

UPPINGHAM SERMONS.

Cambridge :

PRINTED BY C. J. CLAY, M.A. AND SONS
AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS.

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SERMONS

PREACHED AT

UPPINGHAM SCHOOL

BY THE

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VOL. II.

340685
14. 8. 37.

CAMBRIDGE:

DEIGHTON, BELL AND CO.

LONDON: GEORGE BELL AND SONS.

1886

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SERMON LXXX.

MAIDEN SPIRITS WAITING FOR HAPPY LIFE.

ST MATTHEW XXV. 5.

“While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.”

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MEN are always discussing questions of time, how long the world has lasted, or will last, the day of judgment, questions of futurity in one shape or another; in fact putting off, getting their thoughts away from that present which contains for them all that is to come. There are three remarkable parables, which turn on this unwillingness of man to live in the present, because the future seems far off. They are all spoken by our Blessed Lord in His solemn prophecy concerning the last day, when He is warning us, that there are many last days, many waves and tides of judgment fulfilled; all belonging to the same great ocean of judgment; many breakings up of the old, and birthpangs of the new; many presences of the Son of Man; many comings to judgment, each complete in itself. Nothing dead shall

remain in the kingdom of life even on earth; no carcase shall continue; the birds of prey shall gather round everything out of which life has departed. Watch therefore, for there is a ceaseless, unknown, unheeded march of judgment; an everlasting presence of secret life, which every overthrow of dead things makes room for; and *we* form part of this wonderful system of judgment; where every judgment brings some evil to an end to make room for better life. Beware lest we are the evil made an end of.

This is the main outline of the great prophecy of the last day, when the disciples asked, "When shall these things be, and what are the signs of Thy coming?" And the three parables of the faithful and wise steward, of the ten virgins, and of the householder leaving home and entrusting talents to his slaves, all belong to this prophecy, and follow one another. They all agree in one point, the seeming delay. They all agree in this delay being only seeming, for the present life is judged in all three; the Lord comes and nothing is left out because he was thought to be absent.

The first parable deals with men in power who think their lord is out of the way, and misuse their power.

The second of the ten virgins, which is the one I wish to draw your attention to, deals with the enthusiasm and love which sleeps, because the end is not soon.

The third deals with the lack of purpose and unwilling heart, the slackness, which will not work when the master's eye is away. The kernel of all is, that there seems to be delay, that this causes false security, and that an unexpected presence brings to an end the delusion.

In the parable of the ten virgins, we see a happy

company of the young, waiting for a happy festival of life, full of love and joy. The Bridegroom is coming, and they are the friends of the Bride. The picture drawn of life is bright and triumphant, full of excitement, and hope, and eager longing; and all this happiness is to come *soon*; a good end is to crown good expectations. Life is depicted as full of happy hopes, and coming joy. They are a bridal company of the young, furnished with everything necessary for the bridal, lamps, and oil to light the lamps, when the triumphant march actually begins.

The lamps imply that all the external agencies necessary were given them; all the outward means of grace, teaching, and teachers, religious training, sacraments, Scriptures; every outward and visible means by which inward and spiritual grace is conferred; every outward and visible accompaniment of holy life, the law, the order, the good habits, the surroundings which both train for good, and make good easy. Whilst the oil is that inner truth of life, the gift of the Holy Spirit, the real qualities which are kept alive by outward good.

So this happy company wait for a happier end. They are virgins, as being untried, not yet brought in contact with the trials of fuller and more active management and life; feminine, as denoting absence of hard experience, together with the tender delicate power of youthful enthusiasm and love, the pure, bright dreams of good to come, that dwell in the minds of early goodness in its first home. How vividly this company of maidens furnished with all happy aids to life puts before us the longings for good, the uncorrupt aims of youth! How the busy, impulsive, uncalculating looking to a successful end, without counting the cost before the end, rises

before our eyes! Life is to be a bridal feast, a march of happy, innocent joy, with just waiting enough to make the happy end seem happier; just work enough to give a zest to the joy; just uncertainty enough to make success more delightful.

And this happy company of expectant love and enthusiasm, this favoured company of invited friends, this wedding party, is put in between the fierce tyranny of power abused, which causes misery and is miserably punished, and the hard work of the working band of slaves, with their talents, and the wretched fate of him who would not work. And all three pictures of life are in the midst of the great judgment prophecy; of that prophecy, which tells that this world, now Christ has come, is one great ocean of life and judgment, which has its ebbs, and its tides, its periods of seeming rest, and its periods of stormy activity, but which whether at rest, or active, is the same presence of Christ evermore destroying all that is dead, evermore setting free and giving wider scope to all that is living in His Kingdom of life.

Whether we are stewards in authority, or maiden spirits waiting for a happy triumph of good, or traders set to work with toil and risk, it is all the same, the Great Lord tarries long, in our opinion, because we know not that an everlasting presence of judgment and life is on us, whether we see it, or whether we do not.

I hope next Sunday to enter more into the interpretation and illustration of this parable. But there is wonderful interest for a school in the mere picture set before us. Here this great building is thronged with untried spirits *waiting to begin*, full of tender hopes, and dreams, and vigour of happy truth. The glorious visions of generous hearts are here, high thoughts, happy

expectations, resolute purpose, as well as easier wishes, and surface emotions. Who can look on such a company without calling to mind that the angels of the young and true ever behold the face of our Father in heaven? Who can see it without believing that their angels move to and fro amongst us here, and stand by the side of the young in their hours of life, and of trial? Even such a company does the parable tell us of, tender, and tried, and brave, and joyous, and highly favoured, hopeful, enthusiastic, bright, full of a coming life that was to be a marriage procession of successful truth. And, brethren, I would have you see that this happy dream was not a mistake; the only mistake was the impatience. The happy dream was not a mistake, but a sure and great reality. The bridegroom tarried, but he came; and all the dream was realised, all the hope made good. So be it with you. Set your hopes high; make your visions glorious; dream of happiness beyond belief; yet it shall come. Only be patient. Keep the light of life alive. Be patient. Abate not one jot of your hopes; angels are by your side, the Bridegroom comes. Be patient as well as enthusiastic, act whilst you dream.

SERMON LXXXI.

NOBLE DREAMS ARE TRUE.

ST MATTHEW XXV. 5.

“ While the Bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.”

OUR blessed Lord in this parable distinctly recognizes the joyous view of life as a true view. It is not wrong, far otherwise, to look on a life of goodness and holiness as a bridal procession in which the whole main idea is triumphant and happy. The parable upholds this main idea thoroughly, and only requires it to be supported by patience and endurance. It is a blessed thing that our Lord has put His seal in this way on all the enthusiasm, the high hopes, the excitement, the bright expectancies of the noble-hearted young, and consecrated them. It is a blessed thing that He has taken all the warm, untried innocence, which the worldly wise sneer at, all the splendid visions of right and truth successful, which the worldly wise smile at, all the faith and trustfulness, which those, who have lost, make merry over, or shake their heads at, and declared them true,

and justified, real, and part of the divine plan. The young, who have quick, generous feelings, and longings, they know not how, for noble life and noble death, may well rejoice to hear, that their dreams are God's plan of life, if they will but stick to them ; that it is the giving them up that is untrue, not the having them.

But our Lord puts before us the unflinching truth when He tells us, that all slumbered and slept. The mere enthusiasm, and youthful fire, does always in all cases die out. When the weary delays and monotonous evils of life come, all that freshness of spirit, and untried grandeur of thought, goes. Day after day, disappointment, and petty trials dim the brightness of early hope ; and, if there is nothing gained before this takes place, nothing is left. *All sleep.* Good and evil alike. *All sleep.* Mere enthusiasm is only like a charge of powder to start the beginner, to break down the first obstacles, it is soon over. *All sleep.* And how striking a picture this is of what we see and feel daily ; time drags heavy ; nothing great happens ; the Bridegroom tarries ; every crisis is a sort of coming of the Bridegroom ; but there is no crisis. The warm high hearts have to wait, and wait, till all the warmth and fire, little by little, fades out of them ; then, how true it is, that the commonplace life and the little vexations, *as* they destroy the enthusiasm, bring in a sleepiness and desire for ease. The very coldness of night tends to sleep ; the want of light tends to sleep ; the tiresomeness tends to sleep ; and personal comfort, and a certain unwillingness to move *naturally* comes, always comes, after the bright activity, and watchful eagerness, and restless longings, of the young earnest life as yet untried.

They do not see clearly what once they thought

they were sure of all round, inside and out ; further experience has made them *know* how little they know. *That is night.* There comes a period to all, when the certainties of the beginner are so altered by finding all things working differently from his own narrow plan, and so enlarged, and so many-sided, that however fast he holds to his actual belief and his first faith, a sort of dimness in applying it, a darkness on his own path settles down ; he may not doubt, but he does not see. There is so much inexplicable all round him and in his circumstances that for a time he is at a loss to know what is going on. He cannot explain to himself what is the good of it all ; he feels useless troubles, and meets obstructions that appear accidents, purposeless, and yet severe ; all this is a kind of night ; and all men pass through such a time.

Then comes the great warning of the parable, the dividing line. The dull tiresome hours pass on, and all seem equally off their guard ; when, all of a sudden, an unexpected crisis bursts on these sleepers, and the sleepy hours. Everything looks so peaceful : but a cry rises, and sudden exertion is demanded, readiness for action, some great misfortune, public or private, lights upon a household ; or some great call to active good ; it matters not what the shape of the call is ; the great event and stir, joyful, or severe, comes. The sleepers are called on to act ; and all start up, and look about to prepare for action. Then is seen the difference between those whose lamps were only lighted for immediate use and show, and a little display in the sight of men, and those who have a reserve store of energy and secret power, which they have got together, quietly, and patiently, and hidden away out of sight. Surface enthusiasm soon

burns out, but the deep inner power, which doing your best daily brings, is a stored up supply; and this can be got in the dull waiting days, and unexciting, commonplace work, even though all the brighter visions drop off to sleep. The deadness of monotonous days does not destroy the collecting power, the storing up power, the inward gathering of strength, even though it does destroy the vividness and freshness of spirit.

Well, a cry comes in sleepy, prosperous days, or in sleepy, treadmill days, and then is seen who is ready for action. Long disuse, without thinking of trial, and an unobservant, routine style of work, destroys the power of action in many, and they are not ready; they try to act, they go to buy oil, as it were, but it is too late to *get* what they ought to *have*. They cannot act; and they lose all that action brings, whether it be safety, or whether it be joy. Those only who keep their hearts alive to work, though the work may have been dull, are equal to their day when the great call comes. They are ready though they did sleep. The crisis comes and they rise with it. The crisis passes, while the unready are in spirit absent, hunting for their lost energies; or literally absent, unable to face the time. Then when all is over, they come too late to claim a share in the result. "Give us, they said, of your oil." They want others to do the work whilst they benefit by it, and make it their own. But this may not be.

It is true that in earthly life, outwardly, it can be so; but even in earthly life such are shut out from the true bridal communion, alien in spirit they are, and they continue to be. Whatever else they may get, the kingdom of heaven within, the spirit power, is not theirs; they are shut out from the higher life. And in the true

kingdom of the Bridegroom at His coming, how much more shall this be the case? How much more shall the spiritual glory of the friendship of being intimate friends of the bride have a shut door set against those who were not able to show their love by waiting without losing their working power and readiness?

This is a great truth, this fact of dreary waiting trying the heart, but not in any way destroying the working power even though all sleep. How many *do* give up their honest life, and their faithful early conviction, because God seems to them farther away than they thought He would be! Christ tells us this ought not to be, and need not be. How true too is the fact, that all the inner delight of truth is shut off from the half-hearted! The heart communion with the great and good, the love of the Bridegroom, the seeing eye of love in themselves, the insight into the counsels of God, and Christ, and Christ's friends, all are closed to the half-hearted. They are shut out from the inner circle. A door is set, a shut door, between them and the free happy intercourse of spiritual union, which feels truth, and high love, and noble character, and loves it, and is happy. Which sees the secret glory of God's creation, and the hearts of Christ's redeemed, and loves it, and is happy. All this is shut out from them; they meet a closed door, when they come too late with their after-thoughts, and the crisis is over. But, remember, it is not the high hope of youth, the bridal promise, the happy dream of noble life, that is untrue, and false in grain; it is the letting go the hope, the promise, the dream, that stamps the dreamer as a fool. He who hopes for the Bridegroom is wise; he, who gives up his hope, is the fool. The dreamer is true.

SERMON LXXXII.

THE FELON'S CREED, AND THE REDEEMER.

ST JOHN I. 29.

*“Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin
of the world.”*

THESE words were spoken by St John the Baptist when our Blessed Lord came unto him to be baptized. They proclaimed at the beginning of His ministry the real object of His presence on earth. The Crucifixion, and taking away the sins of the world on the Cross by His Sacrifice, was the one great central point of all the counsels of God. *“It is finished,”* said the Son of God, when that sacrifice was fully offered. *“The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world,”* is the same great truth; the one truth, the only truth. For all other truth that really concerns man is contained within that truth. *“The Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.”*

All this week, day after day, Evangelist after Evangelist has passed before you, each pointing to the Cross of

Christ; each with solemn voice giving the warning and the blessing, sentinel-like, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." Sentinel-like in the great army throughout all the world the trumpet has sounded; and all the world has heard: in every nation the cry has been raised, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world."

So it has been since the first hour, so it shall be till the last hour, when the Archangel trumpet shall take up the everlasting note, and the dead shall be raised, and men shall look on Him whom they have pierced as they stand before His judgment throne. Yet I do not wish, even if I could, with angel tongue to thrill your hearts to-day by heavenly visions, and the awe and the glory of the world to come, by tidings of the grave, and the beyond the grave. Rather let us look at what concerns us now, the sins of the world, and the need of a Saviour.

I believe, when sin is spoken of, the thoughts generally turn to an idea of crime, and misery following crime, of doing wrong, and the punishment of wrong doing. And the prevailing impression left is of evil actions being done, and the doer of them having punishment done to him. This is quite true, but it has nothing whatever to do with the revelation of what sin is. Most assuredly, as the Greek saw, "murder, by murder, makes more murder"; and wrong does beget wrong, and misery punishes on the whole the doers of wrong. But the consequences of evil, as we see them doing harm, or as punishment inflicted on the evil doer, have nothing to do with sin. Sin whether it injures others or not, whether punished or unpunished by outward judgment, is the same. Hell, if we only mean by hell a sentence passed, and an execution inflicted, does not touch the

revelation of sin, or the satisfaction of the blood of Christ.

That is a felon's creed, which makes evil deeds, and the pardon of evil deeds, all in all. The King of Heaven could have sent His pardon, if pardon was all, and pardoned man might have received it, and lived on securely, unpunished by a sentence of power, if that was all. No, the felon's creed of guilty acts and pardon for guilt, is not God's revelation of sin, and a Redeemer's death on the Cross. It has but little to do with "behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." "*Taketh it away,*" not pardoneth it only, but "taketh away." Ay, sin is the inward plague of corruption in a soul dying because of it. "The wages of sin is death." "Sin when it is finished bringeth forth death." And death is that banishment from God, when the lost spirit has become unable through corruption to see or love the Holy Spirit of God working good. Sin is the awful impurity and taint in the spirit, that is blind to God's glory, and is learning to hate it as far as it can see it. Sin completed *is* hell in itself, whatever outward sentence there may be also. Power could stop the punishment of an executioner, and pardon a criminal. God might have sent His pardon, just as a king sends a reprieve to the condemned cell, but that does not *take away sin*. The Lamb of God, Christ crucified, alone can take away sin by His Blood. I know not, no one knows the mystery which made this necessary, or *how* it is. But everybody knows, or can know, that the corrupt spirit is not cured by pardon; that the power to see God, and love Him, is something which is not ours, and which no man can get of himself, or give.

Sin is between man and God; as terrible, if there

was no world for evil to make unhappy, but only the man himself, the sinner diseased, corrupted, poisoned in spirit, and every day with the poison of his spirit by its venom working in him blindness to good, and hatred of God. Sin is the dreadful insanity of loving wrong things, of admiring devil work, and lusting after devil beauty, and devil honour, and learning to rejoice in it, and to hate true honour and true beauty, until by degrees everything that is fair and lovely becomes hateful to the sinner, or is shut off from him ; and at length utter choice of evil leaves the sinner unable, however miserable he may be, to find good and happiness any more.

Utter, helpless self-deceit, is the work of sin ; the having neither eyes nor heart for any noble thing ; the complete belief in lies of a devil world, where false glitter cheats the soul. And sin once willingly received into the heart, as it is the serving of an evil spirit, cannot be got rid of till a stronger than the strong man armed come, and bind the strong, and spoil his goods. Till Christ the Redeemer, the Crucified Saviour, having overcome death, and him that hath the power of death, that is the devil, sets the repentant sinner free. No one can have thought of any sin he has committed, without feeling that no power of his own could ever get rid of the dark remembrance, the taint of the poison of corruption once admitted. And no one can in earnest have stood up, in prayer, and struggled against the evil in his heart, without feeling himself in the presence of a power he would cast off if he could ; without feeling that an enemy, a strong enemy is before him, and that he does indeed need a deliverer, a Redeemer, a King to save. Sin is a choosing an evil spirit to be our lord instead

of God ; and, if no act of ours could ever bring misery on another, sin would remain as deadly as if a world was lost by it.

O fearful it is to see the young child in its first disobedience, beginning sin, with a smile perhaps, a petted forwardness, and by little acts of self-indulgence, setting the devil poison working. And then at school, in the beginning of more independent action, there begins also the double life, the life which does not with a generous spring answer to the spirit of the place, but day by day gets more apart into secret thoughts, and secret acts, either of not working, or of hidden untruth, or hidden pleasures, or hidden impurity, which dares not show itself ; and so a false independency, and a lying freedom in wrong doing, takes the place of the vigorous manly liberty of him who is free indeed, because he has nothing to conceal, and nothing to fear. And so the poisonous breath of sin keeps tainting and corrupting all the freshness and purity of young life ; and the corruption spreads, and gets into the very soul, destroying all its power to do true work, and win even earthly credit ; and the face loses its frank manly expression ; and the poison begins to be seen outwardly ; and after disappointing father, and mother, and family, and himself most of all, the wretched victim either sinks down to a lower level and lives on, or often finds an early grave, killed by his own foul passions. Or, in the case of more powerful minds, the pride and rebellion of sin is the temptation, and hardens this kind of idolater into one of those keen, glittering powers, which seem so successful, which the Psalmist speaks of, "as the ungodly, which is a sword of Thine." But whether sin works self-indulgence in the flesh, and softens into idleness and lust ; or works self-

indulgence in pride and intellect, and hardens into a sword, it is sin corrupting, poisoning, blinding, that is the curse. Sin, destroying all sight of God and communion with God, as terrible, if no act of ours ever brought misery on another, as if a world was lost by it. That dread rebellion against God, which runs riot in the man who chooses sin, or devil worship, that is, instead of the glorious service of God, and the glorious liberty of the Sons of God, that is the curse.

Behold then to-day the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world. Fly to the Cross of Christ, pray to the Redeemer for deliverance. Learn of Him Who is meek and lowly of heart, and find rest for your souls. *Learn*, that is, believe what God tells you, and *try it*. If you try it, as He tells you, then you learn. But nothing can reach you, if you will not try. Wonder not that you do not know Christ the Saviour, if you do not try what Christ the Saviour told you. "If a man love me, he will keep My Commandments." O may this great memorial day cleanse this place and your hearts from the devil poison of sin, welcomed, and chosen, and corrupting. "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world."

SERMON LXXXIII.

BIRTH COMMEMORATION.

GENESIS XXVIII. 20, 21, 22.

“And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father’s house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God: and this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God’s house: and of all that Thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto Thee.”

THESE words perhaps seem to many of you a strange common-place, a cold calculating bargain very much out of harmony with the glorious vision Jacob had just seen, very different in spirit from the angels of God ascending and descending before the eyes of the lonely man, in the lonely desert, under the starry heaven, and the Lord God standing above, and the voice of God speaking in power. I think they bear a very different meaning, that they are the fervent thanksgiving of one who has just heard something too

good to be true, something that he can scarcely yet believe from very joy at the greatness of the hope that is in him; who cries from depths of present adversity, if this is indeed true, if I am not deceived, if, poor outcast as I now am because I tried to win God's promise, God nevertheless will give me the promise, then *I will* be grateful, *I will* believe in Him, and give myself to Him, and honour Him, and never mistrust Him again. They seem to me the natural, the wonderfully natural, outburst of a man beginning life under great difficulties; when he has suddenly become sensible of God being *his* God; of his own life being under immediate guidance and protection; of his own work, and present way of life, being specially cared for by God.

There is a difference, a gulf unspeakable, between believing in God ruling heaven and earth, and feeling that God is specially caring for *you*, and looking on what *you* are doing, and what *you* are suffering, and blessing it, and making your heart strong, with a certainty of guidance, and blessing, and a good end. The heart leaps up in answer, and pledges itself to be true to the great leader it has just found out to be its own, and God becomes *my* God. As soon as Jacob is sure of the leadership he will be true to it. But in his great misfortune, in his absolute desolation, the glorious promise of the glorious future, and the angels, and the presence of God, are too great a contrast. Can it all be true? Can it be for him? There is the desert when he wakes, blank and bare, that is certain; there he is, a penniless outcast; that is certain; but yesterday the acknowledged heir to wealth and the highest religious place on earth; to-day, homeless, and alone. Is it

indeed true that a greatness such as he never dared picture is to be his? Is it indeed true that God has singled him out, and has let him know it? What he *sees* is very dreary. If he can but persuade himself that God is indeed with him, he will throw away doubt, and be true to Him for ever.

Up to this time he had lived in a wealthy peaceful home with religion and the promise about him from his first childish hearing. There had been in his home the vexations of life, but none of the real cares and real struggle; nothing very deep either in religion or in trial; with one exception, the great promise to Abraham's race, the birthright—and even that came in rather as a matter of the earthly inheritance, of the first place, and the dignity of chief, than as a great spiritual power. Still it came in, the one strong disturbing element in the shepherd's camp; the one thing that was not only a vexation or a luxury, a surface mover of their life, but which lay like a sword, dividing marrow and bone, cleaving down into the innermost depths of their hearts by degrees. And Jacob had made his choice, blindly in many ways, with many worldly motives mixed; still he had made his choice for God; and what had it seemed to bring him? It had brought him daily fear, and now a homeless outcast's lot. Day by day, from the hour he had got his father's blessing, death had been getting closer and closer to him. In the pleasant home, and the familiar scenes, the sunny pastures, and the evening coolness by the fountain, death drew near; not the petty troubles of wealth that stir the temper but do not touch the springs of life, but death, every day death, nearer and nearer, creeping up slow, but pitiless, though the same sun shone on the same tents, in the same

fields as it used to do. Nothing was changed, only the awful daily certainty of death getting nearer. And this, because as he thought, and thought truly, he had chosen God's promise.

Well might the homeless rich man, suddenly become the poorest of the poor, begin to doubt whether God was with him. As he bitterly thought of his lost home, and of his own wrongdoing and deceit, which would in such an hour wring his heart, and make itself heard with a kind of noisy persistency, shutting out sober judgment, well might he falter in that supreme hour of weakness, when home, and wealth, and father, and mother, and tents, and companions, and all his past life, had suddenly vanished, and left him alone in his sorrow, as one awakened from a life-long dream; well might he doubt which was the dream, and which the reality. Home had been real once, now it was no more; his past life had been real once, now it was no more; God's vision in the night in his dream was real, but the morning found him alone. Which was the abiding power? Not surely the tents, and the pastures, and his home, they were gone. But was the desert, and the loneliness, and the beggary, any more real?

There remained the glorious vision of the night, the great dream in which his true eyes were opened to see God's angels, and God Himself; there remained the long-cherished hopes of the great promise, which all his life he had clung to, blindly it may be, foolishly, and in a foolish spirit, perhaps, but still he had clung to. Was not that after all the only reality? Was not the dream more real, more powerful, more lasting, than the waking, and the bare earth, and the stones of the desert? Surely it was; and in his gratitude, and in his heart only half

able to believe such happiness, he cried, "if it *be* so, then God is *My* God. I will never forget Him. I will give Him a tithe of all He gives me, as an acknowledgment that it is a gift from Him."

Even such is the history of the life of this school, my brethren, saving only that the vow of gratitude has to be made; the dedication of the coming life to be offered.

I know there is such a thing as being the child of promise. "Now we brethren as Isaac was are the children of promise," says St Paul.

I know that this general promise to every Christian becomes a very special promise to the heart and life of each Christian who claims it, who clings to it, who makes it his leading hope in life, as Jacob did; even though he do it, like Jacob, with much of evil mixed at first.

I know that at any moment, if God give the earnest power, one penniless outcast may become a hinge on which the welfare of the world may turn.

I know that a great trial marks a great overseeing training care; and a great deliverance, a great work yet to be done.

I do know also that this school, as it now is, was begun, and its life became what it is, through faith in the promise; through clinging to the effort to work for Christ; through making truth in the service, and for the honour of Christ, the one leading hope and guiding star.

I do not know, as Jacob did not know, how much of self-deceit, and corrupt work, needed the great calamity to purify and purge it. I do not know what corruption there still is, what pain there still may be to come. It

is enough that I am certain of the hope of the promise. It is enough that our great deliverance is a fact in the history of the land. I trust the time will never come when it will be forgotten, or disregarded, *in this place*. It will surely be remembered elsewhere, if not here.

I call on you to-day to accept as a very precious keepsake your inheritance of the year of deliverance at Borth, and the call to better and greater life that comes from it. If you have eyes to see, and ears to hear, the Vision of the Almighty is exceeding near to you; and your ears may hear the voice of the call of God. I would fain hope that year after year, and century after century, these walls shall still be the home of the promise. I would fain hope that "salvation has God appointed for walls and for bulwarks" even here; and that here, even here, a purer, better, ever-increasing stream of life may flow. I would fain hope that you, you now before me, are worthy to receive this great inheritance, and willing to accept the deliverance and its call. But I know the thing has been, I know the life was given. You may reject, but others will take. Yet my heart's prayer is for *you*; that you may see the vision, and hear the words, and pass on the life for ever, as having received the life of this school back out of death, a resurrection in Christ; and with it, the glorious duty of making God *your God*, and serving Christ as *your King*.

SERMON LXXXIV.

THE MESSAGE TO ALL.

ST MARK XIII. 37.

“And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.”

OUR Blessed Lord says these words to all. Other words of His belong indeed to all, but, now at one time, and now at another, come home to this or that man with special power. But this command is to all—always. I believe this is the only command thus emphatically given to all; and as such it strikes on us as no other does. It is God's stamp set on man's life, God's judgment on what man's life should be, God's order to you and me, God's word to his officers.

Our great commander, whilst we stand in this camp of His, this earth, gives us sentinel duty; and every one of you all, though you thought it not, have that voice from heaven direct, which you sometimes think you would obey if you had it. Yes, you have it. *Watch.* Christ has stamped your life with His signet ring; your commission in His army as sentinel comes straight. You are to be on watch, a sentinel. And you are to

watch for Him. You know not when the Master of the House comes back, at even, or midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning. But all four times mentioned are times of sleep, or possible sleep, times when things around give no sign of expectation or activity. Whether then the simile be a camp with sentinel duty, as well befits the greater responsibility of men trained and educated for authority; or, as in the parable, a house with servants, occupied in quiet duty waiting for their absent lord; be we soldiers, or be we servants, (as indeed we are both), the command is the same,—“Watch.” And life, man’s life, is evermore decided by this command to be an active, wakeful, hardy life; busy, when others are idle; awake, when others sleep; on the look out in the cold, when others are, as it were, warm in bed. And the command is to you, and the work is the doing good wakefully for Christ’s sake, looking for His coming; and every one of you has had this voice from heaven sent to him, and him alone, as much as if indeed he was alone on earth, and the Word came to no other. “Watch.” Nothing else is life indeed. “Watch,” this the voice from heaven to *all*.

There are two great seasons in our year, brethren, specially marked as seasons when an end comes, and a new beginning has to be made. Seasons when the command to watch is renewed. Christmas, when the coming of Christ ends our church year, and begins it, evermore speaking of His second coming, for which we are to watch; and this season of harvest time, which ends our school year, and sends from us the year’s harvest of life, sends from us those who have completed their school growth, harvests them, reaps, gathers them in, and sends them out again as seed in a new world of action.

There is something very striking in this double type, of Christmas, and of harvest time. The first with its world-wide significance of an end, an end which, to those who watch, is the meeting with the coming Lord at His great day. How strangely winter and darkness, with their solemn message, attune the heart to judgment, and the end of the world! How strangely the expectation of Spring, though the earth be cold and dead, keeps the hidden hope of better life to come fresh in our hearts. Not less striking is this harvest time of school life, with its richness, and its brightness, its promise, its half fulfilment, its greater life to come, as an earnest of the future, as a warning for the past, as a preacher of the great command, "Watch." "I say unto all, Watch."

When an end has come to ourselves, or to others, a message touches the heart more than at any other time. When they lie dead whom we have known well, and the grave opens, we, the left behind, cannot but think of the past, of what might have been, of what we too might have done, and, lo! nevermore can it come. The thought, too, that we shall be gathered in, and that others will stand by our grave with the solemn message of the end ringing in their hearts, will force its way, and demand hearing from us, as to how we shall stand that final test. Foolish that we are to separate the turning that page of life from the turning the pages which have gone before. Each day dies, and is buried, as much as that day of the grave; and, still more strikingly, each great period of life is put in its grave, each and all with their resurrection to come. Beside such an open grave we stand to-day. All of you lower down into the past your life here of this Term. An end has come, a resurrection is to come. The Lord says to you all, "Watch."

Many of you lower down your whole past life into an open grave to-day. The Lord says to all, "Watch." How does the past look now? 'Tis the sunshine of harvest. Is your reaping sunny? Is it full of seed promise, of a growth that shot up, and became new, and blossomed, and gathered solid bulk, and became fruit? The fruit itself being the good seed, which is to begin again in wider fields, over a larger surface, the fruit-growing process of life. Is not the word to-day, above all days, "Watch?" Watch, for a future is opening. Watch, for a past is gathered in, and must be judged. Yea, it judges itself, sending you out into the great field better or worse able to take your place in it.

It is a grand command this word of the Lord to "Watch," full of a great coming hope, full of noble present exertion; no mean cry in this night of earthly life, but thrilling, and earnest, and high, speaking of another world, as surely as I can speak to you of your coming new spheres; and you know it to be true. It is coming. The word is full of life, this word, "Watch," full of that which is to come after, rather than of the end, full of a coming Lord, and a better hope, and more living reality, full of the new things to be done, when the hour comes, rather than of a past over. So it is with us here, the harvest is also the new sowing.

Moreover, we watch in a household, a company, with common hopes, and common fears, and therefore on this last day we partake of the Holy Communion together to mark that we are one, present or absent, here or hereafter, one in heart, watchers for Christ. Is then the word in this company of ours "Watch?" Is its motto, its ideal, "Watch?" Do we day by day, with active sleepless power, rouse one another to true work, blame-

less efforts, untiring hardihood? Do we never cheat, by idleness or sin, parents, self, and God; parents, who believe you to be doing good; self, who loses by every hour misspent; God, Who will demand to the utmost farthing the talents, the opportunities He has given you? Do you give your best always, *that is Truth*; nothing else is? Again I cry, then, in the name of the Lord "Watch."

And not unfitly is this closing harvest time of ours a time of joy on the whole, of holidays, of going home. So our King would have it, the watchfulness of life, of life expecting good to come, of life ever looking for better and better, must be joyful. It is joyful. The good end, which is a good beginning far more than it is an end, is ever joyful. Watch, is the grand signal word of the true manly life, and the Spirit that breathes through it ever more and more as time goes on is, "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word: for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation." It is all the same, whether it be now that we see the coming life; or at our death, when we are not seen living, it is all the same, every hour that we truly watch gives us some sight of God's salvation, and makes us ready to depart in peace. Go, then, with the blessing of God now. Go to new fields of labour. Be watchful. Be true. Farewell.

SERMON LXXXV.

TIME.

EPHESIANS V. 15, 16.

“See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time.”

I WISH to-day to speak a few plain words to you about time. And if I seem to some of you, in some of the things I say, not to be touching on religion, I would remind you, that the great laws of God, are never greater to man, than when man's common every-day life rests on them, and that man's common every-day life does rest, whether he knows it or not, on great unbending laws, which obeyed, open out to perfect freedom, disobeyed, soon lay bare the dread prison walls, which allow of no escape to him who thought himself able to sin unpunished.

Time! What is time? What is the effect of being under the law of time? What is the meaning of the word of God declaring that time shall be no more? First of all, remove from your minds, if you can, all idea

that *time* means the space, or passage, or going on of existence. Duration, the going on of existence, that is, eternity, is the opposite to time. Time means, that an end comes. Time means, that a barrier is set, within which a life, or a work is shut ; and, when that barrier is reached, that life, or that work, is at an end. Time then is but another name for a measure, an end, a barrier ; and parts of time are but names for the measuring out parts of life, that is, for growth. The whole idea of time is a measuring of life, and an end to that measurement of life. Life to be lived by measure is time.

Let me endeavour to illustrate this in a simple way. A hundred yards is a measure of space taken out of the world. Half an hour is a measure of time taken out of duration. Every one of you here can go a hundred yards in half an hour so easily that neither of these measures in such a case has any value to you. There might just as well be none. But you know perfectly well that if the measure is altered, and your life depended on your doing the distance, say in 10 seconds, then the measure of time that came to an end would indeed concern you most deeply. Now that is just a rough simple way of putting God's law about *time*. Time does mean just *that*, that your life has to cover a certain space of growth in a measured, an exactly measured, period, which ends, which death brings to an end ; and between birth and death lies the space, measured out in minutes, and hours, and days, which is your all ; and which puts an end to your work at last, and measures it every day as it goes on. When you can call back yesterday you may waste to-day, but till then, *time* is supreme master of you and yours. Time then means to you your life measured out to you for

your life work ; and each moment is an end to that bit of life.

Let us look closer to this. I mean to the effect of this measurement and end. Once more, if we had a hundred years given us to learn what we now have to learn in ten years of school life, it is clear that there would be no merit, and no difference, no value, in the learning it. The idle and the active would be the same ; or rather, there would be neither idleness, nor activity, but a dead level of sameness. The measurement, the quickly coming to an end, in a word, *time*, determines the value. That is valuable, which, firstly, has got most good work done in the time allowed, and secondly, that is valuable, which being good requires the longest time for its production. For instance, if a man can plough two acres in the time his neighbour ploughs one, the labour of the first is worth double that of the second, because both belong to a world in which lives come to an end, that is, a world of time. And secondly, if it takes 20 years to learn Latin, and Greek, and Literature, and one to learn to plough, the value of the work in like manner depends on the time. And this value becomes all the more strikingly marked, when we recollect, that during the 20 years of learning, the learner has to be supported, as he earns nothing himself. The learner therefore is feeding on other men's lives, and stored up time-work, during those 20 years, and has to account, not only for his own life, but also for the life work of others, which he is using up. In other words everything of value in the world is time employed,—time in one shape or another.

Man's work of hand and brain, and man's work in self-training entirely depends on the time taken in doing

it. Because, from the lowest animal want, to the highest spiritual gain, the fact that life has to act in a measured space, and that an end is always coming to each part, and at last to the whole, decides for ever that each workman works well, or ill, according to the use he has made of the measurement given him. It is all life, and time.

Time and death, then, are names for the same fact from different sides, as a mile and measurement are names of the same fact from different sides. Time means measured life, death means the measure applied to life. And we have seen briefly that all value depends on being matched against this measure, on rescuing work from death, on seizing on the dying moment, and making it live in ourselves, and our doings, before it can cut them off. And not only so, we have seen that every skilled labourer, from the apprentice in the shop to the king on his throne, has to use the stored up time-work of other men's lives during the years that he is getting his skill, and earning nothing himself. And in like manner the whole world is always enjoying the successful labours of the past, and has to give an account of them.

So then this measurement of death and time, this allotted life of ours, first of all has to account for the use made of all the good work done by all, who have lived before us, who by living well have made this earth a worthier house of life. And, secondly, this life of ours has to account for the money that has been, or is being, spent on us, before we can earn anything ourselves; spent in giving us the power of becoming skilled workmen. This money is the time-work, and stored up life, of our family and friends, who have already done

life work. If we use it we must account for it. And, thirdly, we have to account for our own lives. God is life. And God in giving us the glorious gift of life, the highest gift, and measuring it out carefully day by day, and bringing it to an end in a measured time by death. that is by time ended, makes nature herself preach to us of judgment, and value, of talents given, and talents taken away. This glorious inheritance of the lives of other men which we all enjoy; this grand power of becoming skilled labourers, which all you here enjoy, by using the lives of your fathers and friends; this divine possession of divine life from God, measured out carefully to each of you, all these three great facts call day and night on every one of us to use them well. How keen, and eager, and full of delight in use ought to be the heart work of man, the living life—man, the inheritor of many lives—man the lord of a measured life from God—man the champion matched against time, to seize every moment, before it dies, with a fiery zeal, and flash his own life into it, and make it live, and make it remain, and store it up for future use, and gather within himself an immortality by doing it.

Such is time, and life, and death. And at the beginning of the measured space of our school term, think well what the measured life which God measures out to you means. You have in your school hours, and appointed tasks, a kind of section of the coming time, a map, marked out carefully with sign posts everywhere, to make your beginnings in time as good as possible, and as easy as possible. Your time is measured carefully for you; by and by your time will measure you, and bring you to an end. "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time."

SERMON LXXXVI.

SACRIFICE.

GENESIS XXII. 2.

“And God said, Take now thy son, thine only son, Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.”

AMONGST so many here assembled, there are surely some who will be called on to sacrifice their child of promise, the cherished purpose of their life; for that is the meaning of it. The one aim for which they have given up everything for Christ's sake will seem to have to be slain at Christ's command. All higher lives go through this ordeal, as far as they can bear it; even as all higher lives have to begin by some great act of self-denial. Let not the chill breath of the coward, or the sneer of those who have sold themselves to low indulgence, or mean glitter, touch the springing, upward rush of life. The tenderest thought of generous hope is a precious seed from God; the faintest dream of a noble

hereafter is of God's spirit; the visions of the young are of God; part of that pouring out of God's Spirit promised by the prophet, "your young men shall see visions." There are heroes here assuredly, within these walls, God's heroes, hearts that will not turn back from the path; hearts that will take the great step, and begin life with true self-denial; hearts that will take the great step, and sacrifice later on the child of promise if called on to do it; sacrifice all they hope to gain through the blessing on good. Doubt not there are heroes here, hearts, that glow with intense longing for truth; hearts, that God will take and train to be Abraham's children; whether they die in the fore-front of battle, grand examples to a wondering world; or whether they die in some forgotten corner, a blessed spectacle for angels to see. Let not the cold lie of the old serpent persuade you that your life is not great, and cannot grow into a divine power. But if it does so grow, most assuredly Abraham's trials will in some degree be yours, and you will the better face them, if you see what he really did, and translate his life into the universal language of the human heart, which knows neither time, nor country, nor any change.

Abraham, as we have seen, begins life by a great self-denial, I say, *begins*, for that is the true beginning which marks preparation over, a complete stage reached, and all things perfect for a new start. A man begins his journey, when all his preparations for it are finished. A man begins his life-journey, when all the school preparations and training are finished. So Abraham began his life when at God's word he left his country; though without doubt many a long year of patient work, and patient suffering, and patient waiting, had prepared him

for the great hour, as it does you, if you are ever going to begin a true life. Abraham begins by leaving all the greatness that seemed close at hand, in trust in a promise that the better life he was called to would bring him a better and more glorious reward at last. There is no doubt, for it is human nature, that the glorious reward, at the beginning, moved him strongly, and seemed much nearer and closer to him than it was; and that he thought of self in accepting God's terms, as all beginners do, more than in after years when he had learnt God's will better. We can see this clearly by his trying to bring God's promise to pass through Hagar and Ishmael. Ten years had gone by, and every day the fulfilment of the promise seemed more impossible. In other words, day after day, for ten years, Abraham felt the trials of his new life, and how he was cut off from the advantages of his birth and rank by having obeyed God, whilst all these ten years, day after day, the good that he was to get by it not only did not come, but became, humanly speaking, more and more impossible. What a trial, what a growing disappointment, this must have been in his isolated life after he had given up all, as he sat in his tent year after year, or as he busied himself with his servants and cattle in the fields, with no one of the outer world to speak to, no one of his own rank, no one to share his counsels, excepting Lot, and he was too much belonging to him, too much the same with himself, and we know in other ways could not have been a companion for him! How the lonely-hearted man must have been sifted and shaken by these weary days of waiting! How sorely the quarrel with Lot and the separation must have struck him! How dangerous must the battle with the kings have seemed to him!

We must not judge a great life by the exciting moments, when the strong heart rises to match itself with some great deed, but by the long, slow, monotonous, yet terribly anxious days, when all men care for seems to be crumbling hopelessly away, slipping from under their feet, without any power whatever to check the ruin of their hopes.

This is life, the endurance; not the quick act of courage in a moment of power. And this was Abraham's life, much monotony of quietly troubled days, with every now and then a real danger; and all that seemed likely to belong to the promised blessing very far off indeed; forming no part of the actual life he had to lead. At last, however, Isaac is born, and the blessing becomes possible; and the experience he had had of God's protection, though his daily life had been very unlike what the promise pointed to, and the experience he had had of God's favour, though it had been shown to him in unexpected ways, was fitly crowned at last by the great miracle of the birth of the child of promise. Though it had been long in coming, yet at last part of the actual blessing had come, and the good he had clung to had brought him a reward which he could understand, and which fell in with his own views of blessing and honour. For with Abraham, as with us also, the way God leads is so different from what man expects that, until at last something happens which opens the eyes to God's purpose, the holder of the promise can seem to himself to be getting farther and farther off from the blessing; because he cannot understand till afterwards the divine surgery, which has to get rid of some disease in him, or to strengthen some weak point, or else he cannot be blessed. The heart must be clean, or the blessing

poured into it is poisoned. Men often think they will stake their life on good, when it is not good so much, as what they hope to gain by good they are thinking of. God does not reject, nay, He gives His promise and blessing to this ; but, as time goes on, He proves a man as to whether he really means good, or the rewards of good.

So Abraham, having been convinced by God of His love and truth by the birth of Isaac, and having had the hope of his life, the unseen inward spirit power that moved him, made visible, and take form, and become flesh and blood, a real presence in his daily life, having been made sure, I say, that he was not mistaken, and that neither his own doubts in his wearier hours, nor the insinuations made by others, were worth anything against the honest, unflinching choice he had made—a choice which he now saw was a true one, had yet the last great lesson to learn that even the blessing might stand in the way of the giver of the blessing, and that the pure true heart must of necessity be ready to give up the blessing, as simply, and unhesitatingly, as at the beginning it had given up its earthly pride.

So Abraham receives the command to slay his son. All he has lived for, all he loved of earthly sweetness, or religious hope, had to be made an end of by his own hand, in the full confidence that God, his king, Who had given so much good must be right, *must* have something better still in view by such a command. So quietly, without excitement, the brave old man prepared for that strange journey. And he set out from the pleasant tents, and familiar surroundings in peace, as on a pleasure day ; and the sun shone, and the cattle lowed as he took his onward journey, with Isaac by his side,

Isaac with all the gladness of youth upon him at seeing a new country, and a wider world, but—the wood of the burnt offering ready—by his father's side. And as they wound amongst the hills, here and there a brook would come singing down, and in the evening all the mountain tops would glow in the setting sun, and the great stars of the Eastern sky, that Jacob afterwards saw in his lonely flight, looked down in peaceful glory on Abraham too ; silent, and calm they shone, whilst that dread secret lay in his heart, till on the third day he saw yet afar off, the great hill rise on the horizon line fair, and still, beneath the sky, which was to close all he had in death by his own hand. Never martyr trod a harder path than Abraham in those three days. You all know how in very deed he obeyed. Think what that obedience meant. How utterly all thought of self was lost, and God alone filled his heart. God and His goodness the only point in his life. So Abraham became the father of the faithful, the true father of all those who in earlier life give up all present gain at the call of higher hopes within, of blessing to come through good ; and in later life are content to give up that blessing too, and with their own hands slay their best hopes, so only that by so doing they may widen out God's purposes and make a way for others to do God's will better. Be ye then children of Abraham,

SERMON LXXXVII.

A MEMORY OF JOHN WYNFORD ALINGTON.

ST MARK XII. 26, 27.

“Have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living.”

NOW we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise, Abraham's children; and the God of Abraham, the God of the living, is our God this day. We are Abraham's true children if we have his life; that is the real message. It seems to me, when I look at the practice of men, that it matters little in the first instance what is to take place a long time hence, and that what is present rules mankind. I see men everywhere quite willing, like Esau, to sell anything in the distance, however great, for an immediate gratification, however mean. Am I not right then in saying that in the first instance anything far off matters little, and

anything near matters much? Do not men look on the life to come as so far off as to be practically unreal, whilst what we do to-day outweighs it all, because it has not been treated as real? The present life of most men gives the lie to a belief in life to come. The resurrection from the dead does not make men act now. But the message of the text is far more than the resurrection of the dead. It is a message of life unending, of life unbroken, of life in which there is no death, of Abraham living now, as surely as we here are living, and of our life now, being as surely an unending life, a true life now, to go on hereafter if we are indeed Abraham's children, as Abraham's life was, and is now, and is to be.

How often have men asked, young and old, the young most, what is the good of this secret, unknown struggle for right, of the pain which no one sees, which seems to do no one good, of the broken plans, the baffled hopes, the poured-out life? The question is answered here, God is not a God of the dead, but of the living. In the kingdom of life there are no broken plans, no baffled hopes, no life poured out in vain, the God of the living keeps it all; it no more dies because we don't see it than a seed that is planted dies, because we don't see it. That is the meaning of God being a God of the living, a very present meaning indeed, most intensely now, not far off, not a future resurrection, but all that we are, our very all of life now, quite apart, if we choose to think of it apart, from any hereafter. Are you dead, or are you living? That is the only question. If living, then the God of the living will not let one half-breathed sigh of true life, the faintest thought, the tenderest hope perish out of His world; it shall either enrich the heart that

gave it birth, or passing into other hearts shall take root, and branch out into new lives, and fresh fruit-bearing power. For this is how life works. Life touches life, and gathers strength.

There is an old proverb, "example is better than precept." What is this but saying that the true power in the world is not what men say, or write, or do even, but what they are, and the life in them. God works through men's lives, for He is a God of the living; not through men's words, for the letter killeth, and law at its best is not life. God is not a God of teaching, of word power, but of life. "I am the resurrection and the life," said the Lord. "I am the way, the truth, and the life," said the Lord. Being God of the living, it is by being the life that He works life in men. By His spirit passing into their spirit and making them unselfish, brave, and true, so that their lives speak; and their examples speak; and those who see them, and know them, gather life and strength from them, and go on their way, giving life and strength to others again in turn. For life means what we do to others, and how we take what others do to us. There is no such thing as living by ourselves. That which we most do for ourselves, when most kept to ourselves, makes us, if good, more fit to do good to others; if evil, more harmful.

A school-boy's life, for instance, has as its object his own training and culture; that is all he has to do. Other people maintain him; other people manage for him; no care comes on him of the outer world to break in on the self-training; no interruption is allowed to come near him; he is fenced round, and put in the best way to cultivate himself. Yet all this care and fencing round about him is intended to turn him from a low

and useless creature into a higher and more useful being; and every effort he makes is an effort of life passing into his life, and into the life of his companions, making life strong with the God of the living blessing it; and every bit of self-will and self-indulgence is, as far as it goes, death—a cold, dead destroying of the generous good round him, earthy of the earth, and to perish with things of the earth. So it comes to pass that there is not a thought born of life, and not an effort, however secret, of life at work, which does not go on living, either in the worker himself, becoming a part of himself, a power in him; or else besides this, it passes out into other lives, animates them, gives them the first impulse, the movement for good; or comes on them in their hour of need like a reinforcement in the lost battle, a trumpet note breathing of coming victory, a message of life to the living from the God of the living telling of a power beyond, of a noble army of martyrs to whom death becomes life according to the promise, that “who-soever loseth his life for Christ’s sake shall find it.” For life is the doing and suffering; not what we know, but what we are. Life is the inward reality of strength which nothing can stop from doing right, nothing can force to do wrong, and it is trained and made perfect by doing and suffering.

Any one can test what life is by the simple question, Is what I think, and say, and do, thought, and said, and done, with the aim of adding to the good in the world, or adding to the knowledge? Is it all to help mankind, to help the poor, and the weak, or to take our place with the upper ranks of successful men? I say nothing against knowledge, it is the duty of the true man to be foremost in power as well as in good, but power is not

of itself good ; power-worship is idolatry. Life knows it not. Abraham, the father of the faithful, knew nothing of modern discoveries, but he was the friend of God. Had he lived now, he would have known much more, but not have been more the friend of God. Life by living is a knowledge to the living, a feeling of truth, a seeing of heroes ; we need only see the hero, see him live, feel him in his greatness facing death or shame, and it is enough, no more is needed, only sight. And so in common daily life every deed of life, if in secret, is part of the doer's growth, to come out later in deeds of growth ; if done openly, however small it may be, is part of the life of the world, seen by some eye which is the better for seeing it, felt in some heart which is the better for feeling it ; and so it lives on. God is not the God of the dead, but of the living ; nothing living dies, no hope perishes, there is no broken life. As Abraham is living, so live also the sons of Abraham. With such a certainty, can we to-day think of him, who is gone from us in the prime of his manhood, our firstfruits, our very best, Wynford Alington, so quiet, so resolute, so humble, only prominent, because, as he wrought, and toiled, and bore more than others, others dropped back, and left him alone in his greatness. I count this school happy, that they can claim as theirs this most perfect type of the true Christian soldier. I count those who knew him happy that they have seen a life so pure, so unselfish. Happy am I to have been his friend ; and happy is his memory for evermore ; happy, till our human eyes also close and open again to see what we now know, to see that our God indeed is not a God of the dead, but of the living.

SERMON LXXXVIII.

MAN'S WORLD, AND GOD'S WORLD.

ST MARK XII. 27.

“God is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living.”

MAN, the worker, who knows all the labour, all the skill of work, thinks much of work. Man, the seer, who gathers in all his knowledge by sight, thinks much of sight. Man, the speaker, who carries on all his projects by speech, thinks much of speech; and deeds done, and things seen, and powers of speech, so possess the world, so fill up its space, that few ever stop to examine what more there may be, and whether works, and sight, and speech, are indeed the grand realities they claim to be; the all in all, which their size and pretensions make them seem to be. The outward rush of the engine, its size, its speed, is to the engine driver everything; and the marvellous facts of creation on which it depends, nothing. Men deal with themselves in the same way. They take the things done and seen,

the words and actions, and call them their lives. And a great man is a man who has made a great noise in the world by the rush of his thoughts, or his words, or his deeds; and his life is written, strange contradiction of terms, his life is written; a catalogue, that is, of the most important sayings and doings of the man, with the writer's reflections on them. I do not say that more can be done in writing; neither do I say that it is not sometimes good to do this; but to call it a man's life—that is indeed a curious trick of language, a strange untruth.

What is a man's life? The life, I mean, which really is himself; the life which, for good or evil, moves in the world; that life, of which it is said, "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he reap;" that life, of which it is said, "can a man gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles?" The life, which shall be known not by its leaves, its seeming good, but by its fruit, its real good; that life, which every one has, and not only a few clever, or powerful men.

First, let me draw your attention to *all having it*. All in God's kingdom have God's life. This was what stirred the heathen world so when the first message of life came. Philosophy, if true, only touched a few learned favoured men, whilst the whole world lay in emptiness, and misery, and hunger of soul. They knew what it was to have life offered to all. What then is life in its practical human sense? I answer, practically, life is not doing, but bearing; life is the inward patience, which every minute is content to bear what that minute brings to be borne, whether it bring movement or non-movement, work to be done, or the waiting without work. It is harder to wait than to work very often,

but whether it be hard or whether it be easy, life is the meeting quietly and calmly the orders brought by each day. The readiness to bear and obey is life. This is real; works and words may be false; this is real, and it is the real part of works and words when they are true. The difference between setting *yourself* to do something because *you* want to be good, and holding yourself ready for what comes because *that* is good, is the difference between man's mistake and God's life.

What I wish to insist on is this. There is a world made by man when he acts from himself, and does what *he* thinks best, and starts with the idea of guiding his own life. And there is a world, in which man finds himself, a world of God's providence, and Christ's redeeming spirit, which every moment brings to him, whether he likes it or not, things to be borne and things to be done. That is God's world. Now the man who tries to make his own world inside this world of God's has not found out true life. True life waits on the day, and meets the day, and by always bearing what the day brings, and always doing what the day asks to have done, day by day lives, and grows in life, and finds that peace and power which belong to a natural growth in a true kingdom, under a king of life who is more and more felt and loved daily.

Once more, then, put out of sight all thought of what is known and seen; life is not known and seen, but *felt*. Put away all intention of pushing forward in any way; life takes every day's message as from God, and tries to read as a pupil God's will in the day's message, and then stands or moves, bears or does, what the day brings. There lies the whole matter, are we pupils spelling out a glorious lesson, and finding the

doing it reward enough; or are we picking, and choosing, and trying to make a world of our own? Are we bearing, or are we pushing? The man who pushes knows not life. How many, dreaming of something they will do by and by, forget that they are living now! There is no greater falsehood than putting actions first, and how we receive what comes to us second. No greater self-deceit than imagining what we do to be life, and leaving out how we meet what is done to us, in what temper we pass through our ordinary times. Every day, every hour, every minute has to be lived; and each brings its orders. How many neglected orders, orders thrown aside as of no consequence, lie at the feet of men trampled under foot! Each brings its treatment from those with whom we live, and carries away the temper and spirit in which that treatment is met. How many let the hours and days bear witness to weak giving way, pettish self-will, unthought of failure! Each in turn brings something to be done, and each in turn departs, too often leaving the undone task, heap after heap piled up, whilst fools are dreaming of something they think great which never comes; or if it come, finds them overwhelmed with wasted opportunities, unpractised, and powerless. But life lives, is always living, always quietly waiting on its day; gently bearing each little annoyance, and so learning to bear; firmly meeting each little task, and so learning to work; calmly submitting to neglect or insult, and so able to go on in secret its own true way without praise; forming no wishes of honour, gain, or power, and not disappointed at not getting them; stedfastly busy in helping others, and so feeling the blessing of the kingdom of life as life is shared with the living; strong from constant practice,

so the joy of strength comes to it; and following Christ's command, all the hard self-denial, the fasting of spirit, the giving up, the suffering, is done with a smile, and the ease of one who is enjoying himself. And so at length the hero is made, God's hero, the man who bears and does all things easily, gently, lovingly—the hero, who may die without glory, but who has been felt to be a perfect pattern of manly power by every living being with the heart of life, whose life has been touched by the life. For life touches life, and passes on in silence, invisible, into other lives, even as the rain that falls gently on the earth, and seems to pass away, till the harvest comes, and speaks of a hidden, wonderful spread of unseen goodness. So the hero is made, the courage indomitable is tempered, which does all hard things easily, gently, lovingly. And men marvel, as time passes, how silently he has taken his place in the hearts of men; and when he is gone, even like his Lord, he becomes known in the parting, in the evening, and hearts burn within them as they think of him.

Brethren, such is the working of life. Well may we think of it at this time of Advent, of the coming of life, the coming of the Lord of Life, the true Christmas, when life shall be victorious, and death the last enemy destroyed. Every year puts its questions to us of life. Every year salvation is nearer. Every year those who watch more and more expect the Life, the King of Life, and His coming kingdom; when the graves shall open, and earth uncover her dead, and the past shall be over and gone, and all mankind shall rise to meet their Lord, and we shall be there; we now met to-day, who never shall meet again, all of us together, like to-day, till we meet then, out of our graves, in God's kingdom of life.

All of us will be there, we all, and our life will be there, that life which day by day here we are living, or letting die. Think of that day of life, think too of what is here at this moment. Look on these walls as a seedsman's home, the house of the sower. You will be sown. In how many lands shall you here lay your bones! How many different fields shall see your growth! How far shall your presence reach before earth has finished with you! How scattered shall you be in your workings! How divided in your graves! Never again, I say, to meet all together till that last day when we meet the Lord of Life. Do not then think little of your life, the only thing that on that day will remain, the only thing that even here on earth does really leaven the world. Learn to live; and know that life means waiting on each moment as it comes to see what it brings, and then obeying its message as an order from God.

SERMON LXXXIX.

PREACHED BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE.

FITNESS TO LIVE.

ST LUKE XIII. 7.

“Cut it down. Why cumbereth it the ground?”

“DEATH, and after death the judgment ;” ’tis a fearful saying. Death, and all its visible horrors. The grave and corruption, the worm and the darkness, and all the long wail of lamentation from the heathen world, and all evil that conscience fears, and all the terrors of half-belief, and all the sorrow of the left behind, make the thought of death, when men think of it, a formless dread. Wherever they turn they strive to push it from their thoughts because it is so unwelcome, and they would rather go on for the few years of life they know, or seem to know, undisturbed as far as possible, than admit into the midst of their movements that grim cold phantom which, whatever else it may do, closes utterly the scene before them. Yet, do what they will, the fatal hand is always writing judgment on the wall. Put it away as they can, yet it thrusts itself, in spite of them,

into all calculations, and all enterprises, and measures them all, and the soldier wins his honour according to the measure of the fear of death. And the young man's hopes, and the old man's gains, both alike agree in being bounded by the thought of death. And so it comes to pass that death is all powerful in estimating life and its results, whilst—strange contradiction—the living put the thought of it as far off as possible, and cut it away from themselves. And so, when the thought is forced upon them, as it must be sometimes, they will not, cannot, calmly and quietly scan it, and master it, and set it at its true value, but still continue, generation after generation, to shrink with a shuddering loathing from a close acquaintance, and still continue to make death the king of terrors, an appalling spectral unreality of a very real fear. And men ask, Are you fit to die? And men hold up death before the sinner's eyes, and men dwell in solemn warning on the world to come, and on far-off images of death. But God asks, Are you fit to live?

The Lord of life asks, Where is your life? Where is your growth in life? Where is the fruit? The Lord of life says, "I have planted life in my garden, what business has death there?" The Lord of Life says, "I have come to my garden, to the pleasant ground I love, to the rich growth of the living, what is this dead-alive thing? Cut it down, it is not fit to live."

With what a strange contrast the two questions, man's question, "Are you fit to die?" and Christ's implied question, "Are you fit to live?", strike on the sense. How opposite the thought of man, the child of death, thinking of death, and asking about death; and of Christ, the Lord of life, calling for life in His kingdom! What a mockery it seems to ask whether the living is fit

to die, since fitness to die means being cast out of the kingdom of life, when living lips speak it. Fit to die—the condemned criminal is fit to die. The prison gang are fit for the hangman's hands. Let the felon think of his coming doom; but the living, the living praise Thee, O God. In the garden of the Lord of life there is but one question, "Are you living? Are you fit to live?" Would to God that all thought of death, and of the world to come, could be blotted out from the mind of man, if only life, the eternal presence of life, the glory of being alive, and its present happiness could be put in its place. The felon heart must, I know, first be met with felon fears, but what have they to do with life? What has the gallows to do with us? The question is, Are you fit to live? Give your reasons for being alive. Show that the life blood in your veins is worth its nurture. Life, not death, is the watch-word for the Lord of Life. In this garden of the Lord nothing dies that is ready to live His life. And His life knows no future which is not a present also. Are you then fit to live? Would to God that life, and the glory of being alive in Christ, the activity of the living spirit, the liberty of the strong heart, the fearless courage of faith, the happiness of true work, the freshness of ever new experience, the present moment, the very present moment, the now, the now, would utterly drive out the future, the thought of death, the far-off world to come, from the sight of man, by a great dawn of light and life, and present joy, by a brightening into day at once for those who are planted in the garden of the Lord.

What then is life, if we have to answer the question, Are we fit to live? We must seek for the answer where we find the question. The Lord of Life has taken a

fruit tree in a garden as the best example of the nature of life, both here, and in the one great judgment type, when He cursed the barren fig tree, and withered it, root and branch, to be for ever the emblem of the lost nation.

Life is an internal growth, this is the first great truth. The outer world comes to it in forces of all kinds, and it receives them all, draws them into its being, subdues them to itself, lives by and through them; but makes no stir itself, neither moves, nor utters sound, nor is violent, nor fills the world with the rush of impetuous strength. But planted by a master's hand in its own place, it stays there, drawing from common earth, and common air, a growth and a beauty, new, and unknown to them, by its own transforming power; and, so it goes on, never losing a moment, making all things serve it in turn, be it rain, or frost, or wind, or sun; rain, and frost, and wind, and sun, touch it each with a power of their own, in love or hate, but, no sooner do they touch it, than the life within seizes on the power, masters it, changes it, gives it a new nature, makes it part of a new life, and to take strange new forms of bud, and leaf, and flower, and fruit. This is the history of life. True life waits on the day, and meets the day, and by always bearing what the day brings, and always doing what the day asks to have done, day by day lives, and grows in life, and changes all that comes into living power, by a natural growth in a true kingdom of life, a garden of the Lord.

Life is an internal process, unceasing, silent, prevailing, it is of the essence of life, as shown to us, to be in a world, which always, on every side, is in busy action round about it, to be in this world, as a receiving power able to turn all that comes to it into its own higher nature.

The moment the life does not master the forces which come, that moment it begins to lose its own vitality; and therefore silent mastery of an outward world is life. Then, too, as the fruit tree is planted with a purpose; so is man. The first life sign of the tree is the drawing in life for itself; so it is with man. Then culture and life energy in the tree next cover it with self-beauty of leaf and flower, and make it fair to look upon; so it is with man. And lastly comes the fruit. All the internal sap and outward glory is only to prepare the way for fruit, less fair to the eye oftentimes, but for all that the end of its life. So it is with man. And fruit is that which others live by, or, which being sown, hands on life.

So the great question, "Are you fit to live?" takes this form; first, has all the digging, and culture, and money spent, and time, been honestly used? Has it ornamented you, and budded into a growth of leaves fair to look on? And, secondly, is there a ripeness of life coming of such a nature as to be the food for the living, and a seed of life for fresh planting?

Look at the culture that life receives. It ought to give a return. First the child, planted in a world in which it has nothing of its own, endowed with a receptive power by which the help of others can reach it, and be turned into its life; then, year after year, the money and time of others is spent every day upon it; and what is money but the stored-up labour and life-work of some one or other? So all these years the life of others is in this way given to the young to use; they are cultivated by the lives of others, carefully gardened, as it were, by the heart-blood of parents, and by stored-up life; having their own life to live and account for;

and the lives of all those others by which they live, and whose blood they have to account for. Tried by this test, are you fit to live? Where is the keen enthusiasm that not only has to use its own, but to pay the long debt of borrowed life by which for twenty or thirty years it has been tended in the garden of the Lord? And if self-culture has ornamented itself with leaves, as it ought to do first, and a goodly promise is there—a capacity for living true life—does it stop short in leafage, in selfish adornment? Where is the fruit, the doing to others, the work by which others live? Where is the ceaseless inward power, that transmutes all that reaches it into luxuriant growths of new and pleasant services; the silent sustained mastery, that, come good, come evil, takes it all, and changes it into crop after crop in due season of help for others, life by which others may live? Tried by this test, are you fit to live?

What a strange contrast there is between this great example of the tree with life in itself, planted in an appointed place, drawing life in, and giving out life in food and seed, and the eager doers and workers, whom men call great! What a difference there is in kind between the restless heaping up of outside glitter and gain, and the steadfast still absorbing of what comes from without into an inward unity of productive energy! What an essential distinction there is between the regular untiring flow of sap ever acting, ever changing all that touches it into its own new living growth, and passing by secret channels upwards and outwards into an infinite multitude of little births, ten thousand gracious promises of truth to come, and the noise, and spasmodic action, and hammering, and breaking, and outside operations, of the great human machines whom

the world delights to honour! Inward strength, to end in good to others, alone is life.

The poor maniac may have a superhuman power to break fetters and chains, and no man may be able to bind him. If this is your ideal, O, leave it amongst the tombs with the dead, with dead theories, and dead delusions, and come and sit at the feet of Christ and learn His life. Let the strength of the madman alone. The breaking power is not life, but a disease. And think not of death. What have the living to do with death? The dread sentence, "cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?" was not spoken to the living. Nay, even for the dead-alive the question is, "Where's your life?" It is a cry to leave death, and the deeds of death; and quicken into life. Would to God that one great rush of present life would fill you all, and swallow up utterly in its joyful activity all thoughts of the future. The living know no future. An ever present immortality is theirs. Are you thus living? Are you fit to live?

SERMON XC.

THE HOLINESS OF HOME.

LUKE XI. 2.

“When ye pray, say, Our Father.”

GOD has so made this world that all that is in it, even like ourselves, has its higher and heavenly view as well as the lower and earthly. Even as we are spiritually of God, and in our bodies dust of the earth, so the parables teach us that the dust of the earth also, the good and bad ground, is so created as to set forth God's thoughts about man, as well as to grow crops and be put to natural uses ; and that there is nothing seen in all the worlds which is not part of the same great thought-power ; created, that is, the work of God's thoughts, and therefore a language most expressive and true, able to tell us of God and of ourselves.

Now man's language is twofold : there are many words used by man which tell us of the feelings and thoughts of man himself ; and which would be a great and powerful language even if there was no world,

nothing but man and his thoughts and feelings; but besides this, there is that vast store of words, which speak of God's world, and name all the things in the world. This store of words, as we have seen, contains all the meaning, which God's thought, embodied in the thing, contains, whether we know it or not. The word *seed* for instance, "a sower went out to sow his seed," not only means the grain, the food grain, but all that life hidden within it, the growth, the receiving of rain, and sun, and earth, and growing by them, the withering or flourishing, everything in fact, that does or can happen to hinder or bring out the seed life, till the harvest ends the tale. This is God's thought, which is wrapped up in the seed, put there ready for man to interpret and use, when he has learnt how to do so; it is God's hidden truth which is continually being felt and seen more and more, as the hearts of men become more able to read it. For there is a higher meaning, a heavenly meaning in everything that the King of heaven has set His thoughts in by creating it.

It will be clear to everybody that God, speaking of Himself, takes the truest language, and that man, thus spoken to, can trust what is said in a way that no word of man can be trusted. What a glorious light is cast on the Christian family, when God incarnate, born of a woman, bids us when we pray, say, "Our Father." From that hour, the Christian family becomes an everlasting prayer and anthem, a very ladder, as of old, set between earth and heaven, with angels and angelic messages, Divine teaching, and holy thoughts, songs of heartfelt praise from earth, and messages of love from heaven, ascending and descending by it. "When ye pray, say, Our Father." All will see that God has so created man

that the family life becomes the truest language by which God can reveal himself to man, whom He has thus created. Or, in other words, that the highest Revelation of God to man is in the family life of man ; and that the family with its life is the most perfect form in which man can draw near to his Creator.

