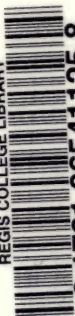


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# THE SEVEN CARDINAL VIRTUES

BY THE REV.

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To

P. W. C.







## PREFACE

IN case any of my brother-ministers should think of discoursing on the subject of this book, a word or two may be prefixed on the literature. The whole moral system of AQUINAS (*Secunda Secundæ* of the *Summa*) is built on this framework; and a marvellous structure it is, well worthy of the attention of all who wish either to sharpen their logical faculty or to widen their view of the moral world. On the heathen virtues an admirable discussion, thoroughly up to date, will be found in MEZES' *Ethics*, and on the Christian ones a discussion still more profound in HARLESS' *Christian Ethics*. Something on nearly every one of the topics discussed in the

following pages will be found in any of the numerous works on Christian Ethics, such as those of SCHLEIERMACHER, ROTHE, MARTENSEN, DORNER, KÖSTLIN, NEWMAN SMYTH and STRONG.

JAMES STALKER.

THE UNITED FREE COLLEGE,  
ABERDEEN, *September 1902.*

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## CHAPTER I

### WISDOM

‘THE Seven Deadly Sins’ formed the theme of a former volume of this series, and it seems natural to follow up that course with another on ‘The Seven Cardinal Virtues.’ The idea of the seven deadly sins is, that among the innumerable sins of which human beings may be guilty there are seven of peculiar virulence, from which all the rest can be derived ; and, in the same way, the idea of the seven cardinal virtues is, that among the countless excellences with which human character may be adorned there are seven which overtop the rest, and from which all the rest are derivable. The adjective ‘cardinal’ refers especially to this latter point: it

## 2 SEVEN CARDINAL VIRTUES

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signifies that these are the virtues on which all others hinge. For instance, in the one with which this first chapter will be occupied—wisdom—six virtues are included according to one ancient authority, and no fewer than ten according to another.

The idea of cardinal virtues is an exceedingly old one. It occurs in Plato and Aristotle, and from these famous philosophers it descended to the Greek philosophical schools. From the Greeks it passed to the Romans, being prominent in the writings of Cicero; and from them it passed to the Fathers of the Church.

The Greeks, however, only counted four cardinal virtues—wisdom, courage, temperance and justice. According to them, these were the four sides of a perfectly symmetrical character, and the man who possessed them could stand foursquare to all the winds that blow. In the Old Testament Apocrypha these four are also mentioned, and a Jewish writer

of the time of our Lord, Philo of Alexandria, compares them to the four rivers that watered the garden of Eden—so do these fertilise and adorn human nature. Christianity, however, introduced a nomenclature as well as a conception of virtue of its own. Many virtues are mentioned in the New Testament, but there are three which occur constantly, as comprehending in themselves the whole of Christian character—namely, faith, hope and charity.

When the Fathers of the Church began to build their systems of dogma, of course they selected the stones out of the quarry of the Bible; but they were also powerfully under the influence of Greek philosophy, especially of Aristotle; and, in constructing an ethical system, what they did was to take the triad of virtues from the New Testament and add to it the quartette derived from philosophy, and thus there emerged the heptad which we are to discuss in



#### 4 SEVEN CARDINAL VIRTUES

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the following pages. Perhaps in thus combining things having diverse origins they did not sufficiently consider whether the old virtues were not, to some extent, identical with the new; but, for practical purposes, no great harm is done if a bit of the ground, here and there, is gone over twice; and it is of distinct advantage to be reminded that Christian character has a natural foundation, though, of course, even the heathen virtues are modified when they appear in the mosaic of Christian character.

Sometimes the name of Cardinal Virtues is restricted to the four virtues of the pre-Christian philosophers, whereas the other three are named the Christian or the Theological Virtues; but certainly the latter are cardinal also—that is, hinge-virtues—and it is convenient to have a single adjective for designating the whole seven.

We begin our study of the seven virtues by treating of

Wisdom, and I shall show that it is, first, a Vision of the Ideal; secondly, the Finding of the Way; and thirdly, a Lesson to be Learnt.

### I.—A VISION OF THE IDEAL

Wisdom is the foremost of the virtues. It is the lampbearer showing the way to the rest. Its principal business is to descry the goal to which they should all strive, and the point to which the whole course of life should tend.

When Thomas Carlyle was an old man, he said to some one, that he was often pondering the first question of the Shorter Catechism, 'What is the chief end of man?' with its wonderful answer, 'Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him for ever.' Every Scotsman has known this question and answer ever since he can remember; but few may have reflected on the reason why this should be the first question. It is the first because it is taken for

## 6 SEVEN CARDINAL VIRTUES

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granted that the foremost inquiry of a rational being will be about the purpose of its own existence. In reality, this is often the last question rather than the first. Still it is a sublime fact that the first seed of thought dropped into the mind of a whole nation should be a question like this, which tends to make those to whom it is addressed ponder on the purpose of life. Why have I been born? Why am I alive? Why should I wish to go on living? These are the thoughts suggested to the mind by this first question of the catechism, and it is in thoughts like these that wisdom has its birth.

That which in the old language of the catechism is called 'the chief end,' is exactly the same as in modern language we call 'the ideal'; and every modern mind can appreciate the importance of the question, 'What is man's ideal?' for no belief has more complete possession of the modern mind than the necessity of ideals,

and the maxim is common that, if you wish to find out a man's moral worth, you have to find out what his ideal is.

Perhaps it might be said of many men that they have no ideal. And this is their condemnation. They have no object in life ; they have never reflected why they are alive ; their course is determined, not by their own choice, but by the blind forces of appetite within and of conventionality without. Such may truly be said to be dead whilst they live ; for surely in such a vast and perilous enterprise as the voyage of life the first duty of every one who claims to be a man is to be aware where he is going. But, from another point of view, it may be said that every human being has his own ideal, whether he is aware of it or not. In every mind, consciously or unconsciously, there forms itself by degrees some supreme desire to which the thoughts are ever tending and towards the attain-

ment of which the endeavours are ever set. It may be pleasure or success, or some special form of one or other of these. The drunkard is not aware of the hold his vice has on him, but drink is the object to which his reveries and designs are ever bent. The miser does not know himself to be the slave of money, but it absorbs his thoughts by day and his dreams by night. The woman of the world would not confess to herself that social advancement is her idol, but year by year the passion for it burns in her blood and determines her conduct. In this sense ideals are innumerable, and it is by their crossing and clashing, their vehemence and urgency, that the myriad-coloured spectacle of existence is produced. But they are, for the most part, unconscious, or, at least, unavowed.

The ideal of the first answer of the Shorter Catechism is a very high one—‘to glorify God and to enjoy Him for ever.’ But, if we

are to have a conscious and avowed ideal, how can we pitch it lower? Can we be satisfied without having the approval of God in this life and the prospect of spending our eternity with Him in the life to come? You may alter the name of the ideal. Many in our day would prefer Christ's own name for it—'the Kingdom of God'; others might call it Welfare, or Blessedness, or Perfection; but the name signifies little; the essential thing is that we should know and avow what we intend to be and to do in this world, and in which port we intend to arrive when the voyage is finished. This is wisdom.

## II.—THE FINDING OF THE WAY

Wisdom is concerned not only with the goal but the way to it; not only with the end but the means for attaining it; not only with the ideal but the actual. A pilot guiding a ship up a river

in the dark sees, afar off, the shining light which marks his destination ; but, if he is to arrive there, he has to mark a hundred lesser lights by which his course from point to point is indicated ; and, if he neglected these, his ship would be aground long before he was half-way up the channel. So, suppose a man has chosen the goal indicated in the answer to the first question of the Shorter Catechism as his own, this supreme purpose includes many subordinate purposes—such as the development of his character, the discharge of his duty as a citizen, of his duty as a member of the church, of his duty in the family, his success in business, and so on. In fact, as the pilot has to be watchful at every bend of the course, at every encounter with a passing ship, and at every change in the state of the tide, so has the wise man to choose his path every day and every hour. He has to compare and to weigh and to



judge ; he has to appropriate the good and reject the bad ; he has to discern what will help and what will hinder ; and he has to pitch upon the means that will take him, not only to the ultimate end, but to the several halting-places by the way.

