go. She was only eighteen. Again and again her father said nothing could induce him to let her depart alone for such a journey. But she won her way. After several more months she started,—it was in the month of September. She only had a little bag over her shoulder, and only one silver coin in her pocket. She was nineteen. And what had she to do? To walk through vast expanses of forest, and make her way, hundreds of miles, to the presence of her Sovereign!

I could not tell you in these few minutes of all that this girl suffered and accomplished on her wonderful journey. How wearily tired she got, how lonely she felt, how often she lost her way, how she was laughed at,—as you would be, if you asked, “Please, which is the way to Edinburgh?” or “to London?” but further;—how she was caught in furious storms; how

she was drenched through and through to the very skin ; how she was driven off from door after door by those who said they harboured neither thieves nor vagabonds ! “ At least,” thought the poor wanderer, “ they cannot hunt me from the church.” But, passing a village, she found the church door locked ; and when she sat down on its stone steps, the village boys came round her, hooting at her and calling her a thief and a runaway. And thus she remained for two whole hours, ready to die with cold and hunger, but inwardly praying for strength to bear this terrible trial. Sometimes people treated her kindly ; she was often obliged to rest for a day or two, according to the state of her strength, the weather, or the reception she met with ; and she always endeavoured to requite the hospitality she received by little services, such as sweeping, washing, or sewing for her hosts. She once, afterwards, said that the acts of kindness she had received were beyond counting ; “ whenever I tell the troubles and adventures that befell me, I don’t like to pass over the kind welcomes I received.” She had one or two great frights, as, for instance, thinking she was going to be murdered.

Then winter came on, and snowstorms, so that the roads could not be distinguished. However, she got a lift on the sledges of some carriers once when things were very bad. The men were kind to her. They were each wrapped up in a great sheepskin ; she

had nothing. They agreed to let her have one, and all the other men took it in turns to be without one for a time. The men arranged to change about at the milestones,—there to shift the sheepskins ; and there was much merriment over the changing ; while all the way the girl kept praying that these kind men's health might suffer no injury from the cold to which they thus exposed themselves. A good lady that Prascovia came across at a village further on kept her all the rest of the winter, and strove to remedy the effects of the severe cold she had caught owing to her exposures, and not till spring would she let the girl proceed on her way. Prascovia was on a barge on a river on one occasion, and got pushed overboard ; and as there was no privacy in the barge, and as she could not bear to undress herself in public, her wet clothes injured her health again. Later on, at a house where she was being sheltered, she was taken very ill, and the doctor who came to see her thought she would not get better ; but she never gave herself up. "I do not believe my hour is come," she said ; "I hope God will allow me to finish my work." And she did recover, but so slowly that all the summer passed before she could resume her journey ; and before she reached St. Petersburg eighteen months had passed since she left her parents in their exile.

But, arrived at St. Petersburg, her difficulties were

not over, nor her patience no more to be tried. How could a poor, friendless girl hope, under ordinary circumstances, to get herself admitted to and listened to by the Emperor? She had to stand for days on the cold steps of the Senate House before she could get the necessary form of admittance signed. Holy Week came on, and Prascovia's devotions and supplications were addressed entirely to God. On Easter Day, that day of universal joy, she was unusually hopeful, and felt a certainty that before long she should be successful. Now this is remarkable. Prascovia went to the house of a lady who had a relation high in office in the Senate who could have helped on the girl's cause; but unfortunately this lady and gentleman were not on good terms. Easter Day, however, is, in the Russian Church, the happy occasion when all reconciliations are made. Families make a point, it is said, of meeting with the glorious greeting, "Christ is risen"; and the response, "He is risen indeed," and the kiss exchanged at these glad tidings, seal general pardon for all the bickerings of the year. While Prascovia was calling, this very gentleman came in. He took an interest in the girl and helped her. But even yet her delays, her toils, her disappointments were enough to break the heart of any ordinary person. At last, however, she got a message to go and see the mother of the Emperor. "My God," she exclaimed,

“not in vain have I put my trust in Thee. Oh, if my father could see me! O God, finish Thy work!” And before many days this work was finished, and she was promised that her father should be liberated.

You can imagine the meeting, some weeks afterwards, between daughter and parents. Somehow or other their first impulse on seeing the daughter, who had done so much for them, was to fall on their knees; but she cried out with dismay and, herself kneeling, exclaimed, “What are you doing? It is God, God only, Who works for us. Thanks be to His providence for the wonders He has wrought in our favour.”

The rest of Prascovia's life was one long decline; her health had been fatally injured by the sufferings she had undergone, and though she lived some years, she was gently falling away all the time. She died on December 9, 1809—seventy years ago next December. It was somewhat sudden. She had been left the night before without alarm, but in the morning she was found in her last long sleep, her hands forming the sign of the cross.

Well there's our pattern: Patience, perseverance—patience long continued; perseverance persevered with. And, my friends, until we have, in the business of our daily lives, and in the strivings of our spiritual lives, and in the supplications

of our prayers,—until we have in all ways wrestled and fought and prayed, once and again, and yet again and again, let us not despair. Patience! Perseverance!

“Dangers do not dare me,
Terrors cannot scare me ;
God my guide, I'll bear me
Manfully for ever.
Constant, calm, unfearing,
Boldly persevering,
In good conscience steering,
Manfully for ever.”

THE END.

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