Even so it was under the law, "Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." Remember, the promised land was the one promise of Abraham, the only fulfilment of all the blessings promised in the first instance. If Abraham's son did not get that, he got nothing ; he was cut off from Israel. So that that Commandment is nothing less than a giving or cutting off from the promised land to him who obeyed or disobeyed it ; nothing less than having all, or losing all, in the Kingdom of God. Truly in the Old Covenant as in the New, there is a great prayer of "Our Father" hidden, ready for use when the true Fatherhood was revealed ; when that time came, in which God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, to give us the spirit and place of sons, and to be called "the firstborn amongst many brethren." And in another place, "both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one, for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren." So then the Christian home for evermore with father, mother, sisters, brothers, is a sort of prayer-book, a living speech, by which we learn to pray ; a holy circle, full of holy truth, and happy visions of God, to those who live aright. Where fathers best learn God through their fatherhood, and all the new great joys and cares, the love, the pity, the thoughtful training, the guiding, the restraining, the long-suffering, the patient waiting, the hopes and fears

that fatherhood brings; and mothers, through their motherhood, feel all this and more than this, by the sacred pre-eminence given to them, in that God Incarnate was born of a woman, and also, in that the inner life of children is most knit to them, and twined around their hearts; then daughters and sisters by a double tie are taught to feel on every side obedience, helpfulness, tender confidences, tender giving of support, and all those little unknown self-denials, that strength in weakness, which have so often made in life's great struggle women more brave, more patient, more enduring than men, as having nothing to lean on but their own devoted hearts, no help but in self-sacrifice. So they, too, learn to pray, Our Father.

And you, ye sons, gathered here from so many homes, what does not this Divine incarnate truth, this revelation of God in man, tell *you*? Oh! you little know with what intense longing parents hang on you. Well do I remember a high officer, tried in battle, telling me how, when the home-mail was getting due in India, many a telescope from every point of vantage was turned seaward, and strong men, hungry for news of children, wistfully scanned the distant sea for the first speck of the whitening sail, which brought hope, hope alas, how often to be dashed. And so it ever is, hearts invulnerable to all outward foes, hearts, that weary though they be, present to all troubles or pains a dauntless front, a shield impenetrable, are stricken by a careless child with wounds that cannot be healed. Learn then to pray Our Father, by first learning to be faithful sons. At this holy season see Christ, see Him Who is not ashamed to call you brethren, obedient unto death even the death of the Cross, for the sake of us His brethren,

fulfilling all His Father's will, obedient unto death, that we might live through Him. Can you pray daily, Our Father, and forget this in your lives? What a heavenly light comes down into every home in which Christ moves teaching His brethren, in their own home first, to learn the prayer, Our Father, by giving themselves up to a true obedience, as He gave Himself. A bad son cannot understand God's will, or pray, Our Father truly. There is a divine language in every family, a sacred book of prayer, living pages of heavenly truth, that can only be read, by father, mother, sisters, and brothers, all setting their lives as God would have them live; and, by doing so, finding out the great poem in all its sweetness and power, which family life is meant to be; and by reading this, finding out the true full meaning of the command, "when ye pray, say, Our Father." O sons, out of many homes, learn day by day, the deep heart-love, the faith, the trust, the life of union, the long-suffering, the happy belief in doing and receiving good that home can give. Can give, if you are true to home. Home is a holy place as soon as you pray Our Father, a holy place, in which the power of knowing God lies hid, a holy language, which you by true brave life, and love, and obedience, must learn to read. O cowards, that are false to home, how shall ye pray Our Father?

SERMON XCI.

BIRTH COMMEMORATION.

JOSHUA IV. 8.

“And the children of Israel did so as Joshua commanded, and took up twelve stones out of the midst of Jordan, as the Lord spake unto Joshua, according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel, and carried them over with them unto the place where they lodged, and laid them down there.”

GOD ordered Joshua to commemorate by a monument the passage of the Jordan, when the children of Israel went through the fierce river in flood, unhurt, dry-shod, for the stream gave way when the feet of the priests touched it as they bore the Ark of God. That river is the type of death, with its cold swift rush between the people encamped in the wilderness, and the promised land. It is the type of passing by a perilous seeming destruction from a lower life to a higher life, safely, by God's help, and by the Ark of God being there.

Even such a deliverance do we desire to commemo-

rate to-day, and to set up a monument also, which shall tell in years to come, at the place of our strange safety, of that deliverance from death which this school had, because, as we believe, there was an Ark of God, a real truth in our midst, a shrine entrusted to our care of true education, which it pleased God to make our deliverance.

It was a strange sight that April morning 3331 years ago when the people came up to the brink of the river, step by step, as it seemed to perish there. The weary wilderness behind them, and all their years of waiting and of work and its success, all good for nothing, if that fierce river rolled across their way. There it was. It looked as changeless as the eternal hills through which it ran, and dark as death, with its wild waters shouting in their strength. True they had the promise of God. But men are men, and I have yet to learn that cruel fear, and impossible danger, ever look to any one other than what they are. Hearts may be fixed and high, but they feel, feel to its full end, the risk they run, and the dread penalty they dare to face. Sure I am that on that day their best and bravest even felt a wondering thrill twixt faith and fear as step by step they drew near that fatal brink ; and in that vast host there was time for all the smothered evil to make itself felt ; and coward faces whitened, and coward lips muttered ; and the mistrustful whispered failure ; and secret scoffings came from those, who had more heart for Baal than for God. Yea it was a fearful hour. We know it was so. We know that all this was so ; we know that the hearts of the people faltered ; we know that they needed a great lesson in faith ; for within a very few days after God made them practically do the same thing over again,

and go through the same trial, to sift their ranks from treason and from fear, when He ordered them not for one day only, but for seven, to march in silence round the giant walls of the great city, whilst evil stood on the battlements and towers, triumphant, and from impregnable heights jeered the army of God as it passed beneath. This second trial of faith shows us only too clearly what short comings there had been in the first.

Perhaps it may appear to some that there is no comparison between a great nation in its hour of trial, and a poor school society in its small circle. We never know. When Jacob fled from his home, his life was worth as much as afterwards the nation's life was, of which he was the father. And at all events, a single heart *feels*. The anguish of ruin and of death comes to each as his own possession, which he must take for himself; none else can bear it for him. In hours of despair men feel alone, even as they die alone. Nay, the destruction of many is worse to bear than the destruction of one, and there are, who could calmly and without shrinking go down into the deep waters themselves, but are wounded beyond reach of cure by the danger, or sufferings, of those they love. And men, however great they be, or however small, can but only lose their all, can only face the worst. As the Zulu said, "the white man die where he stood, the black man die where he stood, and what can men do more?" 'Tis a hard thing to wake up day by day, and feel an irresistible power, day by day, getting closer and closer to kill your all. What escape is there when there is nothing that can be escaped from, and yet an invisible ruin creeping on? Well is the devil called the prince of the powers of the air; for

the air is not more unseen, the air is not more universal, than the evil of evil power when it is let loose on its victims. When in the quiet sunlight of the quiet, peaceful, common day you know, though you don't see it, that a deadly hand is drawing a little tighter, and a little tighter, the net that is to kill; and a deadly horror is every moment pressing nearer and nearer, and the last little bit of safety is growing smaller, and the unwilling foot is forced up to the brink, the fatal brink, of the river, as it were, and must go on; yet where are you to go? Down into the cold deeps of an unknown doom?

Ah—when the river parted, and the Israelites passed through, there was joy mixed with fear, a great joy and a great fear on their spirits that day. And has anyone ever looked down into the calm fixed eyes of ruin with unflinching gaze, looked close, looked long, and seen no pity there, and not turned away when saved with joy and fear, fear and joy mixed, a strange dreamlike uplifting of soul? Let none who has not tried, think he knows.

In one week's time this present school would have been no more. By the end of one week, I, who now speak to you, and others with me, would have been taking their last looks of these walls, never more to set foot within them again, and all our life here would have been scattered and gone. I can never forget how the place looked to eyes dim with thoughts like these—eyes that saw all too clearly, and yet as in a vision, saw what seemed passing away. You may forget, men may not believe, yea, as time goes on the story may be scorned, and the words, that tell it, sound fantastic, and feverish, and unreal; be it so. But let none who has not tried think he knows.

One thing is certain, whatever we felt, this school came to its end ; and even as it ended, the deep waters parted, and it was saved, and it is here.

It is certain also that a great deliverance whether of a man or of a society is a great claim on the life that is saved.

The Israelites carried with them a grand inheritance of holiness and truth. They were saved because of it. As a nation they betrayed it.

I do claim also for this school, that the very deliverance is a grand inheritance for those who come after ; a certainty, that a truth, which God thought worthy of delivering, is here ; a certainty, that it is intrusted with a special mission of life, with a precious germ of holy work which it is bound to carry on. That year at Borth stands alone in the history of schools.

As long as these walls rise in their strength, so long will they plead with those who worship here ; plead with those who were cast out and brought back again, with them and their descendants for ever ; plead for the price that ought to be paid, the price of the life that was given back, the truth and the purity that shall show they were worthy of deliverance, the honest, active power of the sons of a great inheritance, of sons, who remember ever, that a great gift is a claim for a great future, and that destruction, when it is a resurrection, is a passing from lower to higher life.

Do not betray your life. The school died and is alive again. Do not betray that life.

SERMON XCII.

HATRED OF GOOD.

ST JOHN XIV. 6.

“I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.”

THIS is our Blessed Lord's interpretation of His own words, “No one cometh to the Father, but by Me.” They contain that first great awful truth, that there is in the first instance an absolute bar between man and God. That awful truth, that sin is in the world, and that no sinner can see God, or come to Him. Sin, remember, not ignorance only, and doing wrong from ignorance, and punishment for wrong-doing; but sin, the love of evil, and hatred of good—sin, the corruption in the man himself—a putrefaction, as it were, of soul—which makes himself, his love, his hate, his affections, his thoughts, poisoned, and poisonous; which makes himself a kind of snake-like nature, and unfits the man utterly for a higher world; unfits him in himself, so that he and his thoughts are in themselves vile; unfits him

to see glory, and greatness, and truth, so that glory, and greatness, and truth are vile and incomprehensible to him. This is sin: an inward plague, an impassable barrier between man and his false views, and God and truth. Therefore no man cometh to the Father save by "the Way," and that Way is Christ.

The plain fact is, man does not love good, and do good, when he sees it and knows it—no fact more plain in the world. But sin can make the wisest, as they think themselves, the fact-men, the preachers of fact, as they pretend to be, to utterly put out of sight, out of the world, this central fact of the world. But Christ says, "I am the Way, no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me." Christ deals with sin, with the one great fact of human life, faces it in all its tremendous power, and conquers it, and cures it.

The first aspect of sin is the vileness of the sinner, his utter unfitness to be with the true, or in company with either the things or the persons of higher life, his hatefulness in a higher world. The second aspect is, the meanness, and, if I may say so, the dull stupidity, the sottish self-intoxication of the sinner, his utter want of power to see true greatness, or value it. Both these bars must be done away with, or sinful man must die in his sins, and never come near truth. Both these bars are done away with in Christ. "He is the way." First, sin unfits a man in himself for higher company. It is so in this world, if we choose to see it. Take for instance the poor product of our false civilisation, the pothouse hero of the black country, say, with his coarseness, his ignorance, his rough vulgarity, his brutal strength, and his pride in coarseness, ignorance, rough vulgarity, and brutal strength, he is no fit companion for

a Wordsworth, with all his poet's gentle power, for a Mrs Ewing with her tender sweetness, for the Queen, in the graceful royalty of her palace. How much more shall the champion of base success, the low prize-fighter from earth's black arena of philosophy, politics, or wealth, (I say nothing of crime), be out of place in heaven! How much more shall the man that is a worm, living in earth, eating earth, as it were, clothed with earth, of the earth earthy, however great he may be on earth, be a revolting inconsistency in the great palace that is to be, an outrage to the pure high majesty of the Presence of God! How hateful he would be there! and how he would hate it! How he would hate it—that is the second point. As far as he could see it he would hate it.

But God, to prevent this hatred of good, has in this world hidden His power, and does not come to us as a power at all. He would have us love truth, good that is, for its own sake, unbribed by fear or profit, so He comes to us humbly, in the humble shape of little duties, of humble good, of a choice of right. For if we cannot even on earth see or value the greatness of men, on such small heights as human greatness can mount to, without much previous training, how shall we rise without training to the sight of God? We do not see Him. We live and move in the midst of His world, with the very hairs of our head all numbered by Him; but we—we see Him not. He will not let us see Him too soon. He has so wrought that only by little and little, as we are able to bear it, does He let us see Him.

God has made this world as a great oculist might make his eye-hospital, a place where light, the one glory of the universe, is purposely shut out, and only let in, room by room, as the diseased eyes of the patients in

each room are able to bear it. For as utter blindness is the doom of the couched eye exposed to light, so to see good unprepared and hate it is, so far as we hate it, to be a devil. Once grasp what sin is, and the meaning of a sinful nature, and nevermore will anyone wish to rush on unredeemed, unpardoned, uncleansed, blind, in all the coarseness, ignorance, and rough brutality of a lower nature into the presence of the pure, high majesty of God, the Burning Light. "For our God is a consuming fire." Very sweet to him will be the words, "I am the Way: no one cometh unto the Father, but by Me." The Blood of Christ that cleanseth from all sin, to him whose eyes can see, and whose heart can feel, is beyond all utterance a gift divine. Redemption, pardon, slavery gone; oh blessed message to the Redeemed.

He who loves evil hates good; he who loves vileness hates heaven, even as a murderer hates law, justice, and the homes of good men. But the Redeemed, who are at peace with God through the Blood of the Cross, who are buried with Christ in Baptism, who have risen in His Resurrection to newness of life, who see and love God, and understand the language of immortality and heaven, the Redeemed, the Redeemed to whom Christ is "the Way," who have entered by the door of the fold, and go in and out and find pasture—for them all is changed, they are new creatures. "I am the Way." Yea, Lord, by Thee we draw near, by Thee we come to the Father, redeemed, pardoned, cleansed, clothed with righteousness, able to see good, and seeing, to love good through Thee. The man who puts this revelation on one side knows nothing of sin, even as the blind knows nothing of blindness. Utter blindness and utter sin cannot understand that there is light.

SERMON XCIII.

“THE WAY” TO HEAVEN.

ST JOHN XIV. 6.

“I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.”

SOUL and spirit. Oh the dread significance of those two words! Who shall grasp it? Fettered, and prisoned, and pent in these fleshly bodies as we are, how can we get even a far-off conception of our true selves? How can we catch a glimpse of soul and spirit as they truly are, in a world where they are masters, and with powers truly fitted to them, as shall be hereafter? One side, however, of the dread secret is not hidden from us, though we heed it not. We can see the corrupt soul moulding the body to corruption, setting its mark on it in evil, making the vile face, the diseased body, that moving example of death working in the flesh, which, alas, meets our eyes so often, when we see the handwriting of the devil plainly written in characters of the grave—ruin to the body, and its death; and in characters of judgment to come—ruin to the soul, and its doom, on the wretched victims of self-indulgence and sin.

What is this but the soul, the reality within, the unseen, marvellous lord, the mystery which we call life, the subtle mover coming out so as to be seen; and, when it is evil, imprinting in evil the dread fact of sovereign power, even in evil, over all things that it reaches, all things that belong to it, most of all its own instrument, the body. If the corrupt soul makes the body one corruption because of sin, how fearful the sovereignty of the soul appears! How dreadful the thought that what we are has such appalling power over all things outside—over all things, the body included, that the soul reaches!

Let us apply this.

"You have among you many a purchased slave,"

says the great poet,

"You have among you many a purchased slave,
Which like your asses, and your dogs, and mules,
You use in abject and in slavish parts,
Because you bought them; shall I say to you,
Let them be free, marry them to your heirs?"

Who does not feel the mixture of truth and falsehood in this powerful speech? The great noble could go into the slave market; he could buy the freedom of the slave; he could pardon him the crime that oft-times made him a slave; he could set him free; he could take his burden off him; he could feed him and clothe him—but, what then? What of the after life? A life has to be lived. The man, the slave-man, lives on; he does not come to an end; the slave-man lives on, what's to be done with him? "Marry him to your daughters," says Shylock in his bitter sarcasm. What! the slave with the slave manners, and slave mind, wed the great Venetian ladies, and move in their palaces as lords with them! Impos-

sible! The slave-man cannot do it. What's to become of him? There's the rub. Give him money, and let him live his own life? Is that better? Surely for the immortal spirit, the weariest and most tortured life of work, yea, the slave-life in its worst form, is better than the life of a beast, and the slave-heart turning his master's kindness, and God's world, into a feeding-trough in a human sty.

Apply this once more. What is Redemption to the sinner? What is pardon? What is cleansing and clothing? What is the burden taken off, and the free life? All this can be done by mere act of the Redeemer's power and goodness. But the sinner, the slave-man lives on. He does not come to an end. The slave-man lives on. What's to become of him? Here the great answer is given. Christ says, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life." Christ says, "I am the Vine, and ye are the branches." Christ says, "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of Truth." Christ says, "I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you." Christ says, "I pray that they all may be one as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee; that they also may be one in us;" and "I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one."

Here we have the answer. There is to be an incarnation of truth in man. Christianity, Christ-life, is not a book, not teaching only, but Christ's life, Christ in the spirit of man working new life, an incarnation of Divine power and movement, a living Spirit with a power of life sent down to live in the world, a new budding, and putting forth of new unfoldings day by day; each day, each year, each generation, with their own new birth

and growth of living truth. For truth in books is dead, and can lie dead for countless years. That is not life in Christ. That is not Christianity. Christ-life is the new spirit, that by birth of water and of the Holy Spirit lives in man; the new life, that by Christ's Body and Blood, is fed and grows in man. However men may differ about this, Christ commands these two life-powers absolutely as the only way of life. And then, His Spirit in man keeps through love all His commandments, and He is the Way, and Christ's life is ever making a new world by new ways of living. All the circumstances of society are ever changing because of it. Fresh facts and problems come to light, and with them fresh possibilities of onward creation of life. For it is a creative life; fresh life moves on; fresh habits are formed; the ordinary common world gets leavened in spite of itself; and a higher range of good and evil swings into sight and has to be dealt with, which did not, and could not exist before.

Take for example the slave-times before Christianity, when wages were unknown, and work dishonourable. The hard, coarse state of slave and master alone gave scope for man's feelings. But now, noble work, and all the intricate problems of work, and trade, and wages, are a new world, with a new life to deal with it; and so on for ever and ever. Truth must live its way into the evil man even of common life, before the new facts take place which make newer truth possible. Christianity is truth incarnate, an everliving, moving, creative life; not only, like the planet, law and movement in itself by Christ, but a Creator also, making, as it moves, the world in which it moves. Thus Christ is the Way, for without Him there is neither the life that moves, nor

the world of life in which the life moves ; not the path, within or without, the love in the spirit that guides, or the way through the new world travelled by the spirit. All is from Him, all ever new.

Brethren, there is a still simpler form of this "living path" of "Christ the Way." Take a good home. How entirely a good home is a world within a world, untouched by the laws of the land so long as its own inner bond of reverence, love, and honour, keeps each and all in their invisible orbits of happy life. An unfelt compulsion of resistless love makes all move in a perfect harmony of silent, unvarying peace. The love of father, mother, sister, and brother, keeping father, mother, sister, and brother in the powerful, smooth path. Each a path-maker, for true love makes new truth to live. Each a mover on the path, for true love never gets in the way of others. Such is Christ's gift of true family life, a miniature world, an example of Him the Way, the Truth, the Life. This is what you all are striving to attain to, both here in this school, and at home. This is what many of you are returning to. Go home then, go home ; go with the heart trained to this harmony ; carry with you an ever new creation of freedom, of happiness, of life that moves in love, ready to do, ay, ready to suffer, and ever happy in doing, happy in suffering, anything and all things in the great home of love. Go then home. Carry back from here your training, your work, your honour, and the watchful, unselfish love which alone makes home home, so will you know that Christ is the Way. Go hence then, learn to make your homes full of truth. and pure, and heavenly, so will you learn to make heaven your home, and be at home in heaven.

SERMON XCIV.

GOD'S BREAD.

ST MATTHEW VI. 11.

"Give us this day our daily bread."

AT first sight nothing can seem to touch the young less than this prayer. Your daily bread appears to come to you as a matter of course, and many thousands never know what it is to be in danger of absolute want all their lives. What have you, and they, to do with a prayer for daily bread, when there is so little chance of your ever wanting it; when, at all events, at the present moment your daily bread is sure? Many look on the prayer as nothing more than an acknowledgment that the food comes from God; many again, who have the daily bread, look on the prayer, as a prayer for the bread of life, as indeed it is. But whilst it is a prayer for the bread of life, it is in the first instance a prayer for the daily bread by which the body lives, and a very touching prayer too on the lips of the poor and the desolate; prayed with many a tear and trembling fervour daily in hunger-pinched homes.

Are the rich then shut out? Because land brings forth plentifully, and barns are full, and much food laid up for many years, is the prayer for daily bread needless? Or you—because you are here cared for, and shielded from all want, and fed from ready tables, is the prayer for daily bread needless? I mean for the actual food you eat. This very day, for instance, you have had the prayer on your lips often, and you knew all the time the daily bread was ready, what have you prayed for? Daily bread, remember, prayed for daily, not a far off future supply; prayed for every day, though the bread is there, what does it mean? The bread is indeed there, but that has little to do with the prayer. It is not a matter of food only, it is also a prayer, it is also an asking on your part, it is also an asking God. Whether you get your daily bread from God depends on you and your heart. Whether you get your daily bread from God, or are listening to the tempter's voice, saying as of old, "command that these stones be made bread;" whether it is God's bread, or devil's bread, the fruit of prayer, or the fruit of selfish and evil-hearted thoughts and work, does matter. It is the whole matter. The bread may be here indeed in plenty, and at the same table may sit those to whom it is bread given by God, God's bread, as you have prayed it shall be, and those to whom it is bread got at the devil's bidding, devil's bread, taken and used as such. The question is not whether you get bread, but whether you get bread from God, and use it as God's bread. And there is no more searching question in the world than this. It concerns the young most of all, for they are beginning.

Is the bread you eat given by God at your prayer? Or, in other words, is your common life such a life, as

can ask God honestly for food to keep it on; such a life, as takes God's bread knowing it to be from His hand, and uses the life nourished by it in a manner worthy of God's bread? Is it an honest life, true and hearty, always trying to do the best? If so, your bread is from God, and your prayer is a true one. But that is the question, not food only, but whom you ask for it, and where it comes from. You ask it of God. It is God's bread you have to do with. And it enters into you, and supports your life, and runs through all your veins in health and strength. How have you earned it? Every drop of blood in your body cries out as a witness if your life is untrue. The very crumbs from off your table shall curse you, if you have not dealt with them honestly; yea, like the manna it shall stink and be corrupt, an abomination and a loathing, if, coming from heaven, it be turned into base uses on earth. How have you earned the bread of God you pray for? The bread is here for the evil and the good alike; and earning it equally means work done to get it, and work done because of having it.

If a rich man pays his labourers for work, they earn it; but also if a rich man gives alms to his pensioners, and they give him heart-service and love; or presents to his friends, and they rally round him always, they too earn it; they are traitors if they take, and turn against the giver. The labourer who does bad work for his wages is so far a cheat, but the pensioner who lives by his lord's liberality, and then injures his lord, is a traitor, a mean ungrateful traitor. So in this matter of daily bread, the man who earns his bread dishonestly is a dishonest labourer, but all who sit at ready tables, and live on what they have not toiled for, and dwell in

houses that they builded not, all these, far more than the labourer, owe their hearts to the Father in heaven who has made all these blessings wait on them. It is the part of the Heavenly Father to give His children the unbought portion of sons; but it is their part to be sons indeed, and to give the love and gratitude of sons. So let us put out of sight at present all thought of having laboured, and won the daily bread, as far as work done goes, by labour; and take only the case of those, who like you, have everything made ready for them; those, who like you, pray God for daily bread, whilst the daily bread is prepared and safe for you without anything done by you to get it.

You sit, as it were, with Christ on the hill side, and the bread is passed to you by the disciples, straight from Him, and you take, and eat it, simply because you are in His Company; and then you rise and go your way to your own homes, that is to your own heart pursuits, strengthened by the gift of divine hands. You ask to have bread from God, and you have it. What does this mean? It means that your whole life is by your own lips dedicated to God, by your own prayer for daily bread taken from His hand. It means that the prayer concerns you, in a far higher way than it concerns the man who in a sense wins his bread by labour. To you it is a free gift, before you have done anything, and from you is required the love and gratitude of one who receives a present.

You pray God to give you His bread. Now after such a prayer what do you do with it? The bread passes into your body, turns into your blood, runs through every vein, becomes your life. Then, I presume, your life is full of love for your Father, and that in

every possible way you show by doing His will that you know, and feel, that you have prayed this prayer, have asked from God, have got what you asked, and earnestly desire to be grateful. Every drop of blood in your veins shall cry out against you if you waste or pollute God's gift. Even as the first murderer heard, "the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto Me from the ground", because the lost life was so precious in God's sight, so also shall their own blood cry against those who pray for daily bread, and corrupt the life it gives, and let their blood be spent in evil; so also shall the lost life, the life lost in ungrateful contempt for the giver, cry for vengeance against him who loses it. For the prayer to God for daily bread demands that the daily bread be taken as a holy gift for God's service.

Brethren, you are making a new beginning to-day; one of those many, which the wise Ordainer of man's life has provided to make man's life have many opportunities for better things. To-day remember your prayer; remember how, day by day, morning and evening, you kneel before God to ask for bread, to ask Him to be with you in His gift. It is God's bread, and you take it as such. O never take a mouthful with which His life does not go; let His life go with it. And, as you feel the blood in your veins flush with life and strength, remember what the life is, and match it, boldly match it, honestly match it, against every task; and make each task a thanksgiving to God of work done and idleness conquered; set the life, that day by day is given you, to pure high thoughts, and manly actions. And, as you pray the daily prayer for God's bread, keep close the daily hope of doing truth for God; always giving of your best, for that is truth. Every drop of

blood in your veins is an answer to the prayer for daily bread ; you take it from God ; and every action all through the day done by that life blood should be a current of life work running freshly with your blood, the life shown by true works of life. God gives the life. You ask it of Him ; you get it. Are you then fit to live ? A question for the young most of all. You daily take your life in prayer for daily bread from God. Are you fit to live ? Let this Term answer 'yes.'

SERMON XCV.

VALUE, A COINAGE OF LIFE.

ST MATTHEW VI. II.

“ Give us this day our daily bread.”

WE do not enough bear in mind, that all value in this our world ultimately is due to life, and is life in another shape. For all value takes its origin from the work and power employed in producing, or in getting, that which is coveted, or wanted ; and work and power both are of life. There is nothing in this world that passes from man to man as valuable that is not, as it were, life—a coinage of man’s life. Now remember, our prayer is that God should give us daily bread ; we ask it as a gift from God. When we pray for it, we do not look on it as an open question, where it comes from, or how it comes ; we put away, if we really pray, all thought of a scramble for it, or winning it, or of luck, or birth, or fortune, or anything else, being the reason we have our daily bread ; we say the bread is God’s, and we ask Him for it. But daily bread, like all other things for

the carrying on of man's life, has to be worked for by man. Unlike the lower animals, man has to do something more than live; and therefore even to live he has the sharp teaching of work for the bread by which he lives.

We come to the next point then, that he who truly prays God for daily bread, comes to God with the daily work by which he earns it; or the daily work by which he is learning to earn it by and by; or the daily work which he gives in return for it; and asks God's blessing on that work as true work, and honest work, and heartily-done work. *That is the prayer for daily bread.*

All men belong to one of those three classes. They are either learners, as you are, apprentices in God's workshop, being taught to use the tools, and get the skill, which is to earn your bread by and by; or they are already actually working for bread; or they have had plenty laid up for them by others, as you now have, and are bound in their whole lives to do, what in a way you are doing now, use the bread given them so freely in learning and doing higher work than common men.

Now what a tremendous fact this prayer for daily bread is in man's life. It is nothing less than coming to God, and saying, "I am Thy workman, O Lord, I acknowledge that all I do is Thine; the work itself, O Lord, is honest, and sound from beginning to end; and I myself, O Lord, work at it honestly, truly, and at my best, knowing that to receive pay for half work, or bad work, is a cheat. I am no cheat, O Lord, do Thou give Thy blessing on my daily work."

I mean to say that every boy here, yea, all of us, are as much working for God's wages, day by day, as if every night the Lord of the vineyard called us in, and

paid us. And I mean to say that every boy here, who gives short work, and bad work, is a cheat; and that the prayer for daily bread, for blessing, that is, and reward, for his daily work, is a very awful, a very tremendous fact in an unworking life. Tricks learnt at school, and short measure, and unearned bread, and false appearances, are a bad training for the fierce temptations of after life. Need we wonder at the widespread ruin which marches through our land from time to time; need we wonder at the feverish excitement, the effort to get much and do little, whether it be in the artizan's work, or the master's transactions, whether it be in half work done for whole pay, or sham work palmed off as true; need we wonder, I say, when the thought of honesty has so small a place in a schoolboy's creed, honesty, I mean, *in the work he ought to do?*

But, brethren, the prayer for daily bread demands honesty in the work you ought to do. How can you go to God, and as it were stand before Him, and spread out your work in His sight, and say, "Give me, O God, the wages for this my work;" when that work is barely half done; or, worse still, sham, palmed off as true? But that is what you do when you pray for daily bread; you pray for God's acceptance of your day's work, and that day's work is an apprenticeship for after life. The prayer for daily bread means honest work. Then, before many years pass, your apprenticeship is over, and you have to begin in your professions actually to earn your bread. And still you pray to God, "give us this day our daily bread:" and ask it of Him. And you, and every living man, will have to face the temptation whether you will work and rise by integrity and fearless truth, or whether you will catch the nearest way.

Even as our Blessed Lord did, when the Tempter came to Him in His great hunger, and said, "If Thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread." For what is that but a great type, an acted parable of every man's life. It is the same as saying, "If thou prayest, Our Father, which art in heaven, if God is thy father, and thou His son, then turn the power you have to your own use quickly, and get your bread as quickly as you can; just turn ever so little from truth and you will find the hard world give you bread." Turning the stones into bread merely means to us that the way to get on looks hard as a stone to the honest beginner, that there is no opening, that bad work, and cheating work, and sham work, and plausible falsehood, have got such a hold in the market, that at first no stone is harder than the world which meets the honest beginner, who cannot, and will not bring himself to use the little arts and meannesses by which it is possible to wheedle a way in. And the temptation is very great; and many, too many, give up the generous love of truth for which they meant to work, and put self first, ever so little; but it is enough, the clear eye is lost for ever; and many, too many, go lower still, and, like the thief, who is the type of the lowest grade, seize, if they can, the bread they get from other men, either by spreading reports to their disadvantage, or undermining them by tricks, and false cheapness, or, if they have the power, taking advantage of their ignorance, or their weakness, to force them to give up what is theirs, whether of work or of money. And yet they take on their lips the prayer, "give us this day our daily bread," and ask of God in words—bread, which is the bread of thieves, and blessing on work, which is fraud.

But be not deceived, in the opening hours of life it *is* a great temptation. It is fearfully hard to see that a very little falseness will, as it seems, bring fortune and fame, whilst at the moment honesty seems ruin. How shall the mean school boy, who has made his school life already a dishonest sham, a half-hearted selfish doing of half-work, how shall he face the bitter test of opening life, how shall he answer the tempter who bids him turn the stones into bread, and take the thieves' way to get on? They do not do it. And many a public calamity in after years, and many a desolate home, bears witness to the want of truth begun at school; the want of honesty in the school boy's creed; the want of feeling himself in God's presence whenever he prays the prayer for daily bread. It is the first great touchstone of truth—this prayer for daily bread, this going to God every day, and asking for His wages for honest work done by ourselves. For that is the meaning of praying for daily bread.

Over all the world, in every land, every day, this prayer rises to the throne of God in one great cry of human voices. Oh, were the prayer true, how different would this earth-life be! Brethren, you too pray it. "God is not mocked, whatsoever a man soweth that shall he reap." Eat not thieves' bread, which you have not earned, but stolen; for all bad work is a theft. Go to God, get your bread from God, bring Him truth, bring Him your best, and then pray with certainty for daily bread. "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things." The prayer for daily bread, honestly prayed, would change the world.

SERMON XCVI.

THIEVES' BREAD.

ST MATTHEW IV. 4.

“But He answered and said, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.”

MAN shall not live by bread alone. We are not mere animals, we have something else to do besides live an animal life, however innocent. There is always a higher life mixed with the lower in man; we cannot get rid of it. The meanest man on earth, the vilest, has that in his life, whether he like it or not, that makes him of more value for good or evil, than any creature that merely lives. We have hitherto only dealt with the fact that we go to God and ask Him to give us the common bread of this lower life, yet even here, like a knife, sharp and decisive, the prayer for common bread asked of God at once cuts off from that bread of God all asking and eating of bread which has been cheated, and not earned by honest work. I touched also on the great fact that

everyone not old enough to win his own bread, or who does not win his own bread, is using up other people's lives as well as his own, for the money which supports him is the work of others, and has been life. How we shudder when the murderer kills his victim, and takes his money; because we see the crime! But how many thousands, whom we do not see, have been really killed by the dishonest lives of rich and poor, who eat thieves' bread, that is bread they have not done honest work for! But it is more fearful still to think with how light a heart, how thoughtlessly, because the daily bread comes, no one thinks how it comes, or that as the poor fish-woman said on the stormy morning as the sea claimed its tribute of dead, "It is nae herrings ye are buying but men's lives."

Ay, brethren, say what you will, it is no bread that ye waste, but men's lives, when you come here and give half-work, or no work, or false work, in this glorious home of life. The cry of the workmen, be they rich or poor, shall rise against you in the judgment, whose lives you spent in eating the bread of idleness, dishonest bread *to you*, within these our walls. Many a weary hand, and many an aching head, which furnished the bread you waste, if you do not do true work, shall witness that you have not only thrown away your own life but theirs also, and trampled under foot the poured out blood of their toil and weariness, the very life-blood of their hearts, the fruit of their pain. Ay, and sometimes these weary workers, whose heart-blood you hold so cheap, are your own fathers and mothers, who have poured it out freely for you, though it is of their lives. This prayer for daily bread is not the bit of rote work you thought it. It belongs to the deep things of life; it passes like a sword

through the world ; yea, like an axe, chopping off with pitiless stroke all the easy sins of careless boys and careless men, who do false work, or half-work, and who eat thieves' bread, and dare to ask it of God. Yea, it shall judge them, out of their own lips shall the judgment come.

But we have not got yet to the great saying in my text ; we have been dealing all along with common bread of common life, but Christ says that man, man with his life, will have to choose whether God's command is not more than this common bread ; and that the hour can come, and does come to most men, when they have to decide whether ruin or starvation must not be faced rather than any word of God be put aside, any false thing be done. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that cometh out of the mouth of God." Who then will stand this test ? On the one side the plenty of power misused, the stones turned into bread ; on the other ruin, death it may be. Ah—the spirit must be brave and free, trained in liberty, that can do this.

In the Chinese war, a common English soldier was taken prisoner with some natives ; and the next day brought before the governor. They were promised their lives if they would fall down and prostrate themselves before him. The rest did so, and lived, but he, common man as he was, refused as an Englishman to disgrace himself before such a power as that ; and he died ; they killed him. 'Twas only to crouch for once. But all he had of England in his heart rose up, he could not bow before so mean a power ; he died rather than do it. There was that in the free English air, the breath of liberty from England's fields, the sturdy strength of

England's cottage homes, that made one of the least of her sons, a poor uneducated private soldier, scorn, naturally scorn, scorn with no deep thought of what he was doing, the deadly splendour of the power before him. Unseen within stood the majesty of England in that poor man's soul, and before him, on the other side, the sword, and a base lord of the sword; and he chose the sword; he could not bow before so mean a power; he died rather than do it; he had breathed liberty too long; he died rather than do it.

And when the Tempter wants you to bow the dishonest head only for once, only once to lower the pure, free spirit of truthful life at his command, will you do it? Yes, you will do it, unless you breathe truth now; unless you draw in honesty now as the commonest of common things; unless you make honesty now be to you and your companions as common as liberty is in England; honesty, I mean, in every lesson learnt, in every game played. This temptation, this fierce test of the stuff we are made of, does not come in its full power till we start in life for ourselves, but it comes then, sooner or later, to all. There is no man living on God's earth, who has not been brought face to face with that sharp sword; who has not been brought face to face with the dread inward choice whether he will win his hopes by just ever so little bowing to mean power, or risk his all by not doing so. True, the base do not know they have been thus tried; no man who gives way knows fully what he has done; but for all that it is done. The time comes when the spirit of God's truth if you have breathed truth, and the majesty of God incarnate, a grand unseen presence of glory and life in your heart, will be on one side; and on the other, the Tempter, with the mean false face, whisper-

ing that if you will but bow ever so little, and lower your honest eyes to cringe to the world's idol, you shall have your bread, your success, and if not, you shall die; your earthly hopes, that is, shall perish.

Surely that poor soldier shall rise in judgment against the dishonest man of education; he died because he scorned to bow his head before mean power; and you—will you bow your hearts, whilst Christ the incarnate God stands by to claim you as His own? Will you bow your hearts to live base lives, and eat the bread of this world, even whilst day by day you mock God by asking it of Him? Ay—you will do so, unless you make the very air you breathe honesty; unless you make the commonest of all your common habits true and sound; unless your lessons ask for daily bread from God, and you can go each night to claim your wages; unless every stroke of the bat, and every kick of the foot, and all that hand, and eye, and foot, do in games, comes from a heart that does its best unflinchingly, and takes no mean advantage, breaks no rule. The light must be on your lives, and your lives must be clear and open in the light, then you do indeed ask God for your bread; then when the Tempter comes you will not bow. Your answer, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that cometh out of the mouth of God," will be no lip-answer, it will be in your lives, in your veins, running in your blood; it will be in your clear eyes that no lie dims, in the breath you have breathed of liberty and truth, a very part of yourselves, nay, yourselves undivided.

And whether your hopes live, or whether they die, and you pass through their death, and the disappointment and pain of their death, to higher life and happier strength here below, you will still pray truly, "give us

this day our daily bread." Yea, it shall be that when the dread hour of pain and disappointment is past, and you have refused the Tempter's sneering suggestions to win bread falsely, though indeed the stones often remain stones to the false—the bread does not come—it shall be then that angels shall come and minister to you. For He who has led the way does not leave His servants in their hour of need. He puts into their hearts a strength divine, and, knowing we need the lower help also, gives it.

Learn then how to be able to pray, "give us this day our daily bread." Learn too to be able in days to come to answer with a strong heart, yea, to make all your lives answer without words, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that cometh out of the mouth of God."

SERMON XCVII.

LIVING BREAD.

ST JOHN VI. 51.

“I am the living bread which came down from heaven, if any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever, and the bread that I will give is My Flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.”

FROM the beginning of the world to this hour, whether in ancient or modern times, the main burden of the sounds that reach us is one and the same. The great struggle of life, whether it be of crime, or whether it be of suffering, is the cry that the air is full of. Struggling, toiling humanity. Triumph or defeat, success or failure, hope, true or false, it is all the same; under it all is the great tumult of the struggle; above it all is the shouting of the struggle, the heavy sense of ceaseless unrest. Yet there is another sound, whoso hath ears to hear may hear it; there is another sound, a clear bright note as of a far off trumpet, a note not so much of defiance or of battle, as of thrilling hope, and calm

deliberate valour, and solemn certainty of joy, as at some high festival. This is the difference between human life, man at his best striving to do a task too heavy for him, to meet a law he cannot fulfil; and man with life divine breathed into him, man baptized into Christ, made one with Christ in the Holy Communion, really filled with His life, and meeting all things with a love of giving up, a love of hardship, a love of liberty from sin, a love of the mere act of holy and healthy life, with the joy of feeling life growing, and the mastery over the world growing, and the chains falling off as the strong heart gathers its strength. These make the free spirit rise; these make life a rejoicing activity, a glad acceptance of sharp trial and manly exertion, a delight in being counted worthy to see, however far off, the fresh, exultant happiness of forgetting self and loving truth for its own sake, doing good for its own sake, as a gift from Christ. Hence come those calm clear notes, that music ever sounding in the strife for those who have ears to hear.

Hence too the prayer for daily bread passes upward, all transfigured into heavenly shape, and leaving earth calls for that living bread which came down from heaven, the bread, which whoso eats shall live for ever, the bread, which is Christ Himself broken for us, and given evermore for the life of the world; that great power of spiritual life incarnate in man through Christ, by which the self-forgetful lose all thought of weariness and pain in the love that they bear for the beauty of the life they see, and the thrilling sense of victory and liberty gained by the having cast away earthly longings.

What that life is of which Christ is the living bread

we can indeed know but imperfectly; but the rush of health and strength that comes with it is an exceeding great delight even in its first beginning. And this we know, that like as the bread we daily eat passes into our veins, and under the spell of bodily life becomes ourselves, and, as our life-blood, builds up our frame, and by our actions done in that strength passes out into God's world, and still is ourselves in all we do, though once it was not so; thus also the living bread of heaven, the life of Christ, passes into our spirits, and, if we will let it, becomes ourselves; and, as our life-spirit, builds up the unseen frame of living strength, and by our actions done in that strength passes out into God's world as a quickening spirit, giving life and strength to others, making them feel that Christ has not left the world, but still works salvation in the soul in which He dwells, still works peace and joy in men of peace. For spiritual life is not idle. How can that be life which does not do the works of life, or bear, and endure, and be patient, because it is living and strong. It is a contradiction to talk of life, and not mean also the wondrous power of the life of Christ, living and strong in doing and suffering. Ay, glorying in tribulations. There you have the keynote.

The natural man has his theory of life; to gain as much as he can at as little cost as possible. Under the lash of want, or ambition, he works; fired by youth and energy he will even seek work for gain of pleasure, or wealth, or knowledge, or honour; but every hindrance, every tribulation is hateful, to be avoided, or forgotten as soon as possible; and so, like a slave as he is, the fierce conditions of passion, and sin, and want, and pain, and death, hunt him, and he escapes from them as much,

and as long as he can; and when experience is too strong for him, he sadly submits to the inevitable. And not much better is the common life of the Christian in most cases. He has more hope, but the idea of life is very little higher. With many it is a mean bargain in which they hope to buy happiness hereafter by being careful not to offend now; and so they plod on in a heavy way; they too anxious to escape, or, if they cannot escape, hating the trial, but resigned to it, that is the phrase, for the sake of future gain. Most, nay all of these, whether they make enjoyment or duty their standard, when they have first made up their mind what they must expect to have to bear, take a hard and gloomy view of everything beyond this, and endeavour to escape, or shut out all interferences with their ease beyond this. They behave like people, whose idea of health is to go out well wrapped up, and as they get older to wrap up more and more, and to shut themselves up in well-warmed rooms, and keep out every breath of God's world-wide air till the edge is taken off it, trusting to things outside to keep them safe, against nature, instead of to strength of life within. And so they drag on the heavy time, ever guarding against what cannot be escaped, ever oppressed by each inch of trouble beyond the portion they have measured out as necessary. Now this measuring out how much has to be done, this sheltering from everything more, may, and does sometimes, fairly meet the demand for daily bread, honest enough as far as it goes, no cheat; but it is no more like the life of those who eat the living bread than a modern funeral, with its blackness and all its emblems of despair, is like the joy, the solemn happiness of St Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course,

I have kept the faith : henceforth is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me in that day." In like manner, this funeral life contrasts with "the glorying in tribulations," "the exceeding joy in all our tribulations," "the rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for Christ's name," when they had been beaten. But why go on? The whole New Testament is one long joyous history, even in the worst pains, of life victorious. The pains are there of course, the trials of those dreadful days; but how confident, how glad, how fresh, how living, is the voice of the spirit of life, matched against all principalities and powers of evil in this world, and the world to come, fearing nothing, never more glad than at some great danger for Christ's sake, fresh, and active, sinewy, eager, a devouring fire of energy, but as patient as it was full of fire.

This is Life, the life of those who eat the living bread. Stand with St Paul on the hill side as he and one or two friends have just come over the ridge, and are looking down on some great city in Asia, strange to them, full of glorious idolatry, magnificent, fiendish in splendour of sin, and go down into it with him, one against the world : or ride with him a prisoner up the ten level miles into Rome, with that great city in its wonderful weight and bulk of glory full in view, ride with him to meet Nero there ; and hear, as we still hear, as all the world shall still hear evermore, his calm and quiet joy, his certainty—his certainty that palace, and battlement, and tower, would be as nothing to the spirit life he bore. I say this clear bright note of certain victory that is the New Testament, the voice of the spirit life, is as unlike the ideal of our modern

habits, as a modern funeral is unlike the entrance to heaven.

It never seems to enter the hearts of men that life, divine life, must be up and doing, bearing or acting, in God's great world, or—it is not life. As far as it shrinks, and shuts itself up, and draws back, and fears, and seeks shelter, it is not life, any more than running away from an enemy is courage. They who eat the living bread indeed, have received a conquering life, an energy, a power to bear and to do. It is impossible for divine life to shelter itself, and hide from the earthly conditions which it is to conquer. It must be master or nothing—learning to be master, that is. A life divine that draws back from action is no life, it is a contradiction to call it so. The whole new revelation, Gospels, Epistles, Acts of the Apostles, alike, breathes a keen glad freshness as of a window opened, and light and air from God let in to the darkened room of the world's bed of sickness. Those who eat the living bread, and live by it, will know this. The ordinary pattern of going on is no more like this than the glory of heaven is like a funeral. Life divine must rejoice in mastering all things or cease to be life. The prayer for daily bread means nothing less than this.

SERMON XCVIII.

CONTINUOUS LIFE.

I CORINTHIANS XV. 22.

“As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.”

HERE we have the great law of death and life laid down sharply and distinctly. In Adam all die. The natural life of the natural man is death, but in Christ shall all be made alive; the natural life of the spirit is life indeed, life advancing, life unending. Or, to put it in plainer words, sinful man goes on from bad to worse till corruption is the end; but the spiritual man goes on in increasing power of life, more and more cleansing out evil, more and more healthy and pure in heart, till life is made perfect in heaven. This is the great law of the redeemed; a progress out of the sickness and death of a lower nature, into the health, and strength, and life of a divine nature; a passing out of being the children of Adam into the being children of Christ.

Now I would ask you to turn your thoughts on to

the real meaning of those fearful words, "that in Adam all die." But first, never mind the mere fact that all of us will leave this world by what we call death. The sons of Christ do that. Yet Christ says, "whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die." However frightful we may think it, the leaving this world is not death; though without doubt the manner of it is meant to be a warning and teaching to us about death. True death, whatever else it may mean, means growth in evil, and growth in evil, and growth in evil; evil, active, spreading, poisoning, till the whole being is made perfect in evil, till good is cast out, and hatred of all that is pure and true put in its place. I say, whatever else it may mean; for whilst sure that it means this, what unutterable misery may also be found, in a world where all the surroundings are as accursed as the spirits that dwell there, none can guess, and none can tell. Yet human misery, and human pain, may well be to us stern teachers of what can be feared. And we children of Adam from the beginning of God's word to the end are met by the dread truth, "that in Adam all die."

First let us look at the facts of our human nature. If we thought of them more, we should change our light ways of playing with devil's work. "In Adam all die." Translated into more familiar words this means that evil perpetually is breeding its like, and that father hands on to son the curse of the cursed deeds he has done. I wish to press this home first; because the opposite truth of the conquering life of Christ cannot be understood or felt, till we feel a little what it means to inherit corruption, and what it means, therefore, to live and pass on life instead of corruption.

Let us first deal with the body only and its health.

Everybody knows that gross self-indulgence, take drunkenness for instance, is but another name for disease and death; everybody knows that a drunkard's children are of bad constitutions, and inherit disease; that is, that in blood, and bone, and flesh, the evil done in old days still works, and poisons, and bites, snake-like and silently. There is another sin, that may not be named, and, I quote from the Medical Report of a great London District, which says, "there is evidence of a most reliable character to show that it causes more deaths, diseases, and deterioration of health, than all other preventable diseases put together." In other words, typhoid, and scarlet fever, and all illness caused by infection, and bad conditions of houses, and all other sanitary defects, do not kill or smite with sickness so many as this one sin. This is part of the meaning of death working. This is the kind of meaning of the words "in Adam all die."

Go in imagination into the Hospitals; stand by the beds of the sick and dying; see their pain, their pale sad faces, their weary burden of helpless anguish; and know that in innumerable instances it is evil growth in evil doing its work in the body that you see; evil, that has found out the evil-doer; or, sadder still, evil, long forgotten, of father, or grandfather, still poisoning the life of younger generations. This is one form of death working. Many and many a sick bed is a crime taken later on at a riper stage; a crime, done boldly and gaily, but as truly the same on the bed of death, as it was in the chamber of its joy; the same crime, the secret evil, or open sin of sunny youth, of buoyant careless license, of better things deliberately put away, and nobler feelings stifled, the same crime, come back

again in another shape, and hunting down its prey. Nay, it has never left him ; the same crime that looked so gay once, let in to the palace of the soul, let in to the Temple of the Holy Ghost—the body—is ever after settled in the blood, gliding in the veins, a bitter poison of death, every day mastering more and more the life, till at length it flings its poor victim down ; and in the silent hours of night the last flickering of life destroyed, even like the candle at the bed side, grows fainter and fainter as the morning dawns, and soon all is over, all the remorse and wasting of heart, all the blighted hopes, and broken purposes, buried in a shameful grave, an early grave, a grave dug by reckless hands in hours of seeming joy.

All over, did I say? Nay, would God it were ; the brood of hell that the dead man has fed dies not with him ; even if he has no children of his blood to inherit the fatal legacy of wild passions, and shattered health, and powers impaired, there are children of his foul heart-thoughts and tempting words, and unclean actions, hearts that he has tainted and poisoned still moving on earth, infecting, tainting, poisoning still, in their turn. With what care the wise isolate the fever cases, lest death have free range ; with what pitiless severity the secret poisoner, fly where he may, is tracked by the ministers of justice to his last hiding place, and dragged out, and hung. But what slight things are fever, or poisoner's crime, compared to the smooth face of him who is doing devil's work on earth, who is infected with the virus of the Evil Spirit, who with a gay smile, and soft words, passes in and out amongst the crowd, letting the vipers he carries strike their venomed tooth wherever he gets an undefended soul, or a careless ignorant

fool; and what viper ever bit like a tempter's poisoned word or look? No, the sad death-bed is not the end; the dishonoured grave does not bury the sin even on earth.

Well did the Law send the leper outside the camp, as a dead man, as a living death; well did the Law punish with death sins that in England are lightly done—at least the beginnings of them. And Abraham's children to this hour alone survive out of the ancient world to bear witness to the power of life, and purity, and living obedience to law, inherited from their great father, and kept by them, whatever their other sins have been, better than by any other race on earth.

“In Adam all die:” that is, evil unchecked goes on, a sad inheritance always destroying its victims in the end. Year by year, sin and temptation repeat themselves in different shapes; year by year, death and doom in different shapes seize on the evil-doers and their children. True, life is offered; life is freely given; the curse can at any moment be stopped; but this does not make it less true or less certain as a curse. How piteous it must seem to our Father in heaven to see the son repeating the father's temptations, betraying, and betrayed; to see the same smiling beginning followed by the same ghastly end. For this He sent His Son to save. For this the Redeemer died on the Cross. The lost life, the dread sentence, “On the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die,” meant nothing less than this. Do you doubt it? Go see it written on wasted limb, and faces that are as an unspoken curse, a silent doom in the streets, hear its cry of anguish from hospitals and death-beds of poor and rich, from prisons, and palaces, and quiet homes alike. Know that it never

stops. "In Adam all die," and those who choose to follow Adam in disobeying the Lord of Life carry within a judgment that never sleeps, that, generation after generation, does its deadly work, till it be worked out in utter destruction, or conquered by the life of Christ.

This is the first great truth of the lost life, the truth, that evil grows, and works doom; year by year, and century by century, destroying all who love it; passed on as a foul inheritance from evil father to evil son. One of our divines¹ sums up the whole matter in these striking words: "Observe what misery there may be in any street, village, or knot of houses, with which we are best acquainted; and, it is not the disasters which have entered into those houses, we shall find, but the devils that have entered into them that have undone them." Yes, brethren, it is devil-worship, and evil lightly sown, but reaped in pain, the death that is in Adam chosen by Adam's sons that makes earth hideous, and never leaves its prey. This is the cause which brought the Son of God from heaven to give Life to a lost world.

¹ The late Rev. Professor Blunt.

SERMON XCIX.

TRUTH KNOWN TO ALL.

ST JOHN XVIII. 38.

“ Pilate saith unto Him, What is truth ? ”

IN the judgment hall of Pilate on that fearful Friday morning Pilate sate on his judgment seat, surrounded by his court; and Jesus Christ stood before him as a prisoner. It was very early, and the morning sun in all the freshness of day beginning in the glad spring hours cast long shadows on the pavement floor, and lighted up the great Hall, and shone on the hard face, and cruel, troubled eye of the Roman lord sitting in judgment with his nobles there, and shone on the pale calm features of the solitary man, whose life blood the fierce mob outside was calling for; and their cries, hoarse and loud, came roaring through the open doors. Such was the scene on that Friday when Pilate, in his conscience-stricken power, asked, “What is truth?” And God incarnate, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, stood before him a prisoner, for

him to deal with as he pleased, as men look on things; and even as he asked he went out, and with his own lips proclaimed Him innocent, and then, did the lie,—condemned Him as guilty.

What an acted parable! Human nature sits there in its foolish power on its self-made throne of judgment, and with its swords, and its spears, and its skill, and its mastery in things seen, and touched, and felt, asks, as a master and competent authority, What is truth? Whilst God's truth, in a shape unspeakably far off from all the ideas of man, stands before man, unknown; and men condemn by an acted lie God's truth, and condemn themselves as liars in life, whilst they talk about truth, and seem all-powerful, and seem to inquire for truth. Yes, it was a strange parable, the power of doing harm, and the power of quiet good, brought face to face. The snake power of the natural man, the gathered poison of intellect without God, set on the one side; and the supreme spiritual life, God incarnate, able to do and bear all things, on the other. And at the moment the poison fangs had it their own way, the deadly stroke was to come, and, "Crucify Him!" "Crucify Him!" to be the seeming end. And so in its degree it ever is. We shall see why it is so further on.

But, What is truth? If this is a true type and history. And what is falsehood? If this is a true type and history. First, let us put out of our minds altogether the common idea of falsehood, an idea which has done, and does, more to blind mankind about truth than anything else in the world. I mean that common idea, that a lie means telling something as a fact which is not a fact, a false statement of facts; and hence people get to think two great mistakes; first, that a lie deals with

facts, and fact knowledge, and secondly, that a lie means knowingly uttering untrue words. Of course that is a lie as far as it goes; but for one lie uttered in untrue words, there are thousands which have nothing to do with words at all, or with fact knowledge at all. And it is possible for a man never to *tell* a lie in his life, or to utter anything but good words, and yet to be utterly and ingrainedly a liar, and untrue.

Let me assert that the knowledge of facts as such, by itself, has nothing whatever to do with truth. Our uneducated and ignorant poor are as capable of truth as we are, or else ignorance and poverty would be forms of lies, and knowledge and riches would be forms of truth, which is manifestly absurd. It makes no difference in the first instance to a man's truth whether he believes that the sun goes round the earth, or the earth goes round the sun; the knowledge of the outer world from beginning to end has nothing to do with truth, till a man's heart comes into the question. If a man refuses to accept a proved bit of knowledge, because it is his interest not to accept it, he is untrue; but as long as he is simply ignorant, truth or untruth does not come into the question at all; and St Paul, who was entirely ignorant of modern discoveries and modern knowledge, was not less true because of that; and Abraham, who knew less still, was not less the Friend of God because of that. Until this great mistake is got rid of, namely, that falsehood has anything whatever to do necessarily with uttering words about facts; or truth anything whatever to do necessarily with hunting out knowledge; no one is ready to receive ideas of truth. Word lies, and questions of disputed fact, had better be put on one side altogether in asking, What is truth? Because they

have little or nothing to do with a right understanding and answer to the question.

Let us then throw aside words, and knowledge-questions, as not necessarily belonging to the subject at all. And, again ask the question, What is truth? Did Pilate know what was truth when he asked the question, and thought it unanswerable? Yes, he did. Pilate did know. Pilate knew that he was sitting in judgment with power to crucify or let go. Pilate knew, that for envy a set of powerful men had brought an innocent man before him, and hounded on a bloodthirsty mob to cry for blood. Pilate knew that the prisoner was innocent, and Pilate did not easily bring himself to do the great lie. Pilate went in and put questions to the silent, majestic, sufferer, sick at heart and sorely troubled, anxious to get some answer to nerve him; and then he went out to the people outside, and tried to compromise matters with them, and escape from the bitter choice before him. But no—no man escapes; sooner or later, more or less openly, every man in this world has to take his side, and choose decisively whether he will do what he knows right, or will not do it; whether he will offend the noisy majority, or give up right; whether he will have the bad against him, or the good. Pilate did know, even whilst he asked the question, what was truth, as far as it concerned him to know it. He knew perfectly well, for he said so himself, that he had an innocent man before him, Whom the people wished him to murder; and knowing this—he murdered Him.

Truth to Pilate was very simple, the answer was only too clear, "Let the innocent man go." And that is the answer always; put in words it is this, "Truth is the doing each moment what each moment you know to

be right." Truth has nothing to do necessarily with a man's words. Every word a man utters may be fact, and correct always, and yet the man may all his life be allowing the multitude to slay truth; and his whole life may be one long lie of doing, like Pilate, what he knows perfectly well is not taking the side of innocence and humble good. Truth and falsehood no more belong to words in the first instance, than a head-ache, or freedom from it, is all that is meant by health; having no head-ache does not prove you have no fever, or no consumption, or the many other diseases flesh can have. So a word-lie is no doubt untrue, but it is so small a form of untruth as, like a head-ache, to be scarcely worth considering excepting as a bad symptom. It is the life that is true or false. It is the Pilate judgment, which wants to argue and play with words, whilst the dread life choice is being made the wrong way.

Now, brethren, Pilate was a boy once, learning and playing in his Roman home. We know nothing about what he did to begin his course of untruth, but we do know that he, like you, had little things put before him first, little choices of selfish pleasure, or work to be done, of selfish disregard of others, or kindness to be shown. Little did his mother think, as she watched him, or he think, as he took his own way, what was to be the end. Begin now at once with the answer to his question, "What is truth?" Answer boldly in your lives. Truth is the doing each moment what we know to be right then. And by God's help we will try to be true.

SERMON C.

TRUTH IS LIFE WORKING.

ST JOHN XVIII. 38.

“ Pilate saith unto Him, What is truth ? ”

I SUPPOSE there is no one here who has not been accustomed in thinking about truth to fix the meaning mainly to words, and books, and knowledge, and what is said and written. To lie is to speak false words; and truth becomes a something to be told, to be known, to be found out in books, or searched for by clever brains. Philosophy will tell you that its sole existence is the search after truth. Nay, religion speaks much in the same way; and good men talk of the Bible as if the Bible was all that was wanted; and men publish, “Guesses at Truth,” as if Truth was a something to be discovered and ticketed.

But what if Truth has nothing to do with the world of words, and books, and research, and discoveries, and arguments? Our Blessed Lord’s words, “I am the Truth,” absolutely declare that Truth is His Life

working, life, not knowledge ; a spirit acting, and doing, and suffering, not a tongue talking, or a pen writing, or a brain contriving. Men look for truth in the wrong place, they turn the world into a great museum, and go about amongst their dead specimens, and say they are hunting for truth, with just as much sense, as if a man in a museum told you he was hunting. Specimens of the creatures caught by hunting are there, but if he wants to learn to hunt them, he must go and do it where they live. So it is with truth ; books, and knowledge, and words, are specimens very often of what true thinkers and workers have done ; but if you want to be true, you can only find truth in the living work of each moment. Put away altogether that what is said, or written, or discovered, is truth ; it is only a specimen. Put away altogether the idea that truth is something outside you to be found out ; it is life, the life you have to live ; and each moment brings you a different trial of your life, a different truth to be lived.

What did it matter to Pilate whether he knew, or did not know, the philosophy of his day, when he asked the question, What is truth ? He had to live through that fearful hour, when the cries for murder, which he knew well enough ; and the innocence of the innocent prisoner, which he knew well enough, pulled him different ways ; and—he lived the great lie, and betrayed the great Truth, even whilst he washed his hands, and did not know by head knowledge what he had done.

What you do then, not what you say, ought to be the first thought about truth in every mind. A word-lie is but a fungus, but Truth is a forest tree, a real powerful perfect growth of life. What you do, not what you say, is the root and life of truth. For one thing, he who

does the true thing fearlessly will not want a lie; he has nothing to hide. If there were no books in the world, truth would be the same in kind; for the life of man would go on, and he would have to act; and as he acted according to his light, he would act right, or act wrong. If there was no Bible in the world, and God had not given a Revelation, still the life of man would go on; the essential character of truth would be there. That inner witness that we came from God of conscience in the heart, of feeling right and wrong, however imperfectly, would remain untouched, and by its judgment would exalt or condemn man's life, and send him into the world to come prepared for good, or prepared for evil, however imperfect the preparation might be.

To take an extreme example. The Spartan was trained to steal; and stealing as such is a sin. But who can doubt that the Spartan boy, who in obedience to authority, ran great risk, braved great pain, exercised great self-denial in stealing, doing it in obedience to authority, doing it because he thought it was right, was training a self-denying, brave, and obedient spirit by the act, and preparing himself for a world, where obedience, bravery, and self-denial, find their proper place and reward? And who can doubt that the Christian boy, who from better teaching could not be brought to steal, but nevertheless gives way to self-indulgence, shirks his work, disobeys his authorities, is training himself for a world, where disobedience, cowardice, and lust, will find their punishment, and unfitting himself every day for the free, strong happiness of heavenly life. Truth for man is the strength of the free spirit acting with perfect liberty; a strength, which fear cannot touch on the one side, or pleasure pull on the

other, to make it do what it knows ought not to be done, or not do what ought to be done. It has nothing to do in the first instance with books, or words, or head-work.

Poor philosophy goes peering about throughout all time like a child in a wood, searching in the bushes and briars of tangled thought, and subtle words, for truth; but truth is living action; the bird has flown away long ago, and ever will fly, long before they come near, and leave an empty nest for them to take, and ticket, and lay up. The living moment cannot be caught and labelled. It is not possible to seize a man's life, and make it, like a machine, move forward, and meet each changeful moment, with its message and its trials; but life means the moving forward, and dealing honestly with each moment as it comes; and truth to man means this—this, and nothing else; this covers all. It covers all the works and words of man from his birth to his grave. And the poorest savage, who according to his light is making his life do honest unflinching work, is nearer heaven than the most blameless Christian, who is not doing so.

Certainly God is Truth, and Christ is the Way, the Truth, and the Life; and he who really moves in the spirit of God and Christ, is far higher than the poor savage; but he who does not, though he knows better what he ought to do, what of him? There is an answer: "Many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Brethren, take this to heart, now—now, that you are beginning with a new beginning. You know what is

truth well enough; everybody does, whether they are conscious of it or not. Everyone knows at the moment of acting how he ought to act. When you are, or ought to be, engaged in lessons or play, you know perfectly well what you ought to do; and you feel the temptations and hindrances; and it will not help you a bit more than it did Pilate, to try and cheat your consciences, and blind yourselves to the simple fact whether you are doing your best or not. There is no evasion of this. No prizes, no praise, no success, wipes out the dread record within, the stamp imprinted on the soul of him, who has left undone those things which he ought to have done, or done those things which he ought not to have done. His soul has taken the impress of weakness and dishonesty. Keep away from your hearts and minds all ideas about truth except this,—that truth for man is his life meeting the trials and temptations of the world fearlessly and well. And truth is always known, even when, like Pilate, the waverer asks an unanswered question.

These are three great facts to engrave on the heart—First, that Truth is life, and a spirit of God within, meeting in its strength what each moment brings. Secondly, that Truth comes in a different shape, each moment, to be dealt with by the same spirit. Thirdly, that everyone knows each moment What is Truth.

SERMON CI.

TRUTH IS FOUND.

ST JOHN XIV. 6.

“Jesus saith unto him, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.”

THERE is one great fact which ought to be engraved on every mind before any search for truth begins; it is this, that men can know truth and—hate it. Or, more correctly, that men must hate truth if they see it before their hearts are ready and purified by training. Once understand this thoroughly, and you will nevermore be entangled in word-puzzles about truth, or hunt for truth in knowledge, when your life alone can teach it you. You will strive to live, and everything that is not interpreted to you by your life, will not be truth to you like that which is, which you have lived into seeing; and everything which is outside life, however interesting, will have nothing to do with truth in your judgment.

If the glorious powers of the right eye tempt you away from the life given you by God to be lived, you

will tear away the enchanting light, and rather live with narrower paths, and obscure pursuits and name, than leave the truth of daily life undone for the sake of brilliant success elsewhere. For the best and most devoted work in that state of life to which it has pleased God to call you is truth. And this very often indeed demands the giving up of excellent powers, and skill, and genius, which there is no time to cultivate, if the heart and strength are really put into the common task of the life that has to be lived. Now we can the better see why our Blessed Lord never in any Parable speaks of Himself as the Great Teacher, and (necessary as teaching is) left to us His Life only, putting nothing in writing Himself, but leaving to His disciples to do what was wanted in this way. Hence too in the text He speaks of Himself as *being* the Way, the Truth, and the Life; that is, He gives the strength to move, as He moved; the spirit of truth to be true, as He was true; the spirit of life to live, as He lived.

I will try by a homely simile to show the practical difference between all teaching, and this word of Our Lord's, that He is the Truth, and that our Truth is Himself working in us. Let us take the wounded man on the road to Jericho, as he lay there half dead. Suppose the Priest, instead of passing by on the other side, had come up, and pitied him, and told him exactly what his wounds were, and what ought to be done, and pointed out the way to Jericho, with many bits of advice for travellers, and then gone on, and left him there; that is what mere teaching does. And if, as Revelation tells us, man is lying stricken to death, it can do nothing more. But Christ comes, and first begins to cure the wounds, and then supplies a new

power of movement ; He puts poor human nature on His own horse, and walks by the helpless man, and he is moved out of danger. Now this is a very rough type of the great fact that a divine moving power, a new nature, strong and active, is put into us ; man's spirit is as it were put on horseback, instead of lying helpless by the way, which no knowledge can give strength of limb to travel on any more.

Christ is the Way ; the movement of His life must be the direction by which our life moves ; as He did, so must we ; that is the being the way ; the same things must be done over again. Christ is the Truth ; the unflinching spirit of doing and suffering all things must do and suffer in us again. Christ is the Life ; and if this be so, then the deathless life of His victory over death will live in us now, and for evermore.

Truth then is not only the doing at each moment what we know to be right, which would be beyond man's strength wounded as he is ; but it is in its truest meaning, the Spirit of Christ in man making man's spirit able to do the right each moment, if man will consent. Oh, the blessedness of learning in this way to see God, of living God's life, so that life does truth, and sees truth, and knows truth by doing it. "Do My will, and ye shall know the doctrine whether it be of God." No man ever knows truth in any true sense whose life has not lived it into him ; whose life has not cleared and purified itself into a true seeing power.