The Latin name for the virtue which the Greeks called wisdom is Prudence, and this change is characteristic. In the process of passing from the one ancient language to the other, ideas frequently lost something of their loftiness and delicacy. The Romans were a practical people, and they aimed low. Taking for granted that the end of life consisted in getting-on, they restricted the task of wisdom to the means of attaining it. Such a debased wisdom has never died out of the world, and Bunyan has embodied its characteristics in Mr. Worldly Wiseman. Yet there is a prudence which is not ignoble, but an essential part of wisdom : if we

would reach the end—even the highest end—we must use the means.

We must know the facts of the world. Facts are stubborn things; and we may make them either our friends or our foes, as fire may either be a devouring element or the force that carries us and our burdens at the rate of sixty miles an hour, and as electricity may either be death-dealing lightning or the Mercury to carry our messages round the globe. We may set nature up against us, or we may convert it into a friend and helper, and wisdom consists in doing the latter. Still more is it displayed in dealing with human nature. We have to realise the purpose of our life, not in a vacuum or a solitude, but in a world of men and women, and every one of those we encounter may either further our aim or retard it. Every human heart is a mystery, and human nature is a great deep. In nothing is wisdom

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more displayed than in knowing men and women, and in so treating them that they may favour our advance instead of opposing it.

In one word, we must know and obey the laws. On all objects and on all events the laws are written in hieroglyphics which the wise man can decipher but the fool misreads or does not see at all. Not only are there a narrow road and a broad road to be chosen once for all, but at every step there are a right and a wrong, and a choice has to be made. Conscience within and God above whisper, 'This is the way: walk ye in it'; and blessed is he who thereupon walks straight forward, even though at the moment it seems to be into the jaws of hell; but, if, when reason and conscience and God are saying, 'This way!' a man believes he is going to happiness by walking in the opposite direction, that man is a fool.

## III.—A LESSON TO BE LEARNT

It was a question discussed of old in the philosophical schools of Greece, whether wisdom can be taught. There is more of an intellectual element in it than in the other virtues, and wisdom has sometimes been so conceived as to make it the peculiar property of men of talent or genius. Nor can it be denied that some natures are from birth more akin to it than others. Who would deny Plato's gift of intuition into the laws of the moral universe or Shakespeare's instinctive discernment of human nature? But, if wisdom consist in the choice of the true end of life and in the use of those means for attaining it placed by Providence at our disposal, then must it be the privilege and the duty of every child of Adam, for not one is intended or doomed beforehand to miss the end; and, therefore, it must be capable of being acquired.

How, then, is wisdom to be obtained?

Partly by *precept*. There have been many wise men in the world before us, and vast stores of wisdom have been accumulated. These are to be found partly in the tradition that comes down to us by means of speech, as, for instance, in the proverbs which fly from mouth to mouth and descend from parent to child. These 'maxims hewn from life,' are the concentrated essence of a nation's wisdom, and there is no nation which does not possess proverbs of its own. Our own nation is specially rich in them; and it is one mark of a wise man to annex these spontaneously and to speak in proverbs. Then, the stores of the world's wisdom have been largely garnered in books, and, although a fool may read hundreds of these without becoming wise, any one with the germs of wisdom in him will grow wiser by means of books, if

he chooses them well. A book like Bacon's *Essays* shows how much wisdom can be packed into a hundred pages; and sometimes a poet, like Burns in his 'Letter to a Young Friend,' can distil the essence of the wisdom of an entire people into a few lines. In the Apocrypha there is a book entitled the Book of Wisdom, and the name is not undeserved; but it might be more justly applied to such a book as Proverbs or to the Bible as a whole. Several books of the Old Testament are spoken of sometimes as the Wisdom Literature, because they frequently deal by name with this subject; they are poetical books; but the prophetic books are in a still higher sense a Wisdom Literature; and even these pale before the oracles of our Lord and His apostles in the New Testament. Any one who aims at wisdom should take as his motto the verse in the first chapter of Joshua, only applying

it to the whole Bible, 'This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein; for then shalt thou make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.'

Secondly, wisdom is learned by *practice*. It is, as I have said, partly an intellectual virtue; but it consists much less in knowing than in doing. It is slowly accumulated by experience, and, like the pearl which forms where the bivalve has been wounded, it frequently springs from pain and misfortune. Other virtues shine most attractively in youth, but wisdom is the special ornament of old age; and it compensates for the drawbacks of this period of life.

Best of all is wisdom to be learned through *imitation*. 'He that walketh with wise men shall be wise,' says the Book of Pro-



verbs, 'but a companion of fools shall smart for it.' It is not, indeed, so easy as such advices might imply to get into the company of the wise: they have their own friends and companions, and may be jealous of intrusion on their privacy and on their time; a wise man might be making himself a companion of fools if he kept company with us; and we must be prepared to pass through the ordeal of a searching inspection. But there is, at least, One who will not cast us out; and His friendship is more certain to make us wise than that of any other. One of the names of the Saviour is Wisdom, and He, it is said in Holy Scripture, is made of God unto us wisdom. He places no bounds to the intimacy we may seek with Him; and, if we are thus made wise unto salvation, there is little fear but we shall be welcome to other wise companionship even in this world, while in the world to come we

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may reckon on a humble place in that society of which it has been written, 'They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.'

## CHAPTER II

## COURAGE

THERE is no name more abhorred by a well-conditioned mind than that of coward, and every young man covets a reputation for being courageous. It is a favourite occupation of boyhood, in hours of reverie, to dream of situations in which the dreamer performs heroic exploits and earns the applause of the astonished onlookers. Of course, the probability of anything of the kind ever happening is not seriously entertained even by the boy when he is fully awake, and it disappears altogether as soon as the walls of reality begin to close around the growing mind. But it is good that the dream should be there ; the stronger the

aspirations after the heroic in a boyish mind the better ; in fact, in some shape these ought always to survive ; and, although the form of their realisation may be totally different from the visions of youth, yet they will receive fulfilment in every true life. Every brave soul retains in its composition to the last a strain of the romantic.

## I

Neither the four virtues of the ancient world nor the three of the Christian world were picked at haphazard out of the total number of human excellences. Although the connection between the two groups may be indeterminate, the connection between the members of each of the groups is of the closest. Especially is this the case with the subject of the first chapter and that of the present one ; and I wish the connection to be noted, because the course will make a deeper and more lasting impres-

sion if its different members form themselves into an organism in the mind of the reader.

What, then, is the connection between wisdom and courage? Wisdom, as we saw in last chapter, is chiefly concerned with the object of existence: it fixes on the supreme good which we decide to pursue. And courage is the force by which the obstacles which impede this pursuit are overcome. It is a kind of indignation, which blazes out against everything which would prevent it from going where duty calls. It is the club of Hercules or the hammer of Thor, with which we clear the path to the goal.