Of course, in one sense, Christ is seen by every Jew, but who can say that those who crucified Him had a true sight of Him ? And in like manner, day by day, they only really see truth who live truth ; and right and wrong become two different things from mere actions

this way or that between man and man. "I am the Truth," are Christ's words. Right and truth is the being lifted up by Christ without resistance to work and go with Him. Wrong and untruth is the resisting Christ's help, and putting away His Spirit, and going away from Him.

I spoke just now of the search for Truth. But this is a most misleading term. There is no search for truth; if by search is meant a long process of slow and doubtful unravelling till the far off prize is reached, if it is reached. No, the search only takes place before man or boy is on the right track. The merchant searching for goodly pearls, in spite of his intelligent wish, and making it his profession, searches, and is all at sea whether he shall succeed or not; but the moment he has grasped the great thought of Christ in his life working, there is no more search; all he has to do is to sell all he has and buy it; that is, to make all his life ensure to him the possession of a glorious present gain of Truth; the search is over, there is no more uncertainty, he only has to make what he sees his own. And, in like manner, the man who is not searching at all, who is merely digging in the ordinary field of ordinary life at his daily work, suddenly finds the hid treasure, it is there, close by him, though he knew it not; and he too from that moment is fixed, he has it, he is certain about it, but he must make it his own. Before men are on the right track they search, generally anywhere but in the right place. Afterwards all search is over. Truth is found; nothing remains but to make our own the great certainty of what we see and know, the pearl in our hand, the treasure in the field of our work.

Ay, there comes the grand distinction between

man's truth, and God's truth. Men hunt and search all their lives, and life after life, for a hundred generations, and say, they are searching for truth, and that life is too short, the search too hard. And each generation in turn babbles nursery babble about grand discoveries, and wresting her secrets from nature; and glorious boasts of what they, the last comers, have done, and foolish prophecies of what shall be done hereafter, in which they hide the fact that they have failed, and are as far off as ever from any real approach to what even they themselves call truth. But God tells man, tells every man, not a select few only, Truth is by you, Truth is in you, true or false you must be. Make Truth your own. Win it. Have it. Be it. God tells each of you, and not a few favoured intellects only, Search no more, if you have been searching. No search is wanted. Here is Truth, Christ working in life, the Spirit of Christ in man's heart able to do the works of Christ. Make Truth your own. Do the works, and you shall know that Truth is your own.

Put out of your hearts the idea of search, put into your hearts the idea of obedient learning to live. If you want to learn Greek, you do not set about it by searching out for yourselves all the vexed questions in it, and setting yourself against the methods used by Greek scholars. You go to teachers; and, if you disobey them, do not expect to learn. And so it ought to be with life. No man, who has ever studied life work in the way Christ has laid down, and done what he had to do in the spirit of Christ, has ever doubted about Truth.

Ye noble army of martyrs, bear witness; ye noble army of men, and women, and children, and the poor, and weak, and humble, who have met the sword and the

fire, shame, persecution, torture, and death, with the calm certainty of unmistakable Truth.

Bear witness too here, in this Chapel, every heart, of everyone here, old or young, that the heart does bear witness, and has borne witness to you, of happy restful sweetness when you have done the right, of trouble and the pricks of uneasy thought when you have done the wrong, however pleasant that wrong seemed. What, pray, is this but the judgment of God waiting for no great judgment day, but ever moving side by side with His Truth? Wanting no Archangel's trumpet, nothing louder than the beating of the heart within, and the dread silence of the sleepless thoughts. Yes, brethren, bear witness to Truth being before you; let your lives bear witness evermore, as the spirit of Christ becomes your spirit, His life your life, and all your ways paths of quiet trust and peace.

SERMON CII.

TRUTH HUNTS THE UNTRUE, IS BOUGHT BY THE TRUE.

ST MATTHEW XIII. 44.

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.”

IF Truth is life working, and every moment brings a new bit of truth to be done, what kind of life is it that we are called on to live? If Truth lies like Lazarus at the gates of our pride, always there, waiting for our decision as we pass in and out every day, what kind of life does it demand of us? Or, if Truth challenges us, as it challenged Pilate, in the quiet judgment hall of our souls, while outside the world is ravening for the blood of Truth, the innocent prisoner, what kind of heart can meet the challenge? Or, if Truth tries us in the shape of a strong temptation, as the traitor French king was tempted, who sold such religion as he had for the price

of Paris, where is the honest answer to come from? One thing is certain, whether you like it or not, there is no shuffling out of a choice. Truth will be answered. Juggle as you please, twist and turn as you can, hide away in vain talk, hide away in trying to doubt, and wrap yourselves in fancied uncertainty, Truth will be answered. Truth will hunt you. Truth may wait long and not push it home, but sooner or later the great answer is wrung out of the heart; sooner or later the hour comes, and the heart pronounces its own sentence, even though, like Pilate, it may seem to condemn another in doing so.

I care not how secret, how humble the verdict in this world may be, it is decisive, and marks a man as belonging, or not belonging, to the great, manly, exultant life power, that is moving and brightening over all the world towards that perfect victory which shall yet come. The certainty of this is the first point to grasp, the absolute certainty of it from the very nature of things. Man lives; what does he live for, but for the value of his life? And God is ever testing its value, ever bringing a divine touchstone to it, ever trying it by searching fire. It must be so, if God is God, and man's life worth anything at all. There is absolute certainty, from the very nature of things, that Truth is always confronting every man; that instead of man hunting for Truth, Truth hunts him; hunts him relentlessly, if he tries to escape; hunts him down without mercy; tracking him pitilessly through all his secret wriggling away; forcing him to turn his face; forcing him at last, as Pilate was forced, to meet eye with eye, and look at the calm, deep, final judgment gaze.

But with the true man all is different. His certainty

indeed has come, but it is a certainty of having found a great treasure. He has but one thought, to make it his own. He will sell all he has. With joy he goes to do just what the other flies from. Truth does not come to him in the shape of a disagreeable duty, or a fearful choice, or a glittering temptation. He sees beyond all this. The dead dull field of common life with its common-place work, has suddenly been transfigured, and a hidden glory taken its place. He will sell all he has to make it his own; that is, all the trials and sacrifices which hunt the other man, he will gladly make, and gladly do, for the sake of the great cause. He has found a cause worth more than all his own pet schemes and possessions. He is not hunted any more by hateful demands on his time, his money, his strength. No, he is the hunter; time, money, and strength, shall be bartered at once. He goes to make his bargain full of hope. He will sell it all for the sake of the great cause he has discovered, sell it willingly, gladly, time, strength, money, all. For Truth to the truthful is no taskmaster got rid of for a time only to come back again with some more hateful offer than before; no, it is a divine discovery hidden in common things: it is God's life put within reach of man; and nothing is laborious, nothing unwelcome, which gives a hope of winning it. He is the hunter now, not of Truth, for he has found it, but of every conceivable self-sacrifice by which he can get it; giving up gladly all he once loved of ease, gain, or security. For no half-measures will do. Nothing marks the man who has found Truth more than this fact. The field of life has become very, very, precious in his eyes. Once one thing was much the same to him as another, and it was a matter of comparative indifference what was

done, and who was there, provided no one troubled *him*. Men might do what they pleased in the field if only they left him alone. There were no helpers or hinderers ; for there was no treasure in the common work of life.

Now all is different ; he and others with him, are deeply interested in something besides themselves, in a treasure that can be lost or won ; and those who help, and those who hinder, are no matter of indifference. A clear, distinct, impassable line of severance lies between the treasure finders and the treasure hinderers. Half-measures mark the man who has not yet grasped realities. This however is a small matter, the real difficulty is not with others but with himself, with that sharp necessity of selling all he has, that fatal word, *all*. True, he goes with joy ; but however joyfully he begins, however little he ever repents, or loses the deep sense of joy ; as the years pass, and the full meaning of selling all is felt, what it is to sell all is felt indeed. Must it be all ? Yes, it must be all. Sooner or later all that a man cares for naturally must be sacrificed to win the great life treasure of true life from God.

First come the appetites and idleness, and ask to be kept. Just these odd minutes of play, or sleep, or just these pleasant mouthfuls ; spare just a little. But it may not be. Let those, who will, whimper and whine for the fleshpots ; and this is the schoolboy's special trial, but to him the harder life, the frank, sharp practice of brain and limb, the keen air of active laborious days, with their sense of existence ever fresher, broader, more full, the happiness of honest weariness, when tired arm, and tired head, take well earned rest, and feel a manly joy in being tired ; the elastic spring of the young life pressing

onwards into new realities, realities that none can take away, for they are his very self; to him, all this is a joy, a sober confidence of gain on gain, a hope more prevailing still. What matter that the coming world, with all its weight of good and ill, is as yet an unknown country full of all imaginable risks, it is full also of all imaginable hopes that the fresh young heart can look to win.

So he reaches the threshold of manhood, eager and armed. He has gone to God's money-changers and his boyhood is sold, all he had. He has sold self-indulgence, and mean sickly tastes; and the sale has gone well; he has got in exchange the strength and spirit of hardy success in himself. He stands a wakeful dreamer of fearless, bright dreams, ready to begin. He stands dreaming of work, and struggle, and danger, may be, but of work, and struggle, and danger, in which all his powers shall find scope, and all his spirit be trained to victory, and rise to match his day. But he soon finds that he must sell this dream of practised power leading to success, as he sold before his first dream of ease without pain. All must be sold. Like Abraham, the very child through whom alone the promise can come true, must be sacrificed, so it seems, if he is to be true; whilst ever so little sham, ever so little stooping to the tempter, will give him all he wants. 'Tis a heavy price. Will he pay it? 'Tis a bitter question. How will he answer? How little he thought, in the freshness of his first liberty, that year after year should follow draining the life blood by which he hoped to do his work for God, and rendering more hopeless every day that dream of coming hardship, but coming success also, which was his treasure when he started. But he cannot draw back, all he has must go, and does go. Day by day some early hope or other

withers, and dries up, in pain and weakness. Sooner or later the love of truth crosses every desire, every thought, or hope, or fear, of the common human life, destroys them, but—creates a new world in doing so. The freedom he got within himself against his lower self first, he now gets within himself against all the world outside and its enticements, its fears, its shame, its glory. He is astonished to find how much delusion he has loved, when he thought he was loving good only. He is astonished to find how much evil stuck to him even in the best of his early dream. But his judgment now clears; and many a fair life-growth within out of ruined plans, and baffled work, gives faith to believe in the next overthrow and its pain that the same new life shall grow out of that too. Faith takes the place his own plans once took, Faith in God's guiding; and a strong conviction that in God's world of life all pangs are travail pangs through which the new birth of life must be born, and that no true life is born without them: Faith in life born out of death becomes his guiding star, his one thought for time and eternity.

And death is no more death, whether we mean by death the destruction of our human body, or the destruction of our human hopes. All is changed. Life ever being born anew, nothing destroyed without better things given instead, nothing withheld excepting for the sake of richer gain after, becomes his one creed. In a word, life, life and liberty, is his; the sale has gone well; life and immortality, a clear sense of divine life in the world, a sober serious certainty of himself being in that life, working with it, guided by it, these are the treasures of Truth. Truth does indeed demand that man shall sell all, and face all, and shrink from no battle shock, or

secret pain ; but Truth is life immortal working, and out of every death comes Truth, alive, risen, immortal, to inherit life with God. This, brethren, is the kind of life we have to lead with Truth.

SERMON CIII.

PUBLIC HANGMEN AND SCAVENGERS.

PSALM XVII. 13.

“The ungodly, which is a sword of Thine.”

HOW the years pass, and become centuries, and the centuries move on into thousands of years ; and still as of old, spring and autumn, summer and winter, go and return again with sun, and shower, and seed-time, and harvest ; and still, as of old, men are born, and are young, and are old, and die, under the same skies, on the same earth, gladdened by the same flowers, gazing on the same fields, and rivers ; and birds sing, and trees wave in the breeze ; and evermore there is the endless flow of life, the endless renewal of the same conditions of life, till the spirit of man sinks and faints as he thinks of this awful coming and going, that knows no check, no end ; fire and hail, snow and vapour, wind and storm, ever fulfilling His word Who made them. All things, animate and inanimate, ever working as parts of this mighty stream set in motion by God. Nothing so mean that it

can escape notice ; “ the very hairs of your head are all numbered ; ” not a sparrow falls to the ground unheeded by God ; nothing so mean that it cannot be a bringer of life or death in God’s hand. When Herod gave not God the glory worms devoured him. The worms became the ministers of vengeance on the king. And we know full well the truth of the prophet’s words, that the palmerworm, and the locust, and the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, are the judgment of God upon a guilty land, the great army which He sent on His rebellious people—an army, which can no more be stopped by man, than the sea can be stopped when the tide is flowing in. Again, the four sore judgments, are the sword, and the famine, the noisome beast, and the pestilence, which are to be sent upon Jerusalem in her day of wrath. And here, in like manner, the Psalmist speaks of the ungodly as a sword of God. “ Deliver my soul from the ungodly, which is a sword of Thine.”

If any are tempted to ask why the ungodly sometimes have such power, and do so much evil, here is an answer. The power of the ungodly acts as a sword of judgment, and is used by God to destroy, just as other destroying instruments are used in trying, punishing, or purifying, the children of men. The ungodly in power is a sort of public hangman, or executioner, who is appointed to do the vile, but necessary scavenger work of the universe, the destroying and clearing away that is needed.

But let us look at it from another side. The sword is a great power ; the greatest external power on earth ; the giver of glory, of wealth, of kingdoms, to soldiers, statesmen, and kings, carving out the earth seemingly at its will. The sword is the very type, and embodiment,

of the idea of successful force. Holy Scripture therefore speaks of words, "that are very swords." All language in the same way bears witness to this feeling in the terms which are applied to intellectual power; sharp, keen, cutting, piercing, and others speak of it as a sword. The sword then is actually a destroying victorious power, and, as being so preeminently, represents all kinds of destroying conquest, and violence that is successful by strength.

And success,—successful strength—ay; what of that? Success.—All of you have some object in life, some dream at all events, which is so far real, that it represents your heart wish, and heart love, if it could be attained. What is your dream? Is it success? Successful strength? Power to force your way? Sword power? Well, sword power is very strong. People perish by the sword too; but nevertheless sword power is very successful. And many strive to forge their being into a hard perfection; hard, and keen, and glittering. And the living sword rejoices in his keenness, rejoices in the wars of opinion, and the clash of contending parties, when he shows his strength, and wins his glory; triumphing when others fall; inflicting wounds, and triumphing in inflicting wounds; stabbing the hearts of men, cutting their feelings, and carving out his own fortune.

And do not think that this only goes on in the great world, or that any grand power is necessary; the spirit is the same whether the arena be an empire, or a school, a kingdom, or a family. The sword power works by cutting, by wounding, by oppressing the weak, by sharp words, by selfish actions, by having its own way, by being feared, by never sparing. The jest that gives pain belongs to it. The careless or spiteful blow belongs

to it. The careless or slanderous story belongs to it. Everything that annoys belongs to it. And the selfish boy becomes the selfish man by such acts; and the life of some men is, that they are living swords with power to do harm, but with no power to do good. Power to do harm. O fearful success. For let us grant it is successful. God permits such success. God uses such success to punish or try mankind. And the successful man thinks he is doing his own pleasure; that it is all his own; that he is having his own way; whilst all the time the prayer of the righteous rises, "Deliver my soul from the ungodly, which is a sword of Thine;" whilst all the time, he is but a senseless instrument in the hand of God. "The ungodly, which is a sword of Thine"—a mere hard tool, without any directing power of its own, a sword, not the wielder of a sword, not working intelligently with God, not knowing what is really being done.

The sword ranks in the word of God with the cankerworm, the wild beast, and the locust, and the other irrational ministers of the wrath of God. Of course it does; strength of arm, or strength of head, is but an instrument; and a man, who has no sense of all the tender feelings, and love, and humility, and gentleness of life, as far as he has no feelings, and has turned himself into an intellectual, or bodily force-power, is a mere automaton, a machine, a living sword, on a level with the beast of prey, or the locust. But human histories do not take this view. They are full of the glory of the conquerors, of the crafty politicians, of the keen philosophic intellects, of the living swords in fact, whom God uses to destroy worn out systems, to punish evil, to goad the selfish, to wake up and train the true hearted by trial. These are however the men, who in

each generation, are the rising men, the successful men. Not of course that good men do not also prevail; but as a rule the world loves its own; and those who care most for earthly things win them; and they triumph, and know not that they are permitted to ravage, as a wild beast is, and that they are blind tools in God's hand, and are not working with God as men.

Brethren, once more, what is your dream? Is the idol of your heart a hard selfish hope of making self prevail; or an humble desire to know God, to see Christ working blessing on earth, to follow Him, though with bleeding steps, on errands of mercy, gentleness, and suffering, and to work with God, however secret the work may be? He has got very little way in the kingdom of heaven, who wants his work to be known, and who is not happy in the silent success of seeing truth better, and loving it better, and helping it to be loved by others.

True training for true life is the learning to heal wounds, not to inflict them; to save, not to destroy; to build up, not to pull down; to be as oil to the afflicted, not sharp as a sword. Beware of the sword power and its spirit. Beware how you take pride in making your way. Beware of becoming a living sword, cutting down others, and cleaving a place for yourself through those that are weaker. "They that take the sword shall perish by the sword," is true in practice. It is ill building on the overthrow of others. And it is especially true in its widest sense; there can be no place in heaven for the living swords, who have lost their true humanity, and become hard, and keen, and victorious destroyers. How in a kingdom of love can they find place that are swords? "With lies thou cuttest," is the

mournful cry of the oppressed against the oppressor evermore. "Deliver my soul from the ungodly, which is a sword of Thine," is a prayer still heard at the throne of God. But, remember, you may be swords without being successful. Whenever you thrust yourself forward at the expense of another in word or deed, you are giving yourself to sword-worship. There is something strangely mournful in seeing the rough, coarse struggles and turmoil of the living swords in the midst of tender, and subtle, and delicate influences, of which they see and know nothing; like blind men hacking and hewing in the midst of all-pervading light, which is a closed world to them; or savages, letting go the electric current which will fire the mine to destroy them, in ignorant sport; or drunkards, dealing with the sanctity of their homes, which should breathe out unconsciously the prayer "Our Father in heaven," instead of the curse of hell. So looks much of glory to heavenly eyes. Such is the real truth concerning the great speakers, who win renown by attack, and not by wise measures.

But there is a beginning to this coarse, rude, sword-work, this hacking of tender life. It begins in two ways. With the ignorant and unthinking, actions begin it, selfishness in cold and heat, in work and play, the trying to get as much, and do as little as possible, bullying, the disregard of the weak, and all the petty ways in which the mean-hearted boy moves at the expense of others, and annoys, or neglects them. But higher minds begin with false ideas of greatness; they dream a dream of success, in which they put knowledge and intellect first, and true life and character second. They make idols of the men who have been conspicuous for their volcanic energy, and know not that it is idolatry, and that they

are forging themselves in its altar fires. But, O Lord, "Do Thou deliver our souls from the ungodly, which is a sword of Thine," not working with Thee, but in a dead, hard way doing the destroyer's work as Thy executioner in the world, hangman's work, scavenger work, which clears away the dead things to make room for life, without having any part in life itself.

How can the loveless spirit belong to a kingdom of love? How can glittering hardness be a sharer of the gentleness of the kingdom of Christ?

Brethren, it is good to depart and be with Christ. Depart we all shall, and others take our place. Brethren, it is good to depart and be with Christ. But then we must learn of Him now; we must walk gently with Him now. Remember well in training for life the emphatic judgment passed on success gained by force, "The ungodly, which is a sword of Thine." Good men pray to be preserved, and are preserved, from the blindness, the hardness, the glittering power, which makes the ungodly living swords, glorious on earth, but ranked in God's Word with the cankerworm, the locust, and the wild beast.

SERMON CIV.

GIVING LIFE TO SAVE LIFE.

ACTS XXVII. 23, 24.

“There stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Cæsar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee.”

THESE words, as you know, are the words of St Paul before the shipwreck. I wish particularly to call your attention to the last part of the announcement; “lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee.” What were those 275 people to St Paul, that an angel of God should come to tell him as a special favour that they should all be saved alive for his sake? No doubt some eight or ten of them were friends, some twenty or thirty, perhaps, might have claimed a kindly acquaintanceship with him, but the remainder, the odd 240, what was it to him whether they lived or died? The sailors who, in spite of this message, and the order it restored in the ship, tried to steal off with the boat, and leave the

passengers and soldiers to their fate; there was little to recommend them; or those soldiers, whose counsel at the very last was to kill St Paul, they do not excite much sympathy. In fact, that ship's company was much what a rough set of soldiers and seamen have been at all times; and St Paul was a prisoner on board, and though treated well by the officer in command of his guard, was of little account, as we see, and as was likely, with the crew and soldiers, who neither believed his word, nor respected him, as a body. We have then here a very unattractive situation, and a very mixed and unattractive society cooped up in this great grain-ship for many weeks together; for the voyage had been very tedious. And this is the company whose lives are granted to St Paul as a great favour by God. There is something to think of in this. The lives of these men were precious to St Paul; and God judged that the gift of their lives was a gift worth giving. Ah, how often in our island history have men's hearts at home beat high, when they heard how the women and children were saved from the sinking ship, whilst the captain gave quiet orders, and seamen obeyed them, in the last few minutes that remained as they were waiting to die.

We feel that the calm, unselfish protection of the weak at the cost of life is a noble thing. We feel that it is an honour to have such deeds done by men of our race. It is a gain to the world to know that such deliberate, unselfish giving of life for others is a true part of our common human nature found amongst common men. And we should scorn with scorn unutterable the officer, at all events, who bought life by leaving others to their death. Now this feeling of its being noble to save the weak, and mean to save ourselves

at their expense, is just, it seems to me, what God recognized and blessed when He gave St Paul the lives of all who were with him in the ship. God would have us see that the mere fact of being alive in the same ship is a bond of union demanding a good man's sympathy. God would have us see that the being together even, however little else there may be in common, is a claim on a true man's life, a claim to be made good even to death.

And we do see it, when in our newspapers we are inly stirred with deepest feeling, as we hear, how the men died whilst the women and children were saved. And Our Blessed Lord has chosen a ship to be above all other types the type of His Company, His Church. Brethren, if in the ordinary course of a sailor's duty we find it expected that the strong shall give their lives to save the weak by the common laws of discipline, and a brave man's obedience; only because the same ship holds all; only because it is base for the strong to save themselves, and leave the weaker to die; and this is God's view of life; then I should like to know how far we are Christians indeed. We are only Christians so far as our common lives embody the true life, whatever we may call ourselves.

And in that single point of giving life to save life, a disciplined crew, be they heathen in other respects, has reached the standard of the life of Christ; and so far we, who with heart and soul feel the noble power of this, are Christian. But is this principle of giving life to help the weak good in a shipwreck, and bad in a common voyage? Good when life is demanded, and not good when a lower price is asked? Shall we scorn the sailor who with life at stake, thrusts the child back from the boat; and think nothing of the boy, who to indulge himself, thrusts the

little boy back from the fireside? I don't understand such Christianity!

It is very worthy of attention how in the ship, Christ's great type for His Church, the spirit of Christianity has so prevailed in the world, that the common sailor is expected, as a matter of course, be he heathen, or be he Christian himself, simply as a sailor, to do the highest act of Christian sacrifice, give up life for the sake of the weak.

Is a great school better than a ship? And are the picked company of a great school better than the ship's crew? What shall we answer? brethren. I would draw your attention to the barefaced heathenism which a school can, and does hold. The shameless way in which, as a matter of course, the strong in body, or strong in brain, take advantage of the weak in common life. Why should it be contemptible in a common sailor to push the weak aside and save himself, and not contemptible in the Christian gentleman to push the weak aside for his own gain? That place, that company, is heathen, which lets the strong help themselves first. Those hearts are mean, which send their owners rushing into the boats to please themselves, whilst the delicate and true-hearted are pushed on one side. Those manners are boorish, and rude, and vulgar, which take the first and best because of strength, and lose sight of all the higher nobility which can be in the gentle—in the true *gentleman*, though he may be less strong to begin with. Abhor strength as a ruling power. Hate the idolatry of power. Never do a thing because you are strong. Never, if strong, push yourself forward into the ship's boat. I mean by being strong, any power, however small, that at the time is more than another's.

The mere fact of being together, of being in the same ship of Christ, is enough. O, it *is* mean to thrust yourselves into the best places. Let not the common sailor, be he heathen or not, by the mere force of discipline and duty, save the weak at the cost of his own life, whilst the chosen company in our ship here, Christ's ship, act with the mean vulgarity and selfishness of those who worship brute strength.

SERMON CV.

THE SCHOOL A SHIP OF CHRIST.

ACTS XXVII. 24.

“Lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee.”

IT is mean to save life because you are strong, at the expense of the weak. Those who died so calmly in the wrecked steamer a few weeks ago, though dead yet speak to tell us that. A common sailor will tell us that. It is a gracious thing, a reward given by God to those He loves, to save the lives of those in the same ship; whatever may be said against them. The being in the same ship is a bond. The rough, selfish soldiers and sailors who sailed with St Paul, callous, and ready to kill, God considered a worthy gift to St Paul, when He gave him their lives; and St Paul must have thought so too, and cared for them, or it would have been no gift worth having to him. He saved them, and was glad to save them.

Nothing can be more plain than this, that by our own judgment we do judge that the strong are bound to

die, rather than live at the cost of the lives of the weak ; we expect this of a common sailor. Nothing can be more certain, than that the man who came home alive, after having been seen to push the little boys back into the sinking ship, could not show his face in England. Nothing can be more plain, than that God judged that St Paul was concerned with the lives of the crew of the ship he sailed in, and gave him their lives as a precious gift. Here we have what may be called the head and the feet of the same truth ; the head—God's estimate of the value of life ; the feet—man's estimate of the contempt deserved by anyone, who, being strong, uses his strength to benefit himself at the expense of his neighbour. The value of life on the one hand, and on the other the meanness of selfish gain, that even life itself must be quietly thrown away when compared with the meanness of saving it by selfishness.

And round this great truth as a fence and encircling wall, determining where it is to be practised, runs the strong enclosure of the same place, and the same common object, unity, and communion, through living together, typified by the ship. And how true this is ! Whether we like it or not, we share largely the fortunes and reputation of the place we live in ; even as we contribute largely to it by good and evil, however loose the tie of place may be. But when it takes the ship form, that close association, which comes from all on board at the time depending on one another, and on the well-doing of the place in which they are, then indeed, from the highest to the lowest, however discordant the mixture of persons may be, the welfare of the place is their welfare, its reputation is their reputation : and it becomes more than ever true that the lives of all belong

to each other, and that it is unutterable meanness for the strong to take advantage of the weak; or, for the weak to endeavour to overreach the strong, or not give true service in their way. In many societies, as in this school, the actual safety of all as much depends on each doing his duty as in a ship.

It has been well answered by a great man, when asked what makes an orator, "His audience," he said. He knew by experience, that the enthusiasm and fire of the audience was necessary to rouse his powers and fire *him* to his great work. And, believe me, in a thousand ways so it is here. You, boys, you make the school, not only by your presence; but I know that it is impossible to quicken into the best intellectual work, and the most living teaching, unless there is an elastic spring in you the taught. I know by many a sad experience how hard it is to keep faith in goodness, and liberty, and trust, and manly treatment, in the face of repeated betrayal, and falseness, and sneaking, taking advantage of the being thought trustworthy, in those to whom liberty is given.

I know by many a glad assurance how the truth, and honour, shown from time to time, uphold the good cause in this place. You, you, who do it, never will know how much you make those who seem to make you—how much rested on you in upholding, or debasing, the inner life here, and therefore of strengthening, or weakening, the cause of true life everywhere in England, and as far as England plays a great part in the world, in the world also. I do not hesitate to express my conviction that if but for ten years, this our ship, with its crew, could look on the lives of all as given into each other's hands, and, but for ten years, could stamp out school tricks, and

school iniquities, in an honest way, and make the great cause of truth their own, it would alter the whole world. One such stedfast example of a school, which made its honour rest on being more manly, more true, more trustworthy, more hard-working, more pure in word, and deed, than any other, would establish a new order of things on earth. In a most true and real sense every false thing done, every base word uttered by you, is a thrusting back God's truth, and God's salvation, into the sinking ship, in order that you may have your own mean way. You don't know what it costs. It costs the lives of many. It is but a push, and a brightness perishes. Most assuredly, though I cannot tell who they are, God has given the lives of them who are in this ship of ours to all true workers in the ship. And every one of you, who at this moment feels he is doing his best, may be sure that he is saving, not only himself, but in some degree all who are here with him, saving them from the sinking ship of corrupt, down-dragging practices, saving the gentle life of holy thoughts, the women and children of the soul, the delicate excellence, the refined beauty, the innocent perfection of early aspirations, the tender shoots of power yet to be. Take not your part with the contemptible fools who use strength for self. The golden rule of life is, that weakness is at once a claim on everyone who is stronger. Be powers of life, be savers. It is certain that God has given the lives, that which is truly their lives, of them that sail in our ship, to everyone here, as far as, like St Paul, he is doing Christ's work. The prisoner, Paul, the weakest man there, saved the whole crew.

SERMON CVI.

THE WORLD MORE CHRISTIAN THAN CHRISTIANS.

ACTS XXVII. 24.

“Lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee.”

THE sailor in the lost ship is the best example of truth in practice that this world gives. In this one thing the common practice of men has reached the highest standard of Christian life. And the life of Christ in the world has triumphed so entirely that it has leavened the commonest common life of the shipman without its being known. Now this complete abandonment of self in favour of the weaker is the one test of Christ's life in men, even as the giving the lives of all them that are in the ship is *the* gift of God to the true man. When the world scoffs at the meanness, and vulgarity, of the strong pushing aside the weak, then the world will be in its main practice Christian ; and till Christians accept the golden rule, that weakness is in itself a *prima facie* claim on the strong, Christians are *not* Christians. How

little we take to heart the real meaning of "Peace on earth, good will towards men!" How little we take to heart the real meaning of "One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of us all!" Of us all—for those who deny it by word or deed are as much included in the Christian's practice, as a Quaker, who thinks an army wrong, is defended by England's armies; they may deny it, but we are bound as Christians to include all in well-doing. Those who believe with the sailor that to push forward at the expense of the weak is to be a mean brute, have got hold of the main handle by which life is to work.

Peace on earth means no pushing and elbowing. And, as we are in one ship, peace on earth means the capacity of working together in perfect order and obedience even when life is at stake. How few have ever thought that Christ's work on earth is this, and nothing else but this, the power of working together. Complete abandonment of self in favour of the weaker, means capacity for working together. The common cause is the weaker when matched against self. And I would call the serious attention of all thoughtful hearers in this place to the fact, that there is no common cause any more in the Christian world where many workers do orderly work together for the sake of a cause. Neither in the Church at large, nor in societies like ours, is there any capacity of thorough union.

But I have no hesitation in saying that the test of Christianity is the power of working together. The world has got the start of us in this too as well as in the ship. See the gigantic enterprises, that the trust in one another created by Christianity has been able to undertake. Every railway, every commercial enterprise, the

whole grand network of trade and national credit is nothing more nor less than Christian life having prevailed over heathenism to the extent of making gigantic common work possible, when gain is the question. But at present the idea of common work for Christ, that is, of work, where bodies of men intelligently shunt their own differences and self-views in order to do disciplined work for a cause is simply non-existent. I say "intelligently," for that is the step required. Christianity has once prevailed so far as to get the first real united action for a good cause that the world ever knew. But after a little time the unintelligent obedience of those below, and the unintelligent tyranny of those above, though the aim was good, gathering intensity through many hundred years, broke out at length at the Reformation into an unintelligent letting loose of self-will; a natural revulsion, on the great principle that wrong by wrong breeds wrong.

The Reformation was a necessity; but this result was the product of the old unintelligent tyranny, not of the new intelligent life, it was the child not of reformation, but of old wrong. Christianity did produce over the whole Christian world a new power of working together which lasted for hundreds of years. It is gone, and nothing definite has yet taken its place. But the life works, and will not be satisfied till it has made intelligent union possible in religion, as well as in trade. And I would wish you to have a clear sharp perception of the one sole aim of Christ, and His life on earth, the only visible outcome of all His divine redeeming power, namely, peace and union, the capacity for working together, and the doing it. There is nothing else. All else ends in this, all else moves up towards this. And at present this is broken up and non-existent.

It is thought to be liberty and freedom to express opinion, to thwart, and to push about. Only leaders are slaves now a days. Only those who ought to lead are led. But a time will come when liberty will not mean a legalised scramble with numbers as its rule, in public ; or standing stiff on your own roots like a fir tree, in private ; which whether in forest or field, is solitary, with all its leaves bristles, turned to meet with objections every proposal from without. True liberty will come, but seemingly the time is many hundreds of years distant before the claims of the many to oppress, are seen to be as absurd as the claim of a despot, and the power of united intelligent common work is reached at last.

Now there are two points in a school which are of infinite value. The first its wonderful possible power. In a small space it contains the leading actors of the coming world, and ought to contain the leading light. Nothing is impossible to a true school. And, secondly, it is a small space, a space devoted to the highest training. Where shall we find such power ? In theory, nowhere. But as a fact the drag is as great here, often greater, than in the world outside. Yet it need not be. Now let me try in a few words to give you a cause, and a watchword, and to point out our failures.

The cause is, Weakness is a claim on the strong. Never push. Capacity of working together is the human end of Christianity. There is your cause, the sailor's cause. Save the weak. Your watchword shall be, "Down with the fir tree," down with bristling self-assertion, even if it keeps within its own legal bounds.

Now for our failure. There are three outward signs of union. I do not say that the observing them of

necessity makes union, but I do say that no real union can be without observing them. They are, common prayer. The Holy Communion. And the giving of money and work for common good.

As far as regards union, all three are failures here. Next Sunday I hope to explain this somewhat.

The capacity of working together because working together is Christian barely exists among us. We have not taken the sailor's cause as ours, "Save the weak."

SERMON CVII.

THE SCHOOL ITS RANK.

ACTS XXVII. 24.

“Lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee.”

To produce the capacity of working together is, as has been shown, the sole aim of the work of Christ in the world. For purification from sin, crucifying the flesh with its lusts, rising again to newness of life, and all those numberless promises, blessings, exhortations, commands, to cleanse the heart and life, and to be dead to temptation, find their completion in making the man able to live in union with other men and with God, and to work with them and with God. The *kingdom* of Heaven *means* the ordered work of a great community. And when we pray “Thy kingdom come,” we are praying in the first instance, that we may be able to forget self, and live, and work in union with others and with God our King, not alone, but together; not singly when together, but joining to make one effort, as sailors do.

Now the kingdom of heaven on earth has its earthly court, and its earthly organization. Its earthly court is there where its subjects are gathered together in their King's palace to offer common, that is, united prayer and praise to their king. This Chapel is one of the King's palaces, and common prayer ought to be offered here. Now before we examine the facts of what *is* done, let us look what idea there is of that which should be done. The idea ought to be, that we all come to help each other to honour God. To help each other, not to clear ourselves, or to make our own petitions only, or show our own loyalty, that can all be done at home.

I beseech you to consider very seriously why Our Lord and His Apostles have made the gathering of ourselves together a main condition of successful prayer. Why it is we are to agree together to ask, and to meet together to have Him in the midst of us. What is the difference between earnest prayer at home and earnest prayer together? Just the difference between saving yourself in the ship, and having the lives of those in the ship given to you; just the difference between carrying out the citizen life of the kingdom of heaven, and not caring for the kingdom; just the difference between slave work for self, and friend's work for Christ. Now ask yourselves which of you comes to Church first and foremost to help everyone in the earnest worship of God, to fire their souls, and be fired in turn by many hearts kindling with zeal, and many voices making even the coldest and dullest feel what a mighty power lies in a great burst of sound, in one united prayer or praise, one cry, one real cry together. Once heard it would never be forgotten. The feeling of the great common

cause once felt as a reality would burn in the heart, and, as with the Psalmist, the fire would kindle, and perforce you would speak with your tongues.

God forbid that I should judge how far each is guilty, but warm, intelligent, living, common worship, with heart and voice witnessing together does not dwell with us. I forbear to speak of what does. Yet it would be no mean ambition to strive in all truth to make this Chapel, this palace of our King, to be a place hallowed above all other places by the union of many hearts and many voices in the presence of God, the King. Let me say a word about false shame. Which do you want, the approval of the good, or the evil? You *must* choose. "He that gathereth not with Me scattereth," is true here, as in all matters of life. I grant the good do not express their condemnation, and the bad generally do; but this does not alter the fact that the condemnation is there. Yea, Christ is there condemning in silence. Hear Him. "Whosoever shall be ashamed of Me and My words, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when He shall come in His own glory, and in His Father's, and of the Holy Angels." In good, not to take a side decisively is to sin against the common life, the union of Christ, and to betray the good. Silence is treason in common prayer.

Judge yourselves in this lest Christ be ashamed of you. And if this is true of common prayer, how much more is it true of the Holy Communion. Remember in the great explanatory type any one of the Children of Israel who did not eat the manna would have died. Those who feel the love of Christ which is contained in His dying command to come, can no more make this a subject of words and exhortation, than children standing

round a mother's death bed, could launch out in words ; there are things too precious, too sacred for words. If any go away from such a gathering, they must go ; but be sure no one, who is not ignorant, or a traitor, can turn his back on the Lord's table when invited to be there. Judge then in this also how far the discipline and union of a good ship's company ready to sacrifice their own lives to save the weak is shown in thus disobeying the highest command.

The third point is the giving time and the giving money for the common honour. As long as you are at school the giving of time to your own work and improvement is the only gift of time the common honour demands. I will say no more on this. It will be clear to all at once how little the thought of being the foremost working place in the world for Christ's sake is moving in your school work. Yet what more glorious ambition than to stand first for trustworthiness, and honesty, and true work ; and that, instead of a foolish rivalry with yourselves and others in skill and strength, bodily and intellectual, you should take as your watchword, that no cheat, who gives false work, or half-time, or half-heartedness, to his work, should be tolerated amongst us in this place. After all you cheat yourselves ultimately most ; for all the time you are to give is to be given to your own improvement.

But in money this is not so. Money is asked for common objects, for our Mission in North Woolwich, to help Old Boys, and for many other things belonging to our common honour. Here too is a noble ambition to take first place as helpers of good work. Alas, you have credit as a School for what you have no claim to at all, less now than formerly even. Last year the

deficit of the Collections compared with former years was about £40. And a very slight examination of the Weekly Analysis will show anyone, that out of the 400 people in Chapel not above 40, one in every ten, that is, ever give an appreciable sum, anything they care for. So the School, as a School, has no claim to the credit of common work in this. It is a sham.

Is it useless to put before you truth and honour as one crew in the same ship, for your watchword?

England is confessedly the leading country in the world in enterprise and colonizing. And equally certain it is that the great schools ultimately are the leading power in England. You would not like me to put you in the second rank of the great schools.

It is therefore a simple bare fact, that you by position stand already in the first rank of the leaders of the world.

In one thing you stand first, in the chance given to each and every boy here, be he clever, or be he stupid, to do something, and make the most of himself.

O leaders of the world in what will you take lead? Is it useless to set up the standard of trust, honour, truth?

I speak most of all to the common sailors amongst you, as you may be called; the stupid, the backward, the undistinguished many. Noble thoughts, and true hearts, and courage, dauntless and faithful to death, can be yours. The common sailors of the Galilæan sea, the fishermen of Galilee, whose work has changed the world, were chosen by the Lord of Life because of these things. Their standard is borne up by standard bearers like to them in the front of every battle wherever brave men strive for truth, and shall be to the end.

Rise up then, ye crowd of common life, be great-hearted, and the world is yours. The lives of all that are in the ship may be given to the weakest amongst you.

The standard is planted, whether you uphold it or not. You do belong to this line-of-battle ship, which is slowly passing, day by day, into the great world battle. You can lead if you choose, if the common sailors choose. I call on you to be *first—first in heart power*, more brave, more patient, more hardworking, more free from lust, more despisers of cheating, more eager in helping each other to live, more united than any other band in the world, for Christ's sake, His sake, whose watchword is, "Peace and good-will."

SERMON CVIII.

OUR TRUE ORBIT.

I JOHN III. 14.

“ We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.”

HISTORY tells us for how many thousand years men believed that the sun went round the earth. History tells us, how men went on century after century inventing new theories to account for the difficult new facts, which this belief had to account for, as their knowledge grew. History tells us, how no sooner was one perplexity got rid of by some marvellous device, than another more perplexing still was found, until astronomers lost themselves in an endless labyrinth of their own creation. And history tells us, how the simple truth which swept away all their perplexities, and made all their work plain, the simple truth, that the earth goes round the sun, was fiercely resisted by punishment, imprisonment, and death to those who proclaimed it.

Strange contradiction, that men should so thirst for knowledge, and yet hate to know. Men could not bear to think that this their earth, so large to them, so all important, was but a small and insignificant attendant circling round the Orb they had despised in comparison. They could not bear to think, that it was a mere portion of the universe, not its centre, not its guiding power.

And for how many hundred years have men practically set aside the similar truth we are now looking at, the truth that we must not make ourselves the central point of our life, must not look to self first, and make life, and the works of life, circle round our hopes and fears; but look out into God's great world for life, and make others the centre round which we circle, and doing good to them, our power of gravitation, by which all things move by secret heavenly attraction, binding us by an unseen mystery to heaven. Self-searching, or self-goodness, is no more life than the earth is the centre of the universe. But the earth was once believed to be the centre of the universe; and self is still believed to be the centre of life, in spite of the Apostle's words. Go out of self, fasten on by cords of love to all those others, who have been to you as yet either unthought of, or thought of as helps, or hindrances, to *you*, instead of worlds of life in Christ by being fastened on to which you live. Revolve round others in loving-kindness and faith, instead of making others, and your dealings with them, revolve round you. Look on yourself as less than the meanest life you help, not as greater; for lo it is Christ and His life you help; "Because ye have done it unto the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me." Your life circles round *Him*, the moment

being kind to others becomes the one sole aim in all you do.

And now, brethren, I think you will be able to see the true meaning in a society like ours of having a Home Mission, and a Colonial Mission, as part of the necessary machinery of our life. Amongst yourselves you can be kind to each other, and do good as part of the common day's work, which you must do, or leave undone. You cannot help it. Not a minute passes, it may be said, which does not put in your way something of this kind to do, or to prepare for doing. This is obvious in many cases, but it is true in all. You have never thought perhaps, how much an unlearnt lesson hurts others, or a well learnt lesson does others good. But it is true; and you never do, or leave undone, an act, however small, that does not add to, or diminish from, the common stock of happiness and good. This goes on, whether you like it or not, as a matter of course.

But first of all the spending of your money forms no direct part of your doing good to one another; and secondly, as a Society, we must have an outlet into the larger world, or we have no opportunity of doing good, as a Society, to others. It is not therefore a mere matter of course whether you spend your money for others, or of extra zeal, whether this school has the machinery for going outside or not. It is not a fine addition. To be without it would be like a body with a lost limb. Everyone who wants to *know* that he is passing from death unto life; everyone who wants to know life, must give his money. And how much you have to give I pointed out last week. The School would not be a true, living body, able to do the works of life, and doing them, unless it had this way of doing

good to others open to it. And unless you have some special thing to undertake, to care for, you cannot do this rightly. How can you love what you know nothing about? But the moment you fasten on a special thing, like a Home Mission, there is not a soul here which does not know the meaning of helping the poorest and more miserable of our great cities, and who cannot love the thought of passing into those dreary homes as a helper, even if we were told nothing about those whom we help, as we have often been, and shall be still more again.

There is not one amongst you, who does not know how hard the struggle is in our colonies, and who cannot love the thought of giving them help, even if we had not the home tie amongst us which makes the Diocese of Brisbane, and the work of Bishop Hale in that Diocese touch us nearly. And you *shall* hear of that too. The Blind College again, and the Boys Home, you all understand. Unless we have these ways of loving others prepared for us, part of our life, by which we are to know that we live, is cut off from us, as a limb cut off.

I refrain from making any appeal to your feelings on such subjects. They are not subjects for special appeal. Not Victoria Cross subjects, but common life. To be without such works means the being without life so far; the doing them only means being alive in Christ's kingdom of life. We know that we are alive when we love the brethren. It is not a matter of glory, but of health; not an ornament of life, but life itself; a sign of being alive. Give over the old world fable of self being the centre; learn the new law of gravitation by which we circle round others in Christ. Drop the worn-out

science of beginning with self; take up Christ's new commandment to love one another, and make your starting point outside yourself. Take the new science of being kind to others as your leading principle. True science is knowledge, not guesswork. And by this *we know*. Need we wonder at the guesswork about life, when we see this law of the gravitation by love round the Sun of Righteousness, this law of first doing good to others, so set aside; or, taken by fits and starts as a kind of superfluous bit of goodness, whilst, as a law, rejected. But you cannot escape from it. You can as well make the sun go round the earth, as Christ's life go round you. If you want to know life, you must live. And in order that you may live by doing good to others, the Home Mission amongst the poor in England, and the Colonial Mission amongst settlers in Brisbane, are put before you for your money support. For time, and temper, be kind to one another. There is room for it.

SERMON CIX.

WHAT DOES THE WORK MAKE US?

ST MATTHEW VI. 10.

“Thy kingdom come.”

WHAT are we going to do this Term? Who has thought of it? When these twelve coming weeks are dead, and buried with the past, what answer will be given out of them, life of our lives, passing on into life to come, for good or evil? Now they are before us, in our power; perchance if we now think, and pray, and make up our minds, we may have some mastery over them, and catch some glimpse of their reality. What are we going to do this Term? Cricket and lessons, lessons and cricket; most of you will say. This general answer is easy enough. But those are only names of things. The word *we*, what are *we* going to do—has had no answer. The naming something out of ourselves does not answer the *we*. What are *we* going to do? What is to become of us in the doing? That is the answer, when given.

A carpenter makes a table, let us say, but as far as the table goes, it might have been made by any carpenter; it is simply wood put together; and there it is, neither more nor less than what we see. But the man who made it, what of him? Was he the better or the worse for his work? What was his heart about as the work went on? What was his head about? How did the work he worked act on *him*, and make *him* into something? If, for instance, working for wages he made one table only when he ought to have made two, he is a liar and a cheat; a liar for telling his employer by his actions that he could only make one, in the time, when he could have made two, and a cheat, for taking the same wages for half-work. But the table tells us nothing of this. What was made of *him* in the making of that table?

Again, the table is sold and put into a house to do *its* work. If the workman scamped his work, as well as only did half-work, then it may happen that another family's hard-earned wages are wasted by the broken table; and much suffering caused by the wrong thing put out as the right thing; the lie embedded in the scamped work has over and over again killed and ruined multitudes. Only think, for instance, of the one historical fact, that boots with paper soles were largely supplied to the unhappy French soldiers in their last great war, on their winter campaign. The lie embedded in the scamped work is always going on.

It appears then, that the answer which you would probably give to the question "What are we going to do this Term" is simply silly and unmeaning. We want to know in the case of the carpenter two things; first, what his table makes *him*. Whether it makes him a

better and truer man. And secondly, what his table does for others, whether it brings them honest help, or cheats them. So too with you. What are you going to be made by the work you do or leave undone? What spirit are you bringing to your work? Have you thought of that? And what good or evil will your work bring on others? Have you thought of that?

Day by day the prayer "Thy kingdom come" passes from your lips. Have you thought of the meaning of those wondrous words? Your true answer lies in them. The kingdom on earth of our heavenly Father; which day by day you pray may come, and His will be done on earth as it is in heaven. "Our Father," you say, "Thy kingdom come," you say. Have you ever seriously thought of yourselves as princes, King's sons, conquering a kingdom for their father? But what is your prayer, if you have not? You are sons, praying for your father's kingdom, princes, bound to uphold your father's kingdom. What are we going to do this term? What good is to pass into you? What good is to pass out of you?—You, who are in the kingdom of God as sons, as princes.

First of all what is meant by a kingdom? A kingdom, in its true sense, means a great community, where all men, from the highest to the lowest, have their lives ordered by settled law under the king, every man in his place, and laws to guide all. The kingdom of God our Father means, that there is set upon earth a living bond of union, able to unite in time all men into one law-loving, orderly, happy, peaceful body, with the love of a family, for all are children of their father, the King, but the order of a kingdom, for they differ in office, in power, in position, and in dignity. In a true kingdom all work

together, and everyone is in his right place. This then is what we pray for; this is what we work for, if we work aright—the common good of all, brought about by each doing his best in the place in which he finds himself. Whatever he may think, that *is* his right place at the time.

And how wonderfully this wide idea of a kingdom finds place here. This secret fellowship working for good or evil, working for, or against, the Kingdom of love, and union, and right. To-day we are gathered together in this one Chapel, in the one schoolroom, in the one school. Ten years hence, those of us who are alive, where shall we be? We shall be as those, who sat here ten years ago are now. We shall be in every part of England, rulers in our circle, small or large; we shall be in Canada, in Manitoba, in India, in Ceylon, in New Zealand, in Australia, in Zanzibar, at Isandwlna, at Graham's Town, at the Cape, all over the world; even as now from time to time I receive letters from all over the world; and members of the Old Boy's Society all over the world give and receive help. Your kingdom then is plain as far as extent goes; even now, here, you can see, ay see, that the actual distance your reach extends to is nothing less than the world; that your actions go out into all lands; your good is a leaven all over the world.

And when we turn to the kingdom we daily pray for, "Thy kingdom come," the kingdom of life, eternal, endless in time, endless in space, untouched by death, gathering strength for ever and for ever, how then does this world-wide sowing of life out of this Chapel, which we have already seen, become a glorious part of that kingdom of God which day by day is coming; and

which at last shall swallow up all other rule, and reign, the undisputed sovereignty of all the worlds!

Once more then what are *we* going to do this Term? Answer not in your hearts this or that work or play; one word will be an answer, one only,—*our best*; we are going by God's help to do our best. Not the work turned out, but the spirit put into it is the answer. If the carpenter, who can make two tables makes only one for his wages, he is a liar, and a cheat. If the strong in head and heart wins a prize by half-work, though he be a prize winner, he is a liar and a cheat. God does not give double strength to enable a man to do half-work. Not the work, but the man is the question that concerns man. If the man is corrupted into idleness and pride by his work, then that work is a curse, however it may glitter. He who does not do his best, however men may praise or blame him, cheats God, who gave him his power to work, his talents to be used; cheats the kingdom he prays for, the common company of the king's sons; cheats himself, ay, himself out of his throne in the kingdom. Brethren, when you daily pray "Thy kingdom come," beware of the lie of undone work and its cheating. Brethren, when you daily pray to your Father "Thy kingdom come," remember your Father; and bear yourselves in very truth as loyal sons of the great King, as princes in His kingdom.

SERMON CX.

OBEDIENCE IN HEAVEN, BECAUSE THERE
IS MUCH TO DO.

ST MATTHEW VI. 10.

“Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.”

To obey on earth the will of God is the first prayer that touches earth directly, the first prayer man is told to pray for himself. Surely to-day, when Our Blessed Lord sent the Holy Spirit to dwell amongst men, this prayer touches us more than any other. Obedience to the will which rules earth, and which rules heaven, *is* the work of God's Holy Spirit. If we really want to learn what to do, no fact is more plain than this, that where the Spirit of God is there is obedience to the will of God; and that Our Blessed Lord has given us the gift of His Holy Spirit, and come to take up His abode in our hearts, to make us able to do God's will. If you ask what *is* God's will. I answer at once, First, that every circumstance in your daily life which comes to you without any choice of yours, at all events is God's

will to you, whatever else may also be. In other words, God works on you by the things He makes happen to you, or lets happen to you; and the doing God's will is simply meeting these things to the best of your power. If they are work, working heartily and honestly; if trials, bearing them patiently and lovingly; if temptations, resisting them manfully; if blessings, receiving them gratefully. The massive facts which wall in your daily life are God's will to you, and also the various kind of duties which belong to these facts. And, secondly, this is the will of God even your sanctification. It is God's will that all that happens to you of good or evil should be by the working of His Holy Spirit in you make you strong, and pure, and victorious. God's Holy Spirit is to dwell in you, unless you rebel and resist Him, and to give you that obedient power that is able to bear and do all things.

And this gives a greater insight into the meaning of "Thy kingdom come," than anything else in Holy Scripture, when we feel how much there is on earth to try the heart, and find the first prayer man breathes for himself to be a prayer for obedience equal to the obedience in heaven. I am inclined to think that this prayer is more decisive as to the nature of heavenly life, than any other knowledge given us, more clear, and strong on the important truth that the life in heaven is a life like the life on earth; like it in demanding, and exercising, all the same qualities that are being exercised now. Life on earth, remember, we pray may be like the life in heaven in obedience. Heavenly life is more obedient than earthly life.

But how so, if earthly life is full of variety, trial, difficulty, and noble possibilities; full of everything which

calls for strength, and endurance; and heavenly life has none of these; but, according to the foolish, common notion, is a uniform level of do-nothing enjoyment. How can its obedience be greater? You cannot compare two entirely unlike things. God cannot tell us to pray to make our obedience on earth like the obedience in heaven, if heavenly obedience is so unlike earthly obedience that it is never tried. Why the very point of obedience lies in the readiness to do what at the time is a trial. Perfect love indeed rejoices all the more the more it is tried. Who that has ever loved has not felt the happy readiness to do some hard thing, some great thing, to prove the love, and been happy in the thought? Surely heavenly happiness is happy in doing God's will, because it has great things to do, not because it does nothing. Surely the will of God is done on earth like the will of God in heaven, when great things are done happily, and great obedience given, because of love to God.

Think you that those angels, that exceeding great multitude of the heavenly host, whom the shepherds saw singing and praising God, because a Saviour was born for man, were indifferent to the glorious news they brought, and sang, like automatons, the joy of men, untouched by joy or sorrow themselves? Surely full often had they looked on this theatre for angels, as St Paul calls the earth, and seen with unutterable sympathy the dark tides of sorrow, and shame, and crime, sweeping backwards and forwards in the spirit-world of man. But if so, how much on earth alone the angels of heaven must have to do and feel for! Or, think you that mighty angel to whose surpassing power it was given to comfort and sustain the Son of God in the garden, when, like

great drops of blood, the sweat fell on the ground in the agony,—was that exceeding spirit anguish nothing to him? Did not he fathom and feel for it, far as any created being could fathom and feel the agony of the Son of God? But if so, there must be plenty to do in heaven, plenty to feel.

It would take days, ay, years, to examine the passages in the Gospels alone which treat of life in heaven, and prove it to be full of variety, of work, of interest, of difficulty, of sympathy with sorrow and pain, as well as joy, only excluding apparently from its circle of human feeling the idea of overthrow, and hopelessness. Does not our life on earth teach us that there can be the most intense interest in working out plans, and seeing the new thing take shape and come into existence, even when we know beforehand the idea will work out well? Carry this thought of working out new glory through the whole range of spirit power, spirit feeling, and perfection of life, and, even if there are no sorrowful worlds to need help, how endless, how infinite, is the work of heaven, how eternal its interest, its gladness, as perfection on perfection is for ever coming into sight! What we know on earth in this way might go on for ever. Follow out the clue given you by the two examples of angel work and feeling just brought under your notice, and never more can you think that there will be any want of the most absorbing claims on feeling, activity of spirit, or obedience, in the world to come. Never more can you think that the prayer "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," is not a trumpet note, full of the most vivid demand for courage, obedience, and varied excellence, as the life in the Kingdom to come, in heaven, with all its manifold possibilities, makes greater

claim on the obedience of blessed spirits, angels, and men made perfect, than all the sorrows and trials of earth do on us here below; for we pray that the less may be made like the greater; the less obedience like the greater obedience; that the hindrances to God's will on earth may be done away. But—unless selfishness and self-will could find that which would try them even in heaven the prayer would have no meaning.

Let me point out in conclusion, how this affects us now. Nothing affects us more. If heaven is full of the most astonishing stir of life at work, and obedience is *the* perfect spirit power, then this earthly life of ours is a most complete school, and exercise ground, for obedience under every form of trial. And the trials and difficulties are just the links which link our life here on to heaven. If the perfection of heavenly life is the power of obeying under all circumstances, then we learn it here on earth. And what we do every day has a most direct influence on what we are to do in heaven. If in fact heavenly happiness is the love that rejoices in doing all things that God wills, and that has all things to do, then the place we take in heaven will depend on how we have learnt our lesson in life on earth. It must do so. The great heavenly kingdom demanding all obedience to God's will, and needing it, from the glorious works of love, honour, and perfection required to be done, demands also that man's work on earth shall lead up to this, and makes all we do now a very real and true beginning of happy angel life then.

But, remember, God can give and take away the talents from whom He pleases. Not our talents, but our character, what we love, and how we act, determines what we are. Many that are first shall be last, because

we forget this truth on earth, and idolise talents. But the great fact remains that when we pray "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," we are acknowledging a heavenly life that will make great demands on obedience and love, and speaking of our earthly life as leading up in all we do aright to the same kind of spirit work that we shall find in heaven. O may we begin at once and learn life's lesson well. O may we pray in very deed and truth "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven."

SERMON CXI.

SOCIETY.

I PETER II. 5.

“Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house.”

WHAT is man? How strange it is that after so many thousand years the practical answer to this question is for all practical purposes unknown. How strange it is that peoples, ay, and senates, and rulers, go blundering on without the slightest regard very often for the simplest elementary facts of our nature—facts which we can no more escape from than we can escape out of the air into a world beyond—facts which we can no more set aside than we can set aside the earth on which we live. What is man? Holy Scripture answers plainly, man is a living stone in a spiritual temple of God, a single part of a great united building raised to honour God. Or, in common every-day language, man is intended by nature, that is by the facts of his structure and being, to be so closely joined with others as to be mortared in, as it were, and made one with them. This is the first great fact, a seeming multitude, a real oneness. Each single, but

each belonging to all, and joined to all, so that all become one, and are one, though still continuing many. And the second fact is, that this cementing together of many into one is for the purpose of making a home for the highest truth, and the purest, happiest power. The conclusion is, perfect unity in which life mingles with life for ever and for ever.

The measure of a man's excellence then, is his power of uniting with others for good. The measure of a nation's excellence is the obedience and co-operative power that is in it, freedom from abusive language, freedom from violent acts, the sense to see great men, the sense to see great laws, the sense to appreciate good work, and despise talk and self-glorification. The end of the world's existence is, that this iron fact of society's linked chain shall become a glorious perfection of many in one, and one in many, an image of the perfect unity of God. "Holy Father, keep, through Thine own Name, those whom Thou hast given Me, that they may be one as we are." This is Our Blessed Lord's definition of the true purpose of man's being. Now I would call your attention to the two paramount facts of the world, as facts which anyone can see. Which the heathen as well as the Christian can see, and which always have been seen. First, the many in one—society. Secondly, the presence of sin, that is, of evil chosen by man when he knows better.

Now of society. We all know that man does not live alone. How few consider the deep, the terrible meaning of this great fact. Take, for instance, Abraham and his race. Now, for thousands of years, the Jew has been a marked man in feature, a marked man for pre-eminent patience, perseverance, intellect, in a word for

intense vitality, shown all the more as being the vitality of a fallen race, whilst all other fallen races have practically disappeared. What a grand inheritance Abraham, the faithful, the pure, the temperate, the hardy man of God, passed on to his children taken as one body. "I know him," said God, "that he will command his children, and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment." And even so with all their faults in three or four of the greatest commands they have done. And because they have done it, their bodies and their minds have been healthy and strong. Take fifty years, and consider the pain and the ruin that the diseased body, and the diseased mind cause in any town or village in England; which might be prevented, which need never have been, if it had been possible to take a knife, as it were, and cut out of each person all the harm, which the sins of others and the temptations of others had planted in him, and to breathe into him all the good that a perfectly pure and healthy community could give. Now to a certain extent that is what Abraham's children have done, they have cut out of their society, to a great degree, drunkenness, unchastity, and the coarser sins.

But what I want to drive home is this, that not only do the sins of the father visit on the children by a natural law, but that the sins in word or deed of any man, and every man, are perpetually touching their neighbours, poisoning their life, dragging it down in its outward power, if not in the soul and spirit; and that it is as impossible to prevent this, as it is impossible to prevent society itself from existing. Society means just this. Society means, that good and evil are ever intermingling with unfailing energy, and that as one or other

prevails the society lives or dies. This is as true on a large scale as on a small, true in a nation, true in a school, true in each man.

Take for one moment the best representative of a great school as he leaves the University. In one sense, and a very true one, there is nothing of himself in him. He begins life with the grand inheritance of the capable brain, of heart and feelings of deep and delicate power. He begins life generally with the healthy body untainted by corruption of life, all this the gift of fathers and mothers, noble in spirit, whatever their earthly rank may be. He goes on for two-and-twenty years or more, living on gifts, living on money not his own, that is, living on the work—the lives—of workers before him. Then again, his spirit is daily reared on Psalms of David, on burning words of Prophets, sounds of glory and sounds of woe, out of the far off sunset of days of old ; he sits at the feet of apostles ; martyrs touch him with fiery finger ; Christ Himself gently breathes into him the breath of heaven ; and all the while the mighty heathen, or secular writers, Homer, Æschylus, Thucydides, Plato, the polished Latins, and a host of others, prune and shape his intellect into all skill of outward form, and all the grace of movement of mind. All the artistic laws of right embodiment of thought pass into him, by example and by precept. This is what he is, a being beautifully composed by the stored up energies of the world he finds himself in ; fed in fair pastures of divine intelligence ; fanned by fresh breezes from far off shores ; nothing his own but the power and will to receive, and to use. What a wonderful picture such a living creature is ! How strangely put together ! How entirely the many made into one ! A type, an

example of God's will that life shall still come out of life. Take the very place, the Chapel in which we are, and which is part of your store; what is it but a great true thought of a great true man, of what is the truest form of honour to honour God's service with; itself too gathered from ages past, though born out of the living mind in our day. The noble sermon you heard on Friday last¹, told you in words of quiet sustained power, which shall not be forgotten, of the divine parable there is in every glorious shape, of the great eye-languages which a right imagination and true heart can read.

Now you have heard this, it is left for me to press home another truth, humbler perhaps, but, like many humble things, to be found working everywhere. This Chapel, your schoolroom, *are* great Parables. But they are also earnest attempts to do humble service to a greater life than their own. Everyone sees that to call a congregation together to worship in a stable is an untrue thing. Stables are not built for prayer. Why should not everyone also see that the building which is built for prayer, should both within and without be as true to its purpose as it can be? Why should not everyone also see that the building which is used for the lessons of the young, that noblest of all uses, save God's worship only, should be as true to its purpose as it can be? I claim both these buildings as simple-hearted efforts for truth. There is a high life to be enshrined here, "My House shall be called a house of prayer." The true man will, with all his heart, endeavour to make the House true to its holy inhabitant. There is a high life to be enshrined in the schoolroom. The true man,

¹ Preached by the Lord Bishop of Carlisle.

with all his heart, will endeavour to make the Room true to its queenly inhabitant.

Thus, then, once more the very place becomes to you something not your own, yet a gift of life that passes into your very veins, and beats with the pulses of your heart, and becomes your own self. O be it so, brethren, ye links in the living chain be true. Let not the deep damnation of wasted hours, and foul language, and lying work, and impure passions, kindle hell fire in yourselves, and send it burning down the days to come. O be true, be true, ye lives so fearfully and wonderfully made out of the lives of others, take to heart whence ye are made. Be true. It is not books you deal with, or buildings, but the spirits of the mighty and the good of all time. Look up. This roof over your heads is nothing less than a great truth spread out, which calls on you to be true. These walls are the gathered life of centuries given by a master spirit of our own day to you. It is not stone, but life that fences you in. And the timber calls to its fellow, be true. And wall answers to wall, be true. And storied glass, and pictured school-room, send the voice that speaks without language across the silent spaces of air, till above, within, around, everywhere here, one great living cry rises for the children of life, one mighty message to those who have ears to hear, Be true, be true.

SERMON CXII.

TRIFLES TO DO, NOT TRIFLES TO LEAVE UNDONE.

I PETER II. 5.

“Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house.”

IT was a great saying of the Psalmist, when he said, “I am small and of no reputation, yet do I put my trust in Thee.” A very great saying; for indeed, nothing makes man yield to temptation so easily as the thought of being insignificant, and that what we do matters little. If we are so small that nothing we do makes much difference; of no reputation, so that our actions will not be known, why not do as you please, insinuates the devil. take your own way, no one will be the worse for so unknown and obscure a person. Satisfy your own will. God does not care, or man either, for you and yours. And so the deed is done which makes the leak; the little hole, as it were, is bored, which lets the water through the dyke; the loosening has begun, and small though it be, all will break up. It is the bad work of the small, the idle sins of the many of no reputation that

ruin the world. For, indeed, every life as a life is equally valuable. "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth;" and the power of many for good or evil is irresistible. The progress of the world is marked by the level the many get to, or in other words, by the goodness of the small, and those of no reputation, who, nevertheless, like the Psalmist, put their trust in God. This main truth is stamped in characters so broad and large everywhere that, like the daily miracles of nature, no one heeds it.

Three hundred years ago, on these same hills, with the same grass lands, and ash trees up and down the cloven slopes, there lived a man in times of change and fierce excitement, who thought of peace, and had the eye to see, and the heart to carry out what he saw, of the message of the Prince of Peace, and so, Archdeacon Johnson, the quiet, old, resolute clergyman, founded this school. And you eat of his bread, the bread of life which he gave, and for three hundred years it has been so, bread which, like the widow's cruse and the handful of meal, has never failed to this day.

Is it nothing to you that he lived? Yet what did he know of you? He worked humbly, unknowing whom he touched. It would be easy to show how he was linked on to the works of earlier men, and so on, through many an unknown worker, through apostles and teachers of old, to Christ, and, backward still, through Synagogue and Psalmist, priest, warrior, and prophet, to the wilderness, and Mount Sinai, in an unbroken line back to Abraham; so that the very lists of names of those old days become to us names of brothers, and each deed done for God in the wars with Moab or Amalek, a beginning of this our school.

But whilst these strong facts are so strong, and these main outlines so clear, they touch us but little, because they are too wide. We do not want to feel that the school, or the nation, is part of a great unbroken life, so much as to feel that each of us belongs to it, that the little boy in the first or second form is important, that the dull, unsuccessful worker is important, that the idleness of the idle is fearfully important, that the quiet manliness of the humblest of us here is important. We want to feel, not that the sea is large, and is one, but that every drop in the sea is a life, and a power. Yea, it is so in the sea. No drop is more important than another. Those that seem least so, those that vanish into air, become rain, and rivers, and fountains—the life of life to the world. Yet just at this point, certain as it is, faith, rather than proof, steps in. I can prove to you that a society gets a character, which is made up of the life of each and every member. I can prove to you that a nation also does. I can prove to you that this character of society, and nation, goes back without break thousands of years, life after life, continuous, acting and reacting evermore, but I cannot show you the part each has. I cannot take the last bit of unknown good, and say: this good, which little so-and-so did, is of such-and-such a value. Did Abraham know that all men after him, in God's kingdom, were his spiritual children, when he did his first quiet act of obedience? I cannot take the last secret lie, and say, this lie pulled down so-and-so, and is going to pass like a viper's poison, and send hell-fire onwards in men's veins? Did Judas know the value of his kiss? But I can suggest to you where to look, and how to look. I can point out how unexpectedly great in this life-work, things which are not thought

great are. And if we find this true, then we may believe that though small and of no reputation, we too are powers for good and evil.

Pray, in your own daily life, let each ask himself what comes most home to him, the powers above him, or the little things of the study, and the playing fields? What touches him most? Is it not the people he is most with, the boy he likes or dislikes, that on the whole influences him most? Yet what is this but saying that the little, common, every-day, and all-day people, and things, are most important. Never neglect in yourself or another what comes every day. Many a great love has been overthrown by a little disagreeable habit always recurring. The dropping of water has passed into a proverb, for the transcendent power of this seeming weakness. And how do little vexations, and mean offenders, like the flies in summer, sting all the more, because they are mean. But what is this but saying, that innumerable little things, and insignificant persons, are really of very great importance. That is great to us which touches us greatly, and small things touch us most, and our being small does not prevent us from being powers.

Again, I would suggest, as a line of thought about life, and the infinite importance of each life, servants, and their influence. Who is it that has grown up who cannot remember how much of good and evil he has owed to servants? Who has not loved servants dearly? Yet how little they think of their great place in the kingdom of life. It is not only the little captive maid-servant out of the land of Israel, who brings the great prince his happy deliverance. Every home in the world, except the poorest, has its servants, and the children are their

charge in a great degree. In every home throughout the world, servants might be of incalculable power and blessing, but they cannot help being a great part of the life of the world, little as they think it, little as they regard it. But what is this but proof how unknown lives thrill and throb in the great living network, full of power for good and evil.

Let me give one more suggestion. The goodness of the poor, the very poor. I remember visiting in Gloucester, a woman in extreme old age, a pauper, friendless, and homeless, lodged with strangers, twisted and shrivelled almost out of human shape, bed-ridden; imagination never framed ideal of a more desolate lot, of so dreary an ending of a long life. Ay, brethren, but what think you was her view? Thanksgiving for blessings, praise of God, gratitude, heartfelt cheery interest for others; happiness and peace always came forth from her lips. Surely there were angels in that bare room, though I saw them not. But most certainly never has that memory been out of my mind, in many a dark, hard hour has it nerved and cheered me, part of my life of life; and I trust has passed out to others, and perhaps even now is becoming part of the lives of some of you. What did she know of the power the sight of her was going to be in this great school? I cannot but believe that suggestions such as these will make the more thoughtful among you watch yourselves and others with reverent eye. I cannot but think that the humble life of the humblest will become more and more a mysterious seed of vast unknown growth to come, and that your own lives will be to you of unspeakable value, as you learn to see how little they are your own, how much they belong to others. When God tells us that

we are living stones in a temple built in His honour, perfect union, and perfect interlacing, leaning on one another, above, below, at each side, all everywhere, morticed into one, is what He tells us. Look at this Chapel, you are being built up, those walls are scaffolding to you, used by the masons whom the Master Builder employs to build you. Your lives are being built up into a better Chapel; these walls will be taken away, you will remain. Pray God that there rise in this place the living walls, solid, true, beautiful, full of the power of life.

SERMON CXIII.

THE BROKEN EGG-SHELL.

ST. LUKE XXI. 28.

“And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.”

NOTHING, I suppose, comes more frequently into the minds of men than the constant breaking up and change that goes on in the world, both in public and private. How often wars, and rumours of wars, and nation rising against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and famine, and pestilence, and fearful sights, bring to mind our blessed Lord's prophecy of the last days, that is, of the last great period of human life and its history during the time that the last revelation of divine truth is at work! And the people of God involuntarily question with themselves what it all means, and how this crash of falling empires, this breaking up of laws and creeds, and wild cries of “lo here is Christ,” and “lo there,” can be in any way consistent with the solemn certainty of the building up of the one spiritual temple, or be reconciled

with an unbroken unity of solid, perfect, closely mortared life? Stranger still than this is Our Blessed Lord's voice of command, that when all these fearful things come to pass, and the whole world of man is tottering and tumbling about, and the thoughts and beliefs of man's world falling to pieces as utterly as his politics, that then, even then, we, who really believe and are warned by Him, "are to look up and lift up our heads, for our redemption draweth nigh." Ruin and fixity, agony and redemption; how can these things be? Brethren, the answer to the Christian is an easy one. The answer is given by Our Blessed Lord Himself. These things are the beginning of the birth pangs. It is life moving; life being born into the world; life bursting forth from every broken shell, as a bird born to new wings. There is the breakage, and the pain of the breakage; for it is, indeed, men, and the things men have made, and live by, and have built their very hearts into, that are broken, when the true life has gone from them; but there is the birth, and the joy in new birth, the joy of the close shell gone, of scope and freedom to move; above all, the joy in the kingdom of life of knowing and feeling that every end is a beginning—a new power of life set free.

Nothing can be more plain the moment this revealed truth is seen. Life is never still. Life takes everything it touches, and enters into it all, and dwells within the new shapes it makes. Life is ever creating new bodies to live in, whether of poetry, or prose, or art, or society, or nations. On the other hand, the body once made must grow, or after a time it becomes dead, and has to be broken up.

We do not enough realise what God tells us took place when Christ came and redeemed the lost world.

The world *was* lost. A dead, stagnant, worn-out civilisation—aimless and hopeless—was the outcome of all the genius and experience of man. The world was full of hard, lifeless splendour, and hard, lifeless misery. Into that world divine life was poured from heavenly fountains which were to flow for ever. And it did flow, and, by degrees, either changed everything, or broke everything, or left it to be broken. And it does flow; and now, too, by degrees, either changes everything by a more perfect growth, or breaks everything, or allows it to be broken. For “wherever the carcass is there also the vultures are gathered together.” When the life has gone out of anything then the destroyer comes, however beautiful the dead may be.

So Jerusalem and the Temple perished. The life had gone out of them; and yet their dead weight would have made Christian life almost impossible. So the heathen glory and their temples perished. The life had gone out of them; but yet their beauty would have stood in the way of the greater beauty to come. So, too, the monasteries perished; their work was done, and room was wanted for newer, better life. If the whole world were living and full of life, then there would be no change but growth—endless movement and endless growth. If death has the mastery then there is a kind of quiet, and the cry is raised, “those that have turned the world upside down have come hither also,” as soon as life begins to move amongst them. For, indeed, in a very true sense, Our Blessed Lord did come to send a sword upon earth; peace within His own kingdom—the peace of life; but ruin and destruction and judgment whenever the great stream of life is resisted, or judgment is let loose on the dead.

This is a very practical truth, brethren, which meets us in public and private life, daily and all day. It is a joyful revelation to know that we are looking on the growth of life in a world of life; a key to innumerable perplexities to know that out of each broken shell is born the new life, that breakage in God's world means birth. It is a guide to ourselves, in days of sorrow or days of triumph equally, to learn that the days of sorrow are the travail pangs, the necessary pain which is to make the new life live in us; and days of triumph, birth days, the joy that a new life is born into the world, and a new beginning made for a new start of better things.

It would be easy to show that every great agony and breaking-up time in the last two thousand years has been the necessary process by which the new and higher life has been set free, and has left the dead to bury their dead. And shall we not believe that life is doing the same now? Shall we not believe that the crimes, and follies, and misery of mankind, are allowed to break and be broken, in order that the new birth may be set free? Observe, too, in our own lives how this truth of life working at once alters and explains all that happens. First, and not least, it opens a door that nothing can ever shut again; it opens a path to the eye that knows no end. Dead things have no business in a kingdom of life; all that is dead in our hearts and our works must be destroyed. So life begins at once, sets to work pushing out on all sides, and means to go on. And secondly, all the pains and troubles, both from within and without, either come from the life power making its way of itself, through difficulties and obstacles, or come from the fatherly care, which sends pain, as a surgeon

sends pain, in removing disease. Here, then, we have the other side of the peace and union of the spiritual temple. We have the fact that all dead things must be got rid of; and that every pain, when true life is working, is a pain that produces life. The sorrows, and wounds, and crushings, and disappointments, the breakages, the disasters, are one and all turned into helpers of life. "When these things come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh." Rejoice, they are the signs that your life has been true, the signs that better life is coming.

I cannot but think that this great truth of all destruction—being as the broken eggshell from which life, the free, the winged bird is born—is the greatest practical revelation the world has ever known, or can know. The seeming end is the real beginning. You that are young especially, learn to look on life as endless, learn to look on life as a power so powerful that all destroying things become its helpers; they may pain, but they are birth pangs, which give birth to new life. This may serve to explain to you some of the puzzles of your school life, and the barriers you find in your way, disappointments in play, disappointments in work, hardships in the work itself, and the many checks to your own likings, with all the unexplained trials which come on you in and out of school. They are explained: your life cannot have a true birth in the world of life without trials, without birth pangs; your life cannot have a great birth without great and prolonged travail.

SERMON CXIV.

MACHINERY AND LIFE.

ST. LUKE XXI. 28.

“And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.”

NOTHING which does not grapple fairly and fully with death and destruction in every shape, and at every stage, has any claim whatever to be worth considering even, in the region where man moves. The facts are only too plain, if men would but examine them calmly. We are put in a world, all of us, with the structure of which we have no more to do than the baby in arms has to do with the railway by which it travels. There the things are, and there we are, whirled along by tremendous powers which an intelligence near us looks to with motherly care, as far as we are concerned. But more than this: this is outside. The bird grows wings in its nest by some secret power. What do we do? For very many years, day by day, again without any care of our

own, entirely through and by others, in nests we did not make, we are fed with thoughts that breed wings to the soul, thoughts of God, thoughts of man, the living riches of ages past, the glorious gains of generations before us, no more ours than the stars are ours, and yet given us daily to quicken into wings for us, wings which become ourselves, and are grown in, and out, of ourselves, in very deed ourselves at last; but which, unlike the bird, never would have been ours, had we not been fed with the winged thoughts, and quickened by the quickening spirit, which no work of ours had anything to do with, in the midst of which we found ourselves placed; which we are able to refuse, to throw away, to remain mere crawlers on the ground, as well as to nourish into pinions, larger, stronger, more prevailing than before, and practically raise human nature into new worlds of feeling and immortality on earth. But meantime all this was no more made by us, was no more belonging to us than the bird in the nest made the fly which is given it for food. It is all part of a great world plan over which we have no control, in which for years we take no part excepting as receivers.

And what, pray, comes of all this? If we take only what we see, the answer is plain. Let the body first answer for itself: Death is its master; sometimes in pleasure, sometimes in pain, it steadily, step by step, advances to corruption; and every pain, every little ache is corruption beginning. Nay, our very health, unless propped up every moment by new supplies, is a falling off, and a dying. In a word, what we call our human life, is nothing more than a short and unavailing resistance to an ever present power of death, which is kept at bay for a few years.

Then, take the life which our intelligent mind in its human surroundings and circumstances lives, let that answer. The answer there is painfully plain too, if we take only what we see, the actual facts of earthly existence. Whether we take the ancient summing up of the royal preacher "Vanity of vanities all is vanity;" or you prefer the querulous denunciations of everybody and everything of the modern prophet, the sage, the philosopher, who has been the worshipped authority of late; or the verdict of any other of the modern type; it comes to the same, death is master of the individual. Big talk about destinies, and the race, and progress, does not alter the one grave fact that death preys on the individual man every day, and all day, as well as when it dismisses him into nebulous haze, as some would have it, at the end. There is nothing nebulous in the fact that your life, and my life, and the life of everyone of us, meets perpetually at every turn a power that kills the plan, or the hope, or the pleasure, or the wish, part or all; baffling, teasing, perplexing, entangling, ruining, and what is most vexatious, very often doing all this seemingly at haphazard, or worse still by means of the lowest instruments, and the triumph of mean, treacherous, and contemptible natures, till at last the old man, who brought nothing into the world, passes away, carrying nothing out, the space between having been simply a blank, barring the pain and the failure.

Is this then all each winged inheritor of priceless gains gets for himself? Brethren, unless this fierce fact of death incessantly meeting man over all his earthly range, is met fairly and fully over all his earthly range, it *is* all; for life, which does not go on, is not one life but two; and the being, who does not live on, is not one

but two, if succeeded by another in another world. We want life for each man, the same life, not another. But the grand revelation of Our Blessed Lord that in His kingdom every pain is a birth pang, and every end a beginning of better life, does meet fairly and fully this power of death working, over all its range, and turn it into a power of life. The useless pain is not useless if it teaches us to bear, and makes the spirit strong. The traitor's malice is not his triumph if it destroys our vanity, or self-will, and purges the spirit to be strong. The sickness and weakness of disease is not wasted time, if it widens our hearts, makes us able to feel with the weak, and opens out endless paths of helpfulness and love. And so we might run through the whole long list of possible pain, mental and bodily, and pause at each, and say, *That* under God destroyed this seed of death, and gave life to this new strength; *that* other broke down such and such great barriers of old idolatry, and made room for the new life to move. And so the life of man grows out of the destruction and pain.

Remember, there are two things in the world—machinery, and life. I mean there is machine work of outward power done *by* man, and there is life work of spirit power proceeding *from* man. Do not confound them. The machine-man can turn out machine-work according to his strength, grand machine-work if he is strong, and such work is wanted. But the spirit of man is only touched by man's spirit, and for a man to be great in the spirit world of life, or little either, he must as far as he goes have lived the life himself. He cannot give others what he has not got, he cannot be a life power unless he has life. Mark now, how all these pains, and obstacles, and vexations, and overthrows in

Christ's Kingdom, as they are all travail pangs, all go to make new and stronger life, and every end is a beginning also. The true man must meet such things or he cannot truly live. And surely, brethren, as soon as we know this, God's great parable written broad and large over all our earthly world is plain. New endings and new beginnings in ceaseless succession. Morning following night, and night morning; the Sunday beginning the week, and the week ending; winter and spring, in everlasting movement; every plant in the world preaching the same lesson of the great unity with its birth pangs and its births.

It need not have been so. The heavenly bodies might just as easily have worked on another plan, and not have been, as they are now, for signs, and for seasons, for days, and years. But no, all creation preaches through all its voices of a new life ever springing freshly from nature's graves. Turn to God's word and hear how pain, and sorrow, and overthrow were, and all forms of destruction are the servants and ministers of the coming life; and that what wicked men kill, and foolish men hinder, and sinful human nature mourns over at the time, if it is indeed from God, if it is His life, is born, is strengthened, or set free by the breakage. "Look up and lift up your heads for your redemption draweth nigh." That is the priceless message sent into this world of death and its attendant pains, whether of mind or body. The breakage is the birth pang. Not death but birth. Not old sorrows but new powers.

And, brethren, is it not our message to-day? How many here to-day cross that stream, strong as death, which separates boyhood from after life, how many watch them with their own turn soon to come. Is it not

a parable? The new life born, the old life ended. Yet, though all will be new, pause now, and think how entirely what is coming is a true birth from what is gone, one and the same in its powers, though able to begin again so different. A perfect unity, yet an entire breaking up for reconstruction, a true birth. I call upon you to hear Christ's words, and understand them and feel them. I call on you to welcome manfully, and with a hardy spirit, the great truth, that your life, the life of the meanest of you, has that in it which is fitted to meet every pain, and be the stronger for it; and that every overthrow honestly taken is a setting free the pent up spirit of life. Go then, go, *some* for ever, *all* to make a fresh start, and learn to see happy life coming to its birthday in every end. There is no more death. Nothing but Redemption drawing nigh.

SERMON CXV.

THE SIX BLESSINGS OF ABRAHAM.

GENESIS XXII. 15, 16, 17, 18.

“ And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said, By Myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son : that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand, which is upon the sea shore ; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies ; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed ; because thou hast obeyed My voice.”

WHAT do we want in life? A question which cannot be answered too early, a question which, strange to say, is seldom answered at all. Very few ever distinctly put before themselves the end of their earthly life; I do not mean the thought of death, but the thought of what they intend their life to be, and to bring with it. Few answer it at all, but simply drift according to circumstances with no fixed purpose. Some give a half answer;

let us say, they answer, "honour, or wealth, is our aim." But most clearly they do not mean honour, or wealth, if accompanied, for instance, by life-long ill health, or constant misfortune, or great family sorrows, or heart-breaking disappointments, or a thousand other drawbacks. This, and the like, is really no more an answer than if a ploughboy said, "dinner," and omitted the consideration of being well enough to eat it. But is not this equally the case with every prize and every coveted thing, which men long for? Do they not leave out when they long for it all, the one great fact, themselves; whether they themselves will be able to enjoy it when they have got it? Do they not leave out what is more important still, what the end will be, when they have had it, even if they did enjoy it at the time?

Would it be your idea of a pleasant holiday, to spend a delightful week with the certainty of the week's pleasure ending in a broken leg?

Even so amongst Christians I do not understand what is meant by the *pleasures of sin*. The heathen know no better. Amongst heathens there is sense in such words. But men have been Christians long enough now for the ordinary man of sense to have gathered as an ordinary worldly maxim, that the short-lived pleasure (grant it is pleasure) with the certain long pain following,—the week with the broken leg at the end—is the choice of a fool, even if you get the week, and not worthy the name of pleasure. But as a fact, most don't get the week even. The world, the flesh, and the devil, nail their votaries to the cross without stint. And the Pilates condemn the malefactors, the men who seek their own pleasure, to be crucified, and do not even wash their hands over them.

Nay, brethren, what *do* you want in life? It must be something, which, cross, or no cross, can hold its own; something, which being yourselves, day by day gets strength and blessing; something, which with faithful Abraham six times following receives God's blessing, because six times following a period of life has come to an end with victory over inward weakness, and temptation, and trial. But this means that you begin life with a hearty feeling for all that makes a man a man; a hearty feeling for facing anything and everything, which makes a man master of himself, and wins him, day by day, a better self. Away with the folly of thinking the childish life the happiest. God means life to brighten as it goes on; and for my part I have found it so. Do not mistake me, and think that I have found less trouble, less work, less to do, and more to enjoy, as life went on, on the shopkeeper theory of working so many years in order to be able to give up work at last, and be at ease, as they fancy. No; but I have found, as the years went on, that each time of life came with a freshness and joy of its own, and a pain and labour of its own; and that the earlier times were blinder, and more painful than the later; fuller, that is, of trouble not understood, unsatisfied longings, and of quickly passing flashes of joy; everything more imperfect, and the meaning of it all hidden; whilst the demand on self-denial was great, greatest perhaps for those who try to escape from what they have to do. But as life passes on the spirit learns to bear with ease what once was hard; nay, to delight in what once was the task, and the hated task; and understanding comes concerning the past; and the strange trials, chances, and senseless inflictions, as they seemed at the time, stand out clear as having brought the blessed

power of healthy strength, and killed the falseness. And the ways of God become plain; the plan unfolds; from the past much can be foreseen in the future; fear is lost; peace takes its place; and I for my part, having found life brighten onwards in all true brightness, quietly expect that so it shall be to the end; and the grave, whatever it looks like, be a happy door to happy life to come. Yes, it only needs that the cleansing and the clearing of soul should go on which Christ has brought to pass through the strange handling of this world's events, only that it should go on, and life would of itself be heavenly, and does in this way bear witness to heaven.

Now, brethren, mark, this theory and practice of life turns on the view taken of what we want in life, and try for; a different view from the shopkeeper's view of so much work to be done in order to drop work. The view is, that what we make *ourselves* signifies, and—that work, and pain, and manly activity, ay, and the knocks and buffets we get from friends and enemies, all go to make us, and are conditions of sound life, to be heartily welcomed always; whether we have to bear, to work, or to conquer, or to suffer defeat. Many a defeat is the best thing a man can have.

And once more this is just what makes the example of Abraham the father of the faithful, such a living thing to all generations, and to us. He did nothing but simply meet day by day what had to be done and borne in a quiet, manly, obedient way. First he comes out from a powerful but ungodly land; and we may be sure was thought a fool by his neighbours for doing it. But how many have to do this; to choose between wealth and glitter, and a more humble way of life. Abraham did

it, and was blessed, gathering strength by doing it, as any man who obeys God now will do. Next, when he had made the sacrifice and gone to Canaan, and found himself a stranger there, the blessing is given him again more clearly ; and so too now every man, who has done a self-denying, hardy thing, after a time is blessed with clearer sight of good to come ; and in this way it goes on for fifty years with Abraham, in his country home, amongst the flocks and the tents of the shepherd life. Time after time, some trouble at home and in his family ; the difference and parting with Lot, the sending away Hagar ; the command to sacrifice Isaac ; all belonging to his common, daily, home life, and in some instances lasting a very long time, try him, and fashion him by degrees into God's champion, the father of the faithful. And we may be sure he felt and saw, as life went on, within himself the true blessing of purer, stronger, better, happier growth, whilst in those early days God gave him a blessing he could hear, and spoke to him as a friend. God's champion is wrought into immortal, living strength, and given the great blessing by the everyday events of home life.

And the same thing goes on now. If a man now, beginning in his boyhood, with the world advanced in experience by some 4,000 years, accepts quietly God's plan of the world and God's government, doing right at first simply because it is right, and because he knows it is right, he will, as he goes on, see and feel God's presence, and God's blessing, as clearly now as in old days. The inward certainty shall be stronger than any outward voice, and always with him. If a man accepts the great fact of life, and the true meaning of life, that life means the matching and overcoming all obstacles,

life shall be to him its own reward. If a man accepts the great fact of life, and its *consequence*, that life must be exercised, trained, purified, then all that exercises life—work, pain, enemies, trial—becomes at once, just like the weather, things to make life hardy, and full of active strength. Brethren, let your dream, your plan, be a dream and plan of life growing happier as life grows in years; happier because of life; because, that is, the living spirit, trained to conquer by work and endurance, does feel God's blessing within; does see God working in the world; does know Christ's salvation; does day by day receive the blessing of Abraham, the father of the faithful, who by obedience and complete self-mastery, because God commanded him, learnt to know God, and found this life go on with blessing step by step, and the life to come his own.

Love life. Life, remember, is an active conquering power, trained by work and pain, trained by joy and pleasant hours, trained by want and sorrow, being made master of all in the kingdom of life. In Christ's kingdom all things become blessings to true life.

SERMON CXVI.

FEELING SUPREME.

I ST JOHN IV. 8.

“God is love.”

GOD is love. What then has got into our lives of this? What do we feel of God? Everyone is aware that we may know a person and not love him. Everyone is aware that we may know what is good and not love it. Love is a feeling. I do not ask you what you think about God, but what you feel. God is love. That is, God is the most perfect example of that feeling which we call love, so perfect that all true love comes from Him, all true love goes back to Him. Now what do *you* feel of this? Do you move in an air of wonderful delight, and sweetness, and excellence, breathing all round you, with an endless longing, an absorbing devotion, an ardent fire in your hearts? Nay, do you feel anything? Is there indeed any feeling of this kind present with you always? I do not ask what you think about God, but what you feel. Love is a feeling. If

you have not got the feeling, you have not got it, whatever you may think or believe.

Now I do not draw attention to this want of feeling to infer want of religion, but in order to awaken the thought that perhaps we know nothing of the true meaning of love, if God is love, and we feel so loveless; and that we may possibly be deceiving ourselves entirely as to the kind of life we are leading.

God is love; that is, love in both its senses, firstly, as the Glorious Being whose whole work is the creation of true beauty; and next, as the Glorious Being in Whom all true beauty dwells, Who must be loved by all who are fitted to receive and judge true beauty. Now as far as man is concerned, the first thing that strikes us is, that love is a feeling, the feeling which receives with joy the sight of beauty and answers to it. The heart cannot help loving, any more than the eye can help seeing. Show anyone that excellence, real, or false, which is fitted to him, and he must love it. The feeling is quite involuntary. The heart can no more help loving the beauty it is able to receive than the eye can help seeing the light it is able to receive. Light is taken in by the seeing eye at once, without argument or reasoning, instantaneously. It is not learnt. So it is with love; without argument, or learning, instantaneously, that which is beautiful, or seems beautiful to the heart, is loved. Not to see light means to have the bad eye. Not to love true beauty means to have the eye of the heart bad.

Once more then, God is love. Are our hearts full of the sight of God, and the love of God? If not, must it not be true that so far as they do not see, we know nothing of true beauty, and true love—the one great

power of the spirit world of life? "The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not." This emptiness, this ignorance of love, does not necessarily mean irreligion. There are many lower steps and approaches to God. But it does mean that the great Spirit power, by which all the worlds are swayed, is not in us, or understood by us. If you do not feel, you don't feel, and no argument, proof, self-interest, calculation, profit, or loss, will bring the love you have not got. It may fit or unfit the heart for feeling, but it is not the feeling.

As a proof of this I suppose nothing in the world has become more proverbial amongst all nations, than that love is blind. That is to say, the fact of the perfectly unaccountable, involuntary, and irrational way in which the poor, frail human heart often persists in loving unworthy persons, and unworthy objects; persists in defiance of sense, in defiance of argument, in defiance of interest, in giving affection to low pursuits, or low persons. This marks strongly that love is a feeling, called forth by the appearance of real or fancied beauty; and that when the feeling is felt, right or wrong, there it is, and, there it will be, in spite of anything said or done to the contrary. When it is not felt, however much you may know, think, or believe, it is not felt, and you have not got it.

How then does the power to see right, and love it, come? It comes by clearing the eye of the soul. "If thy eye be single thy whole body shall be full of light." It comes by our hearts being pure, clear of obstacles, not blinded by sin, "Thou hypocrite take first the beam out of thine own eye." That is, remove the wrong desire, the lust, the selfishness, the vanity, that is in you, and

then you shall see. The eye may be diseased and hate light, but the fact is the same, that, whether we love or hate the right things or the wrong things, love and hate are feelings, produced by what we are able to see. And if the love of God is not felt all round us always, as far as we do not feel, we know nothing of true love.

Once more, God is love. God needs nothing from us, and yet rejoices over the lost sheep found, rejoices in our happiness, rejoices in our love. And God means us to love in like manner, utterly regardless of everything but the beauty and goodness He puts before us to be loved. If we will give Him our hearts, and cast away the slave's heart which works from fear, and the servant's, that works for wages, both good enough as far as they go, and will love Him, and be His friends, He will make us His friends. For indeed force, and profit, have nothing to do with love.

Shall the dog, who loves his master, dash in, and die for his sake? Shall the dog, with no hope to come, no glorious thoughts of life, simply from love alone, pure, unmixed devotion, dare to lay down his life midst the terror and the pain of danger, that for himself he will not face; a perfect example of affection, and affection alone? And shall man, meaner than the dog, be always hankering after some gain or other, some market price for what he does? Can he never be taken out of self, and love a cause, without grumbling, without counting up his doings, and hugging them to his heart; even when content to take no pay? Shall man created in the image of God not answer in a spirit of love to God, Who is love? Less capable of self-forgetful love than a dog? Shall you, surrounded here with so much to challenge you to do good, to bar you from evil, so much that

should call forth love of God, slink off the moment your courage, or self-denial, is wanted? So does not the dog. He is no coward when love is the question. Think when trial comes, that your Lord is in need; think when temptation comes, that your Lord is attacked. Be no runaway in life's great battle, as the idler is, who leaves the ranks, when real life begins. Be no traitor in life's great battle, as the false heart is, that is trusted, and betrays the trust, doing out of sight evil which he could not do in a place of prison discipline. God is love; and most assuredly, Christ is honour, and truth, and courage, and love incarnate. Be worthy of His friendship, be Christ's gentlemen, spotless, and true. It is a very real truth which bids the little outcasts from the London streets be gentlemen. Shall they answer loyally to their leader's cry, and you with all that earth can give to make you brave and true, be false to your colours, and to Christ. Shall the dog die to save his master and the pick of England betray theirs? God forbid.

SERMON CXVII.

THE HEART, OR THE MARKET-PLACE, WHICH?

I ST JOHN IV. 8.

“God is love.”

HAPPINESS has been, and almost always is, set before the mind of man as the thing to aim at; and the heathen philosopher, and the Christian preacher, directly or indirectly harp on the same string incessantly. Now no doubt the life of fallen man is made up of all manner of motives beginning with fear and pain; and all manner of motives, fear, and pain, and pleasure, and sorrow, and profit, and loss, are brought to bear on man as they are needed. But I deny absolutely that happiness, or any form of self-interest, has anything to do whatever with *the* great motive of true life. Nay more, the moment any thought of loss, or gain for self, happiness or unhappiness, or any other name under which self is disguised, comes into the heart, love is tainted, or gone.

Love is not love, which remembers self when a

glorious sight is there to be loved. God has put before us Christ, and the good cause of life divine in the army of Christ, to be loved. God has put before us the splendour of doing good for Christ's sake as our cause; and from love of this we are to meet all enemies without counting the cost. The moment we remember ourselves, and begin to ask for our pay, whether we call it happiness, or salvation, or any name we like, that moment love has given place to the market value of the things done; and the labourer, however worthy of his hire, is a hireling, and has dropped out of the kingdom of the heart into the market-place.

How wonderful it is in a world like this that anything so above the world as true love should even for a moment be seen, and make itself felt however imperfectly—love, that marvellous seizure of the soul in its rare happier moments by a noble thought, or glorious glimpse of God, when the whole world seems as nothing to the sight of some holy, touching, hero deed, or—(if but for a minute) one great hope to be oneself allowed to worship truth, and perish for it, if need be, sweeps bare the inmost soul of all things else; and the clear spirit loves.

How often too even poor human nature is taken out of itself by the touch of higher life, and not in battle only, but in quiet, well-weighed, deliberate action, men have stepped out in front of those they loved to die. Where is the thought of self in this? Where is any feeling but the absolute goodness of being allowed to do good? The first axiom in the world is this, that love knows no thought of gain. Love prefers to sacrifice itself. That strange insanity of life divine, that will not heed, or care, for the earth it is tied to, ready to die, like a caged bird in the midst of luxury, for the glorious liberty of the sons

of God! Love that calculates is not love. *Love prefers obeying to commanding. Love prefers giving to receiving.*

This self-abandonment is the meaning of the parable of the labourers in the vineyard. If the men who had borne the burden and heat of the day had rejoiced in doing so for their master's sake, then their master would have met their loving self-sacrifice with a glorious return of love. But when they set a price on it, it all dropped to the level of what the work was worth in the market; and that was already settled by their own agreement, it was worth the denarius they had agreed to do it for, neither more nor less. A denarius by their own agreement would buy the work, but worlds could not buy their love. Love is not bought.

We may see this more clearly still in a sort of fable. How much we prize the things we have been long used to. We love in a kind of living way the books, which have become a part almost of ourselves, the very walking stick, which has been our companion in many a hard or pleasant day. How fondly we let our thoughts cling to them. But, if the walking stick turned round, and claimed pay for what it had done, even though it had saved your life; the answer is plain, "Any stick could have done it equally well; take your price in the market, take your shilling, and begone." To ask for pay is not love. And however great the service done a very common instrument may be able to do it; and a denarius becomes the market price for the once honoured friend, whose worth, if he gave love, is infinite and untold, but whose market price, if he claims his price, may be a shilling. Well has the poet said,

"Scorn no man's love however mean he be,
Love is a present for a mighty king."

How many labourers in God's vineyard, and in man's, have lost their place as friends, without getting more pay, from not remembering this.

O, brethren, God is love. Learn to see, learn to feel and love the good cause of God in your world, and then work heartily, never expecting gratitude if you are above, never making demands of pay for work you meant to be loving, if you are below. Not that it is wrong to expect gratitude, or to ask for pay; but the labourer who does so, however worthy of his *hire*, drops out by doing it from the kingdom of love into the market-place, and instead of being a present for a mighty king may be only worth a denarius, and get nothing more. Life even may be saved by a very mean instrument; and the value of the service is not the life saved, but the price in the market of the instrument. For the market value of service depends on the price of the work given, not on the greatness of the person served, or even of the result. This is a great truth.

Once more then, love is not love which does not simply live, and act from the delight of being allowed to live, and act, in the presence of what is holy, and beautiful, and glorious. God is love. God does not need us, or our work, but is pleased to ask for our love. This may serve to lead us to the truth. God does not need us, or anything we do; our price in God's market is poor indeed. Any day-labourer under God, whatever we may think, can do it; nevertheless He will pay us for labourer's work; even the grumblers were paid. But it is of vital importance to see early what is beautiful, and holy, and to try and learn to love it by cleansing the heart of self. How many delusions fall away as soon as we clearly recognise that if we are to be God's friends

we must be able to feel a friend's unselfish joy in being allowed to do His work! How many disappointments are spared as soon as anyone begins to do right for the love of right, and has caught however slight a glimpse of something better than his own success!

One thing is certain; love of good is a feeling, *felt, not calculated*. And he, who does not feel it, does not feel it, however much his prudence may tell him to do good, and make him do it as far as work without love is done. One thing is certain; the heart clear of sin and selfishness cannot help seeing and loving. Our business is to clear our hearts by God's grace of selfishness. Perfect holiness *must* be loved by the heart that can see; and *must* be followed. The perfect holiness of Jesus Christ is loved and followed by all whose hearts are cleansed enough. Do you see Christ working round us now? Do you love His will in your own life? Do you follow Him? By this you shall know whether you have found out the one great truth, that God is love.

SERMON CXVIII.

LAWS OF NATURE, PUBLIC ASSEMBLIES.

ST MARK XI. 17.

“And He taught, saying unto them, Is it not written, My House shall be called of all nations the House of Prayer?”

THIS is a glorious saying for man to hear, that God has established upon earth houses of prayer for all nations, and claims them as His own. It is full of solemn teaching, and solemn consequences. First, as regards the building itself; it settles the great question of the right building absolutely. No building, however splendid, or perfect, which is not built, and arranged, in such a way as may best be suited to make common prayer its first and best work, is in the highest sense a true House of God. “My House shall be called the House of Prayer.” And no building, which from its want of worthiness and fitness does not promote and suggest prayer, is a true House of God.

But it is not my intention to-day to enlarge on this.

We have a House of Prayer here. Rather will I speak of the second point, that in a House of Prayer we have to pray. And just as many people have not seen that the kind of building is settled authoritatively the moment Our Blessed Lord speaks of God's House as a House of Prayer, so many have not seen that the kind of behaviour and outward character, is decided by the same words. Let us look to this.

First, where many people are gathered together there are certain laws, some of them laws of nature, which belong to great assemblies, and to violate them is vulgar, if nothing else. And secondly, if many people assemble together, they come, not for private ends, but for a public cause, and the public cause is everything.

Every great assembly for fixed purposes, and those purposes unanimous, as, for instance, a court at the royal invitation, is under very strict rules, which public opinion judges it intense vulgarity and ignorance to break. This has nothing to do with religion, it is a law of man's nature, that to disregard the feelings, and customs of people, especially if they are higher than ourselves, is vulgarity.

It is therefore in the first instance essentially vulgar to come into the House of God, and not behave as the Holy Place, and the laws of assemblies demand. No fashion can make it otherwise. I have seen desecrated Churches abroad. But, because people thought nothing of it, the desecration was not less profane. Fashion can save a man from scorn, but it cannot save a man from having deserved the scorn. It is necessary, wherever many are gathered together, that all the laws of order, which belong to the presence of many, should be observed. That is, no individual, or individuals, have any right, as

such, to act, or to abstain from acting; they are bound first to realise fully the nature of the place they are in, and the purpose of the place; and secondly to be very careful that their presence is a help to their companions. Otherwise they have no business to be there.

This is exactly what the parable of the wedding garment tells us as its first lesson. The man had not taken the trouble to make himself outwardly fit for the place and company. The accusation is nothing but this; "Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment"? And the words might be said with truth in their degree to every one who comes into the House of Prayer, and does not put on the garment of reverence, in word, deed, and manner.

We gather together into the House of Prayer to have prayer and praise *together*. Never lose sight of that word together,—common prayer. Now, why are we ordered to meet together? This is the first point. All the rest depends on this. We are ordered to meet together, that numbers may give a sense of union, may kindle enthusiasm, may inspire a feeling of strength, a feeling of a good cause, and loyalty, and honour, and faithful trust. We come to inspire one another, to breathe fire into our fellow-worshippers, to receive fire from them. Not for our own good only. No—not for our own good,—but for the good of all. No man who comes to God's House of Prayer has the least business to be thinking of himself alone and his part there. He does not come for himself, if he comes rightly; a bit more than in singing a grand oratorio, a chorus-singer comes for himself, and has nothing to do with the chorus. Now I beseech you to consider whether this is not true; and if true, whether anyone of you has looked upon

himself as being as much bound to consider others in common prayer, as a chorus-singer is to consider others in a chorus, and neither to cough, or make any noise, or in any way be out of tune with the main worship. Once put this obvious truism as the guiding principle in your hearts, and the whole behaviour in the House of Prayer is on a different footing, and starts from a different point, and becomes plain as it goes on. We shall not come into God's House without His wedding garment, showing a vulgar disregard for the place and the company.

It is my intention to state plainly next Sunday what are some of the necessary laws of common prayer; laws, many of them, laws of nature; and all grounded on the one great maxim, that the first and only object of all rules of worship is *reality, reality*—not attractiveness;—*reality*,—for it is God's House of Prayer, and not to be used simply to please, as a place where the sense matters little if the general impression is pleasant. Nevertheless reality *is* attractive to those who are in earnest, and nothing else is.

Now however I wish to dwell on the one fact that God's House of Prayer, of common prayer, with its congregation, is for the many not for the individual. And the good of the many ought to be the first object of the individual. In the wedding company, a wedding garment was necessary, because, it *was* a company. Everyone, with one exception had it, as everyone respected the purpose of their meeting, and the company. And not to have the outward appearance, and mere proper observance of the time, and persons, was a gross insult. Observe too it was the want, the not doing what was fit, the being singular in omitting outward signs of respect for the occasion and company that marked the

man. At home he might have done what he liked, but not in the King's Palace, amongst the King's guests. Now here is the King's Palace, and here are the King's guests, and I cannot help thinking that on earth, at all events, our outward behaviour, and visible fitness to be one of the great company, is the wedding garment; and that Christ, who has declared, "That wherever two or three are gathered together in His Name there is He in the midst of them," has been, and is, with us to-day, seeing who has put on an outward robe of respect for Him, and His company, and who not. As He stands there amongst us, what has He seen and heard?

To me the truth of the great company being the first thing, and the discipline of numbers the central idea of the House of Prayer, stands out so strongly, is so full of life-meaning, that nothing else seems worth considering till that is settled. The wedding garment in the great company decides the whole matter at once. To be a marked man by want of outward regard for others, by silence when we ought to pray, by making self one's rule, by doing, or not doing, what we like, though many are gathered together, will not escape judgment. When Our Blessed Lord comes in Sunday after Sunday to see the guests, surely He does take note, in these earthly rehearsals of the life to come, of him, who has on the wedding garment of thoughtful respect for others, of thoughtful behaviour in word and deed to Him, and the outward appearance of a true worshipper. This is God's House of Prayer. And we—we are here to join in honouring God. Who then helps to swell the tide of praise? Who helps to quicken the life of prayer? Who in this great chorus of the Living God strives earnestly not to be out of tune, as it were, kneeling, standing,

sitting, rising, praying, singing, so as best to make all blend in one great harmony of voice and act, so as to take his part in one mighty chorus of the King's guests ; where every word, and every movement, is full of the union of numbers in a holy place, with a holy cause, waiting for the King? And the King comes in to see who is there, and marks the man, whose presence is a blot, a discord, because he is wrapped up in self, and has not given outward signs of belonging to the great company, of sharing in the marriage feast of prayer and praise with them, of reverencing God's House of Prayer.

SERMON CXIX.

UNION AND REALITY.

ST MARK XI. 17.

“And He taught saying unto them, Is it not written, My House shall be called of all nations the House of Prayer?”

WE start with the statement that the fact of numbers gathered together in God's House is the first point. All else turns on this. Harmonious union, and the thought of others, not of ourselves, is the immediate result of this gathering together. And, as we meet to pray, and to praise the King in the King's palace, *reality* in all we do, earnest reality, must be the guiding principle, and under this, all things fitting the great presence will group themselves. We meet as a chorus to welcome the King. We meet as a chorus to honour the King. We meet as a chorus to pour forth our hearts to the King. And reality is the touchstone by which everything done must be tested. Union and reality. These two are the sole determining powers of public worship in God's House of Prayer; the ultimate tests, whether it is good

and true, or not. We do not come together to clear ourselves, or to go through a work of our own, for our own satisfaction; but to join with others, to inspire them, to be inspired in turn, to give the feeling of company, and to receive it, to come out of self into a larger world, and by every word, movement, and gesture, to show that we remember that great company of the people of God in whose presence we spiritually are, that great congregation of all times, peoples, and languages, the living, the living, in God's kingdom, men and angels, of which every congregation gathered together here on earth is a part, and for which every coming together for common prayer is a kind of rehearsal. And we must put on the wedding garment of suitable behaviour in company. For, whatever more it may, and does, mean, the wedding garment on earth at all events means this, an outward and visible fitness for the company in which we are. And, as the purpose of the company is to pray to God, and praise Him, the second point is clear at once, that perfect reality, earnest feeling, alone can be true worship of Him, who demands that we shall worship Him in spirit and in truth.

Now observe that though there can be true outward observance without inward truth, there cannot be inward truth with a false outside. Nay more. It is a law of nature, for I will now take the laws of nature which belong to common prayer; it is a law of nature, that the true outward expression in a great degree acts on the mind, and produces the inward feeling. Hear what the greatest authority perhaps that ever lived says on this subject¹, "It is a fundamental law of our nature," are his words, "that the mind shall have its powers developed

¹ Bell on Expression.

through the influence of the body." And again, he says, "How much influence the instrument of expression has in first rousing the mind into that state of activity, which we call passion or emotion, we may learn from the power of the body to control these affections. I have often observed, says Burke, that on mimicking the looks and gestures of angry, or placid, or frightened, or daring men, I have involuntarily found my mind turned to that passion whose appearance I endeavoured to imitate." What a stupendous fact this is for our consideration. We all know that the body expresses the feeling of the mind: but that the mind and feelings follow the body is very little taken account of, yet it is a law of nature that they do. Not only does a slouching or careless attitude show the inward meanness, but they have the power of producing it. How careful ought we to be then, whether standing, or sitting, or kneeling, that we have the wedding garment of a reverent attitude, and do not make an unreality of praise and prayer, by bearing ourselves as no one would do, who really felt himself in the presence of Christ.

To this belongs the not coughing, the making no noise, the getting up and down quietly without slovenliness, together, in a thoughtful way; and, above all, taking exceeding care not to begin responding before the minister has thoroughly finished. For who in the world that is in earnest, to whom worship is real, can either think of speaking whilst all the noise of getting up, or sitting down, is going on, on the one hand; or, on the other, would dream in the presence of the King, of interrupting and breaking in on what the King was saying. This is utterly unreal.

And perhaps still more unreal even than this, is all

gabbling, with or without music. No one pleading in the King's presence, no one speaking on a subject he cares for, and is deeply interested in, speaks quickly. It is a simple law of nature that earnestness requires time,—and takes it.

Moreover, it is a law of nature, that, in a large room, with large numbers, the laws of sound demand time. And to speak quickly, (quite apart from any idea of unison) means, either not speaking loud enough, in which case it is not common prayer; or, not speaking distinctly, in which case it is interrupting those who do, or, ignorance. And any idea of true unison, that is, of common prayer, is out of the question. Nothing but habit could prevent us from seeing how disregard of one another in this way, and disregard of common laws of sound, makes our worship a profane and unreal mockery compared with what it ought to be. As soon as the thought of one great reality of united voices, keeping time, and in accord, in the parts that are not sung, as much as in the parts that are sung, is present to the mind, the disregard of individuals for the great company, in such sound as there is, is painfully seen; the gabbling in some instances, sounds unreal and profane; and the silence in others, is simply shocking.

I have been very much struck in the last few years with the great falling off both in the singing, and in the responding, and common prayer, in this Chapel. A meaner heart seems to be in the place. A lower generation, I suppose, has succeeded to those of old; a shallower race less capable of high thoughts, less worthy, has possession of the King's House. I know how hard it is to break through the habits of a generation, but to be worse than we were, is not part of this.

And in a society like ours, if anywhere, it would be possible to have really common prayer. Moreover, compared with what I remember as a boy, all England has got half way towards true worship, towards common prayer, and is as far off from the old utter deadness, as the life of complete reality would be from our half-deadness.

We are often strangely alive to what our neighbour may think of us, if we disturb bad habits, or what we imagine to be their habits, but strangely dead to the pity and contempt, as far as the wise ever feel contempt, with which the good look on those who disturb the completeness of good, and prevent it. In this, as often in life, the silent condemnation of the good goes for nothing, whilst the obtrusive pushing of the bad passes for public opinion. But be not deceived in this. There is no neutrality, you cannot please both. The whole question of everyone is in all things, who he will have as his enemies, the bad or the good? If he prefers the blame of the good because it is less noisy, then let him remember Christ's "woe unto the world because of the hinderers," because of those, who unwilling to face evil, stand in the way of good, and block up the path; and not think himself innocent, because he does nothing but stand in the way.

Reality—that alone *is* all, and settles all. What would be done by any right-minded people thoroughly in earnest, feeling themselves in the presence of God, and striving to give and receive divine fire from their neighbour, *that* is common prayer, *that alone*. What the Apostle thought of common life may fitly close this subject, "For we are not come unto the Mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto

blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more.—And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake. But we are come unto Mount Sion and unto the city of the Living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and Church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant.—See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh.” And,—“Wherefore we receiving a kingdom that cannot be moved, let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear; for our God is a consuming fire.” This is to have common prayer, remembering the great company. We may fitly cry in the words of our own Service, *Therefore* with angels, and archangels, and all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious Name, evermore praising Thee, and saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts, heaven and earth are full of Thy Glory. Glory be to Thee, O Lord most High. Amen.

SERMON CXX.

THE PYRAMID OF LIFE.

ST MATTHEW XXII. 11.

“And the King came in to see the guests.”

GOD is a spirit ; we see Him not with our eyes. It is not meant that an overwhelming sense of present power and glory should force us to give way, blindly, and without thought, before we are fitted to love and feel what we see. But it is meant, that, day by day, our earthly life and training should lead us upward, step by step, nearer, and nearer, to Him. It is meant, that slowly, and surely, new perceptions should dawn, and new sight come. It is meant, that here on earth, till the last day, we men are always to be rehearsing and preparing, always learning by living, always making our life into a new spiritual interpreter of worlds unknown, yet ever near. God is a spirit. “In Him we live, and move, and have our being.”

What is this unknown spirit-world of God in which we live, and move, and have our being, very little more conscious of it than a blind man of light? We know

we are in it. Why do we not know more about it? This earth, this starry universe, what do we know of them? We know that for illimitable distances—distances which no human mind can in any way grasp, star after star, world after world, people infinity with light and marvels. The telescope teaches us this. What should we think of a man now, who refused to believe anything but what his own eyes showed him? Nevertheless before the telescope, the unbelieving mind was in this state of unbelief in spite of the marvels seen. Then again, on this earth we know that for illimitable distances of smallness, life passes on, till we find delicate creatures, to whom a pin's point would be gigantic, endowed with powers able to build up shapes of beauty and colour for their shells of perfect structure. Try and imagine, if you can, the inner channels and organs of an invisible shell; and then remember that this invisible, unimaginable miracle of smallness fed on something smaller than itself, and so on; till it comes to pass, as a kind of hopeless effort to reach such a thought, that the greatest microscopist¹ of the age has said, that he believes there are living organisms so small that they crawl up and down the air as a solid body. But we should have known nothing of all this but for the microscope; and the unbelieving mind was in this state of unbelief, in spite of what could be seen by the eyes. Then mounting upwards from this glorious, invisible, living thought, for to us it is nothing more, coming first to the specks we can see, we find the whole world of earth, and air, peopled with life, tier above tier, and stage above stage, till we reach ourselves, the top of the

¹ Dr Lionel Beale.

pyramid, and seeing no more, we stop. But it is the old argument over again. Because we see no more.

But shall this great ocean of life of all kinds in which we move, for nothing else can express what we really *do* know, though we do not see it, of the multitudinous movement of self-moving things, which fill the world of our Creator as the waters fill the sea, above, below, everywhere; shall this great tide of mounting life from lower to higher, through change innumerable, till it reaches man, stop short at man; and suddenly a great gap come between man and God? Shall a barren waste, of barren space untenanted, unfilled, desolate, empty, lifeless, be found there, where most life might be expected? Is the earth-world full, and the God-world empty? Is not this thought the thought of the mind, that without the telescope denies the starry universe, without the microscope denies the world of invisible life, only because it cannot see, and chooses to think it can, and makes itself the standard by which to measure, with reverence be it spoken, God Himself?

Yea, but we know. First of all, what thoughtful person can doubt that we stand between two worlds, and that the spirit-world reaches through infinity above us, as all pervading, as ever present, as full, and far more wonderful, than the corporeal world which stretches away below us. There is no emptiness. Life is everywhere, life between us and God above us, as completely as between us and the invisible shell, or lower still, beneath us. Yea, but we know more. God has revealed to us the existence of legions of angels; "an innumerable company of angels," the Apostle calls them. And if this sounds vague and far off; we see angels sent to men, and moving in this our world; we

hear of angels watching the spectacle of human life ; we are told of angels on guard over every simple-hearted, innocent disciple of Christ. We are told of Christ Himself always present in every little company that comes together in His name ; and—"in God we live, and move, and have our being." And there is nothing that forbids us thinking, that, as after the Resurrection many of the holy dead arose and were seen in Jerusalem, so always there may be a coming to and fro of the great army of those who have left earth ; or, that we may be surrounded always by the countless ranks of the spirit-world, who once lived here, and those we love amongst them, though our trial-state forbids our seeing them. Surely there is much hidden in the Word of God that is intended to be revealed as men's hearts become able to bear it ; even as there is much hidden in God's book of Creation, which is intended to be revealed as men's hearts learn to love it. All old truths remain the same, but a new sight is given by the new experiences of life.

And, brethren, we are not cut off from this spirit-world though we do not see it, any more than we are now cut off from cities and people on this earth, whom we do not see. God has given everyone of us a voice that will reach Him. Yea, how should it be otherwise, seeing that, in Him we live, and move, and have our being, seeing, that we have reason to think that we live in the midst of living spirits unseen by our eyes. Prayer is that voice. No man who has used that voice in the way he ought to can doubt for a moment of its truth, and its power. Pray, and you will know. And will it seem strange to you now, that, when we are gathered here together to pray, the King should come in to see the guests ; and hear what they really say ? On this

Sunday which speaks of our coming King, the Sunday of the coming, we may well consider what the King sees and hears when He comes now, which after all is a part, and a very true part, of what He will see and hear, when He comes to each of us to pass the last judgment on us. How many a beginning has contained within itself the end also! How many a beginning has decided all that comes after! The King comes in to see us, be sure of that. We are in His presence, He is here. The closing year cries to us out of its grave. The days that are past are calling on us before they are buried out of sight. The dying year has one question only for those who live on; What have you done to meet your coming King? The King comes in to see the guests, are you ready? Do you see Him? True prayer is your answer; true prayer. For, as a man's words are false, which do not represent the fact behind them, as a lie is the outward expression of one thing, when the heart within means another, so also with prayer; prayer is the spirit of man speaking to God; and a man's life decides what his spirit says. If your life is not an effort to serve Christ, and to be like Him, your prayer will not be true. And, if you are trying in your life every day and hour to love the unseen spirit-world, and to learn to feel it, and know it, then you will *try* in the House of God to meet your King indeed. And He will see you clothed in the wedding garment of truth—truth in all you do and all you say; truth in the life, which makes you do and say it. You will try to be true; and will learn by degrees the speech of the spirit-world in which you are. The inward thought and the outward act will go together, and both join in prayer and praise.

How seldom on earth has the King come in and

found the guests with any true feeling for His coming, in their words, or behaviour. Let us at least begin to *try* on this the first Sunday of our Church year to prepare for that Coming which we daily pray for, when we say, "Thy Kingdom come," lest what we call prayer be indeed nothing else than taking God's name in vain.

SERMON CXXI.

THE TRAITOR.

2 KINGS V. 25.

*“And Elisha said unto him, Whence comest thou,
Gehazi?”*

THE history of the coming of Naaman the Syrian to Elisha to be cured of his leprosy is one of the best known in Holy Scripture. There is such power in the simple narrative; so much of nature in that touching scene. The pride of the great noble of the great Syrian king; and yet his servants loved him well, for both he and the princess, his wife, in their home were gentle and kind, as we see from the whole narrative; and then, the simple unpretending house of Elisha; where, nevertheless, a power dwelt far above all this earthly glory; and the great Captain's anger that the man of God only sent him a message, and would not even come down to see him; all this forms a picture so vivid that it belongs to all time. It might have happened yesterday, as far as the life-like interest of the facts go. Now, the key-note to the whole divine lesson of this history of Naaman is

the honour of the cause which the prophet, though living in an humble way, represented. And that honour was not to be betrayed, or tarnished, by any truckling to power, or self-interest. The prophet would neither lower the cause of God, which he represented, by courting Naaman, nor by taking money of him. The honour of God had to be vindicated, as above Naaman's rank, and above Naaman's wealth.

Let me try and put this in a clearer light. The people of God, then as now, do not make so much show in the world as the children of this world. Nay, far more then than now they did not, for the heathen were the powers of the world before Christ came. So the little kingdom of Israel always was insignificant in pomp and power, between the mighty Syrian empire on one side, and Egypt on the other. And this was a great temptation to the worldly Jews. The moment an Israelite began to lose sight of his glory as one of the chosen people of God, he was met on every side by a splendour, and a greatness, and a license, which made his own country and religion seem mean. For mean people are dazzled by outward power. But the temptation was very real, and great; and again, and again, the nation and their kings fell away from God, and imitated Egypt or Syria.

Thus, the honour of the cause of God was at stake whenever heathen pomp tempted an Israelite. They, on the other hand, were God's chosen people. This meant, that their land had been given them by God, who delivered them from being slaves in Egypt. It meant, that their homes, and their pleasant fields, all their wealth and worldly prosperity had been God's direct gift. But it meant far more than this; it meant, that

they had in their possession a higher life, and the rich promise of the Saviour King. And this higher life meant earthly happiness, freedom from the deadly passions and sins of the heathen, freedom from murder and violence, freedom from robbery and wrong, freedom in their own hearts from the black, venomous thoughts of the nations round, whose worship was blood, the blood of their sons and of their daughters, and whose idolatry destroyed all pure love and all the holiness of family life. True, they had not the most splendid court, the finest armies, or the most magnificent cities in the world. They could not hope to rival the heathen in this. But they had that which to this hour makes their history the glory of the earth. They had the life of the living God in their hearts; the honour of the living God in their charge; they had a character to uphold, which none could pretend to touch; they had heroes to be proud of, the like of whom earth had never seen; they had words of power in the midst of them, words divine, which belonged to no other race; they had prophets, who spake as no other men spake, and performed wonders like no other men; they had deliverances to boast of, which marked them out, and victories to remember, when God's own arm had made their warriors do feats of more than mortal daring. This, and much more, was theirs. They stood on a pinnacle of unapproachable glory so long as they were true to God their king, and did not turn traitors to their great inheritance. The whole Jewish nation had in their charge the cause of God, and, as they were true or false, the honour of God in those dark heathen days, and in the proud heathen wickedness all round them, was upheld, or disgraced. These are the broad general outlines of the state of

things, when Naaman, the great Syrian general, the mighty man of valour, the great man with his master, and honourable, came to Elisha to be healed of his leprosy, and with his horses, and his chariots, and his pomp, stood before the door of Elisha.

The times were evil, it is true; but all the more in the heart of Elisha glowed the fire of holy zeal; all the more did he feel that the honour of the living God was in his hands, and the cause of God at stake that day. How full of pure high thought must his soul have been, as he looked over the plain that morning bright with the rising of the Eastern sun, and knew, that on that day it would be given to him to show to all the world that there was a prophet in Israel, and that the God of Israel was God indeed. And Gehazi was his trusted attendant and companion. Gehazi was to him what he himself had been to Elijah, his scholar, his chosen body-guard, as it were, and his friend. Even as Elijah had chosen him, so had he chosen Gehazi; and even as he succeeded Elijah as the acknowledged chief of the prophets and the prophetic schools of Israel, so might Gehazi have looked to succeed him. This day, a great day in Israel, fixed the fate of Gehazi for ever. This day, a day in which the glory and goodness of God, and God's presence with His prophets in Israel, was to be proclaimed to the mightiest of the heathen, to be made known to Syria's warriors and Syria's king, had been looked forward to by Elisha ever since he heard that the king of Israel had rent his clothes in fear, ever since he himself had sent the calm, undoubting message, "Let him come now to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel." It was a day of expectation, a day of searchings of heart, a day of high hope and holy victory, a missionary day,

when the heathen were to know that there was a God in Israel. And this was the day, when after the great work was done, and God's glory declared, Gehazi betrayed the cause of God. Gehazi sold the honour of the Lord. Gehazi turned traitor to his master, and his brethren, the prophets.

Brethren, in Christian days, in this Christian country, in the schools of this country, the question ought ever to be graven on every heart. "Whence comest thou, Gehazi?" On this first Sunday above all, the question is strong in a Body like ours. "Whence comest thou, Gehazi?" From what paths of thought, from what plans of the way you will take this Term, from what secret purposes of good or evil, do your minds make their appearance in this House of the Living God to-day?

Think over it well. "Whence comest thou, Gehazi?" Comest thou as traitor, or as true man, to this house of God? Comest thou full of faithful service, and frank, open loyalty to the cause of truth in this School; or from dark corners of foul thoughts, and running after forbidden wishes, and stowing away disobedient, traitorous, self-willed plots, traitor or true, which is it? "Whence comest thou, Gehazi?" Thy whole life for ever may hinge on the answer.

SERMON CXXII.

THE TRAITOR.

2 KINGS V. 25.

“And Elisha said unto him, Whence comest thou, Gehazi?”

THE schools of the prophets were the great places of highest education in Israel, a kind of religious University. They represented, therefore, the highest learning and religion of the nation. And Elisha was the acknowledged head of the prophetic schools. Gehazi must have been a man of much promise and apparent excellence to have been selected by him as his chosen companion and attendant. He had taken Elisha's staff by his order and laid it on the face of the dead child of the Shunamite woman, whom Elisha restored to life, and he had seen other miracles besides this last one of Naaman's cure. Holy things, and holy power, were familiar to him, and he lived in a time of great excitement, and great corruption. Only twelve years before Elijah had slain the prophets of Baal at Mount Carmel, and had to fly

for his life. Only ten years afterwards, Jehu slew the worshippers of Baal; but in the space of those twenty years what persecution did not the people of God suffer, what did they not undergo! The schools of the prophets then, and Elisha, and Gehazi, represented the cause of God in very dangerous and corrupt times. Their honour was God's honour in the midst of fashionable vice, and fashionable idolatry. Their holiness was the light of truth to a mean generation; and remember, their keeping of law, and obedience to the ceremonies of their religion, was, though they knew it not, the one thing that could save the political life of the nation, and prevent it being swallowed up by the surrounding empires. But it was also the one thing, which, if they were not proud of it, made their neighbours mark them as different, exposed them to remark, and every hour of the day prevented them from being fashionable. And then, Naaman, what a living type he is for all time, but especially for our days; the brave athletic soldier, the successful favourite, whom those above him and those below liked and admired; endowed with every quality that is popular, and a really able man, but with the plague of a living death in him, leprosy,—the type to us of secret, consuming sin, stamped on all his body—leprosy, the type to us of being given over to an inward curse, carried about with him wherever he went. His glory, his riches, his rank, his popularity, the favour of high and low made him one of the foremost men of his time, but he was a leper; he had within him a poison in his blood, a loathsome, abominable taint of death.

And the true character of what took place is brought out very vividly by Naaman's pride before he was cured, and his gratitude and humility after. He felt it, without

knowing in the least that for ever and ever what he said and did would remain to teach mankind ; he, out of the fulness of his heart, was ready to do anything whatever to honour the prophet who had saved him. But he had to be taught, the whole world had to be taught, that nothing man can give can repay help that purifies and makes clean ; that no reward of power, or gold, can reward one who has been able to cast death out of body and soul, and bring life from God in.

But Gehazi was willing to betray his master's honour, and lower his master and his cause in the eyes of the heathen. How bitter, how sad, must Elisha have felt when, sitting alone in his room, still full of the great thoughts of the deliverance God had given by his hands, his heart went with Gehazi as he sneaked out secretly to sell his honour. It is difficult to imagine a sadder, bitterer hour, than the great champion of righteousness must have gone through when his favourite attendant and friend marred the greatest act of his public life, by undoing treacherously the unselfish, high purity of what he had done. And Gehazi, of course, as is always the case, thought but little of it. Thought it just a little unobserved bit of disobedience, which did not signify, which no one would ever know anything about ; a stroke of business which hurt nobody, and which he chose to do ; why should he not ? He was quite competent to have an opinion of his own, especially as it was so secret. So he did it ; and came back, and came in, and told the matter-of-course lie which every secret treason presupposes, and had to hear the fearful question, "Whence comest thou, Gehazi?" and went out with the visible curse of God and man stamped on him. And the thing that did not signify, the secret treason, which no

one was to know, the quiet, little, deceitful untrustworthiness so easily done, becomes at once a watchword through the world, an immortality of dishonour and shame.

When we strip this simple story of its Eastern dress, and take it as a bit of human life, in which each person represents a certain class of feeling and action, what a vivid lesson it reads to a school! Indeed, I believe it is the only great lesson in Holy Scripture where the scene and the actors actually belong to a school, according as a school in those days, a school and University, existed. How strikingly the great cause of truth is put before us in the person of Elisha, so full of power, spiritual power because of truth, so little powerful in worldly wealth. And he has to maintain his cause against the leprous splendour of the world outside on the one hand, and the meanness of mean hearts within on the other.

How true this is in every great kingdom, in every corrupt age of prosperity! Then, how completely Naaman personifies the popular athlete, and success in the world; and last of all, what a picture of the school sneak Gehazi presents. Trusted by his master, brought forward by him into notice, given by him the position, which made him able to be a traitor, enjoying privileges and respect because of his school, then see him creeping out, secretly, along the forbidden path, doing the precise thing which the solemn words, "As the Lord liveth before whom I stand I will receive none," had forbidden to be done; thinking no one would know it, and that it did not signify, he was quite competent to go his own way, his master did not understand such things, and would never find it out. And then, after having lied to the Syrian, see him stealthily coming back, and hiding away

his sin in his own room, and congratulating himself, doubtless, on not having been seen, and then—and then—comes the fatal interview, “Whence comest thou, Gehazi?” And he goes out with the stamp of sin and death set upon him for ever.

Brethren, be not deceived. Every good society, the better taught everywhere, the congregations in a parish, pre-eminently a school, reproduce all this history of honour and dishonour, of the good cause, and betraying the good cause, as long as the world lasts. The greater the society, the greater the reality of the likeness. “Whence comest thou, Gehazi?” rings through the world of God’s people, now here, now there, as traitors betray their trust, and think little of doing it. If that voice to-day brought out each secret sin into your faces, and leprous spots as white as snow marked on forehead and limb the betrayal of honour, trust violated, truth forgotten, warnings despised, who would not shrink as he saw the ghastly evidence, the dread marks of the curse within, spreading over the flesh? Brethren, you do indeed stand in a high place. England, no less than Israel of old, is the foremost nation in the earthly kingdom of God, in spite of corruptions and sins as great as Israel of old. There still are, and always will be, whether you see it or not, those who uphold, and those who betray. And whether you see it, or not, sooner or later, the guilty have to hear, “Whence comest thou, Gehazi?” The punishment comes, and the leprosy seizes its prey.

SERMON CXXIII.

LAW BEFORE LIBERTY.

ST MARK I. 4.

“ John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.”

AS far as Holy Scripture and historical certainty teach us we see man always the same being in body, and brain, and feeling, but in experience a child; even as we also, with all our boastings, shall be children to the more experienced generations to come. This it is, which makes the old world so full of power for us, we travel, bit by bit, along the track of life, and see how each lesson was taught, and great principles enforced, one by one, and all the bitter penalties, that came on men, who little knew that the whole world teaching was being wrought out in them, but knew right well what they had to do at the time they chose evil.

The Law before the Gospel, St John the Baptist before Christ, are the great examples of this truth. And never perhaps has it been more necessary to

examine how, and by what steps, men are to be free, and enjoy liberty, than in these days, when numbers, unhappy that they are, have no other idea of reform than murder, and violence. Law comes before liberty, self-rule before true love.

God for fifteen hundred years pressed the need of law sternly, and unceasingly, by many punishments, and many blessings, on His people. For fifteen hundred years—longer than we English have any business to consider ourselves a nation, Law was the one lesson enforced by God. Think of that. Fifteen hundred years of preparation by law. Mark too the very remarkable fact that the Jew did not know in the least when he obeyed the little, every-day laws which made him a marked man amongst other nations, that his national life first, and afterwards, the great Christian life, depended on his honour, and his obedience. He had not the least idea of the true meaning of anything he did; but he knew it was God's law, and that God had given him his land. This is always true. No man knows what depends on his being faithful; no boy knows; we only know what our honour and faithfulness require. Moreover, if there was no other person in the world to be helped by good, and hurt by evil, the doer of it has within himself the blessing or the curse. Even as a fever patient, however shut off from spreading infection, has the plague in himself. God has pronounced in the Old Testament rebellion—law-breaking, to be “as the sin of witchcraft;” as bad, that is, as openly tampering with the devil; and Christ has said, that “not one jot, or one tittle of the law shall pass away till all be fulfilled.”

Before going further let me put before you what is

meant by the Law being fulfilled. It is a common delusion that, because some particular ceremonies of the Law have come to an end, the Law itself is not in force. An illustration from common daily life will make this plain. In every good family in this country the law of the land is absolutely unknown. The family lives by the wisdom and love, which make parents and children happy, each in their place. But does this destroy the law of the land? Clearly not. The moment the family life is not so much higher than the law of the land as to lift everyone above breaking law, the law of the land steps in at once, and acts. It is there all the time; but a higher life hid it, so to say. But what relation has that higher life to the law below it? Simply this, if the law says, "work," the family life in its wisdom and love has already made work its great principle. If the law says, "thou shalt not steal," the family life has already made giving its principle. And how much more does a liberal giver do of law than the man who only keeps his hands off from stealing! And so on. A wise love does a great deal more than the law demands, not less. And anyone can at once know how he is getting on in true principles by examining whether he is doing a great deal more than the law obliges him to do. That is destroying the law; the doing so much more than law demands as never to come near the boundary. But the law is there for those who drop so low.