It is highly important to keep this connection between wisdom and courage in view, because it enables us to distinguish between true courage and its counterfeits, of which there are many. No sailor is more resolute in facing the stormy seas than is the pirate in tracking the booty on which

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he has fixed his cupidity ; but we do not honour the resolution of such a human shark with the name of bravery : we call it ferocity. No confessor, championing the truth in the face of principalities and powers, is more sure of his own opinions than is many an ignoramus, who, gifted with nothing but self-conceit and a loud voice, shouts down the arguments of all opponents ; but we do not call such noisy stubbornness by the name of courage : we call it pig-headedness. The assassin of President M'Kinley took his life in his hand and must have been more certain of having to die for what he was about to do than is the leader of the most desperate forlorn hope on the field of battle ; but, whatever his master motive may have been—whether it was an overweening vanity and craving for notoriety, or a malignant hatred of capitalism and a morbid compassion for the poor—we do not count his act a brave one.

It sends to the heart no thrill such as a brave act excites, but quite the reverse.

The truth is, the raw material of courage is neither beautiful nor admirable. It exists in brutes in greater measure than in men. No soldier attacks with the violence of a tiger; no hero stands his ground with the pertinacity of a bull-dog. As the clay requires to have another element transfused through it before it can assume shapes of beauty, so the animal instinct requires to have something higher added before it becomes truly admirable. And this addition is that which wisdom supplies, namely, an end worthy of pursuit. Courage is the power of going forward in spite of difficulties to reach a chosen and worthy object.

## II

Although wisdom is the primary virtue in the order of logic, courage is probably the primitive one in the order of time. It was the



first virtue—the first which mankind exemplified, noticed and extolled. In both the Greek and Latin languages the very name for virtue itself is manliness, or valour, and the evolutionists would probably demonstrate that all other virtues are derivable from this one.

The original arena of courage was the battle-field. The earliest heroes of all nations are the valiant, who have performed exploits in defence of their altars and their hearths. The Greek poets and orators were never tired of extolling Thermopylæ, where three hundred brave warriors rolled back the whole power of the East. The lyre of the Roman poet emitted its most subduing notes when he told of Regulus, who, when sent home by the Carthaginians, who held him in captivity, to negotiate a peace for them with his fellow-countrymen, counselled the senate to make no peace, but to carry on the war more vigorously, and,

when his heroic courage had prevailed, went back to Carthage, in fulfilment of his parole, to be exposed with his eyelids cut off to the torrid African sun and rolled down a steep place in a barrel spiked with nails. 'He pushed aside,' says the Roman poet, 'the embraces of his chaste wife and the kisses of his little children, and would not lift his face from the ground till the trembling senators agreed to his proposal, and then through the ranks of his weeping friends he hastened back to exile, well knowing the tortures which awaited him there, yet as gay as if he had been going to one of the retreats of luxury and beauty on the southern shores of his native Italy.' In modern times, in like manner, the Scots have their Robert the Bruce and the English their Nelson, the Tyrolese their Andreas Hofer and the Swiss their Wilhelm Tell. Nor has this primitive sentiment yet died out, as we see by the circle

of fame which in our own time has surrounded the names of a Moltke and a Gordon.

In battle man risks the most precious possession he has—namely, his own life. All men instinctively cling to life, and dread death as the worst of all evils, because it sums up all earthly losses in one ; and, when they see a General Gordon, with nothing in his hand but the staff of a civilian, going about his business in the very thick of shot and shell as coolly as if he were taking the air in a flower-garden, they feel for him an admiration which knows no bounds. Here again, however, the question arises, wherein true valour consists. In some cases recklessness of danger may be a mere animal propensity. A celebrated general used to say, that in a thousand men there would be fifty ready to run any risks, and other fifty ready to run away on any pretext, while the nine hundred were neither brave nor the reverse, and it was a toss-

up which of the two fifties they would follow. In others it may be the callousness of custom. The veteran enters the breach with much the same indifference with which any other labourer goes about his day's work. Some of the bravest soldiers have been the timidiest to begin with, like that one who, when reproached by a rough companion for trembling, replied, 'Yes, I am afraid; but, if you had been as afraid as I am, you would have run away long ago.' Here we see the true soul of valour peeping out: it is the mettle in a mind inspired by a great end, whether this end be called duty, or loyalty, or patriotism. The truly brave man is he who loves some worthy object so much that he is willing to risk everything—even life itself—for its attainment.

### III

In the eyes of primitive man the only hero was the warrior. It was a great step in advance

when it was recognised that there is a valour of peace no less admirable than that of war. The Roman Cicero already says—‘The majority consider that military life is superior to that of civilians; but this opinion must be confuted, for in civil affairs there are opportunities of valour even more brilliant than in war.’ This is the voice of civilisation, and the great lesson of modern times.

We know now that the physician, who goes from house to house and bed to bed fighting an epidemic and exposing his own life, and perhaps that of his family, every day to danger, is as worthy of admiration as the soldier who walks with intrepidity up to the cannon’s mouth. It is not without justification that the fireman, rescuing women and children from burning houses at the risk of being crushed by falling beams or tumbling walls, is as popular in the reading of the young as the soldier or the sailor. The

statesman who maintains the cause of humanity in the face of the frowns of the multitude and in spite of the danger of being turned out of office; the journalist who refuses, notwithstanding a diminishing circulation, to make his newspaper the organ of a public opinion which he believes to be wrong; the judge who sentences a titled favourite of society to the hulks with the same impartiality with which he would dispose of an ordinary criminal—such are the heroes of civil life. But we must bring heroism down to still more lowly acts; for the pure ore of courage is often most abundant where it is least discerned by untrained eyes. The widow who, when the breadwinner has been taken from her side, does not surrender herself to despair, but resolves to face the world alone and bring up her children in honesty; the man who has failed in business but, instead of for ever harking

back to the glory of his prosperous days, adjusts his outlay to his new circumstances and refuses to let go his self-respect; the policeman who rushes into a barricaded room to grapple with a madman—these are the brave of the modern type.

The bravery of the soldier is a momentary effort. By one charge, which is over and done in an hour, he earns the admiration and the gratitude of his fellow-countrymen. But the most difficult heroism is that which is long-continued, the strain never relaxing year after year, and the struggle requiring to be constantly renewed; and this is requisite in modern life merely to preserve our manhood intact. The pressure of conventionality is constant. It is continually seeking to wear down our individuality and reduce us to the level of mere specimens of a common type. Even at school the force of practice and opinion is tyrannical, and the schoolboy



dreads being anything different from his fellows. As life goes on, the tendency to be a mere echo of others becomes more and more pronounced, and any deviation from what society prescribes and expects is treated as a crime.

They say that in city life especially this obliteration of individuality is the rule: while in the country men grow up with their own features and can express their own opinions, in the town we are all turned off on the same pattern, as if we had dropped from a machine. Oh the weary repetition of the streets, the monotony of the crowds that stream together from the gates of our public works, the artificial and mechanical sameness of the drawing-room! It is a life-long struggle for a human being now to be able to say, 'I am what I am'—to look the world in the face and, without oddity or bounce, maintain and express a mind of his own.

For this a man must be often

with himself—he must be able to enjoy his own company. Many are afraid of themselves, and betake themselves instinctively to crowds ; but it is in the crowd that the features of individuality are rubbed off, and one becomes a cipher and a non-entity. It may seem a strange test of courage to set up, but it is a genuine one, when we say, that he is a brave man who can look his own inmost self steadily in the face and be long alone without blenching.

## IV

No arena affords greater scope for courage than religion. So it has been from the beginning. If you wish to see a hero, look at David approaching Goliath not in the armour of Saul but in the faith of the God of Jacob ; or look at Elijah, on Carmel, standing alone against the world. In the New Testament look at Stephen on the field of martyrdom, or at St. Paul passing through a hun-

dred deaths. Every century since then has had its martyrs—down to those, numbering thousands, who have recently in China sealed their testimony with their blood. There is no extreme of courage beyond martyrdom ; yet often have tender and delicate women for the sake of their faith, and for the sake of their Lord, braved the worst that the hellish ingenuity of inquisitors or the brutality of the roughest soldiery could invent. This is the most perfect illustration of sacrifice for a noble end.

The necessity for courage is inherent in the Christian religion ; for the world is instinctively its enemy. There are innumerable degrees and forms of opposition—sometimes it is violent and brutal, ready to grasp at fire and sword, in order to annihilate what it abhors ; at other times it is scornful, using the weapons of satire and comedy ; and there are times when it actually professes Christianity itself, affecting only

to object to a spirituality which is fantastic and an austerity which is extreme ; but everywhere and always the spirit of the world is hostile to the spirit of Christ, and the courage requisite to stand up against it may sometimes be greater when the opposition is soft-spoken than when it is boisterous.

Another thing that makes courage a necessity to the Christian is that his Lord and Master demands testimony from him. 'Ye are my witnesses,' says Jesus to one and all who have believed on Him for salvation ; and the word 'witnesses' is the same as 'martyrs.' Every Christian is a possible martyr. Circumstances are conceivable in which he would have either to lose his life or cast away his hope ; and the world is not yet so improved that any one who is loyal to his Lord should be able to escape scot-free. There is a great deal more of persecution than many people are aware still going on in the world. In

every city there are works and shops where any one making a decided profession of Christianity has to run the gauntlet of ridicule and annoyance; and there are homes, too, in which, under the safe cover of what ought to be tender relationships, the stabs of aversion and malignity are dealt in the dark.

This is the cross of Christ, and it takes courage to bear it. But let none who are bearing it be ashamed, for it makes them the associates of the heroes of every age. The greatest of all martyrs was Jesus Himself. Never was there purer courage than His; and it was courage even unto death. He bore the cross and despised the shame, and there is no way of getting so near Him as suffering for His sake. Coleridge tells a striking story of a young officer, who confided to him that in his first battle he was absolutely demoralised with fear, till his General, Sir Alexander Ball, the friend of Coleridge,

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grasped his fingers and said, 'I was just the same the first time I was in a battle'; when, at that touch and these words, his timidity vanished in a moment and never returned. It is an instructive as well as an affecting incident, suggesting what the mature might do for beginners in the warfare of the Lord. But the best encouragement is in the touch and the word of the Lord Himself. Ay, and He also can say, 'I trembled once like you,' as He remembers Gethsemane and the wilderness of temptation. 'We have not an high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us, therefore, come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in every time of need.'

## CHAPTER III

## TEMPERANCE

LET us begin, as in last chapter, with a word or two about the connection.

Wisdom, courage, temperance—these are the first three of the seven cardinal virtues, and they are closely connected with one another. Wisdom chooses the end of life—the goal that has to be reached. Courage fights down the enemies and overcomes the obstacles which present themselves in the path to the goal. Temperance has to do with the enemies within—with the lusts and passions that war against the soul.

Many must feel that for them the latter are the real enemies. No doubt in every one's lot there



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is a share of temptations coming from without ; but a whole army storming on the citadel from the outside is less formidable than a single enemy within the walls. And who has not such an enemy ? The danger of temptation lies not so much in its own strength as in an affinity for it within the soul of the tempted ; for this is a traitor that will convey the key of the gates to the attacking forces. Who is there among us who is not aware of some weakness in himself that gives temptation its chance and its advantage ? In some of us this native or acquired bent towards certain sins may be so strong that we hardly need to be tempted, but may almost be said to tempt the tempter. Which of us would like to unveil to the public eye all that goes on in his own imagination in hours of solitude and reverie ? Are we not ashamed of it ? Do we not wonder at ourselves ? Like serpents weltering in the dark

depths of some obscene pit, lust and passion turn and twist, inflate themselves and rage with mad violence ; and they lift up their heads after being wounded apparently unto death a hundred times.

It is with the control of these unruly elements in human nature that temperance has to do ; for, if they are not overcome, the goal will certainly be missed.

## I

There are not lacking voices at present which deny that temperance is a virtue. Holding the only law of life to be development, they demand for every power the fullest expansion, and they ask why capacities of enjoyment have been bestowed on us by nature if they are not to be satisfied. Often has the thirst for strong drink been thus vindicated ; and bacchanalian poets have poured glittering shafts of contempt on those who avoid too scrupulously the boundaries of intoxication or try to impose

abstinence on others. With nearly equal frequency has the privilege of nature been claimed against the Christian law of chastity, which has been represented as an outrage on reason and a cruel and arbitrary limitation of the joys of existence.

But such doctrines are contradicted by their fruits. The unbridled indulgence of desire soon ends in both physical and moral exhaustion. For a short time, indeed, the remonstrances of reason may be drowned by the revelry of liberty; the songs of bacchanalian pleasure may shake the air with applause; goblets may foam, eyes sparkle, and laughter echo; but soon the roses wither, and in place of the beaming eye there grins the horrible eye-socket. No one has ever given more eloquent and daring expression to the claims of liberty in the use of the wine-cup than our own Robert Burns; but his own end, in its inexpressible sadness, was a commentary

of nature which even the most thoughtless could not mistake. If among the masters of song there is one in modern times who, for the perfection and inevitableness of the lyric note, deserves to be placed in the same rank as Burns, it is the German poet Heine, and he employed his transcendent gifts in glorifying and vindicating the rehabilitation of the flesh ; but the long years which he spent at the close of life, buried alive in his mattress grave, as he called it, taught all Europe, with a force and a pathos which nothing could have exceeded, that the end of these things is death.

On the contrary, experience shows how beautiful and beneficent, when subject to control and restrained to their own time, place and function, are even those parts of human nature which, when uncontrolled, tend most inevitably to corruption and destruction. As fire, when it breaks loose and rages on its own

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account, carries swift destruction in its course, but, when restricted within certain bounds, warms our rooms and cooks our food, illuminates our towns and drives our locomotives; or as water, when in flood, roots up trees, carries away houses and sweeps the crops from the fields, but, when confined within its banks, drives the wheel and floats the barge and rejoices the eye either by its placid flow or by the splendours of the cataract, so the very qualities which, when unregulated, waste and brutalise life may, when subjected to the control of temperance, be its fairest ornaments. Thus the man who is prone to conversation may, by making unrestrained use of his power, gradually become a bore, from whose garrulity every one flees; whereas the restrained use of his tongue would cause him to be looked upon as the possessor of a delightful gift, by which all who knew him would be disposed to

profit. Temper, when indulged without restraint, is a kind of madness, which transmutes him who is overmastered by it into a demon ; but, when checked and disciplined, it turns into the sensitiveness of a man of honour. Nothing is, in this respect, more remarkable than the instinct of sex—one of the parts of our nature with which the virtue of temperance has most to do: when emancipated from the law of God and the law of modesty, it brutalises more quickly and more completely than any other form of indulgence ; but, when it is obedient to the law of nature and of God, it blossoms into virgin love, the most exquisite flower of human happiness, and subsequently, in the form of wedded love, it is the very essence of those charities and joys which make the home to be the centre of attraction to the heart as well as the basis of the whole fabric of society.

Thus is intemperance demon-

strated to be vicious and temperance to be virtuous by their patent and undeniable effects.

## II

Sometimes the doctrines just referred to which demand emancipation from all restraint are called Greek, whereas those which insist upon control are called Hebraic. Heine, in his prose writings, which are hardly less brilliant than his poetry, often speaks of the whole of modern history as being a conflict between these two tendencies; and, in the same sense, a distinguished Scottish minister has recently published a book under the title of *Culture and Restraint*. Culture is the Greek ideal—the free and full development of every part of human nature—and restraint is the Hebrew ideal—the control by law and will of the too volatile and violent desires.