And it is the same with God's law. Many Christians by name are not Christians, though good people. They are in principle Jews, under the Law, guiding their lives by rules of duty, and hopes of reward, and fear of punishment, not by love of good for its own sake, not from love of Christ and His glorious example, and for

His sake. Then below these come the law-breakers. Those, who by breaking the great laws, are acknowledged by all to be wrong scarcely concern us here. No one here wants to be warned of that. But *the* sin of our day is law-breaking under pretence of liberty. I do warn you all on this head. There can be no liberty in man or society without perfect trustworthiness, and self-mastery. To take a rough example, you cannot seat a coarse clown at the ordinary dinner of a prince, because the clown has no law in himself to stop him from evil, and make him enjoy wisely. So it always is; wise enjoyment means a law within, a keeping of law fully, and nobly, without thinking of it even.

But even the indifference, with which the little daily laws, which guard happy life, are daily broken, is not what I most wish to draw attention to. *The* sin of the day is the reckless criticism of authority and law, which is positively held up as right by public opinion. But, remember, Miriam, the great princess of Israel, Miriam, the prophetess, Miriam, the elder sister of Moses, was stricken with leprosy by God, and cast out of the camp of God as one dead, for simply disparaging the authority of Moses. Remember also, that if those above criticise law, those below break it. Words are the weapon of the ranks above, blows are the weapon of the ranks below. And many a man is a criminal and a murderer, who never did an act of violence himself in his life, or dreamt of doing one; but whose criticisms, and famous abuse of others, have turned poor, ignorant men below into murder, and deadly sin. This season of Lent is the time of the year when our Church brings forward Law as the great subject for Christian thought. Without law first there is no Christianity. And there is no place

where obedience to law is more important than in a school. What is true in the history of the world outside is still truer here. You have not the least idea of the real value of your obedience; you have not the least idea of the real meaning of the laws you have to keep. Something of course you understand, but when I look back at the ignorance of the wisest and holiest Jew as to the real meaning of his laws, which we Christians see so plainly, I cannot help looking forward, and feeling, that we must be equally ignorant of the great, living world destined to come out of our laws. I feel my ignorance, whilst I see an unknown glory in doing right. Love of Christ destroys law by doing more than the law requires, in no other way. St John the Baptist, the great personification of righteous law and self-mastery, comes first to preach the baptism of repentance. You cannot be Christians, and law-breakers; you cannot be Christians and rash criticisers of law. The loose tongue, that lightly speaks against authority, has the leprosy of Miriam on it. The loose morality, that lightly disobeys, has the leprosy of Gehazi in the house for ever. When your love of Christ makes you do always far more than law demands, then you can disregard law. He who gives, for example, does not want to be told not to steal.

SERMON CXXIV.

BORTH COMMEMORATION.

EXODUS XII. 14.

“And this day shall be unto you for a memorial ; and ye shall keep it a feast to the Lord throughout your generations ; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever.”

THESE are the words in which God establishes the Passover. The institution of memorial days therefore is not only natural, but has the divine command as an example. Why should we remember? Because memory—the memory, which the history of any great event of life that is truly life perpetuates—is, as the years go on, a far greater power than the fact itself, even when that fact was a nation delivered, and mighty miracles the cause. How little it signified to that stiffnecked and rebellious people, whom God delivered at the Passover, that they were brought out of Egypt. They died in the wilderness because of unbelief. The sword of the destroying angel on the first born, the Red Sea opening to let

them pass, the trumpet sounding long and loud, as the Lord came down on Mount Sinai, and all the wonders of the mighty hand, and stretched out arm, that they saw, only ended in dishonourable graves, and the death of disobedience and rebellion in the wilderness for those who saw them. If that was all, then indeed what mattered it that it should be done? Dishonourable and forgotten graves want no miracle to bring them to pass. But the Memorial Day now for four thousand years of Passover and Easter has been one long miracle of life from that first miracle, working as a living power, stronger, more miraculous even, in the hearts of those who can see.

The first miracle, and all its grandeur, the shattered kingdom behind, the new-born nation in front, has added to it all the national life, the glory and the greatness of warriors, and wise men, and prophets, and kings, unfolding during centuries of unbroken progress, ever moving up more and more into light. And when the day of Christ dawned, and gave it a larger world, and a new creation, in the Memorial Day of Easter, still, century after century, it goes on, gathering strength, an ever present miracle of life working. For think not that miracles come to an end, it is not their beginning, it is their after life, that is so momentous. The Memorial Day is greater than the day itself in the kingdom of life, even as the whole of life is greater than birth; and the birthdays, year after year, higher powers, as life goes on, than the first.

This then is why we remember? No mere vanity of marking a great day, no curious record for curious hearers, no fireside story, but a keeping alive that which has a true life in it, a keeping of a birthday, as I truly

called it ; for a birthday as long as the life lasts, each year it is kept, if it is a true man's birthday, gathers fresh power and interest from every year of life ; whilst, nevertheless, the last birthday is as truly the same birthday as the first, equally belonging to the same life. First or last still the same, though the last is greater than the first. And so it is with nations, so it is with any society. This then is one meaning of a Memorial Day, a memorial day is a keeping the birthday of a life worth such a tribute ; and by so doing passing on the power of life.

When this birthday is, as the Passover was, a stupendous act of divine mercy and power worked for a whole nation, then that whole nation was bound to feel that the life given was given for a great purpose. And whether they felt it, or not, it did mark most clearly a great purpose in the world ; and the end did mark most clearly that the kingdom of the Messiah was actually brought about in consequence. Those, who felt God's purpose, prepared the way and brought in that kingdom, those, who were false, equally were made by an overruling power to take part, albeit the part of traitors and murderers, in the national work, on account of which the great Memorial Day was fixed. There can be no true Memorial Day without a claim on the society, or the man, to whom the life has been given by strange acts of grace and power. I care not whether we take a single man ; if he has had life strangely and wonderfully preserved, that man's life is held in trust for the giver of it, more than any other man, who has not been preserved. And if a Society has been saved, then the Society has its life on trust, and is different, both from other societies, and from what it was before. And if a

nation, then the nation is bound in like manner. It makes no difference in the tie. Man, or society, or nation, the tie is the same; the solemn fact of having been consecrated by a special gift of life, in a strange and special way, is a consecration, which evermore makes all who come within its range, be they true, or be they false, bound, as no other men are bound, on account of that gift of life.

This then also is a meaning of a Memorial Day, of keeping our birthday; it marks a special claim on the life of those who share it. Our day of deliverance, of which this is the Memorial, has become already mere history to the School, yet all the stronger for that. But, year by year, those who find a home in this Chapel need to keep alive what this Memorial Day really means. I pass over in silence what of good or evil might be supposed likely to have happened to us. It signifies no more than what happened to the children of Israel in that generation signified, when the Passover was ordained by God. They were delivered at the time, it is true, but with their death their account closed, as will ours also. What then was delivered worthy of a Memorial Day? Think not that we commemorate our own safety, though we feel strongly the awe of having been thus saved, and are grateful. But God might have saved us, and yet not brought us back for a Memorial Day here. But this school had a cause. It had had the advantage from a small beginning in numbers, of being slowly built up through many years of school-boy life on the simple plan of trying to make everything in and out of school work together, so as to give each boy the best chance in life. This was the plan. The object aimed at was to raise school-life to a

higher level, to give it less temptations, more power for good, to make it happier as well as better, to breathe into the school life a principle of common honour, a feeling that the school, the boys of the school, were a regiment with a banner of their own, enlisted to uphold the right, and to put down the wrong, themselves amongst themselves, as free, and not as under compulsion; and thus in Christ's name, and with Christ's blessing, that all should be joined together in one body, each in his place working in liberty, for a liberty and privileges of freedom which he understood; and that being free, and soldiers of truth, all should take a higher place in the kingdom of life. This was the cause. And from a small beginning, this had gone on through many school-boy years, as boy after boy came in, and received the watchword of freedom and truth; and so the numbers grew; and as they grew, a character was formed, with many a bit of experience, good and evil, and an honourable name for character gained. This life is in you, you inherit it from them. If to-morrow you all were swept out from this place, root and branch, and an entirely new set came in at the week's end, then all that character, all that discipline, all the honour, all the truth, which is you and your cause, would have been swept away with you, and the new comers would have nothing of it. All would be lost. That was the precise thing that was happening in that hour of trial. It was that from which the school was saved by going to Borth.

One short week more, and had we not taken that almost hopeless step, the school that then was would have been swept clean away, it and its honour, out of these walls for ever, and I, and others, with it. Never

more should I have set foot in this place again. This Memorial Day then bears witness to the character, the discipline, the honour, the truth, the stored-up life of many years having been saved from destruction, utter and final. It was a marvellous thing to us. It bears witness, in my judgment, to God having blessed that life and that school-honour, and chosen it out specially by a special call to do living work in years to come. It bears witness to a great claim on you, on us, and on those that come after us, inheritors of this day and its memories. It bears witness to a great cause worthy of a Memorial Day, it bears witness to a birthday, a day of life now, and to live on. I do hold that the fact, which stands alone in the history of education, of this school having been cast out for a whole year, and brought back again the same, is a solemn consecration of its life, which was given it in so wonderful a way. This school can never be as it was before. It is consecrated. This school is either happy or miserable beyond all others in this its Memorial Day, in its gift of life. Whether for good, or evil, to each one of you, it is marked out, and chosen by a special choice. It has received its life as a special gift from God. O, brethren, be worthy of it. Let this Memorial Day for ever bear witness to Life.

SERMON CXXV.

KING'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

THE GREAT CERTAINTY.

I ST JOHN III. 2.

“Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him.”

“BELOVED, now are we the sons of God.” St Paul has told us, “if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself for the battle?” I am convinced that nothing is more sure in God’s dealings with man, than the certainty of them. The simple unmis- takeable truth of the few main facts that enable a Christian to begin life with certainty, and, by beginning, test by experience what is promised and laid down, is certain beyond all other certainties in the world. I am not concerned with what you are making yourselves, this assertion is that what God has made you is certain. “Beloved, now are we the sons of God.” This is our certainty. On what then does this certainty rest? How is it that it admits of no mistake? The trumpet at all events gives no uncertain sound in proclaiming it.

We must go back some four thousand years, by far the longest bit of connected history in the world, to get at its beginning. This certainty rests first of all on the promise of God to Abraham and his sons about two thousand years before the coming of our Blessed Lord. The Israelite, the son of Abraham, knew at all events with absolute certainty that he was a son of Abraham. Year after year it was graven on their hearts by blessings, and by judgments, that they were sons of Abraham, heirs of the great promise. They knew that they went down into Egypt. They knew that they were baptized into a nation at the Red Sea. They knew that they passed through the wilderness. They knew that they had been brought into the land of the promise, because of the promise. They knew that the greater promise of the Messiah was still to come. Faithful or idolatrous, true or false, they knew their sonship. In their basest hour of treason, sons of Abraham they were, and sons of Abraham they remained, and sons of Abraham they knew themselves to be. It was no matter of feeling; it was a matter of fact. No Israelite, who had passed through the sea, no son who had received his inheritance from those who passed the sea, could be uncertain about his title, he or his, for ever. To this hour they are certain.

“Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise.” Their certainties are our certainties, only stronger still with us; first, as being the substance, of which theirs was the shadow; and secondly, as having had two thousand years more of proof added. St Paul would not have us ignorant that the Baptism in the Red Sea, by which the sons of Abraham were born a nation by a new birth out of slavery, was the type of

our Baptism. The Baptism into the Church of Christ is as much a fact as the passage of the Sea. It is the same fact, only greater, as being the fulfilment. The Baptism into the Church of Christ again, is as much a fact as being born the son of Abraham. It is the same fact, only greater, as being the fulfilment. And is not a Christian home in a Christian nation, a promised land, a place of peace? And are not the Christian nations (after making every deduction for the betrayal of truth, and irreligion), separated from heathendom, modern and ancient, by a marvellous uplifting of wisdom, and power, and purity? Ay—and purity—put it at its worst, what men do secretly now, with some sense of shame, the ancients worshipped in Temples as a God.

These three certainties then, of sonship, of the chosen nation, and the promised land, are ours. Facts, not matters of opinion, or feeling, either of our own or anybody else's. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God."

And, see how God our King seized on the great aspirations of the human nature, took them into His service, and made them His own. First, the honourable pride of race, of being sprung from noble ancestors, with heirlooms of ancient glory to uphold, a name of renown, a glorious name for truth, and courage, and self-devotion, above other men. Next, the being chosen by God Himself out of all the world, born a new nation by an act of God, to be leaders of mankind, the foremost people on earth, because of the choice of God, which made them so. Home and country, family and patriotism, thus knotted into one strong cord of holy worship, and the highest service to the living God, their King. Nay more, God took that most natural feeling of all,

a friendly rivalry between equals, and sanctified that also. Twelve tribes, twelve brotherhoods in the chosen nation, each had a glory of their own to live for. And deeply they felt it, as we may see from many a cry of triumph, or of sorrow, as the great history went on. So home and country, and the inner circle of noble emulation, brotherhood with brotherhood, made up the religion of the sons of Abraham, and were their certainties. These facts belonged to the sons of God, and of Abraham.

One thing more of deep significance, as the great host marched up at last to enter the promised land, and conquer it, the lesson of life comes home to us far more, when we remember that it was a host of the young. Only two old men amongst them. How this touches us as a parable of life. Trained in hardy ways, warned by past judgments, but with all their life before them, their freshness, and their dreams, full of the fire of youth, there they stood, encamped in their last camp, on the threshold of life, on the brink of the war, with the unknown hope spread out before them. And on that last evening, as the sun went down, can we not even now stand with the young man full of that to-morrow, at his tent door, looking over the wide waters gleaming in the rays of day departing, sword in hand, dreaming the dreams that live? Can we not go in spirit with him, as he dreams dreams of great deeds to be done, of trumpets sounding, of the best soldiers of the world in front, and he dashing on their array, fearless, in the name of God? Surely the young men felt their hearts beat high that night, and longed for the coming onset, the stedfast ranks, the victory, and their land, great certainties of life before them!

And do no hearts of the young beat high with the dreams that live now too? "Beloved, now are we the sons of God." The absolute certainty of 4000 years makes us the vanguard of that same army; these are the facts, whatever your opinions may be. You are, if I may use the expression, each of you, a good or a bad Israelite; but whether good or bad, an Israelite, in the camp of God, with God's banner waving over you, be ye traitors, or be ye true. It is a fact more than anywhere in this place. Whatever you may say of the world at large; *here* for many hundred years there has been an encampment of God for the training the sons of God in sound learning and religious knowledge. The young men training for the battle of life are gathered into it, an encampment given us by hands stretched out from the spirit world, the hands of the dead that live, whom the God of the living has permitted to set up a tabernacle of living power in His name on earth. And there is the special brotherhood also. For more than four hundred years this most royal tent of the king has received the king's men, year after year, and sent them out again—that king, who, whatever his place may be in history, was blessed by God in the midst of his sorrowful life to establish a nobler and more enduring record of kingly greatness in his two Colleges, than any other ruler, who has sat on England's throne. In this most royal tent of the great encampment you stand, dreaming of your to-morrow, as the generations have stood before you. For myself, most surely all the pains, and all the joys of the long fierce years, since I too dreamed dreams in this place, have vanished, and are as if they had never been. But the dreams have become the facts. If fact means reality, then the only

fact of all my life has been the dreams dreamed here, and the life that came of them.

“Beloved, now are ye the sons of God.” Beneath this mighty dream of stone, the power of the unseen world spread over you by the king in the Name of Christ, do you dream the great dreams, dream on, and live the dreams; nothing else lives. Be fired with the noble certainty of your brotherhood as sons of God, strive to be like Him, your Lord. For this is the last certainty. We know, *we know*, “that when He shall appear we shall be like Him.” And can you doubt the patent of nobility this is? To go no deeper into things. Walk down the street of any crowded city, do those faces, so many of them dismal, dark, empty of all purity, gentleness, or happy trace of peace within, those faces with the devil’s handwriting on them, allow the sons of God to doubt what their hope is, and what work has to be done, if this earth is ever to be the Kingdom of their Father, which they daily pray may come? Can the sons of God be blind to these things? If a being who had never seen any but the noblest type of face and form was suddenly brought amongst our crowds, it would be a fearful sight to *him*, the death-mark on so many, the gaol-mark of the felon soul scarred in, and unmistakeable; a likeness which sends fear and loathing into those who meet it, and think on what it means. But “beloved now are ye the sons of God” and we know that we shall be like Him. Strive to make this last certainty your own, the likeness of Christ, which, whatever the outward form may now be, is far removed even now from that leprosy of the unclean spirit coming out on face and limb in the looks of evil men. “We *know* that when He shall appear we shall be like Him.”

The thing is very simple, but like any other knowledge it has to be learned ; and the learning of life only comes by living. When once any man has quietly tried daily, with prayer, to live like Jesus Christ, he will soon begin to catch some of the certainty of being like Him hereafter ; a very different thing from believing in religion, or believing in Christ ; as different as a seed, a mere dry thing like a thousand other seeds, is from the living plant, which has grown, and is itself alone, unmistakeable, with its witness in itself.

O ye sons of God, here is your true work ; learn to know that suffering without murmur, gentleness, when tortured, insulted, or neglected, the quiet doing what has to be done, the self-mastery, that can bear pain like Him, despise praise like Him, fear nothing like Him, be misunderstood and unrewarded like Him, and put all things under the patient, strong heart like Him, is something that speaks of a higher world, a certainty, a thing to be known now. They only, who strive to walk like Him, know the promise of being made like Him ; but they do know it ; and knowing that, know everything. There is an easy way of practising this law of trying to be like Christ. Never do anything that tries or troubles you, without asking first in your heart, what would Jesus Christ have done in my place. The old world talked of talismans, and charms, and spells, not altogether untruly ; here is a talisman, a charm, a spell, a power that is, in the spirit-world, which if you will admit it into your lives will work wonders. "Beloved, now are ye the sons of God." Yea, whether you like it or not, you are. For my part I cannot imagine a more glorious truth than this to begin with ; and then, *here*, in this Chapel, with the great standard of the holy dead,

spread over us, you stand a band of officers in the army of God, enlisted as a very body-guard of honour and truth, with your great certainties, your undoubted cause, your inheritance of being chosen out of many. Say or do what you please, you cannot get free. The spirit-world has laid its hand upon you. Nay, but rejoice, enter boldly on your inheritance. I know that if you do so you will find it a certainty. Rejoice in that certainty.

SERMON CXXVI.

LIGHT, ITS UNKNOWN POWER.

ST MARK IV. 21.

“ And He said unto them, Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed, and not to be set on a candlestick ? ”

A LIGHT in a room at night. How simple it seems ; but how infinite its power can be. A light moving on the shore was the first token to Columbus of the new world, when a few hours more the ships would have turned back, and the mutineers on board have had their will. But that light was nothing more than an ordinary torch in the hands of an Indian Villager as he moved near his hut, unknowing and unknown, lighting him and his family as usual, but the fate of the new world and the old turned very largely on those rays, that flashed across the waves, through the darkness, to the great captain standing anxious, and weary-hearted, in his ship.

It is well to think of this mystery of light. Who

knows the feelings that have been stirred in men's hearts by seeing far off lights ; or ever shall know ? It is a strange mystery, that light which makes all things known, whose very essence it is to make known, and give sight ; which is light, because things hidden are hidden no more when it comes, and secret things are made plain, should nevertheless in this one great fact of its reaching into far distances with utterly unknown power, and touching eyes which cannot tell whence it comes to touch them, and know nothing more of it than the help they get, be the most secret power of all created things. It is a strange mystery that light does not know its own doings. The givers of light do not know who sees their light. The seers of the light do not know oftentimes where the light comes from. It is a great secret. The light is lighted for those in the house, and does its work there ; and no one in the house thinks of anything but this. Yet how many a traveller has been cheered, how many a life has been saved, by the light in the house.

This is a great Parable ; and our Blessed Lord would have us think well over it. It is His cheering consoling speech immediately after the Parable of the Sower, and the number of times the seed fails, and does nothing. Much good seed may fail ; but good is also light ; let the light once catch, no one can tell what it may not do.

The infinite, the unknown infinity of power, that there can be in our light, is the first great, broad, emphatic lesson. If good is light, then one light set in its right place, its candlestick, may do anything and everything, small though it is in itself. How large is a room, how small is a candle, how far beyond the room it reaches, how many people in the house may live by it, how many out in the world may see it !

But brethren there are two points which to-day I wish to press more than others. First and most, the silent way in which light makes it easy for everybody to move, and work, and enjoy life; and, secondly, that the light itself which gives this happy power knows nothing of it. Now Christ has chosen this fact of light as the most complete revelation of Himself. "I am the Light of the world." He has also chosen it to impress on us the chief characteristic of our being like Him, and belonging to Him. His disciple "is a light set on a candlestick, which gives light to them that are in the house." Stationary, and yet far reaching. How many contradictions are reconciled in light, and—in the life which is light! Silence, yet activity and widespread power. Stationary, and in a small sphere, yet with infinite movement of far reaching, conspicuous sovereignty; so soft that none feel it; and yet all the work of the world is done because of it; and not least the great mystery of it never being known in many instances what it does, and who see it, and live by it; and that it never makes its presence known by noise or pushing.

Brethren, if this is indeed true of the life in Christ, there is much for us to take to heart. Not least the marvellous unity of light, however many lights there may be, the light that comes from them all blends into one, and none can separate ray from ray; none can stand in the great room and pull the light apart, and say, this is mine, and this is thine. No light so great, that it swallows up others; great lights live by increasing light; and no light so small that it does not contribute; small lights live by increasing light. Even so the golden candlesticks of the seven Churches, in the midst of which the Son of Man walked, held the light of seven great

cities; and the meanest Christian slave in those cities was a part of the light of the golden lamps of God.

And is it not so here? Is it not certain, that this Christian school, has a candlestick of its own, and its own light in the kingdom of Christ now? And that its light is made up of the life of everyone of us, every life giving its share? No one enters these walls, and is enrolled on the great roll of this school life, who, whether he likes it or not, does not become a living part, for good or evil, of the light of the Candlestick, watched by Christ. We know it not. No man knows how far the light shines, or on what eyes, and hearts, it casts its vivifying rays. No man knows. But every man knows that there is a great light in a great school; and many know in many a land the light of the name and the honour of this school. No oath of allegiance taken in the Roman armies, no swearing by the Standards and the Emperor to be true and faithful to death, was more real, more binding, than the silent pledge to obey our laws, and uphold our life here, and spread the light of Christ from this our lamp, which each boy accepts, and takes, when the choice is finally made, which places him within these walls as one of our garrison. He need not come. But having come, he is pledged for ever to the cause of light, pledged in no cowardly way to train himself and others in all exercise of manly truth.

Yes, to train others. The main power of light is shown in making the path plain, and the steps of life easy for all. Who could live and work in darkness? How hard it is to move even in twilight! But let there be light, and everyone, strong and weak alike, can use their powers to the best advantage. One or two earnest singers make a choir fill with living power. A few real

responses make it easy and natural for all to respond. A keen sense of manly hardihood, and activity, and work, in games and out door life in a school, makes manliness, hardihood, and activity, the pleasant habit of the place; and coddling, and cowardice, and their companion—unhealthy self-indulgence, which is more reckless than courage, become difficult and unfashionable. A high and earnest feeling for work fires the souls of the leaders, and warms even the most sluggish, the meanest idler, into doing something. Or, at least fixes a sense of shame and uneasiness on the slipshod meanness of orders neglected, and broken laws. Light makes all the place in which there is light an easy place for life to move in. And light at its best is universal. It is only in the night that stars are seen; it is only in darkness, that the glory of exceptional light, of single excellence, shines out. The dullest morning puts out all the stars; because the dullest morning has its light universal, and spread everywhere. Such is the power of many together making light universal in any place. Such is the power of light coming from all, everywhere, and not from a few in a dark place.

Once more then, brethren, let us remember light; and move in this home of light ever mindful that the smallest ray increases the common stock, which is glorious, because of many, all together, making life and good easy by light. And each of you, as you go forth, carry with you some spark of the sacred fire, and become by it part of the light of the world.

SERMON CXXVII.

LIFE AND DEATH.

ST JOHN XI. 26.

“Whosoever liveth and believeth on Me, shall never die.”

LIFE and death. What is life? What is death? “He that liveth and believeth on Me shall never die.” What words are these which put aside that which we call death without deigning to notice it? Life and death, what are they? The words tell us nothing, they do the common work of common practice well enough. The most ignorant know and feel their first meaning, and the grand lessons of that first main meaning; but, like all the great mystery words belonging to the being of man, try and get closer, and know more, and lo! endless space and an unknown infinity opens. Such words may be compared to a lofty mountain range, which stands sharp and clear against the sky, seen by all, a sure reality to all far and near, a vast boundary which closes in the country, a guide always in sight, by which every man knows whereabouts he is, an unmistakable landmark, that both decides every road, and

tells at once the direction, and also sets an end to that side of the world for the people living there ; the most familiar fact and plainest certainty to young and old alike. Ay, but no step of man has availed to tread that familiar neighbourhood. A vast impregnable wilderness, precipices, heights and depths unspeakable, sweeps of desolation almost baffling eagle wings, like the vast fragments of a broken world, have met those who tried. And, here and there, by long practice and dangerous effort, a thin path or two, winding in and out, by all sorts of shifts and skill, has managed to get some way, and convince the dwellers near of the secret power of what looks so clear, of that which they daily see between them and the sky, of that which they know the sight of so well, and which is indeed a guide to all below living on the plain.

Even such are the words life and death ; the plainest of all plain facts, the most unknown of all mysteries. Yet we may know what God tells us. We may even become aware as men of the wonderful secrets contained in those simple words. Let us look at some of the common facts first. Men talk, without even seeing any inconsistency, of the life of plant and tree ; they talk of the life of the animalcules in the pond ; they talk of the life of birds, fishes, and animals ; they talk of the life of man. Let us stop here a moment. All these different shapes built up, generation after generation, from the grass up to man, by something within them which builds them up, always with the same differences, we rightly call by different names ; for throughout all recorded time, from the oldest fossil to the flower of to-day, they have been different ; nevertheless that inward power, which builds up all these shapes so different, we call by

the same name in all—life. What do we know of it? How can we do so?

Then again, when we come to man, we talk of a good life and a bad life, and use the same word all through. But the life, for example, which is at this moment passing on the air as a kind of bridge from my soul into yours, as far as you are listening, is at least as different from the body which lives by food, as the life of the body, which is kept alive by food, is from the life of grass. Yet we use the same word for all these existences. What do we know of the word? Up to a certain point some main truths we know very well, as a man sees the mountain range. We may also know some of our ignorance very well; and that I wish to draw attention to first, the fact that we do use the words ignorantly. What then is life, since the word gives us so little help? The words of our Blessed Lord in the text bring another and further problem forward. "He that liveth and believeth on Me shall never die." All men die. What then is death, the death I mean which is not death, but life going on undisturbed? We call it death. We men dread it with a great dread to begin with at all events, but our Blessed Lord tells us it is not death; our Blessed Lord tells us it in no way breaks His gift of Life. Here then we know as little of death as we have seen we know little of life.

And this is not a single statement; all Scripture is alive with this truth, and it appears in words again and again, "He that saveth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life for My sake shall find it." What is this life that is death, and this death that is life? Have we thought of it? Have we found it out? Have we any real knowledge? There is much we may know even

from nature and common practice. This revelation of a life that is death, and a death that is life, is not so strange to man as in its first aspect it seems. Every man who has been willing to die for duty's sake, or honour; every common soldier, who when he might have lived, has chosen death, has set his seal to the conviction that what seemed death was higher than what seemed life?

Nay, what is remorse? Is not remorse in the guilty heart a witness to the fact that no present prosperity in what men call their life can overcome the deadly sense of guilt, or make it otherwise than a living death to live; so that suicide has seemed a less evil than the death within preying on the soul? These, and ten thousand circumstances of daily experience, bear ceaseless witness to a life that is death, and a death that is life, as soon as God reveals that truth to us. What then is death, and what is life?

Let us to-day, brethren, leave this question, and take first the great rough truth, which bounds our horizon like the mountain range seen by all, the truth, that we all long to live, and shrink from death; and then the second truth, which even the heathen have seen, that there is a life worse than death, and a death that is better than life, in the common sense of the words life and death. You all know the feeling of having done right, how fresh, how living it is. Alas, too, all know the feeling of having done wrong. What a burden it is, how it kills joy. Take this as a beginning, and then in faith reach forward to the great promise that he that liveth and believeth in Jesus Christ shall never die. Reach forward day by day in work, and obedience, and vigorous striving to do right because of your belief in Him; and He, the Highest, will not fail you.

If we knew nothing more, and could learn nothing more, here is all we need to know for human existence. Here is the grand truth of a higher life, stronger and better than seeming death, and the dread knowledge of a death within, that can quench and kill the seeming life, and yet leave it seeming to live. All this followed by the great promise, that the King of Life does give to those who believe in Him a certainty of life that cannot die. Live then, press eagerly into the higher life, save every hour from the grasp of death. As surely as every illness unchecked ends in bodily death, so surely every evil deed done, or the not doing what ought to be done, if unchecked, ends in the death of the higher life. Live then, be brave, be true, save your days and hours from death.

SERMON CXXVIII.

WORM-LIFE.

GENESIS II. 7.

“And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.”

ONCE more, what is life? And what is death? We have seen that there are so many kinds of existences, that the mere fact of existing is not what we really mean by life. Nay, more, we have seen even Nature teaching us that not only are there lower existences, but man himself can continue on earth in the enjoyment of all his faculties and powers, and surrounded by all things necessary in abundance, and yet have that within him which makes his existence a moving death. We have seen that Holy Scripture plainly tells us that what we call life can be death, and what we call death can be life, and the unexplained facts of Nature bear this out. All this is enough to show us that the first plain meaning of the words life and death, useful as it is, goes a very little way towards teaching us what they are. The life of a

worm is not what we mean when we talk of life. What if the life of a worm be nearer to our life than our life is to the life of God? What if our life be more cut off by Nature from the life that is life indeed, than the life of the worm is from our life? The worm exists, the worm has a kind of life, but the worm is utterly incapable of taking any part whatever in man's thoughts, feelings, or hopes. This utter and absolute incapacity to share any feeling makes the worm-life as compared with man-life death. All that makes a man a man might die, literally die, and yet a worm-life be left. The man-life would have perished, but the worm exist still. This, then, appears to be the first meaning of life and death. Life is life in proportion as it is enlarged in feeling and power, and death is death in proportion as feeling and power die, and nothing is left but an approach to worm-life.

Now let us turn to Holy Scripture, and God's Revelation to man. God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." "So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him." And then, "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul." In God's world, life means such a likeness to God Himself as can fitly by God Himself be called an image, or resemblance and likeness, of Himself. And God is a Spirit; so the spiritual likeness of man to God, created as the Apostle says, after God in righteousness and true holiness, is what God calls life; and spiritual things are spiritually discerned. Man's life therefore, when he was first created, being like God's life, in His image, was created to see all the holiness and glory of God in things created, and interpret them, and feel them all around. Man's life in

God's likeness, in the midst of God's world and God's thoughts in creation, could not help, as it was of the same spirit, seeing God everywhere. This then is the first revelation of life, a high spiritual power of holiness and purity like God, set in God's world, with God's Spirit round about everywhere, and finding itself in harmony with God's Spirit, and seeing it, and feeling it; a living mirror of the living God, and, we are told, meeting God daily without fear, as it was his nature to do. This then is life; a spirit like the spirit of God, seeing God by nature and natural likeness.

Next we are told, that man became a living soul because of God's breath of life breathed into him. This completes the revelation. In God's words life can only mean life, and cannot mean death put off for a little time, death disguised, existence with a mortal wound in it. Even man now would not take a mortally wounded animal and talk of it as a specimen of life. How much more then, when God, who is life, speaks of man as a living soul, must the words mean life with no taint of coming death in it! This is the second truth; Life from God, in God's image, means first, complete sight of God's spiritual works, and intercourse with God; and secondly, immortality. However long death might be put off, God could not call a long long dying—life. True life then takes part by nature in God's thoughts, feelings, and works, and cannot have the seed of death in it. True life sees God everywhere and lives: for that *is* life.

Next we are told that God's decree was, that on the day man disobeyed Him he should surely die. Man did choose to acknowledge another power as greater than God. Man did take service under another king. And

on that day he died. Whatever else death may mean as the ages of eternity pass on, it means undoubtedly and plainly, that the life, which by nature saw God in all His world, and lived in God's thoughts, and knew God's mind, and was in ever increasing harmony with God's holy will, died the death; and the existence of a worm comparatively remained, no more able by nature to feel with God than a worm is able by nature to feel with us. This then is death in its first true meaning, a worm-existence because of sin, cut off from the thoughts and mind of God, dead in trespasses and sins. Bear witness to this truth of God's revelation the countless millions of heathen minds that from the beginning have been sunk in idolatry, impurity, and all manner of violence, murder, theft, and blindness to good. Bear witness, not the savage and the untaught, but the high examples of successful intellect and human pride, the agnostics, the sceptics, the atheists of all times; bear witness Bradlaugh. Bear witness modern dreams of reform by throat-cutting and rapine. Bear witness all the crime, all the loathsome seething passions, which all over the world are killing and corrupting the human body, and digging early graves for those who do such things. Bear witness all these cries of the blind, that death did come, that man was cut off from the quiet happy sight of God, and that a worm-existence was left him instead of the high communion of holiness and truth. This is the first meaning of death, that is death indeed; worm-life instead of life in the image of God. Man, the lowest probably of all intellectual beings, with just intellect enough to deceive himself when he trusts to it, moves in God's world, and sees nothing of God as long as he trusts to himself. And every cry, whether of pride, or despair, or defiance, or rebellion, or ignorance, is but

a cry of death, death, death, everywhere; death reigning—an acknowledgment in fact, that on the day that man chose another king than God, he did indeed surely die.

Hence no teaching, simply as teaching, could really restore man. Life had been lost, life had to be given back by Him who alone could give it back—by God. Redemption and Salvation is the giving back the lost life. “Verily,” says St Paul, “if there had been a law which could have given righteousness verily righteousness would have been by the Law.” Or, in modern words, if teaching could have restored man, the teaching of the Law would have been enough, and Jesus Christ need not have come. But in like manner the Gospel as mere teaching, which is all that many make it, cannot give life. It is the spiritual power given by Christ Jesus in His sacraments, and by the promised outpouring of the Holy Spirit in answer to prayer, that gives back the lost life, first by a new birth, afterwards by a new power of living, which can put to death, *crucify* the worm-life with its affections and lusts. The teaching of the Gospel has to become incarnate in man’s life by the power of the Holy Spirit, or it is not living. Christianity is not a belief, *that* may be intellectual; it is a life incarnate in the man who lives it, and only so far as he lives it is he truly a Christian. During the 1,900 years which have passed since the new life was first put on the earth, some few great life-seeds have taken root and become part of the life of the world, but very few. Christianity slowly and surely passes into human life, but as yet it is very new, a beginning only. The life that understands God’s life and sees God is begun. The meaning of life is this. Death is that low worm-life which cannot see God.

SERMON CXXIX.

DEATH, AND DEATH, AND DEATH.

EPHESIANS II. 1.

“Dead in trespasses and sins.”

DEATH, we have seen, is a worm-life, which cannot see or know God. And the dread meaning of the Apostle's words comes out—“dead in trespasses and sins.” “By nature children of wrath.” Sin is death, in other words, a nature so cut off from God as to be quite ignorant of His glory, and inclined to hate it, and fear it, and rebel against it, as far as it comes in its way—*that* is death. Hatred of good is death, self-worship is death. And the whole world by nature is dead. The question that is to try mankind at the judgment day, since Christ has come, is simply, will man choose the worm-life, or will he choose the God-life?

No doubt this revelation that human life is by nature, now, what God calls death, is exactly what man most opposes and denies, but it is a plain, unmistakable

fact that God is not seen and loved in this His world naturally, and if man had true life, God would of necessity be seen and loved. But the worm-life does not see and love what is out of its reach, and above its nature. Let us first get rid of the first great delusion. The first step in understanding the true meaning of death is to put out of sight at once and for ever, all ideas of the death of the body being any more than a symptom, as a plague spot is a symptom of the plague. Nay, we may go further. The empty chrysalis on the wall is a sign to us of a new life that has got wings. In a kingdom of life, the empty body is the same. Not the perishing of a temporary dwelling of life, but the destruction of high, true life itself is death. The losing God's image is death. The worm-life that crawls is death. Sin is death. "Sin when it is finished bringeth forth death," is the verdict of Scripture, borne out by every fact on earth. What we call death and destruction are only manifestations of the power of sin. If higher life is killed it matters not that lower existence goes on. Man created in the image of God is dead, when the image of God in his life is dead, and only a worm-life that crawls remains. The man has perished, the worm remains.

Death then, in its true sense, is a working corruption that crumbles to pieces all that can go to pieces, and kills all higher life, and makes a destructive power work where before there was a healthy and saving power. All the facts of the world bear this out. Look at the body; take one example only of sin working, take the drunkard. Let him begin as full of life, and strength, and manly power, as imagination can paint him, in the glory of his activity and youth; he sins by

drink, and day by day, yea, hour by hour, the death he has let into his blood works, and works; first his activity goes, his strength is sapped, his muscles relax, a crumbling away of all that binds and holds fast takes place; the hands tremble, the eye grows dim, and a bloated mass of corruption at last is all that is left of the young athlete—rottenness even whilst alive, a moving corpse, scarce held together by the last dying efforts of bodily life.

Then, whilst this is going on, look at his soul-life. First comes a fierce, consuming rebellion against common sense; common sense crumbles away, and is destroyed; and a reckless acceptance of misery and want, a worm-life, takes its place. The feeling of love and honour crumbles away; a worm-life that cannot feel for wife, or child, or himself, takes the place of what he once felt. And home crumbles away and falls to pieces; both the actual outward home, the sheltering roof, the fireside, the very clothes and food of home, as well as the affection and respect, and happy family union of home, it all goes to pieces, or casts him out.

But it does not end here. Death has no end, the home is broken up; *that* ends, but the death goes on. A worse state begins; the broken fragments of the home that cannot live as home, now begin to be a leprosy in the life of the parish, and the nation; having consumed their own resources of life they now prey on those of others, and cost millions in workhouses; or spread disease and helpless corruption by preventible epidemics, the offspring of tainted and enfeebled bodies, and cost millions again.

But this does not end it, the death oftentimes goes on, and becomes crime; and the dangerous classes are

formed out of the wreckage and broken fragments of what once was life ; and the death in the home becomes the death in the community ; and death creeps through the once solid fabric of the nation, crumbling all it touches with ruin, and lawlessness, and a taking of what has not been worked for ; and the whole commonwealth rots, just as the corruption in the drunkard's flesh rotted ; and the drunkard's fate comes on the nation, even as it once came on the home.

Let no one think that death has an end ; death is an ever-continuing crumbling away of higher life, with an ever-continuing misery of lower existence, self-inflicted, self-chosen, even as the drunkard in all his misery still chooses the curse he loves, though he knows it to be a curse. This is what anyone may see on earth who has eyes to see, an endless circle of death ever renewed in lower and lower states.

And what reason have we to think, if we see no end here, that the mere bodily corruption and the grave will put an end to all those forms and workings of death, which did not belong to the body, but belonged to honour, and love, and holiness, and purity, defiled and corrupted, belonged to the movement of life, and not to the body only in which the life dwelt ? Why should the body, coming to an end, end these which are not bodily ? Reason tells us that death is no end here either ; and God tells us that "the fire is never quenched, and the worm dieth not." The crumbling, and corrupting, and destroying power of sin, that is, of death, goes on. Not punishment, in our sense of authority inflicting something on the wrong-doer which really has nothing to do with the wrong done ; not punishment comes, but a downward growth, by which sin, as being love of evil,

still chooses evil; and evil, being corruption working, still crumbles away, and destroys, and makes to fall to pieces higher forms of existence, and still begins again in lower states of misery, an endless line of death.

• Doubtless in a true world, where all the uncertainty of trial is over, the love of evil will move in the midst of the evil it has made, and in a world fitted to evil. But nature, and the word of God alike, teach those who have ears to hear that in the world where all things are true, there are no punishments hung like chains outside, by authority, on the sinner, but an inner working curse of evil loved ever producing new growths and lower states of evil, ever producing more awful depths of self-inflicted misery, of degraded existence, in fit abodes, "where the fire is not quenched, and the worm dieth not."

Brethren, bethink you what you are now learning to love. Is it death that you are allowing to creep into your lives and crumble away the gallant spirit, the fresh activity, the manly endurance, the resolute work-power, by self-indulgence, and idleness, and impurity? *That* is death, death beginning to act. And be not deceived, do not think that if all the time when your powers are freshest, and strength unbroken, and nature herself making it easy to spring upwards, you are resisting the upward spring, and learning to love the worm-life of foul earthly desires, do not think, I say, that by and by, all of a sudden, you know not how, all that you have learnt to love through years of baseness will drop off, and leave you full of love for what you have learnt to hate. As well might the confirmed drunkard expect in a moment to leap back to the health and strength of his youth. No, brethren, Redemption and Salvation are not far-off rewards in a far distant future. As there are

no punishments, so are there no rewards, in the sense of ornaments put on. Redemption, and Salvation, and Life, are the noble present lot by which the youngest boy here can, and does, begin, if he is in earnest, to know God. They are the glorious present by which every hour he throws off corruption, gathers strength, bathes in hope, and lives. We are not put by God in a world full of good, which we are forbidden to touch, for the sake of something to come by-and-by. We are put in a world where the highest happiness is the conqueror's heart, which, by the power of its life, throws aside with contempt all temptations to slavery, and learns to use as a conqueror the lower earth, a world in which the practice of living power and self-mastery is happiness—a world in which happiness in self-mastery grows into certainty of immortality, and the lost image of God returns to man, so that he sees and feels the presence of God now and for evermore.

SERMON CXXX.

ON LIVING.

COLOSSIANS III. 3.

“ Your life is hid with Christ in God.”

NATURE means that without learning, powers and feelings grow and act. We see by nature. The power of sight is born with us. The eye, as a matter of course, is born, and, as a matter of course, sees light, and, as a matter of course, sees whatever light prints on it. When an eye does not see light, it has ceased to be an eye, though it often looks like an eye still. The eye that does not see light, is, as an eye, dead. The image of God in man was once nature; and God's image, or nature, as a matter of course, felt and saw God's presence; for the nature of God in man naturally received that which was natural to it; and when this natural power perished, this eye was put out, it was dead; and man, as far as the true life went, was dead. It does not matter that man has many good feelings and powers left; if the natural sight of God is not one of those feelings and

powers, man's true life is dead. And nothing is more certain than that man by nature does not see and feel the presence of God everywhere; whatever else he has left, *that* he has not got.

Man has without doubt many feelings of good and evil, justice and injustice, virtue and vice, but this is not the sight of God. All this both can exist, and has existed, in millions without any feeling of the presence of God with it, and can be conceived of as continuing to exist, if the feeling of God was utterly blotted out of the world, as it is out of many hearts—any true feeling of God, that is. Nay, more. There may be a thorough conviction that God is, and that He must be obeyed in those His laws, and yet, good as this would be, it might have nothing to do with the recovery of the lost life, and the restoration of the image of God. We men use many of the lower animals as servants. They obey us; they are fond of us; they do much because they are fond of us, more still because they know our power. Well, but the dog and the horse remain the dog and the horse still. They do not change their nature because they see our power, and do our work. We cannot lift them up into our world of prayer and praise; or make them rejoice in the beauty and goodness which we rejoice in. But if this is true, as it is, then this same obedience of a lower nature to a higher may exist in man without in any way bringing him nearer to the nature of God, or giving him any real insight into the higher life of the Divine nature. If God's nature is as much above us as our nature is above a dog, then God's image is not in us, and has died; and we might as well call a dog a man, as say that the life once given to man is not dead.

Men do not by nature see and feel the presence of God. "The light shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehendeth it not."

"Beloved, now we are the sons of God," says St John, and again, "God hath sent the Spirit of His love into our hearts whereby we cry Abba, Father." And, "that was the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name, which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." On that day death ends, when the life of God becomes incarnate in man, and man, born of God, is willing to lead a life in God's image. This is Christianity, nothing else is—life, life victorious, life able to see God in His world; life, able, as it lives, to feel the presence of God in all things; life, that changes pain into glory, and bodily shame and death to a very present sense of heaven and God.

But life must live. The living must go forward and not look back. Our Blessed Lord told us this in His most solemn farewell, when He said it was expedient that He should go away. He told us that if we would but believe Him, and obey His commands, the new life should come into us, and send us forward; that we were not to stop and look back on the past, no, not even on that past in which He Himself was the one grand figure. The living must look forward, not back. The Redeemer must go, or the new life would not come. He told us that "The Holy Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot

receive, dwelleth in us, and shall be with us to guide us into all truth." A guide is to lead onward into new truths of life, and not permit lingering amongst old facts of knowledge. He told us, that a higher life than Adam lost was to be given us, "That they all may be *one*, as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us." Life and truth, truth lived into by living, this is the promise, this is Christianity, nothing else is. A nature and a life which God can speak of as being His own Life dwelling in man, that is the new salvation, that is life. Divine life, incarnate in the living now, and for evermore, a spirit that has a natural sense of God near, *that* is life. It does not come all at once. It has to grow, just as our human life grows. But it is an ever-moving power, or it is not there. The obedience, as of a dog or a horse, with all the virtue that such an obedience can produce, is not God's spirit dwelling in the heart, able by nature to understand and feel God present as a friend. Those out of whom Christ cast devils, were not by their escape filled with the Holy Ghost, and made preachers of life, seers of purest truth.

No, brethren; life must live. First God's Spirit breathed into the heart gives an inward vision of what is worth doing, and worth having. More especially sorrow becomes intelligible, and is comforted; strength of heart comes; light is thrown on the past; and many present difficulties are felt to be unfolding and clearing up; and a strange harmony between the facts we meet and our inner state begins to be felt. Often and often, some little coincidence strikes with wondrous power, because it fits a deep-felt secret within; even as Christ's words struck home to Nathanael, "Did I not see thee under the fig tree?"—which tell nothing to us, but were very

God to him. Then the life moves on and grapples with some of the lower nature; and self-mastery begins to bear witness to new conditions of seeing God in the world, and to give the power of seeing; the heart tastes the joy of doing right, and sees the meanness of falseness and selfishness.

The moment self is really cast aside, man's spirit acknowledges at once that a higher power is come, and tastes the joy of truth and strength, for Christ's sake; able to choose pain and know its good; and can see Christ the Sanctifier of pain, the interpreter and glorifier of sorrow and weakness, the destroyer of the idolatry of the body, and all that belongs to it, pride of head, or pride of hand, or the lusts of the flesh; able to see Him the Lord of life, as higher motives come into sight, and base things please no more. Light comes when the darkness of self-interest is gone, and the secrets of our own life in God's Kingdom unfold; and oftentimes the purpose and working of God in the world opens out, so that all the great puzzle and discordant cries, the sin and the foulness of the world, its glorious shames and its dreadful depths of pain, puzzle no more, but are understood, and their purpose in God's hands known. Light comes, and the kingdom of heaven within the heart sees and interprets the kingdom of heaven in the world without, and takes part in it; and life is indeed life, a sense of eternal reality which must go on, and only needs to go on to be heaven indeed. If it can make pain, and shame, and insult happy, and the triumph of the wicked an intelligent part of the great training of life, what will it not do amongst happy beings, in blessed homes where sin does not enter? So heaven is to the living no far-off dream, but a very

present sense of life begun ; and bodily death is no king of terrors, but a slight and vanishing trouble in the path, scarcely seen, and never obscuring the beyond.

Thus the certainty becomes a certainty that the present life in God is in God, and cannot die. All past glory belongs to it, and has not died, and cannot die ; all future glory is felt to belong to it, which will live on, and cannot die. Immortality has become a visible fact, in the strong certainty of living life ; and the life beyond the grave is felt already begun, not even as a hope, but begun, as much present, as the life of to-day is present, and the life of to-morrow is in thought with us as the same life now. There are many ways in which Christ makes this divine life work in the living, even as there are many who live, and to each his own way of inward certainty, or inward guidance towards certainty, is given, but they all agree in this one point, in being able to see God in the world, and to rest on His love. They all agree in being a life by nature answering to the Divine life of Christ, imaging it, and reflecting it with an ever-growing sense of light in the heart, light in the world, the path more plain, the world seen as it is, life moving onwards, life victorious, life felt to be *in*, and one with, the great life that from the beginning has lived, and shall live evermore ; till at last a calm conviction of immortal life begun, is the life within, whatever the pain may be without, and death is swallowed up in victory, " O death, where is thy sting ? O grave, where is thy victory ? " The life that is hid with Christ in God knows its life and is satisfied.

SERMON CXXXI.

THE LAW OF DEALING WITH DOUBT.

ST MATTHEW XI. 4.

“Jesus answered and said unto them, Go, and show John again those things which ye do hear and see.”

OUR Blessed Lord once and for ever has laid down in these words the whole law of dealing with doubts in religion. In the simplest and plainest words He has defined the treatment of all religious difficulties arising from imperfect knowledge, or mistaken views. There is nothing, true or false, which man's ignorance or knowledge, philosophy, science, honest doubt, or dishonest pride, can advance which is not met by this simple and plain command—“Go, and show John again the things which ye do hear and see,” and then follow the wonderful, and merciful, and kind works, that were being done. Our Blessed Lord Himself has given us this rule of life, that we are to see good, and be satisfied that good is of God. Light is to show us day by day the good done by God in the world; and as we follow

it earnestly ourselves, we shall see better. No man, who does with all his heart what he sees to be right, has ever doubted long about religion.

The world is too large, too ancient, too full, for anyone to be able to explain everything, or in fact to have any real head-knowledge of the past and present. The wisest and the most ignorant are equally far off from any real mastery of all the facts of the world we live in. And our case would be bad indeed if the goodness of our lives depended on our school, University, or other knowledge. But it doesn't. It depends on our seeing good, and when we see it, loving it, and doing it as far as we can. Many cannot read Greek; but everyone has the power of seeing and loving good. So for evermore the answer to the true-hearted inquiries will be "Go, show John the things that ye do hear and see."

Let us, however, before we examine the meaning of this great answer, and the reasons for it, first try and get a clear perception and picture of the actual persons and facts. I will not at present attempt to sketch the state of the Jewish and Roman world, though it ought to be done, beyond remarking, that power, wealth, knowledge, and luxury, never have made a greater show, or been more impressive, than at that time; whilst all the world was heathen excepting the Jews; and amongst the Jews, a very small number, and those mostly of the poorer, and less learned, kept their belief uncorrupted by heathenism, and their lives pure; though then, as often since, there was much stir about religion, so-called, especially in politics. St John the Baptist had been chosen by God, and his birth foretold by an angel, to be a prophet amongst those few true

believers, and to proclaim God's message to the world. He had done so; he was now in prison because he had done so, and might any day be put to death. This was what his service of God, and his life ushered in by an angel's message, had brought him on this earth. Before he was imprisoned he had seen and baptized our Blessed Lord, and had heard the voice from heaven declare Him to be the Son of God, and had seen the Holy Ghost descend upon Him, as he had before been told, as the sign of the Messiah; and now he sends from his prison to ask, "Art Thou He that should come, or do we look for another?" Whilst our Blessed Lord, had you met Him, would have appeared to you, as you passed by, a man, nothing more, a man walking along the road, whilst you perhaps were on horseback.

St John however had had a great message, and clear proof, yet now he sends from his prison to have his doubts set at rest, and is answered by, "Go, and show John again the things that ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the Gospel preached to them."

A few words tell us this; and we forget, as we hear, that the lives had to be lived, and that day after day, month after month, year after year, St John the Baptist had lived the long hours of life, and felt all the fire, all the weariness, all the hope, all the trials, all the patience, all the daring of his wondrous mission as the chosen prophet of God. How in the lonely desert wilds his heart must have burnt within him as he saw the great stars come out at night, even as David had seen them; and all the hero deeds, and all the promises of his race, rose before him—before *him* the chosen one, the crown

of all that had gone before. And what strange trials, for he was but man, what opening and shutting of the doors of God, must from time to time have brought light, or gloom, upon his soul! And now the end of all prophecy, the promised glory was come, and he was in prison expecting death; he, the leader of the world of past promise, the herald of the new kingdom, in prison, expecting death. Then it was that his own life-trouble came home to him with a force that demanded an answer. How could a prison, and death, be the kingdom he expected? How could He, who left him to die unhelped, be the King? All his knowledge, all his life-belief, was shattered by such a difficulty. How could the kingdom be—a prison—death? This pitiless sword of argument contradicting everything that he had built that part of his life upon smote him, and all the proof he had had in happier hours of liberty seemed to darken, and vanish in the darkness of the prison, and the shadow of that death. What he saw in his own life for a time overmatched, or nearly so, what he knew, what had been proved to him; and the life-agony of trial made him send to his King the question, "Art Thou He that should come, or do we look for another?" The answer was given. It was simple. It amounted to this. Works of life belong to the God of life. See true works of life and believe.

But remember who spoke the words, and who received them. The Lord entered into no discussion with His chosen servant, did not refer him to the Voice from heaven, the Spirit descending, the proof he had seen, the absolute certainty that his mind had received, He only told him to see the living works of good, and trust in the sight for ever.

The good that Christ has brought into the world is its own proof. "If I had not done among them the works which none other man did they had not had sin." The sight of good done; and then, the doing good, because of seeing good, alone can carry a man through the world.

Brethren, this sight of good, and doing good, this all-powerful rule of Christ, this law, by which alone we can know His kingdom, has a great meaning for us here assembled to-day to work, and learn, and learn, and work. You know very well, day by day, what you ought to do; you see very well, day by day, the power of right, the prevailing blessedness of good; but this means, that every day you are learning to see more, or, beginning to shut your eyes and blind them to God's life. What you *do* decides it. The power of sight in God's world of life is gained by living, by doing at once what we see to be right. In early life the doing right principally means doing right ourselves, being trained in our own work, and learning self-mastery; this is your main work now. Do it, and you will see. Do it, and you will see. In later life doing right more generally means doing good to others. First comes the learning by self-training how to do good; then comes the practising what we have learnt, though both always go on together. Here there is no room for doubt. Do daily with honest, pure, earnest effort all your work; and you shall learn by doing to see God. Do daily all unselfish kindness to one another, especially to the weaker amongst you; and you shall learn to see God. Our Blessed Lord made His one test of true life to be the power of seeing good and loving it.

SERMON CXXXII.

CHARACTER, NOT RETAILING OTHER MEN'S HABITS.

ST MATTHEW VIII. 8, 9.

“The Centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me; and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.”

THERE must have been a wonderful fascination in looking on an ancient army. It is always thrilling to see a vast array of disciplined men. But in old times, war was the one supreme glory of man; all other things were as nothing compared to the soldier's claim, and the magic of the sword. Then too, as their battles were fought hand to hand, every man of a victorious army was invested with a halo of personal valour, of a readiness to do and die, which made the whole mighty multitude one

grand ideal of fearless gallantry, and resistless power. And their armour glittering over miles of moving light, with swords flashing, and spear-heads tossing starry fire from point to point, across the horizon, must have been a sight wonderful, triumphant, above all words proud, and full of security to their friends, a despairing death pang to those beneath them. And Roman legions marched over all the world in this terrible splendour of glory, valour, and pomp. They held Palestine with a grip of iron; and as a rule hated the Jews for their stubbornness, and despised them for their strict and uncompromising religion. Who were so little likely to see the quiet unpretentious sight of a few poor men receiving their sight, or being restored to health, as these proud swordsmen, these conquerors of the world? Yet the Lord found amongst these a power of sight, and a faith, such as He had not found in Israel. The Roman officer in command at Capernaum was not blinded by the glitter of swords, or the conqueror's pride. He could see.

But mark how it was that this gallant and courteous gentleman, for the short account given of him is a most perfect picture of the true gentleman, came to be so clear-sighted. He cared for his slaves;—I put this first, because it comes in time first as well as importance, and his character in this was formed before he came to Capernaum; and also, because the daily cruelty which could go on without blame in a Roman household is beyond all human belief at the present time. Now the Roman officer cared for this slave of his so much, that he took the trouble, and stooped, to ask a great favour of the elders of the Jews in Capernaum; and they, though they were against our Blessed Lord, did what he wished,

showing how strongly he wished it, and how much they cared for him. For he had been very courteous and liberal to them. No doubt much to the contempt of some of his comrades. But this gallant soldier, and true gentleman, in his brave, strong heart had learnt to take a line of his own, and not to get his character secondhand, as most men do. So the fashionable pride of rank and authority found no room in the kindly home of him who loved his slaves; and as a natural consequence when he came into Judæa, and saw a purer worship, and chastity, and men whose lips were not defiled by swearing, and filthy talk, his heart at once joined them; and the conqueror became rightly the pupil, and guardian of those who were so much greater than he was in life-wisdom, though beneath him in power. And the fashionable Roman, and alas! Jewish pride, were neither of them able to make him a second-hand retailer of other men's habits. He took his own line, like the brave man that he was, and spent his money on the despised race, and gave them of his gentle spirit, so that they loved him well. Doubtless he had heard of our Blessed Lord healing the nobleman's son, who was sick at Capernaum, afar off, by a word spoken; and it came home to him. Who was this, whose word was obeyed in the kingdom of life and death? And he thought of himself; how his servants and the soldiers under him went and came at his bidding; and then again, how he had to go at the bidding of others; and still his mind went upwards, till he reached the Emperor, the lord of all the armies of earth; and as he thought, the awful fact rose before his eyes, that He, who could command, and be obeyed, in the kingdom of life and death, could be no less than the supreme Lord, the

Emperor of all armies visible, and invisible, the King of Kings. The one, poor, solitary man who went about on foot, speaking the words of power, became at once to the gallant soldier, the loyal officer, no other than the Emperor of the armies of heaven. For obedience, military obedience, obedience, the foundation of all that is manly and true, was the very pivot of his life. So he saw. And this was indeed sight. This was indeed the clear unprejudiced eye of the obedient, the true-hearted, and the brave.

And the short narrative of this gallant soldier and perfect gentleman, may serve to show us directly we look into it, how hard it was in those days of conquerors and conquered to see divine truth moving in its quiet, lowly goodness, only known by helping the weak and the poor. It may also serve to show the kind of temper that gave the clear eye to disregard force and glitter, and come to the side of despised, but holy power. So far of the sight that gains the first allegiance of the loyal heart. Kindness, gentleness, courtesy, love of the slave and the conquered, made the colonel in the conqueror's army, heathen by race as he was, first, a blessing in the conquered city, where he was master; next, clear-sighted enough to see the moral purity of the law; next, full of liberal action for what he saw; and thus led him up step by step in unflinching obedience, to tender the allegiance of his true heart to the Emperor of the powers of life, though He looked to human eyes a poor man, who had not where to lay His Head. Thus he took service, as many a true heart has done since, in the army of Christ.

But the sight of the spiritual eye does not stop at the first enlistment. The whole of Christianity,—that is, of the life of Christ moving incarnate in man, turns on the

promises, that what we see shall go on as a divine power transfiguring those who see. The promises are all this. "The pure shall see God." And, "We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." And, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know when He shall appear we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is."

I need not refer to the many Parables, and numberless passages, in which divine life is spoken of as that which we find, and see, and have. As soon as the heart in a manly way looks steadily at the divine power of Christ giving help as the one thing in all the worlds worth living for, and caring for, two things go on; the eye that sees help done, and loves the sight, must take part in it; and, like the centurion, the person, whoever he be, puts his own life into the work, and loves, and is beloved by the workers amongst whom he works; this brings him into the true Communion of Saints, the company of those who are living their own lives in new ways of brotherhood, and not putting on their characters second-hand, bought ready made in the world's shop. It also makes the seer fix his eyes on what Holy Scripture tells us of Jesus Christ; and, as he looks, his own life casts a light on the inner meaning; and he begins to be able to read it truly. Before, all had been to him, say, like an illuminated book in a foreign language, beautiful; and certain pictures stood out as unsurpassable, but also unapproachable, in their excellence; but as soon as he settles down to work, and begins to understand the language of life by having lived himself, all the little crabbed letters, as it were, become to him glorious and

living, and the illuminated outside is as nothing in his sight compared with the meaning within.

In this way the life of one who fixes his eyes on Christ becomes a new power; and what he saw least at first, and saw without understanding, and perhaps almost with repugnance, has become far more living than what he saw best, as the text of a great poem is more living than the illustrations of it, however beautiful they may be. This power of reading, and interpreting, life becomes as great a fact in the living man, as the power of reading, and interpreting, a foreign language to the scholar in it. And, as he sees, he is led to follow Christ, and "is gradually changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." Or, in modern words, every fresh bit of self-mastery learnt by looking at Christ's example, and following it, by obeying His commands, and doing what He told us, is felt within, in a double power, as changing the whole inner life into a glorious reality of life able to obey, and in opening the interpreting eye so as to see greater glory and follow it. These are facts to the man who lives true life. Facts, that come of sight, and acting according to sight. Facts of all time. Facts to the centurion, that made him overcome that hard beginning, and see the Emperor of heavenly armies in the poor, and lonely Man, who spake the words of power. Facts, that are our facts too, as soon as we follow earnestly that which we see of truth and right, and learn to find Christ working in the world, not taking our characters secondhand, but with true hearts as brave men setting Christ always before us and striving to be like Him, knowing that when He shall appear at last we shall see Him as He is.

SERMON CXXXIII.

THE CHARTER OF WORK.

GENESIS II. 15.

“And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.”

I WISH to put before you to-day, one aspect of life and death. The aspect that comes nearest to us now, which in one sense has nothing to do with the hereafter, and in another sense is the hereafter present now. Let me press on you once more the truth of the seed and the sowing, as an everlasting witness to a future wrapped in a present, and a present which, with fair play, or foul, inevitably produces a corresponding future; so that in a very true sense the future is always present to a living being, as all the possibilities of the life to come are present in the life that now is. It is not possible to escape from this main law. Life is life now, or, it is not life at all. In other words, first of all, there is a divine and immortal life placed by God on this earth, and being brought towards perfection more and more, age after

age, of which we are a part. Every time we pray "Thy kingdom come," we bear witness to this great truth, we bear witness to a kingdom of life set up on earth, which is to be made perfect; and by our prayer we claim to be part of that kingdom, to love its working, and to be eager for its triumph. And, secondly, there is the divine life working in each one of us, the beginning of our immortality, heaven in a bodily seed; and by that prayer we profess to rejoice in this, to be glad workers in the kingdom of life, and to know enough about it to make us go to God daily and ask Him to finish what we know; to come, and show Himself as King, and to answer our prayer in person. In other words, we either pray to go to Him, that is, to die and pass into His presence; or that the Archangel's trumpet and the glory of the last day may dawn on us. So strongly is the life that now is made by God's Word the same as the life beyond the grave.

It will be well then, at this time of Advent and of Christmas, when the coming of Christ and Christ's Kingdom is for weeks brought before us, to try and realise what that life is, which, if we are indeed living, is now, and shall be evermore. For this purpose I have gone back to what may be called the original charter of life. Our Blessed Lord when questioned about marriage, went back to the original marriage charter as given in God's first holy institution; and has left this an example to go back to the original charter of life as God gave it first. The words of my text declare the purpose God had in view when He created man, as to how man should spend the life he had received. The life he had received was to be employed in dressing and keeping the Garden of Eden. He was to work, that is the first

great fact ; and his work was to make the place he lived in a better, and more beautiful, and more productive place ; for a garden is beautiful and productive to begin with, and the dressing and keeping a garden makes it more so. This then was the original charter of life in action, this the law of original goodness. And our Blessed Lord teaches us that that original law is not in any way altered by sin coming in afterwards.

The original charter and present kingdom of life, then, rests on three great truths. First, it is to go on for ever and ever. Secondly, it is to be a life of work. Thirdly, it is to be a life of work which makes the world in which we live better and more productive, and therefore the people in the world better and happier. This simple charter *is* simple, and anyone who acts on it, as far as he himself is concerned, has got rid of all the troublesome problems of modern life. The practical truth is, man is created to work, and all true work is productive, beautiful, and full of increase. We see this as a matter of course in the husbandman's work ; a few bushels of seed, and a little ploughing, feeds many. And is it not an equal truth in all things good ? When St Paul said of himself, that " he was poor, yet making many rich," did he not say once for all, that every man, who has gained learning and spiritual power as he had done, and employed it in the service of others, kept the great charter of the Garden of Eden, and was doing his best to make this earth a garden of the Lord. And he is, if possible, still more emphatic in his demand that good work should receive good pay, and that the man who would not work, in his stern and simple condemnation was to starve : " If a man will not work neither let him eat." Our blessed Lord's words are quite as

emphatic, declaring in various ways that they who work shall live by their work.

That man, then, is working according to God's original charter in Christ's kingdom who is doing any honest work whatever, which is either directly productive and full of increase, or, which beautifies human life in a living way, or, which enriches the life itself by making it higher and better, or even, which does the mechanical part of society, and like a road or a railroad, whilst not actually doing anything whatever towards production, makes all the intercourse of life move easily. All such work is God's work according to the charter of life. Whether the doer of the work is God's man depends on the motive from which he works.

Life eternal, as it now is, must fulfil these conditions. The earth is God's garden, given to man as his inheritance; man is to work in it so as to make it once more a garden of Eden, and God is coming back. There will be an Advent, a coming of Christ to judge the work. The public aspect of the work is plain; the estate is given into our hands to be improved. We are life tenants, but so were our fathers, and so will our sons be—life tenants on this same estate; the land which, as the Commandment says, "the Lord thy God giveth thee." We must improve the estate. The private aspect is plain too; work is our business—the reason we are here on earth—and the man who does not work, be he the inheritor of wealth, or the self-indulgent labourer, the man of uncontrolled passions, high or low, is an outcast in God's world; and it is wicked to force God's worker to pay the bills of the gin palace, or any other form of lust; and more wicked still—which concerns *you*—to run up such bills. I say it concerns you, you who ought

to be workers. Each part of society commits the sins that come in their way ; and each person in each part of society, if he sins, commits the sins that come in his way. The school-boy commits school-boy sins. The street-boy commits street-boy sins. Do not deceive yourselves. Sham work, or scamped work, or no work, is sham work, or scamped work, or no work, whoever the worker may be ; and dishonesty and idleness is on the same level, whether it is dishonest, and idle, and lustful, in a gin palace, or in a school. Any boy here can, and does, run up a gin-palace bill in real guilt, as much at least as the poor wretch in the streets ; often more, because he knows better, and has less temptation.

The charter by which we hold our place on earth, the charter by which all earth is held by man, is the original charter of the Garden of Eden, the charter of work to keep it, and improve it and the dwellers in it. And those who keep that charter are God's labourers, doing God's work. It never stops. This one purpose of ennobling work runs through all. This is life eternal begun ; and he who honestly, for Christ's sake, sets himself to make all his work the best possible, will know before long that he is working for Christ. His life will teach him. He will begin to see God in the work, both from his own inward power becoming holier and purer, and also from finding as he works how the work does do what God promises, and does explain what God warns us against. The charter of life is work in God's kingdom. And when even is come, the Lord of the Vineyard comes to pay His labourers.