For these names there is a certain amount of justification. The Greeks looked at the one side of the shield and the Hebrews



at the other ; and doubtless the tendency of each to do so was due to natural temperament. Both tendencies were carried to excess : the Greek civilisation allowed an excess of indulgence and fell accordingly into shameful decay ; the Hebraic element in Christianity has frequently put a ban on legitimate pleasure and taught that mere abstinence, for its own sake, is meritorious in the sight of God. *Æstheticism* is the extreme in the one direction, *asceticism* in the other.

The wise among the Greeks, however, were well aware that restraint was necessary ; and, while their watchword was development, they knew that the harmony of all the parts could not be secured without the rigid suppression of violent passions. Beauty was the Greek ideal ; but beauty means everything in its own place and every member fulfilling its own function. In like manner the Hebrews, while

insisting upon restraint, did so only with a view to culture. The base and inferior must be restrained if a chance is to be given to what is more excellent. If ever there was a Hebrew, it was St. Paul, but in his wonderful parable of the body and the members, in the twelfth of First Corinthians, he shows himself to be both in love with moral beauty and well aware of the essential principles of æsthetics.

The necessity for temperance is based on the fact that the constitution of man is composed of many parts of different degrees of value and dignity, on the harmonious working together of which his happiness depends. It is as in an army, where there are many degrees, from the general to the private soldier. How would it do in a battle if every soldier were to act on his own initiative, no one waiting for the word of command? Even if every man were loyal and brave, and acting for the best, as he

understood it, the whole army would become a scene of immeasurable disorder and fall an easy prey to the enemy. It is as in a ship or a boat, where every sailor or rower has his own place and his own work. In a boat on the Cam or the Isis, when the prize for oarsmanship is about to be decided, how would it do if every oarsman considered it his right to let himself go and pull with all the strength at his command? This would correspond exactly with the theory of those who hold that every part of human nature is entitled to unrestrained development; but it would work havoc on the river and entail inevitable defeat. If there is to be any hope of victory, every oarsman has to consider his neighbours and keep his eye on the coxswain; he must do nothing for his own glory or gratification, but regulate the amount of force he puts into every stroke by a calculation of what is demanded of him at

that particular point at that particular moment.

So in ourselves there is the broad distinction of the body with its parts and the soul with its powers. The body has its own dignity and its own rights; but the soul is manifestly superior. Yet the body is constantly endeavouring to assert itself and get the upper hand. Hence the need to keep the body under, as St. Paul phrases it. Then, among the powers of the soul there is the utmost variety, with many gradations of dignity. Some powers are near akin to the body. Such are the appetites, of which the chief are these three—the appetite for eating, the appetite for drinking, and the appetite of sex. These are common to man with the brutes, and are specially apt to become unruly and violent. So much is this the case that the word temperance is sometimes restricted to the control of these alone. At the opposite extreme from these animal propensities

are such imperial powers as conscience and reason; while in between come the feelings, some of which are more and some less noble. Thus, the feeling of reverence which we entertain for God and the feelings of affection of which the chief arena is the home are noble, while there are many feelings, such as the desire for money or the desire for praise, which, though not base in themselves, tend to baseness.

Temperance, then, is the control of the lower by the higher powers; or it is the force of will by which all are kept in their own places and compelled to do their own work. When the habit of temperance is thoroughly formed, every excess is instantly checked and every reluctant power promptly stimulated. Thus the whole being develops steadily and acts harmoniously; and the effects of temperance ought to be internal peace and external beauty.

## III

The self-control just described can neither be won nor maintained without severe and continuous effort, accompanied by many a failure and many a new beginning. In more than one passage of his writings St. Paul speaks of his own heart as a scene of civil war, the more earthly principles contending with the more spiritual, like a rebel army with the forces of the crown ; and of this struggle no man that breathes is wholly ignorant. Every one has his own besetting sin. It may be a tendency bequeathed by ancestors, such as a cursed craving for drink ; it may be a peculiarity of temperament, such as a liability to uncontrolled fits of temper ; it may be a habit acquired in years of youthful folly, which still clings although the past has been blotted out by repentance ; it may even be allied to what is noble and good, like some forms

of pride. But there it is; and we have to wrestle with it for our salvation. It seems to me there is encouragement in the reflection that this conflict is going on, in one form or other, in every breast: this should make us sympathetic towards others and hopeful about ourselves. Others whose distress has been as desperate as ours have conquered; and why should not we? We are compassed about with a great cloud of witnesses.

Every time the unruly appetite is indulged it becomes stronger, and its next victory will be more easily won; but every time the will, directed by reason and conscience, gets the upper hand, it is itself strengthened, and its next effort will be more prompt and successful. Such is the law of the battle; and it is by the growth of the will in vigour, swiftness and perseverance that victory is secured.

Yes, this secures the victory, but not this alone. St. Paul, in



one of his epistles, compares this moral struggle to the games so renowned in ancient Greece ; and he says that every one taking part in these games was temperate in all things. The training undergone by athletes in preparation for signal efforts is proverbial. In Greece the fixed period for this purpose was ten months ; and the discipline was most severe. It could not be relaxed for a single day ; otherwise the benefit of the preceding time was lost, and some rival would get to the front. But the candidates for the honours of the arena did not go about from day to day, all the ten months, complaining of their hard lot. They took it as a matter of course ; and what they thought and talked about was the prize they expected to win—the chaplet of green leaves to be placed on their brows amidst the applause of admiring Greece ; the wall of their native town to be thrown down at the place where they were conducted



back by their rejoicing fellow-citizens; the privileges of many kinds which they would enjoy for the remainder of their days. Temperance becomes easy and even exhilarating when the prize to be won by it is great enough. 'They do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible.' What father of a family has not observed with reverence and amazement the superiority to the most urgent demands of the body, such as sleep, exhibited by a mother when nursing an ailing child? Temperance is easy when there is a strong enough affection involved.

The terms of the moral struggle we have all to wage may be suddenly and completely altered by the entrance into our consciousness of the prize to be won or of the person for whose sake the sacrifices have to be endured. And if the prize and the person have the same name—Christ! The victory is difficult, and yet it is easy. To obtain the control

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over an unruly passion or to disencumber oneself of a besetting sin may be painful as the plucking out of a right eye and the cutting off of a right hand. Jesus does not deny it; the words are His own. Yet His yoke is easy and His burden light. How is the contradiction between these two statements to be reconciled? The answer to that question is the secret of the Gospel, and blessed are they to whom it has been revealed.

## CHAPTER IV

## JUSTICE

IN the preceding chapters I have taken pains to point out the connection between one virtue and another; and the three already discussed—wisdom, courage and temperance—are very closely related. But the connection of the fourth, justice, with the other three is not so close. Those are virtues of personal character; this has respect chiefly to other people. No doubt, without wisdom, courage and temperance a man cannot cultivate justice with any success, and, on the other hand, the earnest pursuit of justice will react favourably on those other virtues, but, on the whole, while the first three cause him who is cultivating them to

look continually within, this fourth causes him who is exercising it to look continually without, and to consider what he owes to other people.

For justice is the rendering to every one of what is his due. It is the virtue of man, not as he stands by himself, but in his place in society ; and, in order to understand his whole duty in regard to it, a man has to remember his relations to all other human beings—his superiors, inferiors and equals—and his connection with each circle of the social organization—such as the family, the city, the nation and the church. As man has relations to creatures beneath him and to beings above him, besides those to his fellow-men, the idea of justice might be stretched so as to include behaviour to the lower animals and duties towards God ; and, indeed, in some modern books cruelty to animals is discussed under justice, while in the ethical systems of

the schoolmen, and especially in the *Summa* of Thomas Aquinas—the book recommended before all others to the study of Christendom by the present Pope—the latter forms the greater part of justice, the worship of God in all its branches being discussed in connection with it; but, on the whole, it is better to limit the scope of justice to the relations of human beings to each other.

This is, in itself, a wide field, for it comprehends the mutual duties of parents and children, of husbands and wives, of brothers and sisters, of friends, of neighbours, of clergy and laity, of employers and employed, of rulers and subjects, and of others too numerous to be mentioned. If any one were a model in all these respects, he would be a perfect man. Hence justice has often been spoken of as the whole of virtue, and Aristotle, in an unwonted access of enthusiasm, speaks of it as being more beauti-

ful than the morning or the evening star.

While the definition of justice as the rendering to every one of his due seems a very simple one, it is in reality not so simple as it looks. This you realise as soon as you begin to ask what is the due of any one in particular. Every such question is complicated by the question hidden in it, What is *my* due?—for the bias in favour of self too often confuses the verdict. You may lay down a proposition like that embodied in the American Declaration of Independence, that every one has an inalienable right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness; but you are immediately pulled up by questions like these: Is that man entitled to life who has taken the life of another? is a lunatic to be allowed liberty? does not many a man's pursuit of happiness involve misery for other men and women? In short, what is any one's due, and especially,

what is one's own due in any relationship of life, can frequently be ascertained only by close and dispassionate inquiry; and, in order to be trained not only to perform acts of justice but to have a habit of justice, ready to act on every occasion, we require to put ourselves to more than one school of justice and learn the lessons there imparted. Let us inquire what these schools are.

#### I.—THE JUSTICE OF THE LAW

So essential is justice for the welfare of all that, wherever men have risen, even in a slight degree, above the savage state, they have employed their best wisdom to declare what justice is and their united strength to enforce it. In early Rome what were called the Twelve Tables were set up in the market-place, where they could be read by every one, and they told in the plainest words what were the duties of a citizen and what were



the penalties of the infringement of them. As civilisation advances, the picked men of the nation are formed into parliaments for the purpose of defining the rights of the different classes in the community; law-courts are erected, judges and juries sit, and lawyers argue, for the purpose of applying to particular cases what has been laid down in general in the law of the land; while the whole apparatus of prisons and punishments exists for the purpose of sharpening in the public mind the consciousness of the majesty of the law.

In every country these institutions form a school to which the citizens are put, and in which they learn almost unconsciously multitudes of things which they must do and multitudes of things which they must not do. In most cases the schooling takes effect almost as perfectly as the schooling of nature by which every one learns very early in life not to stand in the way of a

falling body or to bring the hand too near a fire. Most of us have never been in the clutches of the law of the land, and it may not occur to us once in a year that this is a danger we have to avoid. But, for all that, the law has been our schoolmaster, teaching us to do no wrong to our neighbour and to fulfil the promises, formal or tacit, we have made to him ; and our unconsciousness that the law and we have had anything to do with each other only proves how well its work has been done.

## II.—THE JUSTICE OF PUBLIC OPINION

The law of the land in any modern state is an embodiment of the experience of centuries, during which multitudes of the acutest minds have been giving their best strength to define what justice is. In the law of our own land streams of wisdom mingle, derived both, on the one side, from the classical nations

and, on the other, from our Teutonic ancestors. Yet, with all that has been done, the law of the land is an extremely imperfect embodiment of justice, and one might remain for life securely outside the clutches of the law and yet be the reverse of a just man.

Of the holes in the network of the law of the land a striking illustration was supplied a short time ago in one of our cities. A man who had occupied a high office in the municipality was summoned into court to answer for a use of his position which, if it became common, would corrupt the administration of the city through and through; but it turned out that what he was charged with doing is no offence against any law in the statute-book. Of course I am expressing no opinion as to whether the particular person accused was guilty or not of what was alleged against him, but the case is a curious instance

of the imperfection of the law of the land.

Nor is it always the greatest wrongs which the public machinery of justice is directed against, while those it neglects are trivial in comparison. On the contrary, the law often strains at a gnat while it swallows a camel. For example, if any one were to defraud his neighbour of a shilling, the law would lay hold of him and set its whole machinery of police, judges, lawyers and prisons in motion for his punishment ; but the same person might, by the arts of temptation carried on for years, make his neighbour's son a drunkard, or his daughter still worse, and yet escape altogether the notice of the law. That is to say, you may not touch your neighbour's purse, but you may break his heart with impunity as far as the law of the land is concerned.

This shows the need of a stricter school of justice, and this

is furnished by public opinion. A man may keep all his days out of the hands of the police, and the law may never have a word to say against him, yet society may know him to be guilty of acts which it sternly disapproves and will not suffer to be perpetrated with impunity. He is not fined or imprisoned, but society frowns on him, he loses his character, and the doors through which access is obtained to the pleasures and honours of life are shut in his face. Thus silently, but sternly, does public opinion punish the man who is known to be a breaker of the eighth commandment and the woman who has broken the seventh. And, on the whole, this is a salutary check on passion and selfishness, while it does much to render society a more habitable place than it would otherwise be.

III.—THE JUSTICE OF  
CONSCIENCE

Public opinion, like the law of the land, leaves holes in the network of justice which it weaves. In fact, much worse can be said of it: it not infrequently commands what it ought to forbid and forbids what it ought to command. In illustration of this may be adduced the law of honour which, not long ago, forbade any member of the upper class to decline a challenge to engage in a duel; and, at the opposite extreme of society, it is still considered dishonourable not to treat visitors to strong drink on New Year's day. Of course it might be alleged against the law of the land also, that it has often commanded what it was wrong to do and forbidden what was right, as, for instance, when the early Christians were forbidden to worship the Saviour and commanded, on pain of death, to bend the knee to the

images of heathen divinities; but a false verdict of public opinion is more difficult to combat than a wrong statute.

The appeal from it, however, is to the conscience of the individual, in which there is erected another school of justice, and a very venerable one. Let any one, when not sure what is right or wrong, retire with the question into the solitude of his own breast, let him rid himself of passion and party spirit, and ask himself what he ought to do; and, provided he really wishes to learn the truth, he will seldom fail to ascertain what is his duty. It is a far finer and more severe type of morality that is taught in this school than in that of either public opinion or the law of the land; and it is the great object of religion to strengthen the conscience, teaching men to feel that, confronted by it alone, they are in a more august presence than in any law-court, however high, or in a whole theatre of spec-



tators. It was to the conscience Jesus appealed when he framed the Golden Rule, 'Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do you even so to them'; and this is the soul of justice.

#### IV.—THE JUSTICE OF CHRIST

As I have just quoted the Golden Rule, it might be thought we had already obtained Christ's contribution to justice. Jesus was a moralist, contending earnestly for righteousness and fair-play between man and man and between class and class; He was the heir and the successor of the prophets—those stern denouncers of wrong—and He emitted many rules of justice, this golden one among them; yet this was not His principal contribution to this cause.

There are some things that make it easy to render to certain persons all that is their due, or even more. In railway-travelling every one has noticed the atten-

tion paid by guards and porters to those travelling first-class. When royalty is in any city, all the arrangements of traffic give way to its convenience, and the citizens vie with one another in placing their services at the disposal of the royal visitors. There is not a town in the world where the well-dressed do not receive more courtesy than the ragged. This is human nature. In many cases it may be contemptible, but it is at least fair to take advantage of it on behalf of those at the opposite extreme of the social scale. Jesus did so. He endeavoured to secure fairer treatment for the common man by raising the universal estimate of him. If the poor are treated without consideration because they are invested with no distinction and dignity to arrest the eye, the treatment which they receive will be improved by anything which secures for them respect and reverence. Now, to the mind that has taken in the teach-

ing of Christ, the very humblest belong to that humanity which He took into His heart and for which He gave His life; and it is impossible thus to see our fellow-men through Christ's eyes—to see God in them, in short—without having a fine and powerful motive for treating them with justice.