You may wonder at this solemn time of Advent that I have not said a word about religion, and holiness, and prayer, and the Holy Communion, and purity, and

worship. I answer, That true work in God's Kingdom includes all these, and cannot go on without them. I answer, Work, with a hearty singleness of purpose never to do a mean, or vile, or scamped thing, for Christ's sake, and you will soon find what earnest obedience to God is needed before you can do true work. You will soon find the meaning of, "If ye love Me, keep My commandments." You will soon find how those commandments alone make work possible.

Once more, then, the King comes at last to judge those labourers who slew the servants He sent, and lived in the vineyard as their own. The Lord of the vineyard calls His labourers when even is come to give them their wages—what they have earned by work. Evening closes in; the long day's work is over; every man stands listening, looking down the road, waiting to catch sight of the Lord coming. It is Advent time, an end has come; it is Christmas time; Christ is returning to judge the work. The workmen will see Him soon. They feel in their hearts already the spirit of His nearness, searching them. Their hearts will not rest. They give judgment, and will not be silent. There is that within them, for good or evil, that will be heard now their Lord is so near. Brethren, it is Advent time; an end has come, an end to the year, an end to this term, an end to *your* day's work. Even has come; the very darkness of the dying year around us now is a preacher of judgment truth. Even has come; Advent has come; the end has come. The Lord is here to judge His work. Yea, is here. There is not one heart at this moment in this chapel which does not feel within a judge present, a judge of the past Term and year, a voice that will not be silenced, telling those evil ones, who have been false to

this vineyard of the Lord, of a greater coming still, a judgment without escape or end; telling those faithful workers, however unseen, however unsuccessful, as men count success, of another evening, and a happy sunset of the long day done, when their King shall come, and they shall see Him; when He shall return, Whom all their life long they have known, and loved, and felt with them in His Garden of Eden, and known it to be His Garden by the work they did. Yea, shall see Him. His work is life; even now on earth it reveals Him. They shall know the blessing on work. The great charter shall be their reward.

SERMON CXXXIV.

COURAGE, MANLINESS, CHRISTIAN CHIVALRY.

JOSHUA I. 9.

“Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.”

IT is strange considering the admiration men have for courage, how very little as yet the manliness of Christ's service has been set up as the ideal of the young man. Strange how little the perfection of gallantry and honour has been taken as the dream of boyhood, the earnest aim of manhood, the glory of age. Yet when I say this, I have not forgotten that in rough and fierce times, there did arise in the grand idea of chivalry, and knighthood, a rough, and imperfect, and yet a very real incarnation of the spirit of Christian bravery. “The very perfect, gentle, knight” of the old poet, ay, and of real life, took as his creed, though in a blind way of practice, that he

was to redress wrong, to protect the weak, to honour women, and fight to save them, to be pure in thought and act, and very brave, whatever enemies might meet him. And without doubt, some of the influence of that high creed, and true sense of honour still remains. Indeed, if it had left nothing behind but the name of gentle-man, nothing but the true word that the gentle are the noble amongst men, how great a debt would the world owe to the knighthood of old time! What an inheritance it is to have, generation after generation, unchangeable, for ever, as long as the English language lives, in the hearts of men, that calm great truth of gentleness being nobility, which the word "gentleman" bears witness to. Is it too much to hope that even now, once more, the idea of Christian knighthood is beginning a new life?

There are many signs abroad that the four great practical new truths, which during 1400 years Christianity strove to embody in daily life, are beginning to lift their heads again, though they then broke down through inexperience, and human corruption of truth. I mean, Chastity, Obedience, Charity, Bravery. They broke down, because the obedience was one-sided and unintelligent, exacted by superiors from inferiors, not given by both; and the charity was one-sided, and unintelligent, gifts from superiors to inferiors, not gifts from both, and the bravery was one-sided and unintelligent, belonging to the few, not the many. And chastity in like manner was set up as something apart from daily life. But the creed was a true one, which set all practical life and truth on those four strong foundation stones of Chastity, Obedience, Kindness, and Bravery. Chastity, Obedience, Kindness, and Bravery, are the foundation of all true greatness. Chastity—Obedience—Kindness—

Bravery—these four make the working creed of man. And though the great experiment of the first fourteen hundred years did not succeed, from being tried in a wrong way, most certainly as soon as the confusion of failure comes to an end, there will be a new trial; and Chastity, Obedience, Kindness, Bravery, will again be the watchword of Christian chivalry, the guiding star of the young, the creed of the true-hearted, which all will practise, high and low alike.

Even now there are signs of the coming birth of a nobler manhood, a knighthood of wider power, which shall take all from the throne to the cottages; and where can it begin better? Where rather must it not begin? Must it not begin with the young? Must it not begin in those great schools, which in England alone gather in from many homes the foremost of the land to be trained? May it not begin here—even here?

It may show us how true the call to such a knighthood is, how the note struck vibrates from first to last through our human nature in God's kingdom, if we go back along the thousands of years to the first examples, when in a large, plain, unmistakeable way, God made His chosen people represent the working of true life, made them a kind of living manuscript of divine training, a book of Christian doctrine in their history; both what they did, and what they suffered, the grace given them, and the sins they sinned as well, marking out how God intended the teaching and training of the future world to go. By a strange providence, He made all of them, young and old, men, women, and children, into a great army encamped in the mightiness of their strength. Or, it is equally true to say, that He made that great army into a great family, family camped with family, each in

their tribe, and tribe with tribe, having homes, and all one moving home of the armed nation. Two great truths, the family truth, and the army truth, equally impressed on their national life. And then, to make the likeness to human life complete, they have to conquer a land full of enemies mightier and stronger than themselves; but—they move to the word of God declaring, "Have not I commanded thee? Be strong, and of a good courage; be not afraid; neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest."

Even so, as long as the world lasts, does the young man stand with the place in life to be conquered before him—stand, a strange mixture of home life, and home feelings, together with the soldier discipline, and the wanderer spirit, of one who has to fight his way; with Christ's promise also, that He will always be with us, and with Christ's high word also, "that he who loseth his life shall find it," with Christ's doom on the coward also, that "whosoever will save his life shall lose it." Courage being the first quality demanded from the servants of Christ, the Hero King.

How true, then, was the note struck by the knight-hood of old, when they made life consist in being protectors of home, and champions of the oppressed; even as the children of Israel had to conquer all enemies with the promise of a home. "Have not I commanded thee? Be strong." And even as *they* stood with God's promise of the land in their hearts, and God's command, to go forward and conquer that land, ringing in their ears, so stands every young soldier of Christ now. "Have not I commanded thee? Be strong." With us, as with them, just in front lies all the future, so full of the unknown, so

full of hope, so full of danger, so full of honour; and the same promise, a happy home on earth, and in heaven, to everyone who conquers fear, and lust, and selfish greed, and disobedient ignorance of true greatness. And with all their faults, and foolish rebellions, they did conquer in the power of God.

And so shall we. There need be no new brotherhood called into existence to carry out this scheme of knightly honour, of courage, of pure and happy homes, of chastity, and protection of the weak. Our Lord Christ has already provided such a bond of union, and taken His champions out of the world into a special Body-guard for Himself. Our King, the conqueror of death and hell, has already founded the noble order of the champions of the Cross, the knights of pure homes, and fearless bravery; He has already given to all such His great command, the trumpet call of God. "Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid; neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest."

This week, in Confirmation, this day, in the Holy Communion, you have been enrolled, and recognized as the champions of pure homes and fearless hearts, the chivalry of Christ. Be strong; you have been strengthened, confirmed, and called out of the world into an inner circle of holy championship and honour. "Have not I commanded thee?" has been spoken to you. "Be strong," has been spoken to you. The spirit of wisdom and understanding has been given to you; that spirit, which knows how to obey wisely, and understands how mean it is to thrust forward self first; the spirit of counsel, and ghostly strength, which knows what is honourable, and pure, and right, and does it; the spirit of knowledge, and

true godliness, which can meet all intellectual difficulties with greater, wider knowledge of life, and the real facts of life; the spirit of holy fear, which never shrinks from anything but wrong doing. Such is your confirmation; such your communion, or brotherhood, as receivers of the Body and Blood of Christ. Look on yourselves then as members of the nobility of the world; as having received the order of knighthood in the kingdom of heaven, as Christ's champions and body-guard. And so to-day, in spirit enter into Jerusalem with your King, in triumph, and so follow Him day by day: stand by His Cross on Friday; stand by the open grave on Sunday; rise again with Him, now, even now, from the burial in Baptism, leaving your sins in the grave; rise again to newness of life. "Be strong, and of a good courage; be not afraid; neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest."—And thou—what art thou? Thou art one of the champions of Christ, invested with an order of nobility from Him, girt with the sword He has given thee, having the star of His cross on thy forehead, and thy heart.

SERMON CXXXV.

PREACHED BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE.

CHRISTIAN HEROISM.

ST MATTHEW VI. 17, 18.

“Thou, when thou fastest, anoint thy head, and wash thy face, that thou appear not unto men to fast.”

THIS is a command. And it is of the very nature of a command to be short and simple. Nothing comes more direct from the inner life than a command. Life touches life at once; straight comes the power out, straight it goes to its mark. A command is life power more condensed, more unmixed, more driven home, than anything else. “March!” says the commander, and a hundred thousand men move to the field of death. “Charge!” he cries, and with one mighty rush the torrent of life bursts forth to conquer or to die. For all understand, all feel, the grand resistless simplicity of a true authority in its commands. God in His highest work commands. God said, “Let there be light; and there was light.” And Christ commands—the Gospels are commands, or simple statements akin to command, or example, which is command in a living energy. And Christ’s commands

come to us as the most direct communication of God to man, the simplest touch of divine life, the most disencumbered of all earthly mediums. The Master speaks. Who will obey? The Master calls. Who will follow? And no call to follow Him has ever reached man in a purer form than this command, this call, to do all hard things easily for His sake. No nobler words than these, which tell us when we fast to be as those who feast, ever decided the great question of what to do, and how to do it. The Master calls; it is for us to come. The Master commands; it is for us to obey.

It is unnecessary, I suppose, to show that in the kingdom of life fasting means all self-denial. Words are as dead as the ink that prints them, unless the true life-meaning is taken. The letter killeth. Fasting is an expression for that self-mastery, which begins by self-mastery in food; for no one who is the slave of his body is free to act; but freedom is the end in view. Life moving, life powerful, life able to do, or bear, at any true command, is fasting as interpreted by life; and a weary man coming back from breathing the air of close rooms, or tried by sedentary work, who forces himself to eat in spite of no appetite and repugnance, obedient to the command, "Thou shalt not kill,"—thyself any more than another,—as truly fasts by eating, as the robust open-air worker does by abstaining from food. The self-denial in this can be greater, the life-meaning of self-mastery more perfect, as real life interprets the command, and turns the dead letter into a living reality. Be not deceived; each man knows truth only so far as he has lived it. The letter is dead, never more dead than when grasped by the keen intellect without the feeling, without the interpreting life.

This then is the command of Christ. His men must not let their trials be seen. They must do all hard things with a genial pleasant face like men at a feast, easily and lovingly. And they must not be acting a part in this ; it must be real. That is, this is the ideal of manhood towards which all effort must tend ; in the spirit of which all beginnings must be made. The character aimed at must be a cheerful festival spirit ; and the outcome of that character must be a joyous face and look, not different in any respect from the worldly man in his hour of enjoyment. We must set before ourselves as a pattern a genial mastery of hardship, a real delight in the deeds of the brave and the strong, a real joy of the conqueror in the happy face, a real power of life in the easy performance. Life and its spirit must be matched against the pain in this, as it is in lower things. What man who runs a race does not exult in the active powers, though the strain may be severe, and the power gained by much of pain ? What man who rows does not exult in the mighty swing of the trained arms, and the speed ; though the skill and the strength involve pain ?

It *is* true, then, that a lesser pain may underlie a great joy, and indeed produce it. It *is* true, then, that Christ's command, to look joyous whilst doing painful or difficult things, is in accordance with man's nature ; and there is no unreality in bidding us "climb the steep ascent of heaven" with the natural buoyant spring of heavenly life, with the elastic step of the born mountaineer, and not the heavy plodding drag of the day-labourer. And if so, then it follows that our look and behaviour, and dress and bearing, as we are doing nothing uncommon, shall not be uncommon either. This is Christ's

command. His men are to look to the world just like men of the world in their festival hours; no one is to know by their look what they are doing in their trials. The trials are part of the true life, a matter-of-course part of it, and, as such, are not matters out of the way, or specialties to be marked. This is exactly the command that was given in a very inferior degree by the great Duke in the Peninsular war, when he issued as the order of the day, "that there should be no more volunteering for forlorn hopes or storming parties; it was the soldiers' duty, and the regiments should take it in turn as such." There are to be no "forlorn hopes" in the kingdom and army of Christ. This appears to be the first plain meaning of the command, no ticketing of ourselves as doing something extraordinary; it is the soldiers' duty; and the best soldier is he who makes least fuss, and does his work most easily. Nay, but Christ commands more. He commands the men of His army to have the joyous face of men at ease, to do their work, their forlorn hope work, so easily, so lovingly, that none shall know they are doing it.

This is indeed a hero's ideal, a great demand, but it is the command of Christ to all His men—His command, that the life shall be joyfully matched against the pain, and nothing uncommon be thought about it, no ticket saying "Look at me" be set upon the doing, no work against grain to win praise be done. No praise, no dreams of triumph,—what we *are*, not what is thought of us, must be the heart-motive. Work to win praise is indeed hypocrisy, an acting an unreal part for the gain of it, and what did the Pharisee do more? He was unreal for the gain of it, that was all. But if there is any truth, if there is any life, then growth in truth, and

growth in life is all in all, not the work done, nor the praise won, whatever men think. The true measure of greatness is not the shadow cast along the earth for men to see, the image lengthened out by the low glare of lamps held up by man, that glory that lies flat on earth, and cannot leave the ground on which it rests, and without touch of which it has no being; no—true life has a being of its own, most true when Heaven's full light shines straight down on it; it works not to cast its shadow, it cares not for what is thought of it, for the growing in Heaven's light is its joy in itself. He who fasts in Christ's Kingdom simply tastes the joy of life; he fasts because Christ's life is higher, and better and sweeter than aught else, worth all the pain, even *in* the pain worth it. There is no acting a part in his happy face, though the task may be hard, and the pain great; neither praise drags him, nor fear to do what he would not otherwise do, to act a part, to be other than his true self.

Look to your motives. Christ commands that the works of life, however hard, shall be done in a holiday spirit, easily, lovingly, for their own sake, with the look of a guest enjoying himself at a pleasant dinner party. The thing is simple enough; there is to be a quiet natural inward life, a joy in living, without reference to any outward gain or outward competition. Truth rejoices in itself, and does not want to be told that other men see it. Truth rejoices in itself, and moves amongst the temptations of the world glad to leave them, glad to feel above them, and does not long for what it dare not touch, but would touch, if it dared, like a felon afraid of the prison. This is the ideal set before us, the character to aim at, an ideal of life within, of a

complete, perfect internal power, which whether it acts or suffers, moves or is still, meets every outward force with a natural spiritual strength to which by degrees everything becomes easy. In a word, it is life as contrasted with all outward manifestations or results.

It is curious in this world of sense to see how the idolatry of strength in some shape or another takes possession of most minds; and men are called great (the very word reflects the idolatry) because of actions done, or works of mind produced, that take large shapes amongst mankind; whilst the secret unknown silent endurance, the unconquerable inner life that can be patient when doing nothing, that bears whatever comes, be it shame or be it praise, that needs no strength, but can anoint the head, and wash the face, and smile, and look happy, whilst the strong oppress it, is not thought of. A kind of animated machine, a human embodiment of wide-reaching thought, or sword-like power, is glorious, and inventive skill a god; mankind worship the Titans still; but the faintest breath of inward life divine both can, and has, matched itself with a calm superiority to bear, and by bearing to set at nought, all the giant troubles, or giant divinities of the idol-loving world.

Christ's heroes hear Christ's command, and mean to live a life within in very truth, and easily, lovingly, as at a feast, to take the hardships of life as a joyous training. What matters the strength of others if they in their weakness can be trained to bear cheerfully all that the strong can do? Mark, too, this command can be obeyed by all; and surely, if it were otherwise, there is no want of courage in England's young men. Yet it is not courage that is asked for; a dog can be courageous; more than courage is commanded, but a thing that all

can be. All can be trained to the quiet resolution which bears what the hour brings, unconquered. All can aim at the splendid patience that waits, or works, with equal energy of inward power, content to meet the message of each day with perfect obedience. All can strive for the peaceful hardihood which penetrates a thousand nameless nooks of untold misery with stores of secret blessing, like some clear rivulet, seeking no reward. All can catch something of the prophet heart, which, being in its own truthful circle, can see truth in the world outside, and Christ the King being crucified there; and seeing this does not, as fools do, seek for justice, or expect its rights, knowing well that, in the kingdom of the blind, the one-eyed man is hung as a traitor for daring to see. All can win at length that omnipotent silence, which in the clutch of evil power cannot be made to utter words of useless self-defence—that omnipotent silence, which persecuted, reviled, in the midst of triumphant wrong, checks the fierce fire of the burning tongue, and will not put the spark to the dry wood, but dies mute and voiceless, self-restrained even unto death, rather than overthrow wrong by kindling fiercer wrong. All can do these things; for they require nothing but a spirit of quiet endurance; no strength is needed but this. This power of living alone within the heart-sanctuary, even as we die alone, that world-wide bit of teaching which every man can see, which sends us all into our inner chambers to live as we must die, without any companion but life itself, this can be learnt by all.

And all this must be done easily, that is the command, easily, lovingly; the only thing out of the common permitted is an unusual cheerfulness. Brethren, this is to

be a hero. A hero does hard things easily, so easily that no one sees them to be hard, so easily that he himself, as life goes on, has learnt to forget the hardness, and to rejoice in the manly joy of matching life against self-indulgence or pain. Surely what a power there would be in this place if this was the ideal of life. What a power there is in this place; only let this fountain of knowledge become also a fountain of life; only let life—life—be the *one* aim, and clumsy idolatries of strength and praise come to an end. And, as all can have Christian heroism, so it can begin always; nothing is too small for a beginning, nothing too great for the end, since it is a true growth in life. And it is the positive command of Christ that we all strive to attain this easy self-mastery, which does hard things in a common cheerful way.

I am bid challenge you to-day in Christ's name to obey this His command, and challenge you, too, in a way which ought to come home to all here more than in any other place in the world. A very noble work is being done here by the Cambridge Old Schools, and the Church of England Primary Schools generally. More than four thousand children are being educated; and it is easy to see that much help is needed for this great work to go on at all. A thousand pounds of voluntary subscriptions were needed last year; and almost any sum might be spent with advantage in meeting the demands of increasing population, and in making the work in other ways more effective. There is no doubt about the goodness of the work. And this University, which lives by its endowments, is also a great living endowment to hand on life from itself. Much true work, I understand, is given; noble subscriptions and

donations I see are made by some ; but we want no forlorn hopes in Christ's army, we want every man to have some touch of the hero, every man to be learning that quiet self-mastery which, by degrees, does the hardest things easily, with a smile on the face. This true heroic temper, which all can have, is always finding exercise in little things. Christ commands ; to-day you are called on to obey. Those who believe the command of Christ will obey it, those who do not believe it won't. Not a word more shall be added. When a true authority says, " March ! " no true soldier sits still.

SERMON CXXXVI.

GOD THE HOLY GHOST.

ST. JOHN XVI. 7.

“Nevertheless, I tell you the truth ; it is expedient for you that I go away : for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you ; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you.”

WHEN we pause, and think over the working of God amongst men, nothing strikes the mind more than the calm, slow, long-suffering march of the divine purpose, which the German poet has noted :—

“Though the mills of God grind slowly,
Yet they grind exceeding small :
Though the time be long in coming,
With exactness grinds He all.”

We have seen how for thousands of years one great truth of Revelation, the Almighty Allwise government of God the Father, was the only great doctrine on earth; the first Person of the Blessed Trinity alone made known to man. The mills of God during all those

hundreds of years were grinding slowly and surely this main truth into mankind, and did not heed any of the other difficulties of man till this was done. It is all the more startling therefore to find, that whilst tens of centuries were consumed in preparing man for the Redemption of sin, and the Redeemer; ten days only intervened between the Ascension of the Redeemer and the Revelation of the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of Life, the Comforter. Is not this fact in itself a revelation? a most decisive teaching of the will and purpose of God to all those who have eyes to see, and ears to hear? Does it not add a fresh meaning to Our Blessed Lord's words, "It is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you"? Did not Our Blessed Lord intend by these words to put before us, that it was God's will, the will of God the Father, and God the Son, that the presence of the Holy Spirit on earth in man should be the great revelation of the last days; and that the worship of the Holy Spirit of Life and Truth should be *the* worship of man from henceforth? Even as God the Father had in the last days revealed Himself in His Son, so had God the Father and God the Son revealed themselves in the Holy Spirit, as the crowning revelation of the Godhead, and as the crowning worship, and glorious aim of all human excellence and holiness for evermore. God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost, Three Persons and One God, demanding from mankind a life, which should rise by the divine grace to meet God, and be drawn upwards by the heavenly light, even according to the light God has given. And the way in which God gave His light, and the time during which He kept man waiting, and the successive steps by which man

was brought near to God, are simply everything to the earnest heart, the clear, undoubted witness to the will of God as to man's life and salvation.

It is certain from this, that the worship of the Holy Ghost is the crowning revelation of the Godhead, and that the perfection of man's life is when the Holy Spirit becomes his living reality, and when the world is turned to the Holy Spirit as the one supreme revealed glory, to whose service all revelation has led up; the acknowledgment of whom as the Lord and giver of Life, and the indwelling, ever-present divinity, marks the true Christian in his most true and highest state. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." This is being a Christian indeed, to have the Spirit of Christ. He who is indeed of Christ knows the Holy Spirit, as Our Blessed Lord has told us. "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of Truth, Whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him; but ye *know Him*, for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." This is the test. Be not deceived. "If any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." Whatever he may know, or believe, or observe, if he hath not the Living Power of God living in him, and leading him, he does not belong to Christ, and is no true Christian. Who then truly worships the Holy Spirit? To whom is the Holy Spirit of Life and Truth the ever-present reality of Christ having come on earth? Who makes life, and life only, the crowning point of all his belief, of all his blessings, of all his doctrines, of all his creeds? Who has begun eternal life because of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him? Who moves in all his daily tasks as

one to whom all that God has given him is, as a miser's gold, precious, but useless, unless his life lives on it, and by its help; whilst the least spark of life living, and real, *is* living, and *is* real, the only reality in all the worlds. This is to have Christ, to live the life which the Holy Spirit gives.

A time will surely come, when mankind will judge themselves and each other first, by the life lived, counting all things else as nothing; and will not suffer any professions, any observances, any creeds, any forms, however excellent, or divine, to hide the fact of the lower life.

Nearly two thousand years have passed since the first Whitsunday only ten days after the Ascension saw the descent of the Holy Ghost on the Apostles, the last revelation of the Holy Trinity; and still mankind are looking back, and struggling with old world difficulties, and old world sins, and building up old world shapes, and old world necessities, instead of looking forward into the new life, and the new life world, strong in the worship of the Holy Spirit, strong in the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, strong in the freshness of higher life and the last revelation. Brethren, is your worship the worship of Life divine? Is your creed a daily victory of life over the flesh and its temptations? I claim you as temples of the Holy Ghost, living shrines of living power, to live by that power, and count nothing else to be religion. Where is the speedy acknowledgment of life divine as the crown of God's revelation which was typified by the short ten days between the Ascension of the Blessed Lord and the coming of His Spirit of Truth, the Holy Ghost, the Comforter? This Chapel, with all its holy fitness for worship, is no more holy

when the persons in it are mean and irreverent, than you are temples of God, when the life in *you* is mean and irreverent. The walls, however glorious, do not make holiness. Turn these strong walls into a warehouse of stolen goods, they would not be holy. The life within makes the holiness, though the holiness needs the strong and beautiful shrine. So with you all your privileges, and religious blessings, however glorious, do not make holiness; they help to make the life possible, and to make it powerful, but they are but as walls, unless the life that is in you lives indeed. And they are desecrated, and profaned, when the foul thoughts rule. Even as a herd of swine in a Cathedral, so are the thoughts that too often herd in bodies that were framed and consecrated for the homes of the Holy Ghost, sanctified for worship and life. Once more, where is that worship of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Truth, the Comforter, which was to become the great crowning revelation of the world so soon; as the ten days typified it ought to become?

Be sure this truth yet has to live its way into the hearts of men with all the power of a new revelation. Be sure there is a new revelation, which men seem not yet ready to receive in this worship of the Holy Ghost that is yet to be. Men have yet to hold fast to all the earlier truths, and all the means of grace, and absorb them as it were into their being, whilst their whole energy will be thrown into a new life. They will look forward, and not back.

Yet no one who remembers the four thousand years of preparation for the Redeemer to come, and the nearly two thousand years that have passed since in impressing mankind mainly with the elementary truths of redemp-

tion, will be in danger of forgetting the means by which God works, and disregarding the body of divine Life, under the cover of zeal for the life, as many have done. All that has past has to be absorbed into the Christian, and lived into; all present gifts of God have to be absorbed into the Christian, and lived into. They must be made the Christian man himself; and then he is ready to begin to live; then he is ready to be the living home of the Holy Spirit of Christ and God; then he is ready to follow the Holy Ghost and worship Him. Then he will go forward, and think little of the old world temptations to the more selfish sins and bodily lusts. They will not be pleasures, or tempt. He will go forward, ever pressing into new worlds of happy daring, and works of life; the very doing of which tells him of the Comforter. The enjoyment of new sight of God and Christ in the world will inspirit all his labours. The enjoyment of new hopes, and the certainty of an explorer exploring the kingdom of life, and feeling the kingdom of God on earth, will day by day be its own exceeding great reward. Brethren, you are soldiers of the Holy Ghost: once catch the faintest breath of the soldier spirit, the conqueror's joy that the Holy Ghost gives to those who worship Him, and the sleep of the sluggard, and the self-indulgence of the coward, and the death of the unclean, will tempt you no more. You will live, and by living know the Lord of life.

SERMON CXXXVII.

BORTH COMMEMORATION.

I. SAMUEL XVII. 26.

*“Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy
the armies of the Living God?”*

CAN we not make those two hills in the far East live again with the battle set in array, army against army, and the morning sun lighting up the valley, and the rocks; and see the grassy slopes, with the little stream between running quickly out of sight into more peaceful pastures where the flocks fed undisturbed? Now, on each side the valley, swarmed the dark ranks of those fierce soldiers; and spear, and shield, flashed light; and breast-plates gleamed; and the shout of coming victory rang through the host of the Philistines, when their champion stepped out once again to defy Israel, and looked more than mortal as he towered in height above the men who dared not meet him.

Who was the young, unarmed lad that with such calm confidence talked with the soldiers on the hill, and

felt so sure the champion should not win? Felt so sure, not because he underrated the danger; the man who had walked up to the lion to save one poor lamb did not want to be told what it was to face death. Who was it felt so sure, that whilst two armies stood by to see, with his brothers' scoffs still in his ears, and all the shame of overthrow in the death-meeting with thousands of eyes upon him, he quietly stepped out alone, and did not fear to match his fair young face, and boyish life, against the renown and murderous fame of the great warrior, whom a warlike nation boasted as their best? He, who felt so sure, gives us two reasons for his wonderful courage. One, and the chief, in a sense the only one, is that he fought as the soldier of the Living God. Yet the second reason is no slight one. He fought as one, whom God had delivered, whilst doing his daily work, from great danger. He had already found God able and willing to save him from the paw of the lion and the bear, when in the name of God, and trusting in God, he had done his shepherd duty in defending his sheep. It was no rashness, which made him go down step by step, ever drawing nearer, as the many thought, to certain death. It was no rashness. Those two certainties were in his heart. He was one of the people of God—he knew it, and his spirit rose calm and unconquerable, as the armies of the Living God were defied, and he knew it should not be done, and no doom mark it. And he had tried, by a most true experience, the power of God to save *him*, even *him*. The first reason belonged to all the army of Israel. The second, was his own.

Yet the second was only an honest, brave outcome of believing the first, and testing it, and making it his

own by using it. What you do not use is in no true sense yours. This is true in all things. The sword, which you have never touched; the horse to him who never rides; the book, that is never read; are each in their way powers, but not till they are used, not to him who uses them not. And the heart powers also between man and man must be used: they become noble by noble use, and mean by meanness. And in like manner belief in God is only made our very own by our meeting the work of daily life trusting in what we believe, trying it, proving it, and finding by proof, that the facts we have known as bits of history which belonged to us become, when acted on, bits of our own lives, certainties inseparable from ourselves.

First then we have the great fact of the people of the living God. The broad, plain signs of this to the Israelite were broad, and plain, and simple. His nation had a history which marked them out as filling a very special place in the world. Great dangers, and great deliverances, and very special messages from God, and blessings from Him, made them a peculiar people. They had been protected in no common way. I think that anyone who knows history will have no difficulty in picking out those nations of the world, that have from time to time been specially chosen to do God's work at the time, and have been rejected by God, if they did not do it truly. A purpose is seen running through their existence, and the revelation of God moving in them; and above all, great trials, and much bravery, and hard work, and pain, and constant danger, accompanied by protection, and deliverance in spite of it all, combined with a power and security in all living greatness, mark a people chosen by God.

Have you ever taken to heart the meaning of our English island power? Have you ever thought that God's revelation has had a freer life here given it, and the Church a clearer light, and the Word of God more undisturbed possibilities of rule than elsewhere? Above all, have you ever thought of the meaning of this land of ours having been kept safe and untouched by any foreign enemy for eight hundred years, alone of all the kingdoms of the earth? Has it never entered into your souls to inquire why our Empire is so great? Why our power is over all the world? Why on many a battle field our race has stood, and rolled back nations greater and mightier in number and giant power? Why, tried by danger, and war, and perils by land and sea, with her sons in all lands, labouring, working, striving, ever active, all the time England alone of all the nations upon earth has had a sacred circle of invisible peace drawn round her own land, and her own homes; and been allowed to rest, and grow, and spread, in perfect inward peace? Was there ever such a lot given to a nation before? Go ask from one end of heaven to another of this great thing, and since the world began, such a time of shielded peace has never been given to any race save to us only. Never, never before, has any kingdom had eight hundred years of guarded safety in their homes. If there was nothing else, this alone would mark England as entrusted with a special mission, as a chosen nation, a peculiar people.

These very walls, whose uprising we celebrate in part to-day, bear witness to the long continued covenant of God's chosen people, and our hope that for a thousand years, and onward, their quiet station on the hill may still be kept inviolate. Our Tercentenary bears witness

that we too are enrolled in the armies of the living God. And if we take the life of this place as one, then like David, we too have tried the Deliverer, and found Him deliver; we too have made the faith our own, our very own, that the truth lodging in us living here, lodged in this living company, this school, shall go fearlessly out, down into the valley of the world, from off this hill, and armed with the simple practice of our daily life honestly frankly done, overthrow every form of giant wrong, and glittering falsehood, that it meets. The pebble out of the brook, the every-day task shall be enough to win. Yea, this school has tried the Deliverer.

There was a day, when our eyes looked on these great walls, and we doubted whether we should ever worship here again. Utter ruin had come, utter and absolute to the life *here*. We had to go out, and, in the sight of all the world, live or die as a School. Few know, very few know, what it is, day by day, to see the giant deadly force of irresistible, invisible ruin, drawing closer and closer, and to look straight in the face of overwhelming evil power. There was a day, when the School here in this place had come to an end, and when, unless the great venture came out right, all the life we had stored up here was lost; and the good cause, the cause of Christ, which had been our hope here in striving to give each boy true justice in work and play, "none favouring, none forgetting," had perished from this hill side. You know it ended in deliverance. Lo! we are here to-day. But that great deliverance is David's second reason for his faith. Christ the Deliverer has delivered this School, and gave it safety at Borth in that dread year, even as David had been saved. Then, as soldiers in the army of the living God like him, and like

him too holding a life saved by a special deliverance, such as has never happened to any school at any time, we are bound to stand faithful and true; to stand here on our hill, in this our Chapel Fortress, with the school-room at its side—twin fortress homes, the one of holy worship, the other of the work made holy, one great building of God's truth, though two, each upholding the other—we are bound, I say, to stand fast; we are bound to go out from here, calm, and confident that none who defies the armies of the Living God shall conquer. Sons of the chosen people of England with its eight hundred years of the shield of God to look to, and with a great deliverance that has made that shield our own, we stand here to do God's will and live or die for Him. Let there be no cowards here.

SERMON CXXXVIII.

THE FOUNDATION STONE OF HUMAN RELIGION.

EXODUS XX. 12.

“Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.”

THIS most remarkable command and blessing contains within itself the secret of life. I say, “most remarkable,” because at first sight men think it the plainest and most matter-of-course of all commands; and so it is: but beyond this there is a power and meaning, which supports the whole fabric of man’s world. It is the first commandment with promise, as the Apostle reminds us; or rather, the promise is put as a consequence of keeping the command. First of all let me draw your attention to the fact, that the land which the Lord God gave, the promised land, was to the Israelite the one great blessing, the blessing of Abraham, his all; no mere property, no mere country even, not wealth, or

peace, or patriotism only, but *the one* thing by which God's people knew they were God's people, their blessing in the present, their hope in the future; and to lose it was to be made an outcast from God. So that the command put as a threat would run, "Honour thy father and thy mother, lest thou be an outcast from God;" put as a blessing, "Honour thy father and mother, that all God's promises may be thine." And next, length of days is made *the* great blessing. *We* again do not so much heed this, because we look on eternal life hereafter; but the Land of Promise was to the Israelite God's land, a very present heavenly portion; and a long life in God's land was a very present certainty of eternal life with God. It is of the nature of good to live; and it is of the nature of life that it is goodness. It was therefore of the nature of the promise of a land to live in, that long life in that land should be the one great blessing, the all in all of life.

I mean by the words *nature of life, and goodness*, that these two words, *life*, and *goodness*, of necessity mean workings of a certain kind; that wherever there is true life, it works to create, to preserve, to keep together that which it deals with, and that wherever there is goodness, it works to create, to preserve, to keep together in union, to make life, in that which it deals with. This then was what God's command told this people, without explaining it, as a command; that long life was a blessed thing in His kingdom; and that long life in His kingdom on earth would follow on honouring father and mother.

Now, that the whole receiving of God's promise, that all His promise, should turn on honouring father and mother is at first sight a most striking thing. And it was nothing less than this. Fathers and mothers in

those days, as in these, did wrong. (Perhaps, had this commandment been kept, those children who kept it, when *they* became fathers and mothers, would have been worthier honour, and the world a far better world than it is.) But better or worse, there is the command. What do we make of it? There must be something in it more than most men think, if the whole of God's promise of life turns on its being obeyed.—And so there is. *The* great principle of life is in it. The starting point for man of all goodness on earth is in it. The central truth, round which all other practical truths of life are gathered, is in it—the principle of obedience through gratitude and love.

The father and mother on earth give to their children, sometimes for many years, everything by which they live, and have hope, oftentimes hardly won by the sweat of their brow, and the blood of their heart, even as our Father, which is in heaven, gives to us the promised land and long life in it. Respect paid to right authority then produces the enjoyment of the great promise.

Now, two points I wish to press home on this, and next Sunday: the blessing of life, of long life, and its meaning, first; secondly, the power of true obedience. We have just been celebrating the long life of this School. I venture to think with a most wise and well-founded joy; which will bear the strictest examination, and becomes the deeper and truer the more it is examined. Life in the land is God's great promised blessing to the true son of Abraham; and the opposite fact is true; nothing evil lives long. Life in the land of life comes from God. In God's great kingdom of life in which God's people are working, long life on earth is God's blessing to that person, or society, which through

true, obedient, unselfish, love honours authority, and is founded on reverence. And in heaven this life finds no end. But the main law and principle is true here also : and though there are seeming exceptions ; and though evil may be bringing things to an end ; yet long life as a special gift of God is at first sight in itself a claim for honour, until the contrary is proved.

Now this is God's special gift. Yet during those many hundred years in which the Jewish kingdom lived on, and saw mighty empires perish, an ordinary worldly Jew would say, that it was their strong city, or their policy, or their strong this or that, that saved them ; and would not have seen in it God's special gift of long life. And do not we often do the same ? Yet what made the city strong ? That is the first question ; even if the strong city is the instrument by which the deliverance is wrought out. It was God's gift of life to an obedient people that made them strong to build, and that blessed their building, and those who dwelt in it, with His special gift of life. The long life comes from God.

It was asked on our great day, whether a hundred years hence, at the next centenary, these massive walls, and the School-room, would be standing to receive the throng of visitors then ? The answer is easy. Yes, if the life has been true. Or, if the life has been true, yes, unless this country has been unworthy to keep the life. Then the life may have been made homeless here to go elsewhere with renewed power. But, standing, or not standing, so far as they are of life, that which they hold of life will live. In the kingdom of life what God sees and blesses is the life ; and He gives long life in His promised land to all that lays its stones on living foundations.

If these Chapel walls, with their stone and their mortar to the common eye, are not mere stone, and mortar, and sordid trade, but the massive strength of prayer builded in, cemented by the heart-blood of the builders, a shape of power, of power that has taken shape because of a principle of life, for the sake of a cause, and that cause be of God, and brought out by God's Spirit, then, these buildings vanish away from our earthly eyes, and in their place is seen a living temple raised for the life here, a spiritual house, a shrine of immortal faith and hope, that may move, but cannot die; and God's blessing of long life is here; here in these buildings we trust; here in the cause, and the life of the cause, we know. Ask then first, not whether our Jerusalem is strong, but whether its three hundred years of life in the land hitherto, by God's blessing and gift, have indeed ripened into a higher life still, and are now winning a higher blessing of life. Is there a spirit in these stones? Is there life-blood in the mortar? Is it the life for Christ's sake living into a temple-shape for Him? If this be so, then shall our days as a School be long in the land which the Lord our God gives us. If not, then all we take pride in shall but tempt the spoiler, and bring false glory to a shameful end.

SERMON CXXXIX.

THE CORAL ISLAND.

EXODUS XX. 12.

“Honour thy father and thy mother; that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.”

HOME was set up as the ideal by which long life comes to pass. The honour, love, and reverence of a good home were to be the title of long life as citizens in the kingdom of life. Home-honour, and citizenship in the kingdom of life, bound together into one by the blessing of long life attached to them; fused, as it were, into one strong, enduring, unity of present good, and prolonged enjoyment of good. “We brought nothing into this world, neither do we carry anything out.” The last half of this sentence is easy, and recognized by everyone; the first half, though equally true, is neither felt, nor even seen by most people. We brought nothing into this world. Where does it all come from? In what light are we to look at it? The answer to these

questions is the answer which all practice must be based on; and as the answer is right, or wrong, so will the main practice be right, or wrong. We brought nothing into this world. Here is the beginning of all that we can do, or say, or think. A grand, bare fact, like a great rock, which faces the thoughtful mind at once, but which is easily left behind out of sight. We brought nothing into this world. No words have ever been spoken more full of meaning to man, both as a dweller on earth, and as a traveller towards another world. We brought nothing into this world. This is the starting point of the problem how to live.

If any doubt the fact, let him go, with all the advantages, which nevertheless are not brought by him into this world, of educated strength, to the vast unsettled tracts of Asia, Africa, or the American continent, and he will find the very land, by the produce of which men live, of no value—of no value—to be had for nothing, till work, that is, human life, has been put into it, till security for life and work, that is human law, has been put into it, till help, and society, and an orderly multitude of men have collected to unite in labour, and to use what is produced; that is, till human civilisation, and refinement, and the excellence of great men, and noble life, have been added to it. The land by itself is nothing, utterly worthless, only a building foundation on which man, like the coral insect, builds up his living fabric of life in the waves of this troublesome world; and whilst the topmost tier is living, the lower tiers are the inherited work of those who lived, and worked, and died, ages ago. But it is all living work from beginning to end—all life, past and present equally, solid land that nevertheless is all life.

And as the coral island rises, and the work lives, and grows, it betters itself; the meanest cottager of honest life to-day has many luxuries in his home, and even in his clothes, that kings and nobles could not get in old days.

Then turn from the body and its needs to the mind. Look at this School, and the work done in this School. What a marvellous fabric of coral building that is! First the actual House work. Whence came the great architect's wisdom, the mason's skill, the stores of life that paid for both? Life piled on life to make the mere buildings for your use. Then the books—is not book work coral building? Life is incessantly adding to life, and taking its strength from life; life piled on life, to give you the thoughts you use; the heart wisdom, by which you live and serve God; the knowledge, which is to enlarge your powers; the training, which is to win you your place and maintenance when you start at last to do something for yourselves. All this coral-building of life being carried on by the living. Living teachers, living helpers of all kinds being engaged round each of you, to feed you with a life not your own, which you did not bring into this world yourself. Look for one moment each of you into yourself; take yourself only, what you are, your power of reading and writing, the thoughts you think,—the words you say,—the games you play,—the kind of life you lead,—that judgment on things round you which makes you like or dislike, choose things as good or reject them; what of all this is you—you unassisted, your bringing? Nothing of it came into the world brought by you. What rather are you but a being made up of the lives of others, part of the great coral-building of life, an example in yourself of all

that transfusing of life to life, that putting together of manifold influences which, if you examine, has built you up, and made you what you are now as an educated being, and has made you as different from what you were when first born, as you are different from the child of the African savage born on the same day with you; different because of the difference of the building powers of the life employed. No shell is produced by the creature within more surely than you are produced by the life powers working in you from the life of others, so as to be what you are. From first to last, the whole human world, with its riches and poverty, its value, and its needs, its markets, its money, its knowledge, its civilisation, its heroism, its self-sacrifice, its Christianity, its infidelity, its good and evil alike, is one great coral-building made by life, and embodying life, not brought into the world by any of us, not belonging to earth, and the earth conditions by nature, but simply a creation of human life under God, put into the shape of human work, and passing out by human work into whatever shape work can take; so that a loaf of bread, a bit of money, a cultivated field, a house, a book, are one and all embodiments of life.

And in the same way, all the great problems which vex and try the heart and hand are equally part of the built-up life. "We brought nothing into the world". Everything which is in the world of human society from first to last is man's life put into new shapes, a coral island in the sea of time; and man himself is a living article manufactured, if I may put aside the derivation of the word, manufactured by influences of life. "We brought nothing into this world."

I will not touch on the larger question; but what a

power such a truth is in a school. Where did you get what you are from? The text answers, "from your fathers and mothers"; and, as in the great coral island there is no power of separating any one life from another, it is natural that the blessing of seeing this truth, and honouring this truth, should pass at once into a promise of long life in the land given by God to him who acknowledges this grand fact of life, this secret of all true practice, this first original truth with its demand on true life, its demand for humility, reverence, and love. For your fathers and mothers got their share of life from the life before them, as surely as you have got it from them. The great coral-building of life knows no separation of the present from the past, of life from life; and the land the Lord God gives us is very specially this living, built-up, life creation, which is nowhere better represented than by a school. For here, at all events, no one of you can claim anything; here at all events, father, and mother, and home, and honour, and love, and reverence for home, unmistakably hold the first place, the only place. You are here because of your homes. Your work here is for your homes. Your work here truly done *is* honour given to father and mother who sent you, whose hearts are with you, who expect you back again more experienced, more strong, more ready to take your part in the great life building.

And long life is the blessing promised. This grand ideal of home, and home honour, as the title-deed by which the child of God claims long life in the Kingdom of God, is a wonderful clue to right practice. Turn it round, and our life as true citizens and patriots becomes an offshoot of home, nothing more. And earth is turned into man's home, a gift given to each of marvellous life-

work, not his own, with which he has nothing to do, "we brought nothing into the world". A home feeling of love and reverence becomes the root of all life in dealing with the homes of God.

And this truth is emphasised by our daily prayer, "*Our Father*". Home feeling is the root of all true heavenly life, as it is of all true earthly life. Have you then who are now going home been loyal to your homes? Look through your lives this past term, your lives, first of all, as living parts of a home that is nothing else but life built up, and building; and secondly, as living parts of a promised land, a gift of God, that is nothing else but a life creation, a coral island, built up by the lives within it, amidst the waves of this troublesome world. Have your lives been honest, living parts of this living home? Put out of your minds all thought of the things you see, as such. Your world is all life, a creation of life, owing its existence to life, a gift given you; not one of you has, even in appearance, as yet brought any contribution to it. Have you used this precious gift of inherited life as its preciousness deserves? What right has anyone to misuse or squander the lives of his home, the gifts of his God? You wish to live. Long life is a blessing which the young care for. It is given to those who have a true home-feeling. Go home then. Learn to be true to home wherever you are; and so the prayer "Our Father" shall be to you the one reality; and long life in the promised land of God be yours.

SERMON CXL.

UNION.

DEUTERONOMY XV. 16, 17.

“Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the Lord thy God in the place which He shall choose ; in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of Tabernacles ; and they shall not appear before the Lord empty. Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord thy God, which He hath given thee.”

LIFE in the human body keeps the body sound, and makes all the parts of the body work together. In other words life is union, disease is disunion, death the breaking up of the body. The power of life is very great. When we consider first, what a great variety of food and nourishment life takes hold of, and turns to use, and makes into its body, whatever they may have been before, we shall get some glimpse of the vigour of its faculty of union, its faculty of making many differences one. Next, how great a power of resistance this life-

union has, what destroying forces of frost and cold, of sun and heat, of rain and wind, of pain and labour, it can overcome and turn to good, and make into strength, and endurance, and healthy activity! We get another glimpse of the vigour of this faculty of union, its conquering power, which makes all things, whether friendly or hostile, work into one great union, as long as its power lasts.

In this we have the great type of the highest of all excellence. We are ourselves moving parables; each one of us showing in his living body, in its strength, its health, in a word, its union, the working of life in God's kingdom of life. Next in order comes the Body politic. Every kingdom, or state, is living, in exact proportion to its power of union, of working together as one; and a kingdom or state is dead, and falls to pieces, when the power of union departs, and every man acts for himself as far as possible, and suspects and mistrusts his neighbour. A dead kingdom has no obedience, no union; a dying kingdom is full of cries of discord, and treason, and selfish violence. Lastly, the life of the whole world is being trained on this plan, "that they all may be one; as Thou Father art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me." Our Blessed Lord rests the proof of His having come to redeem mankind on the union, the oneness, of His true followers; a oneness such as may convince the world that He has been sent to bring a life into the world able to make in time the great body of the world into one Body. Oneness then, the life that makes many one, is declared by Our Lord to be the sign of His Kingdom of Life, the purpose for which He came into the world, the meaning of redemption to life.

It is not my purpose to-day to contrast this with modern ideas of liberty. I would merely observe, that whenever a great truth is catching hold on mankind generally, and becoming widely spread, a great parody of that truth is the first outward sign how deep and how wide the power of that truth has got to be. The French revolution murdered for years to the cry of liberty, equality, and brotherhood; but had not the idea of liberty, equality, and brotherhood been very widely spread into very desolate wildernesses of humanity, this cry could not have been the watchword of such wild and debased movements. The worse the crimes perpetrated in the name of holiness, the lower does it prove that the knowledge of holiness being a power has got. A parody of a great truth is a witness to that truth having become so strong as to be known by name amongst those most ignorant of its real meaning, and the most incapable from vice and ignorance of being its disciples.

To resume, that we all may be one, as God and Christ are one, is a short practical definition of redemption, and life. But I have often observed that mankind are very apt to dwell on great truths, and really to mean to live by them, whilst all the time they leave alone the common every-day things which can alone make those truths real. English religion has often seemed to me like a magnificent palace, of which the underground foundations are very strong; and the top story most beautiful, when you get there; but all between—the living rooms, the daily life place, bare, and dirty, unfurnished, and cold, and empty. I mean there is no taking of the things of common life, and using them to help religion. God does not teach us in this way; God takes the lowest and commonest points of human

nature, which are really natural, and works up from them.

We have just seen that life means union; and the highest life, salvation, redemption, life divine, life eternal, is "the being one, as God is one." Now mark how this idea of union was worked out from small beginnings of natural humanity up to the highest point of heavenly life. First, a family was chosen. The natural affection of family life made part of religion, yea the very chief part, pressed into God's service as a consecrated thing. To be a child of Abraham was the title to the kingdom of God. Then, when the family grew into a nation, and the ties of blood were weakened by numbers, God took the nation, as He had taken the family, and gave it a national law and religion to bind them together into one. And in order to intensify and keep alive this tie of blood, and of law, and of religion, God ordered all the men every year to meet three times in the same city, and the same great building, and made those meetings festivals, times of joy. It is not possible to imagine a stronger bond of union than this command, which made every year the whole nation rejoice in their being one great family, one great consecrated army of citizen-soldiers under God; and ensured a friendly meeting of the whole every year; and ensured their knowing all that went on, and ensured their caring for one another.

This strong spirit of race, relationship, teaching, religion, all welded together by commands to meet one another in the Holy City, and rejoice three times a year has wonderful significance for all time. It breathes new life and meaning into the Christian brotherhood; "for we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise." It sanctifies every effort of men to combine into a company

for a good cause. It makes every union of workers a holy circle. It glorifies their work, and the place they work in, and the truth with which they work; and by the example of God's will, takes our daily common tasks done together, and declares that they are consecrated parts of the kingdom of God, and that any treason, any betrayal of the honour of united life, is treason against the great cause of redemption, a betrayal of Christ. Life is union. Union in a good cause is life. And God has from the beginning taken every natural help of human nature, enlisted it in His service, and set His blessing on each. Some are better, some less good, but all sanctified. And the whole nation of the Jews was every year reminded three times that they were one great family, compelled, you may say, three times to unite in a family gathering for the sake of God; their very journeys to and fro made a high religious service of union and life. Life is union. Wherever true life is, there is union; wherever it is wanting, ruin is there.

God takes every act of union of family, or society, or nation, and consecrates it to His service as a holy and sacred thing. The great outward sign and type of this was the gathering of the Israelites into Jerusalem three times a year. "Now," the apostle tells us, "we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise," children, that is, selected and chosen by God. Three hundred years of life in this school bear witness to the blessing of God, which has kept the school alive so long. We begin this Term another cycle, another spell of life, in hope that these strong walls and holy ornaments may bear witness three thousand years hence to hearts that are strong, to lives that have been true, to holy union. It is a grand inheritance to be born into a nation that has been un-

rivalled in the world as yet for the works of life, and for stubborn tenacity of union in hours of peace, in hours of danger, and on many a battle-field. It is a grand inheritance to be in a school that is starting fresher, higher in aim, more strong, after three hundred years of fruitful life. Take this to heart. You have a glorious life given you. Hand it on true and faithful to its glory. Be not traitors, traitors to the life of England, traitors to the life of England's foremost schools. Lift up your hearts above the mean scramble of buying and selling, of prizes, and gainful knowledge. Look on God's cause, on life, and union, and the passing on of life. Fire your souls with visions of being, as you ought to be, the champion guardians of God's life now, the creators of the coming world in truth and living power. Be not traitors. Have no mean thoughts of life, for, whether you like it or not, the responsibility of a great inheritance is laid upon you. For good or for evil you are parts of a mighty life, and a great cause. Shame on the cowards and the fools, who, come before the Lord, in the place which He has chosen, with hands idle and empty, or, perchance, full of deceit and uncleanness.

SERMON CCLI.

UNION AND GIFTS.

DEUTERONOMY XV. 16, 17.

“ Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the Lord thy God in the place which He shall choose ; in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of Tabernacles, and they shall not appear before the Lord empty. Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord thy God, which He hath given thee.”

NO thinker can help being struck with the wonderful care God took in enlisting in His service every feeling of man's nature which promotes unity, and consecrating and turning into a holy binding power every common act of life, which was united action. When we consider the meaning of life, we see it could not be otherwise ; it is no more than saying that the Lord and Giver of life allowed no part of life to lie idle. Yet it throws a great light on the nature of life to observe the stamp of sacredness, the Government stamp, the Royal seal of

authority, thus put on every band of union. First the family, as we saw, is made a holy circle, in which the promise of God dwells as in a shrine. The family home is a kind of Church, in which God's blessing is housed, an altar, where offerings of true life are made to Him. Then out of all the world, one nation, the family grown large, is taken ; and one city, chosen as a kind of centre of the holy circle ; and every feeling of home and country is worked up into one mighty religious service, and filled with the light of God, and transfigured, as a cloud is filled and transfigured by the light of the sun at evening.

It is not easy for us to realise how completely an Israelite had his whole common life from beginning to end, first, quarried, if I may use the expression, out of a heavenly kingdom, and secondly, built up, all of it, into a holy and heavenly fabric. The very land on which he stood was his Bible, the promise of God given him to read daily, wet with the blood of judgment on the guilty nations they had cast out by God's help, bright with the light of blessing from Abraham in the past, and of the Messiah in the years to come. They could not take a cup of milk without its witnessing of God ; they could not see a bee amongst the flowers without a message from the honey of the promise. The corn, and the vine, and the olive, were pages, so to say, in their book of life ; pages, ever open to tell of their being chosen as Abraham's children. The whole land from end to end was, as it were, a camp of God, marked out by Him as His own, and guarded by His arm, so long as those within it were true to Him. Their religion was everywhere, and their religion was strong in this, that they were a chosen people, made one by every tie

of family, religion, and country; with no power to escape out of that divine circle; only able to be traitors to the good cause, not able to get rid of it and be as the nations around them. And not least, the three annual gatherings, when the nation poured into Jerusalem, served to bind them together for good or evil, and ensured that all knew what was going on, that all shared the responsibility of the national life.

The significance of this will be seen, if we for a moment picture the great caravans slowly travelling through the land, so that a family could go a day's journey without being alarmed that their child was not with them, thinking him safe amongst their kinsfolk and acquaintance. How entirely everything of interest in the Jewish world must have been known through these journeys; and how entirely must these journeys have made the common daily life *felt* to be a service to God. Mark the demand on personal exertion that this constant moving from home made on every one. What a spur it was! What a check to laziness and ease! How greatly in a silent unconscious way it must have contributed to train them in hardy habits, and make them the brave and enterprising people they finally were! Then again, what habits of acting together, of bearing and forbearing these long journeys must have given! What companionship, what friendly feelings to one another! How they must have known each other, rich and poor, and been able to deal with any difficulties that arose!

No doubt their being thrown in this way together had its bad side. Evil could be set going as readily as good. Of course it could; the plan of the world demands that. God's plan of the world is framed so as to give free play to human nature, and when He has set

everything in order to work for good, then the possibility of its being turned to evil is disregarded. If men will be traitors and false hearted, they can be. A system is good, which gives every opportunity for good, in spite of evil. A system is not good, which gives no liberty of choice. So then God's great teaching plan, by which He schooled the children of the early world, simply turned every natural tie, and every thing calculated to bring His people together, into a great religious service, and made every home a kind of church, every meeting together an act of worship, and the whole land their Bible, the witness of their religion, whilst He gave them only one place of special worship. The life of the true Israelite was entirely compacted of religion from beginning to end. All his common actions made a religious service. He could not mistake an occasional ceremony for the worship of God, though he had the occasional ceremony to crown and complete his worship.

The consecration of every act of united life, and of every body of men in union, is the one great stamp and seal, stamped by the hand of God on the religion of the Jew. And as a part of this comes another great fact. No union took place in the promised land without a giving of gifts. Few take to heart that the only instructions given by God to His people about worship, and very minute those instructions are, all prescribe *giving*, and direct the manner in which the gift should be made. Every sacrifice was a gift. Firstfruits of everything were offered. A tithe of everything was commanded. All the firstlings of all animals were taken. All day long, we may say, the Israelite was occupied in making gifts, as acts of religion, and calculating how much of his income had to be set apart for God. Gifts, and

nothing but gifts, were the acts of worship which fell under the special command of God. And at the three great festivals the command was, "They shall not appear before the Lord empty. Every man shall *give* according to the blessing of the Lord thy God which He hath *given thee*;" not a fixed sum, but according to *the blessing*. How much wealth those great caravans brought up to Jerusalem; how much talk there would be by the way of the year's profits. How the hearts of the people must have been lifted up when Jerusalem was reached, when they passed over the brow of the last hill, and saw the Temple of their God rise strong and fair in the bright sun of that bright land; and heard the hum of thousands, and saw everywhere that countless number of the children of the city of God.

Two things then stand out pre-eminently in the schooling of the children of the early world which is our example. Union and Giving. Union shown by personal service, and by gifts. Union and Giving simply sum up God's lessons to His people in practical life. Every company of faithful men made sacred; and every man of every company bound to give. And is not this taken up by the Lord Christ? "Where two or three are gathered together in My name there am I in the midst of them." Union and Giving, this was what God gave His people as their only worship. But it met them everywhere, morning, noon, and night, at rest, at work, at home, on their journeys. Two names for one thing; for Union means giving of self for a good cause; being ready to sink all personal matters for a good cause; and those who give self cannot help giving gifts. Union means, that the first thought is, can I agree? And the last thought, can I do away with obstacles?

Now I shall waste no words in applying this. Search the Scriptures, and you will find how everything commanded by God to His people comes back at last to these two. Union and Gifts. There is a power of union *here*. There is a power of giving here. There is a great cause of truth and life here. There is a holy circle of living workers sacred to God here. There is no more plain test of true life and readiness to live true life than these two, union and gifts. No one can be said to live, who is not acting on these lines. Those who are in earnest will take this to heart, and rule their lives by it. Union and gifts are practical names for life in God.

SERMON CXLII.

HARVEST THANKSGIVING.

DEUTERONOMY VIII. 7, 8, 9, 10.

“The Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, and fountains, and depths that spring out of valleys and hills, a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig-trees, and pomegranates, a land of oil olive and honey, a land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack anything in it, a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass. When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the Lord thy God for the good land which He hath given thee.”

NOTHING is more wonderful in Holy Scripture than the way in which God always takes every real part of human nature, and makes it holy, accepts it, and brightens it with His glory. I say “wonderful,” because the history of man is full of an opposite tendency. From heathen times to our own, mankind are always insisting in trying to cut out, or quench, some fact or other of man’s nature. One generation tries to crush one bit of

God's creation ; another—another ; but there is always something disallowed. Thus there are two opposite principles always at work on earth. God's principle, which counts nothing common or unclean that He has created, and hallows it all, and demands that the spirit of man shall win perfect mastery over it by right use ; and man's principle, which in each generation puts some one or other thing of God's creation under a curse, and declares that man must attain perfection by running away from it.

In keeping this Harvest Thanksgiving we are acting in accordance with God's principle, which has declared the fruits of the earth holy. This is the more noteworthy, because at the Fall, when Adam sinned, the earth and its fruits *were* put under a curse for a time, and Cain's offering, which disregarded this, was rejected. But the curse was taken off after the Flood. And the Law made the fruits of the earth holy by admitting them as an inferior part of the sacrifice, and by the festivals of Pentecost, and the Ingathering. Whilst Our Blessed Lord has taken bread and wine as the means of giving the highest blessing in His Kingdom. Thus (a point which concerns us much to-day,) we find the fruits of the earth first under a curse, then the curse removed after the Flood, then a partial blessing given, then, when Christ came, the highest blessing in the whole world joined to them. So that a Christian can never look on the corn and the grapes, never cast eye on fields of wheat, or vineyards full of fruit, without seeing one great sacrament of divine life spread like a garment over the whole world, and hearing one great voice of holy joy, a song of the Bride and the Bridegroom, and the Marriage Feast, rising up from earth to heaven

evermore, from hill and valley, garden and wide-spread plain, as man's successful labour has clothed the earth with food and gladness; and God has taken it all, and made it all proclaim with one mighty shout His goodness, and man's liberty; giving every blade of corn a tongue to sing and preach; and every grape, that summer suns have struck their light into, a chant as of angels; telling man to conquer in Christ's name.

We may now the better understand the words of the text, and their deep significance, and the promise given to those children of the early world, the Israelites, whose schooling was to be our example. The one great promise, which for hundreds of years was held out to the sons of Abraham, even as heaven is promised us, was this land of plenty, this land of corn, and wine, and oil. The one great reward, that for many hundred years bore witness of God's glory, and of their being the people of God, was this land of plenty, this land of corn, and wine, and oil. There it spread out before their eyes, generation after generation, a very book of God, God's handwriting, their heaven, for was it not the fulfilment of the promise? Their Bible; for was not God's voice ever speaking from it, ever telling them of nations, whom the land had cast out because of their lust; because the goodness of the land had fed unholy lives, and been turned into sin. Ever telling them that they too would be cast out, if the land they had conquered became their conqueror, and the corn, and the wine, ran riot in their veins, and mastered them, and enslaved them to sin.

Mark too how the lesson had been early taught them. In Egypt, full-fed and hard-worked, their only pleasure eating and drinking, and with the slave's whip

ever at their backs, they had known what base self-indulgence meant, and the bitterness of it; but, when they were brought into the wilderness by God's hand, the mean-spirited and greedy amongst them, the slaves of their belly, showed very soon how unfit they were to be led into a land of corn, and wine, flowing with milk and honey, and preferred the flesh-pots and the whip to being free and at liberty, and the warriors of God; preferred them to all which brought manly hardship with it; and murmured and rebelled, ready to give up the great promise for another onion in the pot. And it was not till these miserable slaves of food had all been killed off, and another generation grown up in the hardy habits of the wilderness, that the nation was fitted to take possession of the land of Canaan, and enjoy it as conquerors, able to live there in the midst of its plenty, uncorrupted by it.

But this was God's will. This *is* God's will in every age. It is God's will for us. He gives us plenty, He bids us rejoice in His plenty. He bids us, when we have eaten and are full, to bless the Lord for the good land that He has given us. But He kills, yes—kills, as pitilessly as He did the rebellious mob in the wilderness, the drunkards, and the gluttons, and the whoremongers, and whores, who give way to their appetites, and cannot be conquerors in food and pleasure. This is always going on. Everybody knows it, as a fact; but few take to heart that the bloated body is God's visible judgment bringing death; and the drunkard's face, a kind of handwriting of God, a sentence of coming death printed there by the judgment of God; and the ruined home, the verdict of a heavenly assize; and the dishonourable grave, an execution of the criminal by

God's secret ministers of vengeance. This goes on all round us every day. We must be conquerors in the good land of plenty ; the conquered perish, slain by God as unworthy of His gifts.

But the gifts are glorious, and blessed. They are nothing less than the promise of Abraham fulfilled for the sons of Abraham. They are nothing less than part of our Bible,—the whole land, with its promise fulfilled to Abraham's son, proclaiming over all its length and breadth of cornfields, and grass, the glory and goodness of God. They are nothing less than part of our Gospel ; the corn and the wine throwing their great mantle of sacramental grace over hill and valley, and turning the wide plain, and the harvest field into a sacrament, a very portion of the Last Supper of the Lord. Yea, it all brings us to the Crucifixion, to Redemption, to the noblest life of the soldiers of Christ.

Let us then rejoice to-day with the joy of the conquerors for the good land, and the plentiful harvest. God means us to rejoice. And, remember, the Law given for the Promised Land only vanishes away when more is done, and in a higher spirit, than the Law requires. The Gospel fulfils and does away with the Law of Moses just as the family life of a good family in a wealthy home does away with the law of the land. The children moving amongst precious things hold their hands off from love of father, and mother, and the goodness of the home ; and the law of the land never enters into the doors. But it is there, all the same, and if the thief's heart enters in, then law enters in too. But as long as family love does more than the law requires, the law is, so to say, dead in that family. Even so it is with us, all the wilderness judgments, as I

have shown, still press heavily with the pitiless grasp of the Law on all those who do not rise above Law by the spirit of self-mastery, and the love of truth. The moment Christ is forgotten the Law steps in and punishes. But we will not forget. O lift up your hearts in joy, take God's good gifts of the land that God has blessed.

What kingdom is there in all the world where no foreign enemy has set foot on 800 years, save England only, the land of peace, the land of wealth and work? Some great thing is expected from such a land, a land so shielded, so protected. It is expected by God who gives, that the gifts He gives of harvest and peace should be taken and used in a noble way; should make the spirit strong, and fill the heart with gratitude. It is expected that His people shall be a conquering people, masters of the land and its plenty, and not under the curse of the felon heart, which fain would glut itself with excess but dare not. That great Feast of the Bridegroom with its wedding garment of perfect fitness to be there, which we all hope to attain to, that glorious adornment of the Bride in which we are to be a part, is full of the joy of feasting, of beauty, of abundance of wealth, full of harvest thanksgiving, of praise, and of song. Yea, we must learn to sing the Lord's song in the land He has given us, the conqueror's song, the song of the Marriage Feast, the song of infinite riches, with infinite power to use them rightly. We have to learn it now. He has learnt it best who does not cast a felon eye of longing on wealth he dare not touch, but from Love of Christ can move in Christ's world able to do all things, making himself ready by perfect self-mastery for the Feast of the Marriage Supper of the Lamb.

SERMON CXLIII.

GOD'S SECRET POLICE.

PROVERBS IX. 10.

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.”

NOTHING can prosper long that runs its head against any of the great walls of the Universe. Life is known by its manifestations ; no one has ever seen it. And no one ever sees the invisible barriers, that close like a prison round the living, whenever they violate the laws of life. Life shows itself in us, and all round us, by what it does, and by countless displays of power, by which we know it. Even in what we call the inanimate creation there is no need for man to see the power that acts. The bitter freezing wind that chills the blood, and smites the earth with seeming death, is not less known because it is invisible ; or, when it hurls the oak from its firm settlement, the ruin is witness enough of the unseen agency that wrought the ruin.

So also, as surely as life exists, and is plain to the most ignorant by the things it does, do the invisible

barriers which control life exist, and may be plain to the most ignorant by what they do. There *are* unseen, pitiless limits existing, walls of adamant, against which the waves of human passion and human folly, dash, and break, and are shattered without mercy, even though every drop be a life; and every life be dashed to pieces in hopeless agony in the vain endeavour to go its own way, and set its own will as the judge what that way shall be.

All seems free, if the voice of truth within is despised; but it is the freedom of the prophet of old to go on in its traitorous way, with many a warning, but still able to go on, till in place of the great King's favour and the house full of silver and gold, defeat and death in the lost battle are the end at last. There is an eternal march of judgment, which they who choose can see. And calm, and clear, and pitiless, on every side, amidst the noise of ignorant selfwill, the clash of blinded passion, and wisdom blinder still, the voiceless warning strikes upon the world; and the great prison walls close in on those who will have it so.

It may be said, these are but words; what proof is there of this invisible, everlasting wall of doom, and of the unseen executioners, God's secret police, that arrest the guilty, and the careless, self-indulgent fools? I answer, take any form of vice you like, give it power, give it wealth, and then—wait a few years and see what comes of it. Or, if you are near enough, and have the sense to see realities, watch the curse day by day, and hour by hour, walking by the victim's side; watch the hand laid on him; no policeman ever seized a man more truly; watch him dragged from bad to worse; watch him when he knows ruin is near; can he stop?

Watch him, when he knows death is in his veins; can he stop? Stand in his dreary home, be it cottage, or be it palace, when the last scene comes, and doubt no more of God's great prison walls on earth, or God's secret police, for those who walk their own way, and will not hear or heed.