As the discussion of our theme has been pretty abstract in this chapter, it may be advisable to finish with a practical illustration, and this I shall take from the great struggle between capital and labour which is surging on every hand at the present time. What would the four teachers say about what is due by employer to employed, and what is due by employed to employer?

First, the teaching of the law of the land is very brief, but decisive. It simply says to the master, 'Pay that thou owest,' and to the servant, 'Thou shalt not steal.' And, simple as this teaching is,

there are those to whom it is the thunder of God.

Secondly, public opinion goes a good deal beyond this, though its voice is divided. There is a public opinion of employers, which the employer hears perhaps too exclusively, and there is a public opinion of the employed, which the employé hears perhaps too exclusively. The former urges the stern application of the law of supply and demand, while the latter counsels to take advantage of the employers' necessities. But there is a wider public opinion which decides more impartially: it frowns upon the employer if he is not at least trying to provide the best conditions of labour which others have been able to allow in his business, and it censures the mechanic or labourer if, instead of doing his best, he follows a 'canny' policy—the tyranny of officials who would impose this upon him being, in the judgment of the wider public, as demoralising

as that of the task-masters of Egypt, though the modern whip is used in favour of too little work, whereas the ancient was in favour of too much. This wider public opinion is imperfectly informed and, therefore, makes mistakes; but, on the whole, the influence which it wields is invigorating.

From its blunders employer or employé can appeal to the third tribunal mentioned—his own conscience. Let him ask there, as an honest man, what he ought to do, what God wishes him to do, and what he would wish the other man to do to him, if places were exchanged; and then, if he is loyal to the decision of his conscience, he can hold up his head and brave public opinion, however hostile and unanimous.

Last of all, what is the message of Christian principle to master and servant? It will remind the former, that his servants have an immortal destiny, and will constrain him to minimise or abolish arrangements, like Sabbath labour

and excessive hours, which secularise and brutalise; while servants, as they toil, will hear a voice behind them saying, 'Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not unto men.'

I do not mean to say that even with all these sources of light the question of justice will always be an easy one. The reciprocal rights of corporate bodies are particularly difficult to define. But, at all events, it is by letting the instructions of these different teachers play upon the mind that the level of public justice will be raised and the individual prepared for appearing before that solemn tribunal where the sentences of this world will all be revised and a verdict pronounced from which there can be no appeal.

## CHAPTER V

## FAITH

IN the opening chapter I explained how the cardinal virtues came to be reckoned as seven. The idea of cardinal virtues belongs to the ancient world, as it existed before the appearance of Christianity; but the classical thinkers counted only four—wisdom, courage, temperance and justice—the four already discussed. But Christianity, when it appeared, gave the foremost places among the virtues, not to these four which were the choice of the philosophers, but to the three well known to every reader of the New Testament—faith, hope and love. It was much later, after Christians also had begun to be philosophers, that



the ancient quartette and the Christian trio were joined, so as to produce the seven virtues as we now think of them.

Few things indicate more clearly how great was the change effected by Christianity on the thinking of the world than the fact that it adopted an entirely new set of virtues; for virtues are simply excellences of manhood. The change indicates that the type of man which Christianity tries to produce is radically different from that aimed at by pagan philosophy; and some one has truly said, that the final test of every human system or institution is the kind of man it produces.

It might be argued, indeed, that Christianity did not change the virtues, but only altered their names. Thus, it might be maintained, with some show of reason, that faith is simply wisdom under another name, that hope is to a large extent identical with courage, and that love has a consider-

able resemblance to justice. But, while in each of these cases there is a certain likeness, the unlikeness is more obvious, and we must, I think, conclude, that Christianity taught mankind to admire a different set of excellences from those set up for the admiration of the ancient world, and that the man it strives to form is a man of a different type. I may be reminded, indeed, that Christianity has adopted the pagan virtues as its own; and this is true; but it has adopted them in addition to its own; and the three new ones are its own choice in a sense in which the four old ones are not.

It is not, indeed, to be thought that Christianity created these three virtues: it is not to be thought that human beings did not exercise faith, hope and love before Christianity appeared. Man has always been a being who has believed and hoped and loved. But what Christianity did was to recognise the value

and importance of these mental acts or habits; and it supplied them with new objects on which to exercise their powers. Faith, hope and love are the tap-roots of the plant we call man, but Christianity transplanted the tree into new soil.

Of the three distinctly Christian or theological virtues, as they are sometimes called, the first is Faith.

In the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, where we find the most express definition of faith given in Holy Writ—it being defined as ‘the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen’—a brilliant attempt is made to represent the whole history of religion as a process of which faith has been the inspiring principle. The heroes of the Old Testament are made to march past in long procession, their exploits are enumerated, and in every case these are attributed to faith, as if this had been the power which

produced religion and all its manifestations. In the New Testament, in general, faith occupies a foremost place, and especially in the writings of St. Paul. The apostles were all sensible that in Christ a great new force had entered the world, and faith was the element in man by which it was appropriated. When in modern times, after centuries of observation, Christianity was re-discovered at the Reformation and preached afresh to the nations by Luther, Calvin, Knox, and the other reformers, faith again became the watch-word, and it was through the reappearance of this virtue in men's breasts and in their characters that the rejuvenescence of Europe took place.

After that great movement subsided, a stage of development ensued in which faith became an object of speculation more than a living power. Men inquired about its nature and disputed with one another about the ele-

ments of which it is composed. Thus many strange opinions came to prevail, some of which hang, like cobwebs, about the general mind to this day. Thus in the eighteenth century, when religion was at the lowest ebb in England and Scotland, faith was understood to be the habit of taking on credit dogmas which the mind could not understand, and this submission to the authority of the Bible or the Church was supposed to be exceedingly meritorious. But anything more unlike faith, as it is represented in the Bible or as it has prevailed in the heroic periods of religion, it would be difficult to conceive. If in the mind of the reader there still linger any remains of the notion that faith is a shutting of the eyes of reason and a blind trusting to authority, I advise you to sweep such rubbish out of your thoughts. Religion wants to shut no man's eyes: its mission is to open them.

It was in opposition to that

view of faith that the Evangelical doctrine was developed in which most of us were brought up. In Evangelical preaching faith held a very prominent and honourable place. Those who can remember the more earnest type of preaching prevalent a generation ago will easily recall the frequency of the appeal, 'Only believe, and you shall be saved.' But there was a tendency to narrow faith to a single point and to restrict it to a single act, namely, trust in the sacrifice of Christ for the forgiveness of sin. But, however important this may be, it is far from expressing the whole genius of faith. If you go back to a character like Luther and listen to him speaking about faith, as he was incessantly doing, you realise that in him it was the bursting forth of a spring of energy, which spread sunshine and fruitfulness over the entire landscape; it was a habit of the whole man, the action of which kept all the functions healthy and

happy. Faith is wronged when it is conceived as something demanded of us on pain of perdition ; it is the most natural, the most health-giving and joy-giving of all experiences.

If I might attempt a definition of faith, I should be inclined to call it the response of man to God — to His revelations, His promises, and His offers.

#### I.—THE RESPONSE TO GOD'S REVELATIONS

As has been already said, faith did not come into the world with Christianity, and it is not even peculiar to religion. Faith is a human function, which every human being is exercising every day in regard to multitudes of objects. Whatever lies beyond the range of our own immediate observation is an object of faith. How do those of us who have never been out of Europe know that such places as Africa, Asia and America exist? It is by believing the testimony of those



who have been there ; or it is by seeing objects, like black faces or white ivory, not produced in this country, and inferring that there must be other continents besides Europe from which they come. Our knowledge of all the events which have happened in this world before our own generation is due to faith : we believe the testimony of those who have placed them on record. And all our knowledge of what is taking place in the world of our own day, except that which is cognisable by our own five senses, is obtained in the same way—by testimony, which we accept by faith.