But it is equally true that the great laws of life act for good to those who follow them. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." There is no one in this Chapel to-day, who has not felt the happy feeling of having done a right thing; all the happier, if it has been at the cost of giving up with a struggle some wish or gratification. Well, there has been set for him who has done it the first stone of the invisible building, which is to guard him in his after-life from evil. And, stone by stone, if he perseveres, the happy barrier rises against sin; and, stone by stone, if he perseveres, the strong fence of love of right, that will not let evil be done, is built up in his soul; whilst all the time he, and the spiritual home he is building, are within that blessed fold of Christ, the Shepherd King, which with its great invisible walls of love shuts in, and protects His own; shuts out, and baffles the beasts of prey, and ensures safety and peace. For God has not only set His prison walls that punish, and appointed His secret police of vengeance that avenge; but He has also set within the broad space of the world the protecting walls of the fold of Christ, the happy home of those who follow Him, where His sheep go in and out, and find pasture.

"Go in and out." Here you have that service which is perfect freedom. "And find pasture." Here you have that freedom which is full of blessing. Freedom to go wherever plenty and happiness is to be found;

freedom to find pasture, broad plains, green, and beautiful, and free, with complete safety, for the fold is near, and complete liberty, for the Shepherd leads them everywhere by the living waters, where all they want for happy life is found. In this way God has His barriers, His walls of love, barriers to keep out danger, and death; walls, within which there is shelter, warmth, and safety; whilst outside all the fairest gifts of the world are open for His flock. They go in and out, and find pasture. There is the freedom of the outcast, for whom no one cares, the freedom, which is ruin and death. And there is the freedom of the Fold of Christ, the freedom of being cared for, protected, of loving good, and finding pasture by the waters of life. And there are the prison walls which hold the condemned; and the walls of the Fold which protect the happy. Which set of walls will you choose? "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."

Let me take but two points, and ask this school what they think. If the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, if it is the being with the shepherd in the fold, and if prayer be the appointed way by which the sheep, the people who choose the free life of the fold, and the free pastures, show their choice, and honour the shepherd, and belong to Him, then—what shall be said when our three hundred are gathered together to pray? Can it be possible—that those heavy louts—with their vulgar careless attitudes—and their vacuous silence—or heartless gabble—perhaps more vacuous than silence—are intelligent educated Christians who know right and wrong? I speak of those amongst you who drag down the rest. As the Shepherd-King passes through your ranks to receive your words, and accept your homage, will that

offensive mockery, that vulgar insolence of lip and attitude, be thought anything but a mockery by Him? Even as it is thought a pitiable sight by me. Where is the hearty soldier voice of those who with heart and soul have made up their minds to be champions of right in God's stirring world?

There is another point. *Manliness* may be taken as the one word that from the human side defines Christianity. The power, that is, to do brave things, and still more, to suffer bravely, and patiently. Now this is a matter of training and practice. Manliness means the cheerful bearing heat and cold, hunger and thirst, work and hardship, pain and weariness. Now it is computed by competent judges that from £1500 to £2000 are spent yearly by the boys of this school in luxuries of food and drink, (for I say nothing of the many thousand pounds spent in boarding you in our houses). Now this expenditure of £2000 represents a great deal of illness, and occasional deaths, in the school. It represents a great deal of vice and self-indulgence. One-half at least is a direct harm. £1000 a year is spent in doing direct harm; and at least half the remainder is needless. Where is the manliness which ought to be training itself for healthy power in life? Is it not possible for the leaders of the school to have an honest, manly pride in being manly? And an honest, manly pride in treating with scorn these milksop, self-indulgent ways? Can we not be champions of manly life in the world? Is it never to be, that public opinion shall crush the mean, self-indulgent, animal life, and the vices that spring from it? I must think that to be known through England for true manliness is a better thing than having a name for cricket.

Think too, if you turned the £ 1000 a year, which you spend in doing actual harm to yourselves, into doing good to yourselves and others, what a power it would be. The offertory to-day averaged about a penny a piece, and that, as usual, given mainly by a comparatively small number. I will say no more. The plain facts seem to me so fatal, so condemnatory of the unmanly life of the bulk of the school.

We are just at Advent, beginning a new year ; professing to believe that our Lord is coming ; professing to rejoice in that Great Christmas-day, when the blast of the Archangels' trumpet shall call us to stand before His Throne ; when this earth-world shall be over ; and whether we come to meet Him out of our graves, or He does indeed come this Christmas in His glory, it is all the same. We *shall* meet Him ; and in that day we shall surely know that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom ; and those who know it now will rejoice.

SERMON CXLIV.

WORK AND LOVE, LOVE AND SIGHT.

PROVERBS IX. 10.

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.”

IT is not too much to say that the faculty of seeing with exactness the thing before the eye, which has to be seen, is the highest perfection of human nature. This is called in the Scripture, “Light,” and the “single eye”—“Walking in the light,”—“the light that is in us,” and “being the children of light.” “The light that is in us.” What a grand revelation in this troubled world; “the light that is in us.” What does it mean? It means, first of all, what has been said above, that the highest perfection of man is the being able to see without delusions. Now, sight is made up of two parts—the light, that makes sight possible, and the eye, that sees light. Of the light that makes sight possible, I will only say that Christ gives it: “I am the light of the world;” and, that Christ has so ordered His gift of light, that in

this blind world, full of the blind, this world of eyes in every stage and degree of disease, and weakness, and incapacity, the light is not suffered to come on our eye unprepared, the great Oculist does not destroy man's eye by pouring in light on it. Men have to live, so to say, in darkened rooms, till they can bear the light. Too much truth at once, is as deadly to the soul, as too much light is to the eye. So it comes to pass, that men are able, either to make foolish complaints of want of light, or to boast in a coarse self-satisfied way of superior knowledge, when they do without light, and rush forwards in the dark. Light then, the light of truth, is given by Christ to those whose eyes are prepared and practised; and hidden by Christ from those whose eyes are diseased. "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Those murderers did not see.

Now of the eye that sees light, or does not see light. First of all, take this great axiom, as summing up the whole matter as a whole: *Whoever turns his back on light moves for ever in his own shadow.* Every step he takes is darkened by self. Self quenches all the light on his path, though he moves in the midst of light. All things around may be full of light which he can see, but his own path is dark, for self obscures it; and as he moves, he carries his own darkness with him, in front of him, on the way he has to go. An awful parable, an appalling mystery of darkness in light.

Now let me illustrate this by a rough example. God says as a command, "Thou shalt not steal;" this is the command; and "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." He who fears the Lord, and obeys from his heart, simply has cut out of his life all temptation arising from the stealing lust. He is in the light. There

is no shadow on his path. Stealing means taking secretly what is not ours. Why must we not steal? What is ours? We must not steal, because everything of value in this world has been produced by some one's life; we have no right to a bit of another man's life. Nothing is ours, which our own life has not worked and won, or the lives of our parents and friends given us to use. Land is worthless, till man's life has been spent on it. A sack of corn is made up of the life put into the land by our forefathers, the life put into the producing the seed, the plough, and horses; and the life work of sowing and reaping. Money in like manner, is only life in a shape that can be exchanged. Now let us go back to "Thou shalt not steal," not money, or anything money can buy, for it is other men's life. This covers all things outside. Life must be given to get life. Work alone can buy work. However wrong the distribution of things may be, they at all events are not ours, unless we can give life for them, or the work of life, or have given it. Thou shalt not steal. Very well, but if a man engages to give his employer his work, and does not give it him, is he not a thief? It makes no difference whether a man steals five shillings from a purse, or steals five shillings-worth of work which ought to have gone into the purse. Well, is it a slight thing to be completely trustworthy in work, never to steal? Again, if a boy is sent here to do work, and does not do it, is he not stealing? Stealing from his parents, who pay for his time; stealing from God who demands his time; worst of all stealing from himself, and destroying his after life. Not to go on further. The commandment is, "Thou shalt not steal." Imagine for one moment, what is only too easy, a man full of selfish longing, a

man with the thief's heart, why the whole world to him is full of temptation, and fancied injustice, and bitter feeling against those who have; and work is hateful; and idleness and self-indulgence his god. He is in darkness hating the light. He carries darkness with him.

We all know the coarser forms of this kind of thing, and the ruin they bring, but the thief-heart in ourselves we are blind to, simply because the heart is full of hindrances bred out of disobedience to God's command. But if we suppose boy or man to have cut out of his heart all such self-worship, or not to have let it in, then at once he works his work utterly untouched by any of the hindrances that drag the other down. He is in another world, a free world, and not being hindered he loves his work, and does it well; and when he does it well, he finds more to love in it, and he becomes great in work; and men see that he can be trusted, and that the thief-heart is not in him; and as soon as they see that, he rises in the world. He must rise, for excellent work in time is known, and being very scarce, is valued; and complete unselfish trustworthiness is scarcer still; of such stuff heroes are made. You have been brought close to heroes¹ this last week. Examine whether I have not said the truth. There are no heroes so heroic as good women; for they are heroes from the hero spirit, not from the strong arm, or from the confidence in force. Were you not told that love of her hero leader, and love of the work which made the speaker able to see a hero, was the secret. In other words; the heart first emptied

¹ An Address was given to the School by Miss Van Sommer, on the Soldiers' Institute at Portsmouth and Miss Robinson's work.

out of the thief craving, and all the mean hindrances of self; and then filled with noble work, done nobly, without shrinking; and then full of light, with the eye made clear and strong to see straight forward what had to be done, without anything in the way to stop sight; that was all. But this is what makes heroes. The work brought the love, and the love brought the sight. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Those who do not work never see heroes. Obey that one command, "Thou shalt not steal," heartily, and you will be heroes. But do not think that a circle of life bounded by the age of 21 practically, which opens to nothing beyond, excepting an imaginary great man which somehow or other you are to be, and in the mean time is filled by self in various shapes, is going to make you see light. Time is your test, time given you for work. One destroys his time by food and gluttony; he is a thief stealing time. Another is full of priggish pride, he wastes his time on that; he is a thief, stealing time. Another blocks up his heart with foulness; he is a thief, stealing time for that. Another is simply idle; he is a thief, stealing time for that, and so on, through all the dreary catalogue. But there are also those who are earnestly trying to "cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light," those who are not thieves, who do not steal God's time, their parent's lives, or their own; let them rejoice in this Advent, this coming of the Lord. Yea, I would say to all of you, you are young, you are beginners, all can begin, rejoice in that. Rejoice that every end, every break up, in Christ's kingdom, is also a new birth, a new beginning of new life made possible. So at this Christmas time, which ends for us the life that has been,—

“Our tasks are over,
Purpose crowned, or purpose crossed,
None may mar, and none recover;”

at this Christmas time, the Lord does indeed come, but He comes to set you all free for new endeavour. Some here to-day lay down for ever all their school life; and these walls bear witness to a parting, a farewell, a burial in each heart of that which ought to be a glorious seed of life that-is-to-come on wider fields. At all events it is gone. Bear witness, ye walls of God, to what is garnered. It is yours, whatever it be, to judge it, or to bless. But all of you lay at your Lord's feet, a finished circle, all will begin again. O walls, bear witness, O House of God, bear witness, O Chapel, that we call our own, bear witness; a thousand years hence ye will be here, if God will, a thousand years hence ye will still breathe the spirit of these days that gave you birth; and, year by year, through the long ages, Christmas after Christmas, perchance till the Lord comes indeed, will your roll call, as a voice from the spirit world, summon us all to go home; summon us all with a searching cry of judgment to go home. Summon us all with a resolute bright hope of coming life to go home. There is a spirit present here, there is a standard set up, there is a banner as of fire, streaming o'er your heads,

“Lightening from beside the throne,
Where the one Lord makes us one,”

which calls on the soldiers of Christ to remember what they are. O regiment in that great army, have you no feeling? Is honour dead? Can your hearts hear no call? Is it enough to cheer when others tell of hero life? Steal no time, and you shall be heroes. Is it enough to put your name on one door in the noble

building of life raised by others. Stamp your name here. Sink it deep into these great walls, by work untiring, by deeds of truth. Steal no time. Make not this house of prayer a den of thieves. Live, live, so that these walls, whoever comes to see, shall glow like flame with the unwritten glory of this regiment, even this, and Uppingham be a word of power in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

SERMON CXLV.

WHAT IS GROWTH? AND WHEN?

ST MARK IV. 26, 27, 28.

“So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.”

LIFE is the sacred and surpassing gift of God and Christ to man. Not what life wins, but what life is, is the whole question for man. We brought nothing into the world, neither can we carry anything out. Everybody admits that. Why then do we lose sight of life, and fix our minds, and entangle them, in things which are not ours to carry away? Once more I would endeavour to concentrate your thoughts on life, and to make a sharp division between life, and anything that we do, or make, or win. Our Lord Christ in likening life, the spiritual and practical life of man, to a seed

sown and growing, and at last bearing fruit, to be reaped at last, and when reaped, garnered by the angels in another world, puts this truth of life in a very striking way. The plant has only to grow in this world. The fruit, the real result, the product, what the plant, so to say, does, belongs to another world, not to this. Surely this is a marvellous revelation of the true meaning of life, a marvellous revelation that what we have to do on earth is to grow, nothing more, to grow into a power of doing real good; and that then, when we have the power of doing real good, it all belongs to another world, and is taken there. The working power is not to be of value here, but there, by and by. Here we grow. Here we do nothing but grow. That is all we do, and all that is done to us works for the same end to make us grow.

The plant puts out roots, and pushes its stalk upwards, and develops itself into blade, and new shapes; so far it acts. But all the time ten thousand influences of good and evil, of joy and pain, wind, storm, sunshine, rain, come upon it, and really make it what it is; make it grow. Till the corn is ripe, and reaped, it does nothing real; and this real power is taken to another world to be used there.

This is not the picture man draws of his own life. It *is* the picture, remember, that Christ draws. Moreover, how this truth of life being all in all, and the unconscious healthy work of true life, is emphasised in the text—unconscious, healthy work of growth of life! The seed is just cast into the ground, and left, out of sight, uncared for, ordinary business goes on as usual, night brings sleep, day brings waking, but the seed is left alone; and it springs up and grows, nobody knows how,

and indeed nobody troubles about it; and then comes the decisive statement that the earth brings forth fruit of herself. Or, in other words, that the growth of true life is produced by the working of causes outside the seed, and that the true work of the seed, if it can be called a work, is to make use of it all, and grow. The whole history of man's true life in still plainer words is, that what is done to us, and how we receive it, is life. What we do is put aside altogether.

Once more, this is not the picture man draws of himself. He pictures himself as a doer of deeds. God and Christ picture him as a life growing. The difference lies in this, to come to an example. Your work, your lesson, your games, your occupations, bring you in contact with various things, with pains of mind, and pains of body. All these things are done to us, even when we put ourselves in the way of them. The blow you get at cricket, and the hard passage that tries you in a book, are both of them, together with all the cricket and all the book work, things put in your way, just as much as the wind, and rain, and sun. How you meet them, and what they make of you, is the question. And this is what practically all the parables of the seed press upon us in the very strongest way.

But this parable presses more still. It lays great stress on the growth going on no one knows how, sleeping or waking. That is, it draws wonderful attention to the very great number of hours in which nothing particular is going on, hours of sleep, hours of leisure, hours of amusement, do-nothing hours as it were, hours which men do not reckon or watch. I want to draw *your* attention to this. Our Lord practically insists on the good growth going on in these many

unwatched hours. But mark how true, how gentle, His teaching is. He does not hunt us down with commands to make these hours of sleep, leisure, and amusement, a care and a burden, but only would have us see that growth *is* going on, and that we do not turn them into times of no growth, or of hindering, and damaging growth. No doubt, if the main life is strong and healthy, all these quieter times, which are more in our own power, will be times of health and growth. For instance, there is no need to tell an athlete that he must not over-eat himself, and that he must take exercise. This is a matter of course, because his main thought is fixed on bodily activity. Well, if the main thought of the heart is fixed on mental activity, how much more does that require a clean bill of bodily and mental health, pure thoughts, so as not to clog the mind, temperance, so as not to clog the body, self-restraint in play, so as not to take too much time, and too much strength. And if the main thought of the heart is fixed on being like Christ in spirit and in truth, how much more then will all those innumerable minutes, and long times of sleep, leisure, and amusement, be all unconsciously tending to growth.

This is part of what our Lord means by His seed-parable, and His picture of life. He means that the greater number of hours, which pass generally unwatched, and with little thought bestowed on them, are most important hours, hours in which true life is growing most vigorously when the life is true. Hours therefore, which, if the life is not true, require particular care.

Now look at this side of the question. Whatever ambition, or higher motives still, may urge, if a boy gives himself up to eating, and drinking, and spending

his money in such a way, he simply *cannot*, as long as he does this, do anything either in body, mind, or spirit, worth doing. And till he has got rid of the habit never can. Yet this is a part of that no-man's-land leisure. How true it is, that the leisure time, which goes right of itself if the main life is right, actually stops all possibility of good the moment it becomes the master, and goes its own way! How true and how strange it is, that whilst attention is being given to the work done or undone, and conscience pleads and commands, and authority rewards or punishes for it, a few shillings spent wrongly in a pastrycook's shop may, and constantly do, ruin the whole career, and great careers too! The little leak unchecked sinks the noblest ship. The little habit of mean indulgence kills the true life. A few shillings spent wrong have decided many a life for feebleness or ruin.

It is the old, old story. Esau, the great champion of the coming world, is wilful and vain. He admires in his silly vanity the silly heathen boastfulness of the young athletes in his neighbourhood. He thinks them finer fellows than his father and his home, and that he knows a little more of the world, is more up to things, than the quiet old man with his retinue, who nevertheless had in early childhood heard from his great father the glories of Nimrod, the conqueror's sword, the great cities, to which those in Canaan were villages, and the magnificent leadership of the leaders of men. So Esau despised the quiet shepherd life. But the quiet shepherd life needed as much bravery as the hunter's, and infinitely more patience, endurance, and character. To lie on the bleak hill side with the flocks by night, and hear the roar of the lion coming up the valley, and the fierce

growling of the bear as he seized a lamb, and then in the stillness of night, in the half darkness, to rise from bed, and go out, as David did, as many a shepherd did, alone, to do battle on the lonely hill side, was no child's play. The shepherd's peace was braver work than the hunter's war. But Esau had no heart for it. And after giving way to a thousand little weaknesses of this kind, a day came when he sold the greatest inheritance earth ever had for a little soup, the value of a few shillings. But to do him justice he was very hungry; he thought he was dying of hunger; and he did not lounge into a shop, as you do, full-fed, and buy what destroys you. So also the Israelites in the wilderness, they lost their lives; but real hunger tempted them. All this becomes plain enough as soon as we look to life and life only, and learn to see that whether we do, or do not do, the effect on our lives is what signifies. Then we can understand Our Blessed Lord's silent warning, and silent encouragement, when He tells us of the seed that only has to grow, and has power within to make all things that touch it turn to growth. And it is a solemn warning, too, that we should find in quiet leisure hours the little things on which all life hinges, and beware how we neglect them.

SERMON CXLVI.

LIFE THE SCULPTOR.

I CORINTHIANS IX. 27.

“I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.”

ST PAUL in this earnest and striking passage lays down the true position of the body of man. It is his servant, to be kept in subjection. And to make it a master is to be a castaway, banished from God. But the body is in itself God's work, and originally blessed by God. And in the Gospels and New Testament writings, the glory and honour of the body, as the Temple of the Holy Ghost, and the home of God, and full of light, and the seed sown in corruption to be raised in incorruption, is fully and plainly declared. And Our Blessed Lord after His resurrection appeared in a body which bore the marks of the Crucifixion; and after His Ascension, when He was seen by the beloved disciple, was known by him, as having a form like unto

the Son of Man. This then is the history of our body. It is created by God in His image, that is, as a true outward shape for the divine spiritual life within, worthy of honour as the highest form of things seen. It is moreover inseparable from us for ever, carrying with it into the world to come, however glorified or changed it may be, a continuous unbroken sameness that makes it the same body still. And, as St Paul tells us in the text, it is our servant, to be kept in subjection, or we shall be banished from the presence of God for having made a rebellion against the true sovereign, and put the servant in His place.

How completely the life makes the body, and is united inseparably with it, anyone can see who has eyes to see. However a child may look, before character, that is, love of good, or love of evil, bred by practising good or evil, has had time to act; or, before education, that is, the intelligent skill of knowledge and training, has had time to act, it is impossible to mistake for one moment the different classes of men by the time manhood is reached. But what does this mean? It simply means that the body as a matter of course has taken the shape and appearance; and the face got the expression, which the life within and its habits have by that time formed. Or, in other words, that by twenty years of age every man and woman has remade by living their body and face, made it after a certain pattern, according to the life lived. And every day the life is remaking the body, making it into a vessel of honour or dishonour, according to the life lived. And Christ takes this great truth, as He takes all great truths of creation, and carries it on and perfects it. Our body is to be changed and fashioned like unto His

glorious body. And the Apostle tells us, "that we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

Now we actually *do see* every day this working of life in a good way if we choose; but we cannot help seeing it in a bad way, however much we may refuse to think about it. It is the commonest fact in the whole world that the life makes the body. As the lives of men are higher and nobler a higher and nobler type of body and face becomes seen in each successive generation as an ordinary type. And though it is true that we cannot add one inch to our stature beyond what God wills, it is also true that in childhood men can, and do, in many instances stop growth by evil habits, and in that sense, if good, do add many inches to their stature. To such an extent is that true that I have lately seen writings calling on the Government to make inquiry into the degenerate growth, and feeble and deformed bodies of the population in some of our great towns, and populous districts. So severely has preventable evil smitten the bodies of the race. And it is no less certain, that as life goes on and youth departs, the body is a great tell-tale of character and life.

Now it is an appalling thought, that a wrong life is busy, as a sculptor might be busy, in modelling and carving the body more and more into a moving curse, and a corrupt, abhorred abomination; and that this must go on from bad to worse as long as evil is at work working out its own outward and inward doom in the body. It gives a fearful meaning to the Apostle's words concerning the rebellious body, and to our words when we repeat the Creed, and say, "I believe in the

resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting." Yea, it is an appalling thought that we carry with us an undying record of our deeds; that the lips, which spoke the words of hell, are ever present as witnesses against the speaker; that the hand which struck the felon blow, or did the sin in secret, remains with its sin an everlasting witness of it. The great poet was right; "all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand." It is an appalling thought, that our own body writes its own judgment on itself; and goes with the sinner carrying the witness of his sin.

Moreover, when the talents are taken away in the world to come, we are told no more, but we know a little. In a world of perfect truth, every shape will be perfectly true to the inner existence of which it is the outward shape, so *that* man, who has taken from him the talents he would not use, must of necessity, if he retains the human form at all, retain it in a miserably degraded, animal type. How much more must this be the case with him, of whom the Apostle speaks, "He that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption"! What an abyss of intelligible misery yawns before us, when we are made to see the corrupt life dragging down the corrupt body, and the corrupt body dragging down the corrupt life into ever-increasing depths of hateful corruption, hideous to see, and hideous to be!

After all when we talk of this as future, do we not see it beginning daily? How many in this Chapel at this present moment are practically having their talents taken from them, taken from them, by their own act, when they make their body into their master, and, by listening to its commands against their better self, lose

their better self. How often the body commands, "Eat this, or drink that, to please me." "Don't work, to please me." "I am tired, stop, to please me." "Cold, sit by the fire, to please me." "Sleep a little more, to please me." "Sneak, and cheat, and lie, to please me." And lo! all the time the talents are being taken away, the possible higher life is vanishing; and a dreary level of feebleness, stupidity, and disappointment, is taking the place, day by day, of the happy activity of powerful life. Not hopeless indeed, there is yet time to repent, and receive a new blessing from Christ; but the beginning of hopelessness, the dread witness of that which *can* come, and *will* come, on all those who make their bodies their masters.

In this world what a great teacher the body is to all those who will take warning by it! How sharply it punishes the evil-doer! Sometimes at once, in suffering, and illness; but surely, however long the punishment is delayed, making the victim, rich or poor, full of pain and punishment at last. Moreover, if we choose to see it and watch it, every day, nine-tenths of the daily trials that come are bodily. Suppose for one moment that the body is perfectly obedient; all trials of temper arising from work done, or undone, would vanish. When the work is loved, as it can be, this happens. All trials of temper arising from heat and cold would vanish. The hardy active man finds this true. All trials of temper arising from food, and drink, and lust, would vanish. The earnest self-mastery of Christian life finds this true; and so on, through the whole range of life. The Apostle in his catalogue of sins of the flesh rightly puts, "hatred, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, and murders," as all proceeding from the

ungovernable passions, which are bred by indulging fleshly desires. And all are in themselves punishment, pains working in body and mind.

Then again, what significance this great fact of life creating daily its own body throws into the revelation, that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit. The glorious buildings that human hands have made for worship in the great Cathedrals are the pride of the lands which own them. We have seen a mighty nation unite to finish one such building, because they gloried in it as rightly and truly a birth of mighty life. And shall not we, we spiritual temples, we living Cathedrals not made with hands, glory in the Great Architect's plan, glory in completing the Great Architect's plan, and building up our bodies day by day, into a temple meet for Him? O living stones of the spiritual temple, each a temple in itself, this your temple is being built by you. It is not, as you have thought, settled. It is being built by you, for honour or dishonour. For unspeakable glory, if you build according to the Architect's plan a temple of the Holy Ghost. But at all events, you are building. Your life every hour is shaping and creating your body that shall be, shaping it into something new, creating something which has yet to be finished. At all events, you are building, building up that bodily house in which for ever and ever you will take up your habitation in glory, or in shame.

SERMON CXLVII.

THE SACREDNESS OF LIFE.

GENESIS II. 7.

“The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life...”

IT is strange how familiarity stops thought and knowledge. Common things are the last things studied. The ignorant despise them as not worth notice. What glorious beauty of colour and shape has been contemptuously cast aside as common; and how many flowers worthy of Paradise been only known to the clown as weeds. Air, water, sunlight, clouds, rain, and all the most precious gifts of creation, precious because universal, share the neglect of ordinary minds, because they are common. The highest gift of all, life, most of all suffers this wrong. How to live is not unthought of, but life itself, the sacredness of life, the glory of being alive, the stupendous character of the power in us simply because we live, who, pray, thinks of that? Of all in this Chapel to-day, these many lives, all have wishes

and hopes, some have an idea of what they intend to do, but none, I will venture to say, of the young have paid attention to what they *are*. To-day you begin a new bit of life; of practising the life which is in you, that is, to do or not to do; and by this practice strengthening or weakening its power.

But, what is it that you strengthen or weaken? Surely what you *are* ought to have much to do with how you act. The reality which you all have should not be left unregarded. Can anyone here answer with truth that what he is, and the use he is making of what he is, has been seriously considered, or at this moment forms any part of his thoughts? If I could force out of you all the actual ideas that make a home within you and inhabit your kingdom; if I could call forth the population of your mind, the habitual dwellers in the territory of your own real selves, the shapes that would appear, if we may judge by what does appear, however varied, would have a dreary sameness in mean, and beggarly hopes and fears. Few indeed would betoken high rank, or noble endeavour. Though I do not underrate the readiness with which many, very many, are for a time kindled into wishing to be true. But if life is a glory and a greatness; and if to be alive is of itself a matchless gift, this ought not to be.

Let us go back to life. "The Lord God breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life." Life is of God Himself. Yea, life is the breath of God Himself. Yea, life, in a very true sense, is God Himself giving of Himself. How sacred, how exceeding sacred, the life that is in us is seen to be! What high treason against the King of Kings any evil use of life becomes! Think for one moment of the words of St Luke, "Enos which was

the son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, *which was the son of God*. St Luke, inasmuch as the Lord God breathed into Adam the breath of life, calls Adam the son of God. Now do not let time, and the thought that this was long ago, weaken this truth. What would it not be to you if you stood, and saw, one after another, all your companions advance, and go forward, and receive direct from a glorious Presence a gift of life, even as you see them advance to the Bishop to be confirmed, and your turn came, and a new and higher life direct from God visibly passed into you? How for evermore the glory of that gift, and the sight of the Almighty Giver, would be imprinted on your whole being! Even such *is* your life. First, in Adam. "The Lord God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life." And you, yes, you, have that life in you as a son of Adam, which was the son of God. And, secondly, Jesus Christ came to give a higher life still in the place of that which Adam's sin had corrupted. He died that we might receive of His life; and He gave us of His life in Baptism, even as God gave the Israelites a new national life under Moses at the Red Sea; and the Holy Spirit of God *does* breathe into us greater strength at Confirmation; and each living son of God *does* at the Holy Communion receive the bread of life, the divine manna, which keeps the living alive.

This then is life. This, O sons of God, is the sacredness of the life you have in you; this the exceeding sacredness of being alive. You do see by faith the gift of God's life given you. Is there any who has not heard with awe of the day of judgment, when the Great White Throne is set in heaven, and there is One sitting upon it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled

away, and the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books of judgment are opened, and an innumerable company of angels witness round about the throne? The day of judgment. But what is the judgment day? Is it not the day, when God calls back again into His immediate presence the life He has given to man? Is it not the day, when life returns, and the Giver of Life takes life into His hand, even as once He gave it out of His hand? I do not see that the day of judgment yet to come is a day of greater nearness to God, and more real touching, if I may say so, of God Himself, than that day when the Lord God breathed into man the breath of life; than that day, when each of us was new born in Christ's new spirit-world at Baptism; than that day when the Holy Spirit at Confirmation came to help the living; than that day, whenever the Body and Blood of Christ makes life to live more strongly in the kingdom of God. Yea, than to-day, and every day, when, a spectacle to men and angels, the true living lives, that live in Christ, bear themselves nobly and well in the great battle.

Life knows no change of time, life is the same life, now, and for ever, in all its main truths. As surely as our countrymen in the desert to-day have either fallen as the brave and gallant-hearted should fall in their country's cause, or are standing victorious by the great river, which for so many thousand years has flowed through peopled lands, so surely are we too holding our lives in God's cause in the wilderness of this world, warriors of God in the midst of danger, but with life from God to meet it.

Such is our life, so sacred, so exceeding sacred, the breath of God—the Holy Spirit and Christ and God

dwelling in us, ever and always, sacred, and of God; ever and always, living in a judgment day, ever and always, coming from, living with, and returning to, the God who gave and judges it. Such is life. Such is the holy power of being alive with the life of God in us. How then at this new beginning are you intending to live? How are you living? I ask not what you are going to *do*, but what are you going to *be*. Not what you *do*, but what you *are*, is the question. What you do may be fair to look on, and worthy of man's praise, and full of honour here, and yet, may all the time be making you a worse man. Not what you make, but what makes you, is the question. Not what the life does, but how the life is worked by what it does, is the question. I cannot press too strongly the truth I have often endeavoured to press, that what you do is no more your life, than the table a carpenter makes is the carpenter. The honesty, the good feeling, the desire to do his best, if it has been put into the table, is life, and is a real exercise of life, practising, and making *a habit* of honesty, goodness, and earnestness; but if it is not there, however skilful the work turned out may be, the life is not there. The work is not the life necessarily. I mean, what we see done does not necessarily tell us of the life of the doer, or tell the doer either. Nay, it often deceives the doer more than it deceives the looker on. And dishonest or selfish success fills the winner with triumph, whilst all the time he is but lifted up on high to be seen, and pitied, and scorned. And, if this is the case with success, how much more piteous is the vileness which corrupts life, and does not allow it, so to say, to live at all! Search then your hearts to-day as to what you think of your life, and as to how you are going to

shape, and chisel, and fashion your life. Search and find what hopes of greater truth, greater fearlessness, greater energy, greater self-denial, greater life, in a word, you are dreaming of, and cherishing. Look at your day-dreams. They will tell you your real inward self. They will tell you whether the being like Christ is your aim. They will tell you whether you think of life at all, and of cleansing, and purifying, and ennobling, your real self; or whether you are only in secret making what you can get of self-indulgence, money, or praise, your god. The moment the inward eye is fixed on the life, and the making life better and higher, everything in the world is changed for that man. Like the Centurion, he will see henceforth the Lord of all, the Supreme Commander of the Heavenly armies, the Emperor of Eternity, in the humble, unobtrusive life-commands, which day by day, somehow or other, come before him to be obeyed. Life is sacred, exceeding sacred, the breath of God, the indwelling of Christ and the Holy Spirit, the glory of God the Father, in His temple of our body. And the commands, which come to us day by day, and call on our life to obey them, are the commands of God, the Lord and Giver of Life. In His presence you stand. God is in us. Adam, when the breath of life was breathed into him by God, was not so near God as we are; we, whom Christ has taken; we, to whom He has said, "I am the life."

SERMON CXLVIII.

BORTH COMMEMORATION.

PSALM CXXII. 3.

“Jerusalem is built as a city that is at unity in itself.”

THIS is Tuesday. On Tuesday, the 4th of April, nine years ago, from all parts of England the boys of this school were travelling full of curiosity towards the Welsh coast to their new, and as yet unseen home at Borth. On the sands by the sea that evening the waves came in, and found on the usually silent shore numbers of eager new-comers, restless feet, and restless tongues, full of strange talk about their own strange lot, the wonderful change, the unknown expectations. As they wandered up and down the sands on that eventful evening, with the great sea in front of them, and the mountains and hills all round, and the unfamiliar houses, which were now to be their dwellings, close behind, it is difficult to imagine how any greater surprise, or more magical illusion, could come on the boy mind, than this transformed and enchanted Uppingham by the sea. And the solemn music of the waters rolling in, the wild cry of the sea birds, the glistening of white wings, the sun going

slowly down, and dipping in the Western waves, lending them a glory not their own, the wide wide sands, the little village-town, the gleaming mountain sides, the darkness coming on, and in the midst this little whirl and tumult of unaccustomed life moving, must have made even the most careless feel.

Such was the outward scene; but behind that was the grim struggle for existence, the fierce effort to save the school, the danger, the ruin, the destruction it might be, of the life of Uppingham; not the less dangerous, not the less grim, because to the eye no sword was seen, no destroyer with uplifted hand to be met, but only the smile of the April day, the pleasant shore, the glorious mountain range. But—

“To him who wounded turned aside,
It mattered little that he died
In sunshine, in the fair spring-tide.”

For a whole year our life in this home here was blotted out, and our place knew us no more. It suits well with this great resurrection festival of Easter to recall this. It was in very truth a death, and resurrection, a triumph of life over death. As we stand by the open sepulchre from which the Lord of life has risen on Easter-day, we have a glorious parable, an everlasting example of what true life means. It means, the lower nature and the earthly structure brought to nothing, in order that the higher nature, the heavenly life, may be made strong. Even as Christ's Body was crucified, and laid in the tomb as dead, in order that the resurrection life might overcome death, and change His Body into immortality, so also all true life has to pass through a grave in order to live; and does attain to life by the

death of the lower nature. And the life which thus lives is strong.

This is why we commemorate great days. We commemorate them as witnessing to life triumphant. And we commemorate this day, as a kind of Easter-day to us, when this school died in a figure, and was buried, and rose again from the dead, through the strength of the life of God that was in it. The school held together, and did not go to pieces because of its life. For this *is* life. Life in the human body first builds up the body, and then holds it together in health; disease in the body, death beginning, first makes the body at war in itself, and then kills it, and then makes it fall to pieces. And so it is in the body-corporate, in any society of men, true life makes all the members in harmony; true life makes all the parts obedient; true life makes each and all hold together in their own places; true life is unity, and unity is life. "Jerusalem is built as a city that is at unity in itself." Unity is only another name for life; a name which explains what life truly means. Thus the Jewish life was the one family, the one nation, the one city, the one Temple, "Jerusalem is built as a city that is at unity in itself." And the Christian life is, "one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all," a perfect unity as far as it is truly of Christ. And in a school, one work, one honour to uphold, one name by which we are known, life lived together, our one Chapel, and one inheritance from the years that are past, one great aim to do the truth for Christ's sake, makes, as far as we are true to each other, as far as we are true to God and ourselves in living the prayer we daily pray, "that every member of this school, in his vocation and ministry, may truly and godly serve our God,"—makes, I say, one great

unity, in which all are honoured by the life of all, as far as that life is true.

These stones bear witness, these walls to a life that was strong. Not one thing of beauty here but has been given by loving hands, or, is a memorial of loving memory of friends; a bit of life not yours, but given to you in trust. The pulpit, in which I stand, was a gift from a boy in the School; the lectern was given by two of the boys; all the carving was the first offering of an old boy on receiving his small inheritance; the statues, the first money earned by another in far distant lands; the reredos, a record of one whose courage, and self-denial, and simple enduring work, made him one of Christ's heroes. But why go on? It may be truly said, every note of the organ is a human heart speaking; not a stone, but has been as it were set in its place and mortared with heart-blood; a spirit power breathes from wall, and beam, and pillar, and window, above, around, from the pavement beneath, and from the roof above, a spirit power of unity and life. The whole place is sanctified by life. "Jerusalem is built as a city that is at unity in itself."

And this unity it was, this strength of life, that was able to endure the utter shattering of all its outward existence here; to die to this place for a year; to live through it, and come back again by a very real resurrection. And this unity it is, one aim, one truth, one honour, one vocation and ministry, though in many shapes, which makes the name of Uppingham a watchword in the land. Of course I know how far we fall short of what we might be; of course I know that there always are some cowards, some traitors, some discords, some false, amongst us. But this does not alter the

grand fact of life. This does not alter that great historic deliverance from utter destruction which we celebrate this day, when new life came to us at Borth, and we escaped from death as a school. This does not alter the debt of gratitude we owe to Borth, and the kindly people with whom we found safety and a home.

True life in its strength of unity can overbear much strain of selfishness and discord. The petty vanities, and petty selfishnesses, as time goes on, die out of memory, and the Life stands out as the one great presence; the victorious unity alone is seen. "Jerusalem is built as a city that is at unity in itself." Life is unity, and unity is life, and the strength of life that gave the School its Easter-day, its resurrection, is an heirloom for ever. We are too close as yet to that time to be able to judge its after-effects, but not too close to see and feel that a life so wonderfully saved, so given back by the Lord and Giver of Life, is specially dedicated to the Holy Spirit; and that from henceforth we ought all to feel that the Holy Spirit of God has consecrated this school to Himself in a very special way. A great thing has been wrought in us, and for us, and we never more can be the same as we were before. For good, or for evil, God has set this seal on this School by the deliverance, the resurrection we commemorate to day. For evil, if having been so saved, so chosen, we live lives here unmindful of the Lord of Life. For good, if having been in a figure, dead, and raised again to life, we purify ourselves as special servants, a chosen people of the Holy Spirit of Life; and ever keep in sight Christ raised from the dead, buried with Him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

SERMON CXLIX.

FASHION OR GOD.

ST MATTHEW V. 48.

“Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.”

THE intense significance and practical power of this divine command is not seen at the first glance. Indeed, I suppose, the first idea of everyone is that a high and unapproachable ideal has been set before us, a point, like the pole star to the sailor, in another world, to show us our way in this. And so it is; but it is a great deal more, far closer to us than we think. So far from being distant, it is the nearest of all commands; so far from being unapproachable, it grasps us everywhere, and in all our life. For the simple fact in every life on earth is that everyone from beginning to end sets up in his heart some standard, some kind of person or character, or some particular person, to admire, and imitate. In common school language, nearly everyone belongs to a set, and shapes his life a good deal by fashion, by what is

the thing with that set, or whatever new name comes in from time to time to mark the special fancy of the hour. And the leaders of any set are great heroes in their own eyes; and the set compares itself with other sets with the same idea of superiority.

Now against all this comparison of man with man, and sets with sets, and ourselves with others, Christ puts His emphatic disapproval, and bids us compare ourselves with God alone, and measure what we are, with what we ought to be, as children of God, in God's sight.

Fashion? or, God? that is the daily question. A fancied excellence resting on the opinion of the people about us; or, the being one of the great company whose truth is their claim, and whose judge is God. First I would point out the curious fact, for it is curious, that no set is so low as not to have its fashion; and that every set despises those who are the conspicuous examples of any and all other sets. For the low set despises the high, as much as the high the low, and with as good reason. Those only, in all conditions of life, who strive to be perfect as children of God, honour in all conditions of life those who do the same. Honour, and truth, and right feeling, in all ranks unite everywhere the honourable, the true, and the right feeling. There is one difference, however, between the high and low sets, both their fashions may be equally narrow, but the higher know and see keenly the absurdity of those below, whilst those below do not equally understand the ways of those above. I wish to draw attention to that point, how ridiculous the would-be-hero is to those above him; how foolish, for that is the prevailing thought—how foolish, the show of the lower fashion is to everyone above it. To excel in this way then means the making

yourself conspicuously foolish to all above you. And this comes of comparing ourselves with one another. But enough of this, though much might be said about it.

Let me next draw your attention to the fact that in this choice of fashion men invariably select something they fancy themselves able to imitate; or, in other words, choose the kind of idolatry, for idolatry it too often is, which suits their own vanity and self-esteem. Vanity and self-esteem is the root of it all. This shuts them out at once from all real improvement. He who strives to be perfect as his Father in heaven is perfect, goes on, and on, and on, for ever. However poor or ignorant he may be, he can take up his cross, and live the great life of self-denial, love, and work. But he, who is taking his own vanity and self-esteem to guide his choice, walls himself up within the narrow space which his foolish admiration reaches to, and everything beyond that is out of his world. This makes difference of class and class. There would be no class distinctions in a nation, if all alike were striving to be perfect in God's world; there would be rich and poor, learned and unlearned, but all equally striving to lead true lives. And on that common ground of true lives men do meet as equals, as every clergyman can tell you; as the fishermen of Galilee, the Apostles, proved. That is the real test of the true life; and of the fashion. Where men meet as equals, with one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father, there is true life; but where each has his separate world, and there are worlds and worlds quite apart from one another, there, be sure, whosoever fault it may be, the life is false, the standard of life false, and a sham and misleading worship has been set up. So close to us always comes

the great command, to be perfect as our Father which is in heaven is perfect." Close—it cuts to the quick; it pierces through and through all we do, all our lives; and not a moment passes in which it is not judging us, and deciding whether we love truth, or love self, best. Nowhere is this more seen than in a school.

And on this our last Sunday of the Term this command shall test, as none other can, what has been true or false in these past weeks. First then, has there been one world or many in this place? And secondly, what have we imitated and admired?

To take the first question. This School has one sole aim for its existence, rests on one sole foundation stone, the intention of doing truth for Christ's sake; and truth means that which at the moment you know to be right. This School also is made up of men and women who have undertaken to do truth for Christ's sake, and of those who have been put under their care by their own fathers and mothers. In other words it is preeminently one body under Christ, bound together by the most solemn ties of union and truth. How far has this been true in practice is the first test.

Those boys who divide the School into masters and boys, and make two worlds instead of one, and live in their own world as much as they can, by their own rules, and set themselves either apart, or against, all outside their own world, are not true. I would here remark that, however *we* may fail in our duty, the throwing away by the School of that teaching and training which *we do* give is a madness which damages them, not us; and, moreover, those very idlers, or disobedient, who do so, are ready enough to claim the character the School has won as their own when it suits them to do so.

Amongst yourselves too, how many ridiculous fashions and petted meannesses there are. Some things you fairly unite to do. But amongst yourselves, in your private life, where is the high spirit, the brave facing of work, the honest endurance of hardship, the self-denying simplicity, the patience, the kindness, in a word, the true manliness, there ought to be? Some few are manly and true, the great majority perhaps mean well, but in a cowardly weak way; and there is simply little or no trace of one gallant united effort to do good work unflinchingly, and to band together to make even the least willing tighten up towards honour. And secondly, what are you proud of? Where is the pride of being the most honest, the most obedient, the most pure, the most truth doing, and truth speaking, school in the world? Is that *what* you have admired this Term?

Now if we all strove to obey that great command to be perfect as our Father which is in heaven is perfect, all false comparisons, false admirations, false pride, false imitations of mean examples, would vanish away with their ridiculous mockeries and vanities.

He who once has fixed a happy trustful eye on Christ and God has entered into the great brotherhood, the glorious company of faithful men, who from the beginning of the world to the end, have gathered into their ranks high and low, rich and poor, learned and unlearned, alike; who scorn no one; who never feel contempt; who help one another; who rejoice with one another in honour gained; who mourn with one another in dangerous hours.

There are no sets, there is no fashion, there is no double world, in the Kingdom of God. All are one in their endeavour, and that is enough. The effort to do

right is enough. Life becomes one great unity, passing onward from better to better; first boyhood, with many temptations and many protections, with its inexperience, with its imperfect, though vivid joys, with its work not understood, but full of growth and life; then early manhood, with its plunge into the battle of life, with a soldier's joy, and a soldier's hardship and wounds, more exciting, more painful, more real, but still imperfect, only unfolding life; then, as time passes on, higher joys and higher pains bring the great struggle for true life on to old age; and old age, happier and better than all that has gone before, leads up the old man to his departure with the calm great feeling of quiet joy, "that it is better to depart and be with Christ." This is the natural and true development of life in the Kingdom of God, amongst those who strive from the beginning to be perfect even as our Father which is in heaven is perfect. And a far-off image of this takes place every Term in this School.

Those, who when they come back first, set themselves with all their might to be true, come to the end with a happy feeling of days not spent in vain, of pain that has been useful, of strength gained, of glimpses of better things to come; they have within them a peace and joy in the past worth *all* they gave to get it, of hope in the future. They have found part of the hid treasure, and are ready to sell much for joy, and buy the field which has it.

Brethren, if this is your feeling be happy, be happy, it will go on for ever. But let those who have not tasted it know that in their way of life they are outside the kingdom of life, and let them think well over what is to come next, and next, and next. Let them look to the end.

SERMON CL.

A GRATEFUL MEMORY OF JULIANA HORATIA EWING.

I COR. XV. 24.

“Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.”

A LIFE breathing religion and truth, not a religious life, is the final will of God for man. I mean, (to give an example) there are numbers who can speak great religious truths nobly and well, who have truly gained this gift from God by a religious life, but only here and there is one found, who without saying a religious word, nevertheless makes every word a shrine of divine life, and breathes tenderest grace and life-power all around, doing nothing, and saying nothing, which is not by its very nature a delightful freshness of purest breath of life. This is the difference, when both are noble and true, between a religious life and a life breathing religion and truth. The one, so to say, is religion moving in the

world; the other is the world ceasing to be the world, and become a kingdom of life in itself. The religious life, which learns God's truth, and works at God's truth, and is able to speak God's truth, is a true and glorious life; but it is the life of one, who beset by trials and temptations, inward and outward, overcomes them, and—

“Climbs the steep ascent of heaven
Through peril, toil, and pain.”

Victor indeed, but victorious through great exertion and at much cost; which, whilst it inspirits the brave, acts as a discouragement to the cowardly and the weak-hearted, and is put aside altogether by those who avoid truth. Or, to return to the more familiar example, the good religious book may be good indeed; but no one reads it who is not already on the side of religion more or less; whilst the book, which is a shrine of life, and breathes in every word health, and happy airs of humanity made loveable, and winning, and tender, and true, in common things, is read by all, and sinks into hearts with a life of its own, without their knowing very often that it has done so. Whilst, to those who have already mounted high, it adds another rainbow tint, another gleam of heavenly light, a prophet speech more delicate and bright than any that has touched their hearts before. They understand it to be life of heaven; the others think it to be lovely earth. What is done with labour marks want of strength in those who do it as compared with the thing that is done. What is done with unconscious ease marks perfect mastery in him that does it as compared with the thing to be done. Or, from another point of view, what is done by degrees, and won by degrees, marks imperfection being made

perfect, however great the worker may be; whilst that which is perfect puts forth quietly at once by its own nature, without perceptible change, the excellence of completed power. And so the stars for ever show forth the gracious parable of perfect strength, rolling silently, on their silent courses, never faltering, never showing movement or force, clothed with the might of eternity; and leave it to the weakness of earth, to the volcano, and the ocean, and the storm, to seem to be strong by noise and violence, that awes the weak, but betrays weakness to the strong.

It is clear then from what has been said that an imperfect being, be that being man, or angel, must be brought by degrees to his full perfection; and that in bringing him to perfection time is necessary; and that the difficulties and trials which have to be met are difficulties and trials because the learner is weak. And just as in childhood the bitter tasks of the child train the child till they turn into the glory and the gladness of the life of the trained man; so in the life of the trained man the trials and work still mark the progress towards perfection; and he is most perfect who feels no labour in doing hardest things; he is most perfect, to whom fasting has become the feast, as our Lord commanded; he is most perfect, whose commonest life, and meanest word, and most careless gesture, have become a natural movement of purity and truth, a breathing presence of honour, an atmosphere in which no foul thing can dwell, and yet, like the air is invisible, and does not need to be labelled, as a physician's medicine is labelled, to show that it is health.

And as the man is trained so also has God trained mankind. God the great Worker of perfection has

wrought man by degrees, and is still shaping him, yea, in a sense shaping the spirit world too with him; for is not Christian life "a spectacle, a theatre sight, to the world, to angels, and men;" and do not "angels desire to look into these things?" Mankind is therefore trained by successive revelations. And ages on ages of advancing life, as they are able to bear it, slowly bring men to their appointed good. And we are sure that in the kingdom of life, where God, the God of the living reigns, every man and woman, as they leave this earth, live and carry on the glorious purpose which is to end in a kingdom of absolute perfection, where God is all in all, "when the end has come, and Christ shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority, and power." This, brethren, is the fullest and most glorious message of Trinity Sunday; a revelation of an end, when all the struggle shall be over, all the imperfection vanished, and the great work of redemption finished; when sin shall be a thing of the past; and redemption only mark a happy space of a world in its early manhood; and the gifts of the Holy Spirit be, as it were, a record of a battle won, and a warfare over; and the perfect life be enthroned where God is all in all; and nothing left of hindrance, nothing even of growth from one state to another, no rule remaining to be overcome, or needed to protect, no authority, no power, nothing but the purest eternity of infinite life, when God is all in all, and the life in God perfect.

"The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." This is the solemn final harmony that peals for man on Trinity Sunday; a note that thrills through all creation, the blast of the Archangel trumpet even now, sounding

over every grave ; for " God is not the God of the dead but of the living." Yea, even now, a mighty tide of life has come sweeping up through the everlasting halls, and submerged utterly the first barrier of death, the grave, as man once saw it ; and life flows clear and strong over the grave ; for God is not a God of the dead, but of the living. " O death, where is thy sting ? O grave, where is thy victory ?" And now, as man stands by the grave, the everlasting halls are opened wide, and the words of Christ are heard in power, " To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." " O death, where is thy sting ? O grave, where is thy victory ? The sting of death is sin." And when we see on earth the pure life casting off sin, and in the sweetness of its power passing on its earthly path, breathing forth the Holy Spirit of life and light all round, then we can see and feel that the life belongs to a kingdom of life, and has only to go on, and take part in the great victory, when the last enemy, death, shall be destroyed.

Even so we see in the living life of those who live in Christ that already it is being done ; God is not a God of the dead, but of the living. " To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise," is the word of God to men that live. " The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death ;" that is the word of God to all the spirit world of angels and men. The last great proclamation of life in the kingdom of life. And Trinity Sunday bids us lift up our hearts, and having first seen with our eyes life on earth here by its living presence casting out before it all the works of death, and filling with health and strength everywhere whatever it touches, wherever it is welcomed and lives ; then tells us to be sure from this of the truth of God's revelation, that the living life sweeps over the grave and

heeds it not ; and then would have us, as we have felt this, go on and rise up to meet in heart the final proclamation of God to-day, that, "When all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all." And the Holy undivided Trinity shall reign, and the Archangel trumpet peal its last summons over an everlasting realm of immortality made perfect ; life answering life evermore, and saying, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty." "Hallelujah, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, Hallelujah, Amen."

SERMON CLI.

THE KINGDOM LOST.

ACTS VII. 22.

“And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds.”

THE death of the lower nature is the victory of life. That is the teaching of the crucifixion, the doctrine of the cross; life coming out of death; victory coming out of defeat; the lost battle turned into the kingdom won; the disappointment made the hope fulfilled; the useless pain becoming the blessing that makes life happy; the long years of broken purposes fulfilling themselves in strength; the baffled dreams giving birth to undying realities; the poured out blood, spat on, despised, rejected, living again in a growth of glorious sympathy and work; the anguish and the struggle which men lied about, and mocked, and accused, transformed into the great new truth triumphant, marching onwards to take possession of the coming world; all this and much more is the power of the cross of Christ in the kingdom of life, and the progress of this world in which we are.

And the history of Moses is the most living picture of this great truth which God has given to man; the simplest pattern; the prophecy nearest to common human nature of divine work in man, which we can have to lead us to spell out the heavenly reality of what is going on on earth.

Just let us try and translate into the language of our own hearts and lives what Holy Scripture tells us about Moses. First of all, for forty years, he was heir to the throne of Egypt, the greatest kingdom on earth. Next, he himself was the foremost man of his time, learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and mighty in words, and in deeds. Next, he carried with him in his heart, through all these years of pomp and power, the strange, dread secret that he was one by birth of the slaves; who, slaves though they were, had the promise of the Living God as their inheritance. Then, a time came when he made the great choice, and devoted himself, by one of the most splendid acts of self-sacrifice the world has ever known, to try and deliver the slaves, his brethren, and cast in his lot with them. And then, God seemed to reject it, and did reject it in that shape; and Moses fled for his life, a ruined man. And then, stranger still, for forty years, the forty best years of his life, as it seemed, he kept sheep in the wilderness, doing nothing; the prince, the statesman, the warrior, keeping sheep, seeing nobody, doing nothing. Forty years, as summer after summer came, and found him pasturing the flocks, and tending the lambs; and winter after winter came, and found him in the sheepfold with the sheep; and the years passed, and still he was there; and the years passed and still the great prince was there; and old age came creeping on, and still the great prince

was there; what a reward it must have seemed to him for his choice of God's inheritance; his brethren still slaves in Egypt; nothing done; he himself an outcast; and this for forty years! And then, for another forty years, he became God's great leader, the chosen of God, the one man, who, throughout all generations, is marked out as the greatest leader the world has ever known.

Now first, note that noble act of martyrdom, for it was nothing else, with which his career in Egypt closed, when he left Pharaoh's palace, the throne, and the kingdom, to throw in his lot with slaves his brethren and risk his life for their sakes. Mark how complete self-sacrifice in the single act of heroic daring was possible, whilst the whole life and character required to be changed before God could make use of it. And forty years of solitude, self-training, humility, and patience, were needed, before he was ready to lead the true life. Half a life spent in beginning to be able to begin. Half a life then spent in learning how to live. And then, and not till then, God took him to do his real work in life. So much greater a thing is it to live a life of obedient, quiet, daily work than to be trained to do one great act of heroic fortitude. So much greater is it to live truth than to die for it; to live truly and holily, than to be a martyr. The martyrdom, as it may truly be called, of Moses, was only the beginning of his true life.

Now, I wish to draw your attention first to the manliness of this type of life; and, secondly, to the wonderful comfort that is in it, the daily comfort of seeing life and blessing coming out of overthrow, pain, and suffering, and by degrees finding all the power, all the blessing, born from what was most bitter, and most inexplicable at the time it had to be done or endured.

First of all, the true idea of life must be taken. Mankind want to put before their eyes the truth of what life is. Life is that, which makes the living being grow a body healthy, and active, and strong, able to resist heat and cold, disease and corruption. Death puts an end to all this union. All that belongs to death weakens this union. Life again is that, which makes the spirit power healthy, and strong, able to command the body to face any danger, even up to bodily death, for the sake of spirit life. Death puts an end to all this commanding power. And all that belongs to death, love of ease, self-indulgence, and all kinds of evil, weaken and put an end to this union. The power of life then is a conquering power, and the aim of true life is victory. And all mankind, who live truly, do in a figure pass through the training that Moses passed through.

To-day I am only concerned with those first forty years. The man, who was learned in all the wisdom of Egypt, was trained first to be master of human knowledge. He knew what it was to deny himself pleasure in field, or feast, prince as he was, in order to bend over his books weary, but full of energy and thought. Human knowledge was needed to make him able to meet men on their own ground, and beat them there. No one is fully armed for life, who is not a match for the thoughtful thinker, be he friend, or be he foe, to truth. No one has a true feeling for life, who, when given the princely opportunity of learning the wisdom of Egypt, and Greece, and Rome, and England, sells that great inheritance for a little silly skill in hand, and foot, and eye, at best; and at worst, corrupts it by food, and sleep, and idleness. For life means mastery; and

mastery must be master of the lower first. Life must make hand, foot, and eye, obedient to brain and intellect, or it cannot go higher, and reach truth. So Moses was learned; a disciple of teachers, a man of books. Then the great prince, the heir to the throne, was mighty in word and deed. Legendary history speaks of him as a great general. Here again we have the picture of one, who in the magnificent palace with its splendid columned halls, and amidst the luxury of royalty, made his life master, and trained himself as a statesman great in counsel, and as a soldier great in battle. What a picture we have here of the perfect man in his lower walks as a mere man of the world; that is, as a man trained in the best way to be a complete master in all the ordinary dealings of man with man. Lastly, all this time he carried in his heart the dread secret that his royal state, his learning, his statesmanship, his victories, were good for nothing, *if* the promise of God was with the slaves. And he had the promise by his birth as a slave.

A choice had to be made. Need we wonder that under such circumstances he was long in making it. But he made it, and went out of his palace at last ready to lay down his life if he could save his brethren.

And you too, brethren, I know well are most of you to-day full of good resolutions and high thoughts. You cannot shut your eyes to the dangers that threaten your country, there is a wild hour coming on, no one can help seeing that. I call on you to set up in your hearts a true idea of life, to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light, to make the choice of Moses, and, with less to give up, to give up that less willingly, and welcome life, resolute life, manly life,

self-devoted life. And first you must begin by doing first what first has to be done ; by making yourselves masters, I say, of all that great inheritance of knowledge, hardihood, and practice in duty, which is given you in this place. That comes first. You are no cowards. Do it.

SERMON CLII.

THE KINGDOM WON.

ACTS VII. 22.

*“And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians,
and was mighty in words and in deeds.”*

IT is easy afterwards, when the whole life is seen, to look very lightly on the long years of danger, and doubt, and darkness, that perhaps have to the man who lived them been everything, when for thirty, forty, sixty years, or more, he wrestled through a long night of unknown trial with everything uncertain excepting the pain. Or again, it is easy for the after spectator, who knows that the life was saved, to think nothing of the deep wounds that have set their everlasting mark both on the body and soul of him who so nearly died, and felt all the agony of death in the seemingly lost battle of life. But *he* knows that nothing earthly can compensate for those dread hours. *He* feels that if success is only the short remnant of his days the price paid for success has been too great. Others may talk

of reward, but realities which no reward can touch are cut into his soul. If his spirit is mean, pain has made it bitter; if his spirit is faithful to God, it has triumphed over shame, and triumphed over glory equally. And this last is the training God gives to His leaders. Moses had to pass through it. First of all, for forty years, he was to learn the greatness and the power of princely rank and highest human knowledge. Then, for forty years, he was to learn their emptiness, their nothingness, and be trained in his own heart. And, for forty years more, he was to lead God's people, and be a kind of creator under God of a new and diviner world, which in turn became the kingdom of Christ by being fulfilled in a still greater birth.

Let us to-day consider this great self-training in the wilderness, with the flocks, as contrasted with the throne of Egypt to which he had been bred, and how his martyrdom, for it was nothing less than death to all his former life, death to his royalty, death to his splendour, death to all that had gone before, was but the beginning of the greatness of his life, a new birth through death in a figure into a higher world. But let us not forget the martyrdom, and the marvellous preparation out of which that new life came. For it was a martyrdom to be in the magnificent palace, day by day, in all the glory of his royal rank, his greatness, and his fame, and, day by day, to have had in his heart the voice that would not be silenced telling him of the slaves his brethren, whispering to him of God's great promise, God's inheritance for his race, the blessing of the Living God. How his heart must have been torn with doubt, and shame, and self-questioning, when his fierce spirit brooded on these things. What a weight

the giant works of Egypt, the colossal statues, the massive walls of his royal home, must have been on the great prince, who, now above them, knew their deadly power, whenever beneath them he should find that the mighty stones, the gigantic statues, the adamantine walls, would be less pitiless than the men who ruled there! How ghostly and hollow must the sound of his own footfall, or the night bird's cry, have struck upon his ear, as he paced the silent halls in the anguish of his mind, before he made his choice, and went out for life or death to try and be God's champion! And then, the overthrow, the rejection—in a moment, an outcast flying for his life. And when, in his flight, at last his life was safe, and the weary wanderer found himself alone in the desert, how dreary the future must have looked, how dangerous, and yet how small, how mean, compared with his lost throne, and the royal pride so lately his! But yesterday a mighty prince, to-day a homeless wanderer with nothing but life left. Yet, mark the greatness of the man. As he sat and rested by the well, a stranger, defeated, overthrown, friendless, unknowing what might be his fate, waiting for the shepherds to come, on whose decision his life perhaps, certainly his immediate lot, depended, he would not see a woman wronged. The same great heart which made him in Egypt step out to help his Israelitish brother in his need, at any cost, was in him still; gentle and brave, when the shepherds rudely drove away the women and their flock, he took their part. He was not crushed by his adversity; he had not lost his princely heart; he would not see the weak oppressed; no woman should be ill-treated when he was by; and the great Egyptian soldier—for such he seemed,—in a rude age, showed his

gentle spirit, true *gentle-man*, and once more risked his life, his all, in an act of kindness and protection. Ruin had not made him bitter; ruin had not quenched his courage. And this closes the scene.

When he woke the next morning in the tent of the shepherd prince, whose daughters he had unknowingly befriended, how strange the world in which he found himself must have looked in his eyes! We have no record in Holy Writ excepting the short notice that, "Moses was content to stay with the man; and he gave Moses Zipporah his daughter, and she bare him a son, and he called his name Gershom, for he said, I have been a stranger in a strange land." These two verses are all that are told us of forty years of life. Yet these few words give us the key to those forty years and the lessons they brought, when we look at them through human eyes, able to see and sympathise with our common humanity. They tell us of a struggle between his past greatness and the humble shepherd life, which ended in his being content with his lot. They tell us how keenly and how long he felt his overthrow, and his lonely, friendless, flight, when we find him naming his son by a name which marked his being a stranger in a strange land. Surely we know, for he was a man, and we have men's hearts to feel with him, that before he was content to dwell with the man, when he first had time in the silence of the wilderness to think over what had happened, his heart must have been wildly stirred and perplexed at the heavy blow that had fallen on him, so it seemed, for serving God; and still more at the good cause being so utterly ruined, and the great promise of God stopped, just when it seemed possible to do something. For a time it would all be

dark. It would all seem useless sacrifice; evil triumphant; good trampled down. His own personal loss, which he had thought was also the cause of God, would try his faith exceedingly. And are we not sure, for he was man, that the stranger in the strange land did feel his loneliness there, did remember the time when he moved amidst the ladies and the nobles of the greatest court on earth, their prince, their leader, the noblest of the noble there. But the years wore on, and he was content. And day by day he learnt the lessons he was meant to learn.

“His heart, long forced in humble walks to go,
Was softened into feeling, soothed, and tamed.”

He bent his ear in obedient faith to the teachers our English poet speaks of:

“The silence that is in the starry sky,
The sleep that is among the lonely hills.”

We are sure of all this. God took him like David, and set him among the sheepfolds to commune in silence with nature and his own heart, yet with daily, careful, gentle work to do, requiring great attention and great tenderness; and with the daily possibility of having to step out with his life in his hand, and risk it perchance against the lion and the bear for one poor lamb, like David; no hard task it may be for that gallant soldier, Moses, but yet keeping his courage practised and ready. So passed the forty years, and life seemed over; the old life gone, Egypt blotted out for him, and he for Egypt, and nothing but the sheepfold for him this side the grave. Eighty years, during which his life was to him in a great degree a puzzle, an unknown perplexity, a blind movement day by day, a story without meaning. Eighty years, before the light

was thrown on his path, and his true work began, and he knew it.

Brethren, if this is God's plan, what are we doing? If this is training, what are we doing? Three facts stand out pre-eminently in this history. First, the need of a great principle to live by, in common language, the question, What is worth living for? Moses had to answer that in its most fearful shape, in the choice between a throne, and perhaps death. And he answered it. Have you answered it? It has to be answered first. Many of you have nothing fixed but whims and immediate fancies. Suppose them got, what next? When you leave this school you begin again. What next? Many of you do not even rise to have an ambition however trumpery. To those few who have I still say, suppose it won. What next? You will have to begin again. First then the stupendous value of life with God the Lord of Life as your King has to be fought out and grasped at any risk. Then, secondly, the great fact that all training, trials, overthrow, ruin even, in the kingdom of life, give birth to a new and higher world at last. Have you learnt to rejoice in hardness, in courage, in work, in pain? Are you learning to do so? And, thirdly, the greatest fact of all, patience, faithful patience. The patient waiting of eighty years was needed to enable Moses *to begin* the true work of his life. Hardihood and patience. Why you cannot bear to put off your idleness for half-an-hour. Those who are not even learning these things, those who float like straws in a stream, who think not of work and hardihood, who know no patience cannot be said to live.

SERMON CLIII.

GOD'S MEN LEARN THAT GOD IS THE WORKER.

ACTS VII. 22.

*“And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians,
and was mighty in words and in deeds.”*

PERHAPS *the* characteristic of the generation in which we live is childish impatience.

A childish impatience which expects to know at once the vast mysterious; and when it does not know, thinks itself justified in rejecting the elementary beginnings of truth, which it might know, and in fact does know. There is something babyish in a being like man set in the midst of a world, which goes on whether he is there or not, and in which he cannot tell the real final history of one grain of dust, stretching out a baby hand to grasp the moon, as it were, and laying claim to the universe, and then, declining to believe what the baby hand cannot grasp, in spite of other evidence.

There is something still more silly in the childish

impatience, which in the wonderful world of feeling, of love, of hate, of reverence, of worship, of truth in the heart, and falseness in the heart, grovels in a lower world of sense and touch, and calls it life, and cannot bear to wait and watch, cannot bear to learn the language in which heart speaks to heart, spirit to spirit, man to God, and God to man. And so we hear on every side impatient cries of discontent, because men have no faith, because men are not *content* like Moses to dwell with the shepherds in the wilderness unknowing why and wherefore for a time, to dwell content, like Moses, till God lays open to them by and by what they are, and what they have to do. Why should the young have the tried experience of the old a bit more than his grey hairs? Above all, why should those who have day by day set aside the teaching of God expect to find the knowledge of God in their hearts? God's grand plan of life unfolds itself in a slow, grand, steadfast way, and the greater the life the slower the unfolding. Eighty years passed before Moses was trained to begin; and, every day of those eighty years, the thoughts of Moses were awake, and had to think out the questions which his heart stirred within. And, every day of those eighty years, the feelings of Moses were alive, and quick, and wanted to be satisfied, and were being trained by God, he knew not how. And, all those eighty years, a great cause lost was in his heart to be thought over. And, every day of those eighty years, the meaning was hid from him of the breakdown of his plans, and why he was an outcast because he had chosen the service of God. But he was content. Content to wait; content to trust and do his daily tasks; not unvisited, be sure, by a growing sense of higher peace, and quiet strength,

and clearer sight. At all events he was content. The great prince, who had lost his earthly throne, who, harder still, had lost the cause for which he risked his throne, the cause for which he was ready to die, was content, although as yet he had no answer for these bitter questions; all lost, and no answer to tell him why.

But he found out later. False success, though done in the name of God, pushes God out of the working world. In old days he had had a wonderful belief in God and God's world; but his idea of God's working was nothing. He appealed to the selfish misery of the people to work by, and to their brute passions to do the work, and thought because he believed in God that this was God's work. So his splendid self-devotion was accepted, but his way of working destroyed. Yet, during those long years, Moses must have thought evil triumphant, when it was only that he was untrained; must have thought his time wasted, whereas the time was ripening him, and the wasted time was growth, because he was doing his duty. The forty years of the court of Egypt, when he had empire in his hands, was a lower life that did not change the world. The forty years of daily small tasks in the wilderness did the work of life which made his life a power; did the work of life, until a day came, when his life was ready. And then, as is always the case when God speaks to man, the common bush, such as he every day saw in his shepherd work, becomes full of divine fire, and he turns aside to see it. Something in the daily life always burns, and calls attention, when God means to speak to the heart. And Moses is ready when called. "Here am I," is his answer. Yet when *bid* go by God to do, what once he

was so eager to do in God's name *unbidden*, he hesitates, and raises objections. His feeling of human power had been broken, the unseen had not yet been felt enough. So different is a belief, which could inspire the splendid martyrdom which lost him his throne, from a belief which could trust the daily working of God.

But real belief in God means believing in God's daily working, and the being ready to face the impossible in that belief. For Moses was required to do nothing less than this. The heir of the throne of Egypt, the warrior, and statesman of old days, was now the friendless shepherd of the desert. How could the friendless shepherd do what the great prince could not do? Right well he knew what Egypt was, and Pharaoh. Right from his inmost soul came out the question, "Who am I that I should go unto Pharaoh?" It had a dread significance for him, the outcast from those proud halls of power where Pharaoh reigned in deadly splendour, where he himself had once been so at home. How often in after ages the same question, Who am I that I should go up alone against the mightiest after having been once trampled under foot by them? comes into the mouth of the workers of God! Yea, all God's workers begin like Moses with a burning zeal for the good cause, but with a blind and mistaken plan of the way to work it. They believe in God ruling over all; but they do not practically believe in God daily working in an evil and powerful world. They are ready to risk their lives for the good cause, to leave all for its sake; but man's strength, and skill, and intellect, and sagacity, and battle, are to do the work for them, the work, which God is to bless, but not to do. God is often put out of the work of the world even by those who are ready to

be martyrs for God's cause. But they have to be taught, as Moses was taught, that God's way of working, and God Himself doing the main work, and inspiring all, must be humbly accepted, as well as God's cause. How great is the gulf between the two! The history of Moses shows it clearly. Forty years of lowly training, and incessant trial of heart, were needed before Moses, the martyr for the cause of God, was made into Moses the obedient believer in God's work, the willing executor of God's will. "Who am I that I should go unto Pharaoh? is his question then. Who am I that I should try the impossible?" So wide a space does there lie between the martyr spirit ready to die for a cause, and the faithful life that can see God working in the world, and work in his way. How many religious men that really love the cause, never learn to work with God! But Moses did. This second epoch of his life closes with God's command to him in God's name to do the impossible, and he obeyed, and did it.

Brethren, two great truths for us stand out of this history of life. The first is that which I have just mentioned, that zeal even unto death is only a half-learned lesson, if the other half, the working in God's way, by God's means, in obedience to His Spirit, is not added. Many work *for* God, who never work *with* God. The other is, that which greatly concerns us, the meaning of those forty years of disappointment, of busy monotony, a weary routine of trivial labour, always on the watch, dangerous withal, yet requiring the most tender care, utterly without honour, utterly unknown, leading to nothing, and this with him who might have been a king of kings doing it, sitting in thought upon the silent hills, not forgetful sometimes of the past glory,

nor in his loneliness quite without secret questionings of the days that were to come. Is not this a grand lesson of patience and power? What a reproach to the childish hurry which cannot wait a single day, which will sell the after life for an hour's play, or idle self-indulgence in a tenth-rate shop! No wonder if a little later on mean tricks in practice, and fretful denials of the God they have never served, in talk, and in writings, mark the would-be-heroes of modern life. Eighty years of training before his true life work began made Moses fit to be a worker. Impatience of a few hours, silly judgments on a training you don't understand, and are not manly enough, or sensible enough, to receive heartily, too often unfits you. There is a use in little incessant calls on humility, on patience, on labour, on the courage that can work, and endure, and wait. God orders in this way a good man's life. The would-be-wise, weak character prides himself on knowing better. But an end comes. Wait till the end.

SERMON CLIV.

THE PROMISED LAND.

PSALM CVI. 24.

“ Yea, they thought scorn of that pleasant land, and gave no credence unto his word.”

THE third epoch of the life of Moses, the actual beginning of his true work, opens, as we have seen, after eighty years, with the command given him by God to do in the name and in the power of God, the very thing, that forty years before he had risked his life, and cast away his throne to do for God's sake, but in his own name, and by the power of the brute passions and brute force of the people. It had taken forty years of quiet, but most trying discipline, to teach him the difference between those two things, between zeal for God's cause, but belief in man's work, as contrasted with obedience to God's command, and reliance on God working that command out.

The difference is marked in the strongest way by the first words he speaks to Pharaoh the mighty king,

“Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness.” Not a word of policy, not a word of the oppressed people and the possible danger from them, not a word of expediency, but short and simple, and uncompromising, “Thus saith the Lord God of Israel;” putting in the forefront with a stern abruptness the great principle, however unpalatable and unintelligible it might be.

A grand lesson for ever and ever in practical life, never to slur over, or compromise a principle. Out with it at once, bare, and hard, and plain. Afterwards all those who agree on the principle thoroughly can settle details, and things will come right; but, wherever there is concealment of principle, success makes all things go wrong. It is impossible to attempt even to deal with this third portion of the life of Moses from Egypt to the Promised Land. It is so vast—a kind of universe containing many worlds of life. I shall simply pass it entirely over, and confine myself to the single point of his leadership into a Promised Land. All turns on that. Without the Promised Land, what was the life of Moses? What was the life of the people? I venture to say that in reading the Scripture account the impression carried away by an ordinary reader is the impression of a very weary hard-worked life for Moses, of much disappointment, constant rebellion, now the mob murmur, and are ready to stone him; and, remember, the mean, low lives, and mean, low words of the mob, their threats, and their outbreaks, were just as bitter and painful to the feelings of their great leader, as the triumph of a revolutionary mob, or murderous lawlessness are at the present day, with the additional sting that the people’s wretched outcry was a flying in the

face of God their deliverer, who had just given them the liberty they abused. Then again, the nobles set up against him, and a section of the priests with them. Then, every day, nothing but vexation and toil, barren marches, hunger, thirst, and heat; the only excitement the thankless trouble of dealing with an ignorant and stiff-necked race, who neither knew him, nor lived sensibly, nor obeyed God, sullen, unthankful, self-willed. I do not mean that the ordinary reader puts all this into words in his mind; but that the general impression, and a very true one, of the life of Moses is much disappointment, and vexation, and trouble; hard work and little thanks for it. And it is true. The greatest leader the world has ever known; the one man, who under God turned a horde of slaves into a nation of gallant freemen and conquerors, did lead such a life. And such a life was his earthly reward for all he had gone through. His martyrdom when he lost his throne, his forty years of daily self-abasement in the wilderness *did* end for him in this fierce, patient, penalty of leading a mean people on the way to greatness, with all the present pain, and nothing to compensate for the pain, saving only, the feeling within of stronger life day by day for himself, clearer sight of God, a calmer heart, a greater self-mastery, with the sweetness of such liberty in his soul; and next, the certainty of working with God, which made all the labour, all the suffering, the joy of the champion for the King he loves; and lastly the Promised Land, the blessing of Abraham coming true, the sweet conviction of victory and peace.

It is of the Promised Land I would speak. The home for which they lived. That is the first truth. They lived for it. The Promised Land first, and the Messiah,

the King, who was to reign over them in the Promised Land, these two great thoughts were the daily joy and hope of every Israelite, who was not a traitor. And the bitter accusation of treason brought against them by the Psalmist was, "Yea they thought scorn of that pleasant land." The Israelite in the wilderness life looked on the Promised Land with exactly the same present feeling that a man now looks forward to success in his profession. And it was to Moses his every-day work, as well as hope, his work to lead them to that land, his hope, to share it, or something better. Their lives so to say were threaded and strung on that ever-present central hope, the Promised Land, the Promised Land. And it had such power, because it came home to them so thoroughly. They could understand it so well, though they had never seen the land. Man, woman, and child, could understand the difference between marching to and fro in the wilderness, hungry and thirsty, pitching tents, pinched by cold, and parched by heat, being here to-day and there to-morrow, everyone, I say, could understand the difference between this and the homes they were to have in a rich and plentiful country of their own. It was just to be the same life, only rich instead of poor. There was to be no change whatever in *them*, only change in their circumstances. They went into Jordan on one side, and came out on the other, the same exactly, but on one side was the wilderness, on the other, the Promised Land, the Promised Land.

Need we wonder that the true Israelite took every step in joy which brought him nearer to his home, nearer to the Promised Land, where he was to be rich, and happy, and in peace, leading the same human life in a better world.

Brethren, we never shall live life truly till we have got *our going home* into the same practical true groove that they had. I can truly say, in my own case, that from childhood to the present time, life, however painful or dangerous, and painful and dangerous it has been, has got better and better on this plan; higher pleasures, higher pains; and that I shall be glad when the best comes, and I pass the river of death into the land, and go home. I would not go back an hour for joy of the better life already, and of the Promised Land. The better life already, for that concerns us now; from joy at feeling all present life a ripening growth, a getting forwards in life, a higher world already here and felt. Nor would I forget in this one great advantage we have over the Israelite. As life goes on how many of those we honour and love leave us, as we count leaving; at all events most assuredly we cannot see and speak with them. They leave us, carrying with them how much of our lives and thoughts, so that our hearts go across into Paradise to them and are transplanted even now! Brethren, our going home will be like the Israelites, a going on with this our life, unbroken, into a better land; this same life unbroken. I beseech you look steadily at the great prophecy and example of the Promised Land. You are going home, this week. Some of you die to this place—*leave*. This too is an example. Home! But home, what is home, if disgrace and wrong-doing here has spoiled home?

But life, taken manfully at first, brightens, as it goes on, even if the brightest here on earth be, as with Moses, the government of a stiff-necked people, or a marching to and fro in the wilderness as with the people. The life goes on. Moses, fifteen hundred years

afterwards, seen in glory on the mount, taking part in the new creation of Christ our Lord was satisfied. Even as we, ten, twenty, one hundred years hence, will be satisfied, however hard the life may have been which led up to the world of truth. Yes, brethren, life goes on; and even as you go home this week, each with your own life in you, to go on, even so shall we all go home, to go on, each with our own life in us. There will be no change. Save only that in the future the life will go on where it is most fitted to go. True life never dies. It goes on, and on and on, seen on the mount in glory, doing glorious work with Moses and with Christ, now and for ever. We all are to go home.

SERMON CLV.

CHAPEL COMMEMORATION.

ST BARNABAS, 1885.

ST MATTHEW II. 11.

“And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts: gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.”

THE wise men at the birth of Christ brought their offerings, their precious things, and laid them at His feet. And in the book of the Revelation, in the last revealed account of things that are to be, the revelation of the Holy City of God, it is said—“The kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it—and they shall bring the glory and the honour of the nations into it.” The coming of the wise men with their offerings is the beginning of the great Christian kingdom; the kings of the earth bringing their glory and honour into it is the end. And the same truth was set forth in the great type of a world new born, in the bringing Israel out of Egypt.

Moses was mighty in word and deed, and learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians ; and the children of Israel going out, spoiled the Egyptians of their precious things, which Egypt gave them. In this way, from the first type to the last great and glorious triumph, the same truth appears of God's kingdom gathering into it all that is beautiful and precious in the world. Our Chapel represents to us God's kingdom ; therefore we honour it to-day, and always. And I would point out that our lives here are framed after this pattern of heavenly life. Many, because earth is not heaven, spoil both earth and heaven for themselves by mis-using earth.

But earth is in a very true sense heaven. I not only mean that the kingdom of heaven is within us, but that earth itself in a very true sense is heaven. God does not make two things when one is enough, and has already been made by Him. Take the eye for instance. God has given the eye to man. When Christ on earth delivered the blind, He did not endow them with a new, supernatural power of discernment, He restored the eye. Be sure that whatever the eye can do, it must do ; and no spirit of God will come down from heaven to man to be instead of the eye, to those blinded men, who having blinded by their own fault the eye-power of reading the working of God in the world, expect to know God's work and God's will without the eye. No ! the created earth with man created to live on it, has to be used, and lived on ; the eye has to be used ; the eye of the mind has to be used ; the glory and honour of earth has to be brought into the kingdom of God. No self-blinded men, who cannot see the heavenly use of earthly powers, and use them, have a true perception of the life of God. The eye is but a type in this.

All creation, as far as it goes, is God's will, and God's thought, the divine instruments God has given us to use for Him, and, as being His gifts, nothing less than heaven brought near to us, as far as we are fitted to see it, and use it. Rightly then is this our noble Chapel set in the midst of us here. Rightly is the adoration of the wise men, the heathen world bringing its gifts to the feet of the Saviour, our altar piece. Rightly is heathen literature, and the history and work of the most perfect heathen races—the glory and honour of the nations—brought into this school, to be used in God's service. This is the meaning of this Chapel, and of our School Buildings, and of the work of heathen writers, or secular knowledge, or the workshops, or the games, which are gathered round this our Chapel. It is all one life; and it would not be a true life, if the precious things of earth, and the glory and honour of the nations, were not gathered into it. To take one example only, history, and the knowledge of the lives and thoughts of the world before us in old times, which even the most ignorant boy in this school gets, is of inestimable value. When Christ first came to bring happy life to a lost world, miracles were wanted to show that the message was higher than earth. But no miracles are wanted after these nineteen hundred years of life, to show how heavenly the life of Christ is, compared with the life that then was on earth. In this way the very wickedness of the ancient world, and the knowing how wicked it was, is not all an evil, it makes those, who come to the city of God with all their gains, able to see how great those gains have been; able to see out of what a hell on earth the life of these days has emerged; able to tell the semi-heathen reviler of God's truth, how entirely he owes the glimmering of better things, which makes

him able to find fault, to the light all round him, which has given him what he is, though he denies it.

As you heard last night the common English home is not a home of boasts in lies; and the English face is not sullen and licentious in its better ordinary type as a heathen face. Be not however deceived, you *may* be, in spite of this, greater traitors to the truth *you* know, than *they* are to the truth *they* know. Yet the fact remains, that a higher, healthier life is the rule where any light of Christ is known, and a worse and more wretched level of life where it is not known. The fact remains, that it is something even to know what has taken place in this sinful world. But the great truth is, that the kings of the earth are to bring their glory and their honour into the City of God; and the glory and honour of the nations is to be brought into it.

Once more then I say, this our Chapel is the visible sign of the City of God to us. And the kings of the earth, the kings in wisdom, in knowledge, in intellect; the kings of poetry, of philosophy, of words that burn, of eloquent speech, and true writings; the kings of music, and painting, and all that interests eye, or ear, or mind, or heart, bring their glory and their honour into this Chapel, to lay them at the feet of Christ. And never can you look at that noble picture of the wise men and their offerings without being reminded that in very truth the whole of the inner life of this school is there put before your eyes—the kings of the old world giving their gold and their treasures to Christ.

The noble and precious labours of the heathen world, the master-pieces of the Greek, the conquests of Rome, are here taken into your lives, and through *you* brought into the Holy City, consecrated in this Chapel to Christ

and God. Ay, and you may remember the Christian hero¹, in whose memory that picture is put up ; who, once well known in this our Chapel, was himself an example even unto death, scholar, and gentleman, and Captain of the Eleven, and athlete as he was, of the glory and honour of the nations brought into the sanctuary of God. This then is the true Chapel Commemoration, when you, even you, seeing in this holy building the City of God with us, come into it not to-day only, but week by week, full of living fire. Come into it each Sunday, with the glory and honour of the nations gathered during the week as an offering to Christ. When you, as kings, doing kingly work amongst the kings of poetry and prose, get gold of thought, and frankincense for holy worship, and myrrh for purifying power, and come in, and lay all you have gained as an holy offering before God each week. *This* is to commemorate the Chapel. The Chapel is commemorated when honest manly purity and bravery, working through mind and heart at their best, are not idle, nor slothful, nor self-indulgent ; but working true work, bring into these walls the glory and honour of the nations week by week, and kneel and present it in prayer to God. This is the Chapel Commemoration, the seeing this Chapel here as the City of God set amongst us, and making it holy by bringing holy gifts of life and work into it, and passing it on to those who come after, full of the glory and honour of kingly work, done as kings amongst the kings of earthly renown. Yea, this is to commemorate the Chapel.

¹ The Rev. J. Wynford Alington.

SERMON CLVI.

THE LORD'S DAY.

REVELATION I. 10.

"The Lord's day."

THE mutability of human affairs has passed into a proverb. Historians moralise over the rise and fall of empires; as kingdom after kingdom, from the first witnessing of recorded time, lights up, flashes across the horizon, and departs, swallowed up like the lightning by unfailing darkness again. Poets are never weary of a mournful music of mortality and change, still

"Like muffled drums they're beating
Funeral marches to the grave."

It needs must be so. In a world of sight and touch, where everything belonging to sight and touch is perishable, with beings like ourselves, creatures of sight and touch in our earthly nature, mere embodiments, as far as earth is concerned, of faculties of seeing and touching, our very existence on earth as men gone if these are taken away, it needs must be that this circle of perishable powers, dealing with perishable things,

shall stamp the impression of perishing and of death on the whole of this perishing circle of powers and material alike. Since both the makers and the things made, be they cities, or armies, or empires, are compacted, all and each, of that which is perishable.

And all experience bears this out. The words of the haughty Assyrian conqueror are more true now by some three thousand years nearly than they were when first spoken. "Have the gods of the nations delivered them which my fathers have destroyed, as Gozan, and Haran, and Rezeph, and the children of Eden which were in Telassar. Where is the king of Hamath, and the king of Arphad, and the king of the city of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivah?" Where we may say now, is Assyria and Babylon, and Egypt, and Persia, and Greece, and Rome? Where are their Gods? Where are their temples? Where are their worships? Where is their glory? Ruins, and fit inhabitants of ruins, a few books for learned men, some valuable warnings, and experience, some beauty to please eye and ear, some power to forge the swords of intellect, are all that remains of them, all that is not dead, and buried, and passed out of this world, as if they had never been.

Just pause, and think what this blank space of ancient vanished life means. Just pause, and think how what remains, remains like a pyramid, a temple, or a Greek play, imposing, or beautiful, but a mere tombstone witnessing of a past that is dead, a curiosity, a monument, at best an intellectual forge, where weapons are brought and sharpened. But, whatever they may be, or whatever men may think of them, they are no more part of the living life, the worship, the good and evil, the every day interests of the present day, than the

dead bones of those who made them are part. No one prays a prayer, or makes an offering, or appeals to his fellow man through them, or puts his life into any of their shapes. In the daily practice of life between man and man, in our work, and shops, and market places, and homes, they are as if they had never been, they are dead. It is true that now one bit of experience, and now another, a beacon light here, a lamp there, has been added to the world, and tossed from hand to hand. Fragments, and broken bits, more or less precious, have been kept. But for all that, the main result has been a blank space of ancient vanished life; a buried past, ruins, and oblivion. A mere patchwork, a mosaic of broken pieces, a kind of museum of antiquities, is all that remains of the ancient world, if one thing is excepted.

I marvel that man's boasted reason has not taken more note of that one exception.

If one thing lives whilst all others perish it is worthy of notice.

If one thing is not broken, and is not surviving as a patch in something else, when everything else is broken, or patchwork, reason would bid us note it.

If one life grows and lives, and lives and grows, one separate life, whilst everything else perishes, then, that life must be by the nature of things the one only power worth considering on earth.

I have taken as my text, "The Lord's Day." It is my intention to endeavour to give some practical explanations about the Lord's day, and to draw attention to some very clear principles by which we may be guided in our thoughts how to treat the Lord's day. But first, the power of the day itself, and its wondrous claims,

demand to be considered, and make a solemn appeal for our allegiance, and our reverence.

The first words of religion spoken at the Creation of the world are, "That God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made."

The sabbath, or rest-day, was consecrated by God when the first earthly Creation was finished.

And the Lord's day, or Resurrection day, the Life day, took its place naturally; when the resurrection finished the second Creation, the spiritual creation to life.

So when we take this day really as our own, and make it become incarnate in ourselves, we stand with the Lord on the resurrection morning, and celebrate a weekly Easter day; and we stand with God at the Creation, and receive the day as a solemn blessed token of everything created very good; and we have a day of rest, and a day of life, two in one given us; and, week by week, the resurrection morning and that glad dawn when "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy," at the birthday of the world, are with us still, in God's unchanging spirit world, the same. Two birthdays; the birthday of a world; and the birthday of divine life.

Mark this, from the first hour of this created world, from the first words spoken by God to regulate man's life, to the present moment, the great solemn birthday consecrated by our God has been kept. At this very moment, we in this place are living embodiments of God's first command. We are here to-day, because of the blessing on Creation. We are here to-day, because of the birthday of life. The first day of the finished

earth-world, and the first day of life divine triumphant, meet together in us. Creation's early morning, and Easter day, are present in us, and with us, at this moment here; even as through all the thousands of years one unfailling series of rest-days has been kept, strung like pearls in regular order, from the first day to this last. Noah, on successive seventh days sent out the dove, and waited for God's message. Abraham, sitting at his tent door, or under the great tree, not unvisited by angels, drank in the calm of the seventh day. Peace came to Jacob in his weary exile, and a little rest amongst the sheepfolds, as he strolled on the hill side, or by the water, on the seventh day. The Lord after His Resurrection, on each occasion appeared to His disciples on the Lord's day. The Lord's day had received that name from the Apostles. Saint John says in my text, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." The history of the early Church shows them meeting together on the Lord's day. And now, after nearly two thousand years more, here are we met together because of Creation, because of the Resurrection, on the Lord's day. There has never been a week, since this earth was created for man, in which the people of our God have not observed God's day. Week after week, the great pearl necklace has been strung with another pearl; and peace and life have, without break or pause, held their high festival. Creation is here. Resurrection life is here to-day. We, we, are the living picture of those eternal facts. We, we, are ourselves, a kind of manuscript of God, God's handwriting in human lives proclaiming His endless reign, and our unbroken reign of life with Him through the Lord's day.

I claim then your allegiance to the Lord's day. I

claim your solemn reverent loyalty to God's first command, and to the Resurrection of Christ. The day itself cries aloud, and calls on us for love and honour. What a mystery of life divine, life unchanging even on earth, life eternal in the midst of mortality and death, God's presence on the morning of the Creation, Christ's presence in the birthday of life, is wrapped up in the mere common fact of our being here to-day! The Lord's Day—pause, and think, think long and well, what the eternal presence of the Lord's day is in a world of shattered empires, series after series of ruins, and perpetual successions of breakage and of death.

SERMON CLVII.

THE LORD'S DAY.

REVELATION I. 10.

"The Lord's day."

THE Lord's day is the most marvellous living reality of unbroken, immortal life in the whole world, a strange union of the human and divine. It is a kind of boat, a floating fragment of eternity carried on the stream of time. There is a visible everlastingness in that day, which having its title as the first day of the finished world, the birthday of a created, blessed universe, heard, we may say, the song of the morning stars, "when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy" at the Creation. And from that hour to this, it has had that chorus of divine song echoing down, week by week, throughout all generations of mankind, never silent as the day came round, age after age, through all the thousand years, keeping up the song of joyful rest from work, and then of joyful life. There is nothing like it. It stands alone

in the life of earth, as the one only bit of heaven sent down to earth, which from the beginning to the end has been unchanging amidst change; by an everlasting weekly birth of life from God, received by man.

How far off, how imaginative, how shadowy, how unapproachable, the morning of Creation seems to us! How separate from the present, how dark in the dim distance much of modern talk makes it! How voiceless and uncertain it reaches our times, in the teeth of the great fact that the Lord's day, with its ever recurring song of praise, is the lineal descendent, by a never-ceasing strain, of the angel chorus on Creation's dawn. See how true this is. It runs back, and back, and back, through all known history to the first prophecy, "that the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head," to the first blessing, "that God blessed the seventh day."

And now, to-day, in a figure, our first parents worship in this Chapel. Adam and Eve are here in the fulfilment of that prophecy, which they heard, and which in turn witnesses of them, that the seed of the woman *has* bruised the serpent's head. Here too, "all angels cry aloud, the heavens and all the powers therein, Cherubin and Seraphin continually do cry." Their song of praise on the first morning has never died away. Abraham is here, who saw in spirit the day of Christ, and was glad. He could come in this moment, and take a more living part than we do in that glory which he saw of old. Moses is here. His words never are silent in the Church of Christ. Moses, who on the Mount of the Transfiguration bore witness to his King. David is here; his words have been on our lips to-day. And be sure those blessed spirits know of God's kingdom on earth, and their own share in it. Isaiah, Ezekiel, the prophets, are

here. You sat at their feet just now. The goodly fellowship of the prophets praise Thee, O God, and never have been silent on the Lord's day. The Evangelists have been here. St Paul spoke to you this day. The glorious company of the Apostles praise Thee, O God, and ever do praise Thee on the Lord's day. The noble army of martyrs praise Thee. The Holy Church throughout all the world doth acknowledge Thee, O God, and evermore acknowledges Thee on the Lord's day. All the Saints, whose holy words have been handed down to us, join in declaring Thee, O God. At this hour we can, and do oftentimes, take their words, and speak with their voice. They all in a figure stand in this Chapel to-day with us and worship the same worship. The holy manna and the water from the living rock, which Moses knew, are here in greater, holier, power. We turn to light, and the East, the home of light, as the Jews did to Jerusalem; all is the same, glorified indeed, fulfilled, more heavenly, but still the same. And the first song of angel voices at Creation's dawn, "when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy," has come pealing down the ages, a rolling tide of glory, week by week, on each hallowed seventh day, from the beginning, never silent, never to come to an end. Our Lord's day, this day, our worship here to-day, is the lineal descendent, by an undoubted pedigree, of the day of the first blessing, and the angel song, older than the earliest record, passing through the earliest record in the unity of ever increasing power unto us this day. This is certain, nothing is better known than the pedigree of the Lord's day. "We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord. All the earth doth worship

Thee, the Father everlasting. To Thee all angels cry aloud, the Heavens, and all the Powers therein. To Thee Cherubin, and Seraphin, continually do cry, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth; Heaven and earth are full of the Majesty of Thy Glory. The glorious company of the Apostles praise Thee. The goodly fellowship of the Prophets praise Thee. The noble army of Martyrs praise Thee. The Holy Church throughout all the world doth acknowledge Thee." With what a solemn harmony of angel voices does this great unison of eternity incarnate in prayer and praise roll on, when heard in the witness of the everlasting music of the Lord's day. How, like a mighty sea, gathering up its waters from age to age, does this weekly immortality of song, and prayer, and blessing, bear witness to unchanging life on each Lord's day. This *is* the Lord's day. This song of creation, of blessing on work and rest, this resurrection life.

It is difficult in any way to bring home to the feelings this glowing stream of immortality in mortal form, which, as it flows, gathers up all the true glory of the human race, gathers up patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, saints, in the golden bond of the Lord's day. It is impossible without time, and thought, and experience, and much effort, to send the heart back, consciously, and with real perception, week by week, along the track of moving light, back to the open tomb on the first Easter morn, back to the thunders of Sinai, and the consuming fire, back to Creation, and God's throne, and the fountain head at God's throne, and the song of the morning stars, the joyous shout of the angels of God. Yet this is to know and feel the Lord's day. This, and nothing less than this.

Mark too the wonderful significance of its double character, as the day of rest, and the day of life. Rest means the gathering strength after work in order to work again. This is rest in a world of mortal men. The blessing on rest came before the curse which man's fall brought on work, and remained after it. Fallen man had first to be taught through work, and weariness in work, and the sweat of his brow, the curse of the lower fleshly lusts, and the blessing on rest and practised strength. Then as the world went on, and gained experience, the glory of the resurrection life in Christ cancelled the curse, and made the unwearied strength of life the truest definition of rest. The first rest, which was born of weariness and weakness, passed, and was fulfilled in the second rest, which is the strength of life able to work with joy, and not to be weary in well doing. And just as the Law always comes before the Gospel, and just as the Jewish Church went on side by side with the Christian Church, till the destruction of Jerusalem, but wanted no new command to make it pass into the Christian Church, so also the Sabbath, with its putting away earthly drudgery and the things of earth, always comes before the Lord's day, and still remains for those who can go no higher, but nevertheless wanted no new command to make it pass into the Lord's day. It passed by a natural fulfilment and growth, as the law, and work done from duty, passed into life, and work done from love. And it still keeps its double character—rest from earthly toil, a sabbath from the daily work, and cares, and ambitions; activity in life, and love afterwards, a holy joy in all things that raise the heart to Christ and God. The Sabbath is not abolished, nor the blessing on rest. But

a higher rest of strength in life and love raises those who have life into a higher world.

Rest from work, and a rest, which is working in life and love, meet in the Lord's day. And starting from this principle, which is deep set in the history of the Lord's day, it is not difficult to show how the Lord's day ought to be kept, as holier, more sacred, higher, and greater, than the Sabbath; yet in no sense abolishing the Sabbath, or needing a fresh command for itself. I propose to show this the next time.

SERMON CLVIII.

THE LORD'S DAY.

REVELATION I. 10.

"The Lord's day."

THE history of the Lord's day, as we have seen, contains within itself its own laws of observance, which only require to be drawn out plainly; first, the law of rest from work, secondly, the law of living life conquering death, the resurrection life of Christ acting.

What then is rest? That is the first question. A true idea of rest is necessary. And next, what is the nature of the new law of life? These two truths meet in the Lord's day, and together entirely satisfy the wants of human nature. First then of Rest. The idea of rest, which, I suppose, everyone begins with, is the leaving off work which has made us weary. Weariness from work underlies every form of rest; and the intention of working again, when rested, is equally contained in the word Rest. Observe how entirely different this is from idleness. The idle do not rest.

Weariness from work is the underlying notion. To get rid of weariness from work is rest. Yet the weakness of human nature, and limbs and bodies, that get tired, lead many to look no further than idleness as their idea of rest; because it is true sometimes that, after great exertion, rest does mean doing nothing for a short period. But powers of work, and the getting rid of weariness, not unfrequently take the form of great activity in spite of our weakness. And the man, who has spent month after month in ceaseless brain work indoors, finds his rest, when his holiday comes at last, in exceedingly strong exercise, and great activity of body, in field, and river, and mountain. This *is* rest; the strengthening and renewing the body by exercise so as to be able to bear the labour of the mind again. Moreover, all healthy life overcomes weariness by healthy exercise, which makes the man strong in health and working power. So that it may even be said, the stronger the health and healthy body, the more a working man rests, inasmuch as he is not weary though at work. Every increase of strength is a giving of rest. And in this way, following out the idea of growing stronger and stronger by healthy exercise, the true definition of rest is found at last to be, the power of working without weariness in the repose of perfect strength. But this also is the definition of life victorious, of life that conquers death, of the resurrection life of Christ.

Thus we find that the earlier idea, of rest being a doing nothing in order to repair great labour, passes onward, step by step, as life grows more perfect, into doing everything in the joy of a living activity that cannot tire. And, though this can never be our lot

entirely on this earth with our mortal bodies, yet it is of vital importance to us men to see the truth of things, and the true direction towards which we ought to press. So we see that the two meanings of rest, the getting rid of weariness by a short cessation of work, and the getting the conquering life—the Sabbath rest, and the Lord's day rest—are the same in spirit. The Sabbath rest being the beginning of true working life, and the Lord's day rest that life grown up, perfect, and given to the Lord.

The principles which decide how we are to keep the day are simple, and have the same twofold character as the history of the day has. First, the old rule is a true rule, no work, which presses as work, is to be done on the Lord's day. I think the moment we get a true idea of rest, we get a true idea also, that there is nothing wrong in doing a little necessary work which is so little as to make the day, taken as a day, a real rest day. There is nothing wrong, for instance, in a good household doing the necessary household work; or a farmer feeding his cattle; or in doing anything that cannot be left undone without harm, or great inconvenience, and—which by being done does not tire, or break in on the feeling of a rest day.

There I think lies the secret in God's living kingdom. First and foremost, there should be the feeling of a day of rest, of peace. Anything that destroys that is not right. No work, that is work, and can be fairly laid aside, ought to be done on the Lord's day. Now, work to you here, is your book work. And you break the rest of the Lord's day if you do your common school work on that day, as much as a ploughman would, if he ploughed the fields. The mind, as well as the body,

ought to do no work that wearies, no work that worries. This belongs to the first idea of rest. And also nothing which destroys the balance of mind, or engrosses it too much, or stimulates it too much, ought to be done. All this is fatal to the idea of rest, and fatal also to the idea of conquering life; for the conquering life is master of itself, and is not carried away by excitement, or fear, in what it does, or by any passion. This law preeminently applies to many amusements, innocent enough in themselves. If they destroy the balance of mind, and are disturbing elements, then they are not right.

Then also, Sunday reading, as it is called, falls under this head. And whilst it is not possible to lay down strict laws, it is very possible indeed to point out very definite principles, and indeed to name in some instances very positively what ought not to be done. Work has been already spoken of, but it is equally clear that the same law which stops work of the body, and the secular ploughing and digging, equally shuts off any secular reading that is utterly worldly, and belonging either to the work or amusements of the world; newspapers for instance, or very engrossing novels, however good they otherwise may be, are of this character. They shut off the restful thoughts, and the quiet peacefulness of the Lord's day. On the other hand any noble book is right reading. The Jews had their national histories to read on the sabbath. They read how David won his throne, how Ahab fell by the judgment of God. Many of the exquisite stories of modern times, which are short, and full of feeling, and tender truthful power, may well be read on Sunday, though there may be no special religious teaching in them. What is nobler teaching than golden deeds, and noble life examples? In this

way without making special laws, which may have many exceptions, according to the persons, there are broad, plain principles, by which everyone can determine for himself if he chooses, how he himself ought to keep the Lord's day, without making any stumbling-block, or wounding his conscience, concerning this or that particular thing. Only remember that it *is* the Lord's day. That alone is a lighthouse of faith and truth. Rob not the Lord of His day. Do nothing in it you could not present to Him. *That* will decide any doubt. The conquering life given to Christ the Lord may do anything which brings with it "the peace of God which passeth all understanding." And may do nothing, which destroys the balance of peace by tiring the body in common work, or common amusement; which worries the mind with earthly cares; which fills the mind with excitement of any kind, even good excitement which upsets peace, and pushes the Lord from His Lord's day throne, and prevents the heart giving itself to God's peace.

No common work, no weariness, no excitement, no worry, nothing which disturbs mind, or body, either by its earthy character, or by being too much, too engrossing, is right on the Lord's day. Still more idleness is not rest, and cannot be the living life, the conquering life, giving itself up to the Lord on the Lord's day.

Nothing has been said of the reasons which make the observance of the Lord's day so all important in practice, so all important, that no individual, no nation, which profanes, or puts aside the Lord's day, can be considered a true disciple of the Lord. Time will not admit of this; neither does it belong to the day as commanded by God, and fulfilled by Christ, to give

these reasons. From Creation to the present hour the great command has stood, and been obeyed; the undying witness above all other witness of immortal life on earth, and the unfailing purpose of the Lord the Giver of life. But note, the judgments of God fell most heavily on His people when they neglected His Sabbath, and the land had rest, whilst the people of the land sat down by the waters of Babylon and wept, slaves without rest in another land.

It needs must be so. How shall men sing the Lord's song in a strange land? How shall those, who cast themselves out from the great chorus of prayer and praise, which began when the morning stars sang together at creation, all glorious in the light of the new day, and the sons of God shouted for joy, and which has been continued week by week to the unrepealed law from Mount Sinai and the consuming fire; and which has been continued week by week from the Resurrection morning, and the living life, till we here to-day have taken up its harmony; how shall they, I say, who break the great immortal chain of prayer, and praise, and song, of rest, and peace that passeth all understanding, hope to keep their place in the kingdom of their Lord?

Whatever can be presented as a holy offering to the Lord belongs to the Lord's day.

He who stands outside this day of life, this portion of eternity living week by week on earth, stands outside the kingdom of the Lord.

There is nothing on earth which in awful claims, and law unrepealed, and life fulfilled, can be compared with the Lord's day. It is the most solemn witness to God; the most solemn and gracious test of the allegi-

ance and loyalty of man. See ye to it. Pass it on till the Archangel's trumpet takes it up and the Lord's day comes indeed, and the Lord's people enter into their rest of everlasting joyful work for Him, in the repose of unwearied strength.

SERMON CLIX.

THE CHOICE OF NEW LIFE.

ST MARK VII. 11.

“ Whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrhah in the day of judgment, than for that city.”

TWO poor men go into the streets of a city and speak to the people, and tell of happiness, and truth, and of a Deliverer come with power to save, and power to heal the sick, and cast out evil spirits, and cleanse the heart, and if the people do not receive them a deadly curse is passed on those people. Two poor men, and cities and villages as little inclined to give up their own ways then, as they are now; nothing more. Now what was the secret of that judgment? The real truth about it? Is it anything to us? Are we in the same circumstances? Is it here now? Yes, it is everything to us. We are in the same circumstances. It is here now.

The facts were these. In a small but densely peopled country, which may very well be represented to us by the three or four neighbouring counties, the fiercest political excitement was going on, which the world has ever known. The open air life of that hot country, as well as the constant moving backwards and forwards up to the feasts at Jerusalem from all parts of the world, made these few counties, so to say, a perfect hive of news, and talk, and activity, and danger, and revolution. Sedition and rebellion did not come to them quietly in newspapers, it came in fierce whispers, and secret gatherings of armed bands, it came in the troubled eyes of terrified women, and in the clenched teeth of desperate men. It came in the ghastly message of those Galileans, whose blood Pilate mingled with their sacrifices. And not a breath stirred, however faintly, through the land, but on the house tops in the summer evenings, and sitting under the vines in the shade, or lying on the hill sides at sunset, as the light died over the fair bright fields, and dropped behind the mountain tops in quiet splendour, young and old felt alike the thrill. And an ever-present unseen sense of peril, and death, and life, had become the very air they breathed, the daylight of their lives. Suspicion, and surprise, and expectation, possessed the land. Now add to this, that these thickly peopled counties were full of religious fervour true or false; that all the great prophecies of their race were to be fulfilled; that all the nobility of the noblest hearts was watching for God; and all the ferocious selfishness of those who murdered, or were ready to murder, and call their savage passions the cause of God, was eager to let loose their deadly hate in God's name; and some idea may be arrived at in

time of what it was to be living in a Jewish town when our Lord Christ appeared.

And now we come to the most striking picture of all. Into this mass of quivering humanity, with its hopes and fears seething and tossing, a new power comes, most powerful, but yet most still, a great calm, a mighty but quiet relief, help for body, help for mind, and a living Deliverer. Thousands thronged to see Him, and hear Him. We read, "that Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease among the people. And His fame went throughout all Syria, and they brought unto Him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy, and He healed them, and there followed Him great multitudes of people." He healed them *all*. What a number there must have been!

This and other like passages show us quietly what was really going on. Every person in the land knew, saw, and heard. Every person had to settle what they thought of it all. And it did not pass away. Every village, town, district, had some inhabitants who had been healed, and were daily examples of this new movement of life. The whole country was full of them scattered about. Here, so to say, in Uppingham, there would be two or three, Preston, Manton, Lyddington, all round would each have their well-known figures of persons healed, blind men seeing, cripples made sound, all day long before their eyes. The whole Midland counties would have them. They were everywhere demanding by their mere presence an answer in men's

hearts as to what was going on. Then think of the words. Think of the Gospel of the Kingdom. Think of the Sermon on the Mount, for instance, spread through the country as a new thing, for the first time, perchance by some blind man who now had his sight, or by some cripple who now had feet he could use. Think of all the gracious words that daily were gently falling on their hearing and hearts like rain in the desert. And then, when all this has been thought over long and well, and pictured to the mind, and soaked into our modern perceptions, we may be able to get a little at the reality that took place, when these living messengers, sent with authority by Christ Himself, came into the towns and villages, two and two, able to widen the life-giving power more and more; showing that the life-giving power was indeed come to live amongst men, and to be given by the Great Prophet to others besides Himself.

These two poor men came to those cities just as truth always comes, in the very humblest shape, but with a power well known, and demanding an answer from all. It is the everlasting question, Which will you have, the new living truth of inward life made pure and strong; or, the settled habits of respectable selfishness building the tombs of the prophets, and worshipping past truth with dead worship; or, the fierce longings of men of license and violence, eager to give rein to their passions in the name of God?

It is the simple choice, between life in ourselves and our neighbours cleansed, healed, made happier, more peaceful, more contented, more helpful, and the license to be self-indulgent, grasping, violent, envious, and to let loose our evil passions on others.

It is the simple every-day choice, between the quiet

power within, and the fool's dream of hatred and ambition satisfied without.

But let us look closer. There is a new birth of life and truth in every generation; for life is ever moving on towards perfection. Now put aside the shape in which the new birth comes. If we say that there was stronger help, and plainer proof, given for choice when the Apostles went out two by two, (though I doubt it) then, be sure, the reasons against were stronger too; as are the trials so is the help. If choice of good means, as it did mean, a near chance of being murdered, then the man who runs a near chance of being murdered wants help in a rougher, plainer way than we do, and got it. The help is fitted to the trial. So those two poor men came with the life power of Christ to cities and villages able to make a fair choice. And the choice had to be made. And it was precisely the fairness of the choice, its living power, its calm, quiet call on the heart, that made it so great a blessing, or so great a curse. And it is precisely *that* which has made it such a type to us, such an example to the end of the world.

There never can be any doubt in any society, town, or neighbourhood, as to who on the whole are on the side of doing good. And it is not difficult in any generation to see what movement is taking place of new life trying to do good. In our generation without doubt the personal effort of the rich and educated to feel the hopes and wants of the poor, to give them opportunities of being happy, liberty to lead healthy lives, good pleasures, and higher amusements, stands first amongst the movements of new life. There is also a most clear test of what is not life. All life, now as of old, moves inside, and works from within outward by health, self-mastery,

and curing diseased habits, casting out unclean spirits, cleansing, healing; and all shams and parodies of life attack, and excite men to attack, and knock about the outsides of things. So it was when the Apostles went out into the towns and villages to heal the sick, and cast out devils, and speak of peace in the heart, and peace in the land, from peaceful hearts being there. But the sham religion, and sham patriotism, and sham improvement, was busy with a fierce enthusiasm stirring up hatred and war.

Never be on the side of destroyers. It may be necessary sometimes to condemn and execute; even as it is necessary sometimes to take the life of a criminal; but it is a solemn sad necessity, and executioner's work, hangman's work, not the work of life, and noble striving. Life works by healing from within. Nothing is of life which does not do so. This is the work of the Lord of Life, which He comes to judge. This is His Advent judgment. And we, as of old, know right well the main features of life. Long ago has He sent His messengers to us. Nay, we here claim to be messengers, you and we alike claim to be disciples, and to have made the great choice. The message of peace, of healing, of casting out the unclean spirits, has come into our midst. The movement of life is here. Everyone of you knows well enough how far he is doing his best or not; that is true life, doing your best. Everyone of you knows well enough who in this society of ours is helping on the life of others by purity, by courage, by truthfulness, by work, or not; who is encouraging and who is hindering. The Lord is at hand. Year by year His judgment tries the hearts; it is trying yours to-day. Peace, and healing, and casting out of evil, a cleansing within, marks ever-

more the presence of the Lord and His messengers. Whatever be the storm and strife in the world outside, cleansing, and healing, and peace, mark where He is. Honour, and truth, and helpful hands, mark where He is. We are expressly told, that when the people heave and toss with fear, and rage, and perplexity, His Advent is close at hand ; then He is coming to judgment ; then His own peaceful workers are to rejoice in His coming.

There is no doubt, there can be no doubt, to an earnest heart. It is not possible to mistake His call in our world, any more than it was possible to mistake it when His first messengers, two and two, gave the choice of life in their world. The call is the same, peace, and healing, and the cleansing of the heart. You, who have obeyed that call, and been on the side of good, rejoice in the coming of Christ ; rejoice in the end of this bit of life, of this Term, drawing nigh. To those whose lives are true there is great rejoicing in the last day.

SERMON CLX.

THE DAY OF INTERCESSION.

ST MARK VI. 7.

“And He called unto Him the twelve, and began to send them forth, by two and two, and gave them power over unclean spirits.”

THE most solemn warning perhaps ever given to mankind is that in the great prophecy of judgment and death, when our Lord bids us “remember Lot’s wife,” who, one of a holy family, sharing their life, and their safety, brought out a little way from the fiery rain, seeming to escape from the burning sulphurous waves, did not escape, but died in the free air outside, died on the sunny plain, because her heart was not with the righteous, because her life belonged to the lost city. And in the Advent hour that comes to all; in the Advent hour of war and storm, and earthquake of nations heaving to and fro, and in the yearly Advent season, which both prepares us, and adds a yearly message of its own to the signs of the Lord at hand,

then, "remember Lot's wife." Think well and long how much of our seeming safety is but seeming; how much of it only means that we follow unwillingly the steps of the righteous, that we do without thought the habits of those with whom we live, because it is easier to do than to resist; that we simply are heathen with the heathen, followers of the Law with those who live by law, Christians in appearance with the Christian home. Christ demands our lives; other people's habits will not do. This acting a part, this living by other people, is what our Lord set His curse on, it is His woe on the hypocrite, on the actor, that is, the man who clothes himself in other people's habits and thoughts, and puts them on and off, for they do not really belong to him. But Christ demands your lives, and not a made up figure.

Brethren, throughout all the world this week, all Churches in communion with us meet for a day of Intercession on behalf of Missions. And we are met to-day. Now this School has a name for Missionary work, and we are proud of having such a name. We do not deserve that name. We do not deserve it so much as we did, and that was little enough. I do not mean to waste words on this. I think shame has but little power, when honour and truth fail. But it is well that you should know the facts. The average sum given each Sunday by the School amounts to less than *2d.* a time from each one of you, and that given by a few. Now let each boy ask himself, whilst he has given *2s.* or less in the Term to the cause of God how much he has spent on self-indulgence, and he will learn something of the value he sets on his religion, the market-price at which he sells truth. Very Esaus, for the poor

bribe that catches you. But enough of this. Think not that I forget there must be a beginning ; and that many a spirit, half awake here, may in the coming time march into battle in the battle van, with a heart filled with the martial music of God's battle call, the trumpet blast of the Archangel, which evermore is summoning God's soldiers even now. Neither do I forget those who have begun, that small but living section of the School, which in silent invisible power is building up here a character for trustworthy work, whose hearts kindle as they catch sight of great realities, and hear the word of God, like the fire within of the tongues of flame, that with the sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind first came on the Apostles' heads ; who in silent hours of inward strength resolve, and work, and wait. Still less are those forgotten, who in far off martyr graves bear witness to the truth they practised here ; and that honoured band in England, and abroad, who in years gone by sat here with us as learners, and now in many a parish, ay, in many a land, are sending out their lives at Christ's command, who this week, at this Intercession time, are joining in prayer for God's Church with us.

When we look round, and lift up our eyes, and think of the past, and see the present, then that little room in Jerusalem with its one hundred and twenty congregation, so few compared with us here to-day, and the tongues of fire, and the mighty rushing wind, become great realities, and speak a living speech. One hundred and twenty poor men and women in a world of wondrous heathen power, all heathen in its power, and with them the Holy Spirit with the rush of irresistible might ; a Parable, that now we clearly read in a world

with all the nations that have power, Christian, however they may fall short of their true place as Christians. It is a Parable, the little unknown seed, the world overspread by its growth.

And may we not dream? God has told us we may dream. "In the latter days, the young men shall see visions, the old men shall dream dreams." The strong vision of glorious truth in the young is to pass into the dream of the old, not less strong, only farther off. Yes, we may dream. We may dream the dreams of all who have worked, and been weary; the dream of the bleeding hearts and warworn souls of all ages; the dream of all, who have toiled and suffered, and seen their first hopes fade and die; but as they toiled, and as they suffered, have begun to dream, and found the dream within, as life went on, a greater reality, a more impregnable truth, a life within life, more living than all they have been able to grasp or feel of present time; a star as it were in a very distant sky; but far more bright, and far more true, more real, more known, than the candle by their side. Yes, we may dream.

We stand on the threshold of a new world. Railways, and steamships, and telegraphs, have made this earth of ours to all intents and purposes another planet, as compared to the old earth and its possibilities. We have as it were been given lightning wings. All the nations in all lands, their thoughts, their habits, their beliefs, their knowledge, true or false, are being suddenly poured together into one great tumultuous sea of stormy strife. The old earth is being broken up. And we are the spectators and the helpers in a new and greater birth of life. The old earth, as far as it is earthy, is dying. Our generation, we ourselves, are standing at

the death bed of the earth that has been. Its Advent day is here. Its Christmas day has not yet come. We stand at the death bed of a dying past, which, as it dies, is to give birth to a great new life. The travail pangs have begun, the breaking up, the pain, the suffering, the wild cruel pangs of destruction, the fierce exhausting efforts of birth—the death pangs, and the birth pangs. It may take thousands of years before the conquering life is born; before Christ the Lord has become incarnate in the new birth of nations again. It did take a thousand years the first time for the first birth. Nevertheless, all hail to the new birth! All hail to the King to come! “Lift up your heads for your redemption draweth nigh.” Be reverent at the death bed. Be full of living life at the birth.

Yes, we may dream, the dreams that God has revealed to us in His word.

We may dream of this Chapel with its three or four hundred, thrice as many as were in the room at Jerusalem, sending out year by year the lives that are to be the seed of life in many lands.

We may dream of liberal hands giving liberally, and of the talent put into the hands of the moneychangers of God for them to use in God’s service, even if the giver cannot go and work himself.

We may dream of many a noble life passing out from these walls, which, like the walls of a deep well, are ever full of the living water of life, of many a noble life passing out, and joining those who have gone before in the great current of the spiritual work of God.

We may dream of the stream widening, as of old, till the brook becomes a river, and the river becomes a sea, according to the great promise, that the earth shall

be full of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

Yes, we may dream ; and the dream shall be true. But first, to-day, begin, take heart, work your own work, act ; God's dreams are born of an earnest, unselfish, working life. They are no phantoms of the brain, born of sleep. They are born of the strong heart of the strong. They are born out of the absorbing interests, and resolute conflicts, of wakeful love of truth. They are children of a far off sight of stars through watching of the heavens, and God's lights on high. They are born from such days as these, when throughout all the world the bravest and the best of the army of the living God are joining in prayer, and closing up the ranks in battle order, full of happy daring in the service of their king.

Let us then dream, and in our dreams evermore let this Chapel live as a fountain of life. Let us then dream, and in our dreams evermore see earnest life here devoting itself to Christ, see our regiment year by year recruited, and, year by year, marching at the Advent trumpet call.

Yea, let us dream, and watch the great birth of the new coming world, and know in our dream that victory is sure, that Christ is near, and know in our dream that our dream is true.

SERMON CLXI.

THE WORKSHOP OF GOD.

I TIMOTHY VI. 7.

“ We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.”

THESE calm, clear words are perhaps better known than any words in the world. Few years pass to any one before, on some sad solemn day, at the Church door, as the coffin passes in, bearing all that is left on earth of one dearly loved, earthly sorrow is met by the living challenge of the living world of Christ, “I know that my Redeemer liveth.” And the high proclamation of the King of Life, “I am the resurrection and the life” sinks into faithful hearts. And the great truth that this world’s gains are nothing, and the treasure in heaven all in all, is pressed home in these words, “We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.” The dead, as it were, by whom we then stand, are called to bear witness to the double truth of nothing worth keeping here, of everything

worth living for there. And, in the darkest hour of human despair, death here on earth and nothingness and all things left behind are called into court to cheer the sorrowful with the certainty of higher things to come to us, which are already present to the loved one gone. Death is made to bear witness to life. And present tears are the sowing of the seed of life to be reaped in joy.

Yet, to-day, on this mingled day of death and life, this last day of the Term, and first day of the holiday week, and the new start, I would not have taken these words if they belonged to death. Methinks, of all words that ever were spoken they are to man the truest testimony of life. They glorify most of all words life. They are the very most perfect intensity of life. They knock away with one remorseless blow everything that man puts in the place of life. Their sharp, quick stroke falls, like an axe, on all the world, and leaves only life standing. Their breath passes like a destroying fire over the earth and all things earthly. It all goes. The dead body bears witness that all is gone; but the life itself, the life which came into this world, and took up its abode with us here, and which is ourselves, and which had to deal with earth—in like manner as it came with power to use earth, so it has passed beyond with power to use heaven. The bare life, in the majesty of its power of life, is made exceeding glorious by being thus separated from all perishable things; born into an earthly world with power to rule it; born once more into a heavenly world with power to use that; shaking off, as the dust from its robes, all things in its passage onwards.

Let us then speak and think of life for a little time;

of life on earth living as sovereign and lord of earth. It is clear we must begin by passing sentence of death on all things seen, and on all things made by man. We must begin by setting life on the judgment seat, and summoning into court to appear before the throne of life all things visible and invisible, so that life may decide what is living ; and what not ; and pass sentence on everything which he does not acknowledge, and banish it for ever from the kingdom of true life. Lo ! at once the sentence, " Life brought nothing into this world, and it is certain that we can carry nothing out."

This sentence leaves life alone to be dealt with. Yes, but life in its use or abuse of all these earthly things, which, as we stand by the dead body at the Church door, have so plainly had this sentence of death passed on them. What has the life done with them ? And what have they done with the life ? One of two things has happened. Life has either taken them, and used them as scaffolding, and built up by their help a character of truth and immortal power, a building made without hands, eternal in the heavens ; or, life has been taken prisoner by them, and made to serve them, and been crushed by them, and in a sense killed.

Now this last we will not deal with to-day. The drunkard is a familiar example of the lust of the flesh enslaving and killing the life that has been fool enough, and weak enough, and wicked enough, to give way, instead of mastering the perishable world. I say fool, and weak, because though sin is a fearful betrayal of the most High God, and a traitor's rebellion against the Great King ; yet, to man, in this world, from the side of man's judgment there is something so senseless, so utterly pitiable, so contemptible, such absolute mean, weak

folly in seeing generation after generation, in the same baby way, beginning with self-indulgent boyhood, glorying in the old old forbidden sewage, sucking poison into their veins, just as thousands of years ago the fools of the early world did, and perished, and then, destroying themselves and their country by vain-glorious, empty, evil manhood; if strong, smashing and destroying what is lovely and true, like drunken giants, and like drunkards glorying in doing it; if weak, sneaking to the grave burdened by mean, and unsatisfied passions, discontented, dishonest, envious, carried about by any cry, the slaves of the senseless shouting they have made themselves, following sounds and echoes like children in a wood. But strong, or weak, equally fools, equally to be pitied by sober sense.

But living life is a sovereign power. It comes into this world, first, able to build up a body for itself to live in, by taking earthly food, and turning it into a body for itself. And secondly, when it has thus built up its body, and whilst it is engaged in doing so, it has the power of taking all things, all the world of created things and nature, and turning it to its own use, of meeting all the world of man's actions, and works, and turning them to its own use; of entering into all the world of man's thoughts and feelings, and turning it to its own use; and finally, of receiving from Revelation God's laws, and thoughts, and feelings, and living by them; and receiving Christ's new life, and sacraments, and living by them; and making the body thus prepared into a Temple of the Holy Ghost, and living with God.

This is life. This is the bare life that brought nothing into the world, and goes out of the world again

carrying nothing. Yes, carrying nothing; but having been wrought, and hewed, and carved, and fashioned, into a holy perfection in itself; having been endowed with new powers, enriched with infinite experience, purified by trial, glorified by victory, turned into a luminous image of God's light, a crystal lens from which God's spirit radiates, ever changing, according to the promise, "from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

Now gather up all your own experiences, call before you everything you have learnt to love, whilst trying to live rightly, and think awhile of these as seen in the light of Christ's redeeming power, and heavenly happiness, and eternal dwelling with God.

Call up also to your hearts those men and women, whom you have known or read of, or whose words and deeds have sunk into your hearts with power, and ponder on the value of their lives, and the glory of them, going on for ever and for ever. Think of Gordon and all heroes. Think of all you honour, and all you love. Think of them in the light of Christ's redeeming power, and heavenly happiness, and eternal dwelling with God for ever and for ever. We all have some we love waiting for us there. As we grow old, how many there are that have taken away with them portions, as it were, of ourselves, help half given, unfinished meetings, who have touched us with living power, yet left it unfulfilled! How many beginnings broken off we hold in our hearts, the ends of which have been carried away with the lives that alone can complete them.

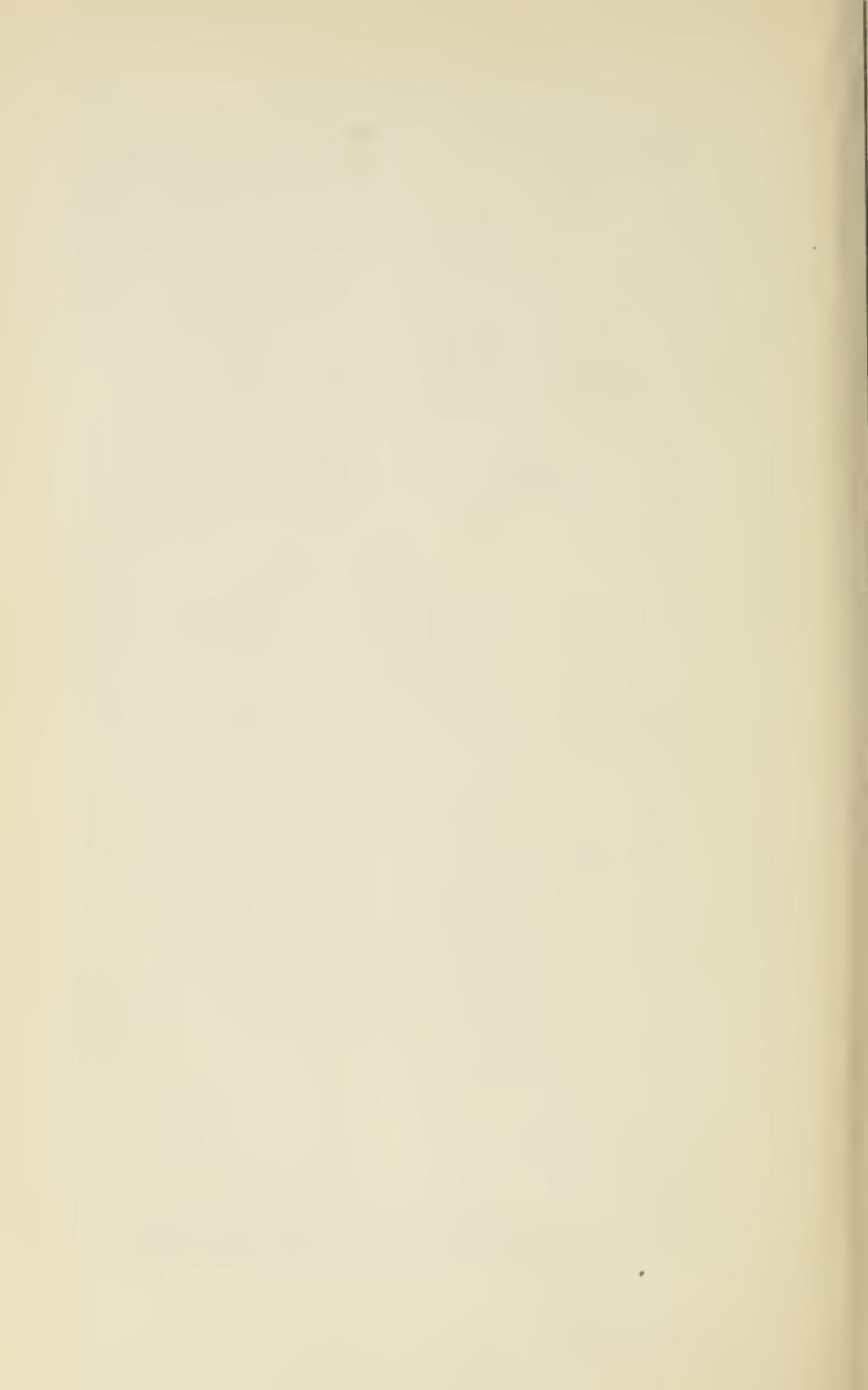
Two great facts meet us everywhere concerning life. First, that just mentioned, the strange broken character of human life, coming and going in bits, no one can

guess how ; each bit by itself so unintelligible, but so precious ; yet a masterhand is evidently dealing with each broken bit of life on a set plan. And, secondly, in the more perfect specimens, the marvellous excellence of the training they go through, the infinite delicate variety of carving and shaping power, that is applied to a great life ; the exquisite perfection of the noble man, or noble woman, when at last the life leaves earth.

What a strange harmony of divine contradictions a living life presents ! Heroic fortitude and the tenderest shrinking, strength to endure all things, weakness that forces nothing, keenest intellect, humblest sense of ignorance, all the feelings, love, hate, ambition, pride, anger, fear, under complete control, when evil, quenched ; when good, put to their utmost power ; the greatest vehemence and the greatest calm uniting in the same breast ; and all this music of the perfect soul being the work of many many years, during which shame and honour, insults and comforting, battle and peace, wounds and success, sorrows and joys, and all manner of trials and testings, have been brought to bear on the sensitive heart strings of the human life, till at last it is wrought into that perfect, exquisite delicacy of thrill, which answers truly to the slightest touch of spirit power, and can rise through all gradations of heroic daring, and heroic endurance, up to the throne of God. How glorious must be the world with which such lives have been attuned to sympathise ! How glorious the lives which through all phases of joy and agony have been prepared for such a world ! Hour by hour, year by year, the unseen Master hand is applying His creative powers to the lives of men on earth. They come in at one door ; they pass through ; they go out at the other ;

and nothing as they pass is of any value excepting as a tool to shape them, as help or hindrance to shape them, as trial, and testing, and training, to train them. The whole earth-world is God's workshop for the working and shaping the spirits of men, nothing more; a place of tools, and making, and shaping, of hammering and filing, and polishing, nothing more; not a place to stop in, not a place to take away from, not a home.

How this school and this Chapel tell the same story. You come, you go. You bring nothing but yourselves. You carry away nothing but yourselves. You pass in at one door, you go out again. But oh! the wondrous value of the passing for good or evil; its eternal power! How wonderfully the life trained here in passing through, though it carries nothing out but itself, passing through the grave in a figure, holds nevertheless within itself the happiness and success of fuller, nobler, coming life! Whilst the coward and the traitor, the idler and the fool, go out into their grave with a past life dead, and have within themselves the death, and failure, and overthrow, and meanness, of a mean and painful coming time. This Term is as a life time. It is over. These separate life times are given us; these graves; in order that we may rise to new life. Christ is coming. Christmas does come. The eternal Christmas does come to each of us we know not when, but soon, very soon. Who will be here next year? Behold He comes quickly. Even so, come Lord Jesus.



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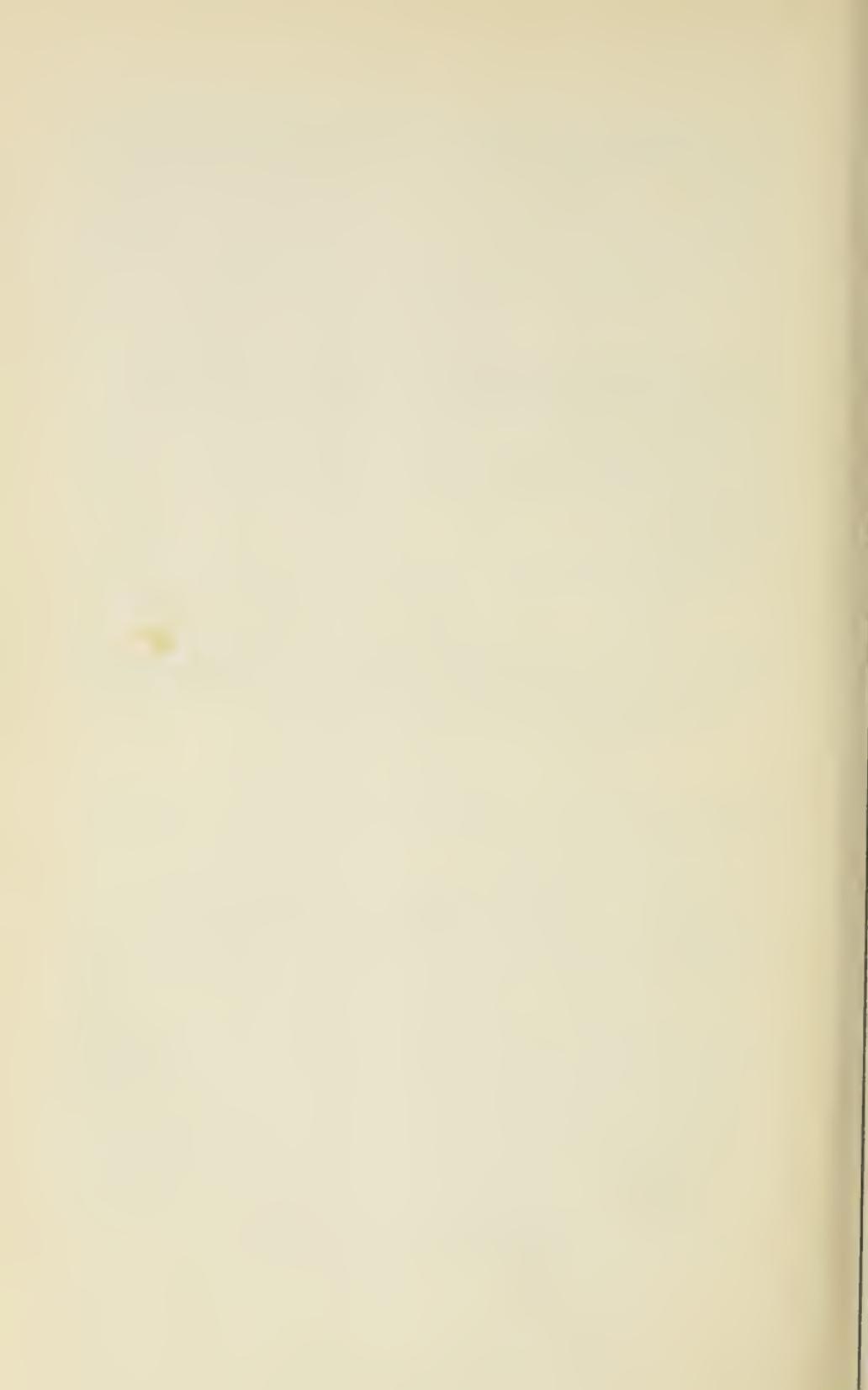
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