Thus it may be seen how vast is the sweep of faith, and how large a part it plays in everyday life. Of course, testimony has to be sifted. It is not all worthy of belief ; some of it is true and some false ; and it is the part of a wise man to sever the wheat from the chaff, believing only that which is deserving of credence.

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Now, among the various testimonies which come to us from many quarters, inviting us to believe in the existence of things we have never seen, there is the testimony of God, certifying to us His own existence and His character. His testimony takes many forms. Partly it is in His works—‘the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and godhead’—partly it is in His providence, for we know that we have not brought ourselves into existence, and that the sweetness of life which we taste is not of our own procuring; partly it is in conscience, where a holy and righteous will, above our own, is daily announcing itself. We are quite entitled to test these evidences; this is our prerogative as reasonable beings. But, if they stand the test, then this Supreme Being is entitled to the homage of our

soul—to our admiration, trust and worship—and this is faith.

Have you ever thought what a change it would make if you believed with all your heart and soul and strength and mind that God is? This one belief would alter everything. Some may even think that it would change too much: if we realised God as He really is, we could think of nothing else. This I do not admit. The thought of God should be to the rest of our thinking like the sky to the other objects of the landscape—always there, blue, serene, unifying. In His presence, constantly and steadily realised, everything would find its right place; it would be easy to do proper and difficult to do wrong. In fact, the problem of life would be solved. Alas, we lose sight of Him: earthly objects shut Him out; we often do not even wish to retain Him in our knowledge because of the imperativeness of His claims on our conscience. But it is the office

of faith to overcome this godlessness, saying, in the words of the psalm, 'I have set the Lord alway before me.'

## II.—THE RESPONSE TO GOD'S PROMISES

God does not merely stand at a distance, silently appealing to man through His works: He comes near and speaks in intelligible words; and His words are promises.

It will be remembered how large a part was played by the divine promises in the experience of Abraham, the father of the faithful. God promised him a land and a seed and a blessing; and the faith of Abraham was exhibited in laying hold of these promises. In order to do so, he had to let the world go—for the abandonment of things prized by the natural heart is always involved in the grasping of those things to which faith applies itself—but he steadily followed the star of the promise wherever

it led him. Among the successors of Abraham, this cleaving to a divine promise through good and bad report, through fair weather and foul, was so prominent a characteristic of faith that the writer of the eleventh chapter of Hebrews sums up their biographies in the words, 'These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.' And at all times the life of faith is one of response to the promises. These are contained in the Word of God. The reading of God's Word is one of the most native habits of a Christian life; and the traffic which the soul thereby keeps up with God consists to a large extent in appropriating the promises.

But the great promise to which faith attaches itself is that of the life to come. Of immor-

talities man has dim intimations apart from special revelation; and some thinkers, like Socrates and Plato, before the advent of Christ and apart from the Bible, followed such natural light as was vouchsafed to them with a wistful and noble eagerness. But it is in the Word of God that the unveiling of the life to come has taken place, and especially in the words of Jesus Himself, who has spoken to us distinctly of the mansions intended for our future habitation as one who has been there and is familiar with them. It is, therefore, to His blessed words, above all others, that faith responds, when it rises up to claim possession of its heritage.

This action of faith, also, has to overcome obstacles. Not only may doubt arise as to whether even the testimony of Christ is credible, but the things that are temporal engross our time and attention, and, above all, we shrink in cowardice from the kind of life imperatively de-

manded of us if we really have an immortal destiny. Who does not feel that it would change everything if he believed with his whole soul in his own immortality? It would supply him with a totally new standard of values: many things which the world prizes and pursues he would utterly despise, and many things which the world neglects would be the objects of his most ardent pursuit. The world to come, because invisible, is to the multitude as good as non-existent: but it may shine as attractively before the eyes of the soul for a lifetime as the prize does for a moment in the eyes of the competitor in the games; and this passionate response to God's grandest promise is faith.

### III.—THE RESPONSE TO GOD'S OFFERS

It may seem a little forced to distinguish between God's promises and His offers; and I will not deny the charge, if any one



chooses to bring it; but I make the distinction in order to emphasise the personal element in God's dealings with us. He comes nearer to us than even a promise brings Him: Person to person, He makes us offers.

His grand offer is His Son, whom He offers to the world as its Saviour. This world is full of sin and misery, and it is in desperate need of some one to save it from these evils. Reformers and theorists are not wanting. The world is like an invalid with a disease of many years' standing, who has tried many physicians and spent much money on them, but is nothing better, but rather growing worse. Is there no balm in Gilead? is there no physician there? God Himself comes to the rescue, and His remedy is nothing less than His own Son.

It is only expressing the same truth in another form if we say that Christ offers Himself to every man. When a human

being feels himself to be a sinner, condemned by justice and exposed to the loss of his destiny, then he feels the value of the offer of a Saviour. But even one not so ripe for salvation as this might be awakened to the true position of affairs by the mere fact that a Saviour is offered to him. As a person who has been in an accident, on awaking and seeing in the bedroom doctors, nurses and weeping relatives, becomes aware that something serious has happened; so a thoughtful man, realising that Christ is offering Himself to him as his Saviour, might well ask, why he needs such an offer. The Son of God, it is said, gave His life for me; but how did I stand in need of such a sacrifice? what have I done that I should require an atonement to be made for me at such a price? what danger am I exposed to from which the Son of God should have become incarnate to deliver me? Along such a line of reflection any

one might come to realise the value of Christ. Who does not acknowledge that the life and death of Christ form the mightiest event that ever happened in this world? The Son of God incarnate! the Son of God dead upon the cross! What, then, is that to me? what am I getting out of it? Christ is not dead, He is living still. With all that history at His back, He comes to me and offers Himself as my Saviour. And, when my soul rises in humility and timid gratitude to accept the offer, feeling it to be the greatest chance I shall ever have in time or eternity, this is faith.

In this chapter I have been less desirous of giving an exact definition of faith than of commending it as an act or habit to be acquired; and, in conclusion, I should like, with the same end in view, to mention one form of faith that lends itself to easy cultivation. If any one is unaware how

to begin to exercise faith, the easiest form of it is prayer. This is a response to God's revelation of Himself; for he who cometh to God in prayer must believe that He is. It is a response to God's promises, for one of the principal arts of prayer is to plead the promises. And it is a response to God's offers: the best way of replying to Christ's offer of Himself is to speak to Him, and this is prayer. A single genuine prayer, and the life of faith is begun; and we have God's own word for it, that 'whosoever calleth on the name of the Lord shall be saved.'

## CHAPTER VI

## HOPE

LET us begin, as usual, with a word or two about the connection. The three Christian virtues—faith, hope and love—are very intimately connected. Faith belongs more to the intellect, hope more to the will, and love more to the emotions. Faith is a vision of the spiritual and eternal world; hope is the effort of the will to secure the objects which faith reveals; love is the glow of desire for these objects, and sets the will in motion. In strict logic, love ought to be treated before hope, but we naturally reserve it for the last place, following the example of St. Paul, because it is the greatest.

## I

Hope is with many people a matter of temperament. They have the temperament which is called sanguineous. This is attributable to a certain fulness of the blood, and is generally associated with fair hair and a florid complexion. Certainly there are some people that seem to see by nature the sunny side of things; they are always expecting good success, and they rise like a cork from beneath the attempts of misfortune to depress them. The opposite temperament is the melancholic. This is usually associated with dark hair and a sallow complexion. As the name indicates, it is disposed to gloomy views, it sees the seamy side of everything, and is always anticipating evil rather than good. As some one has wittily observed, if two men touch a bee, the one gets honey and the other gets stung; if two approach a bush, the one gathers

a rose and the other is jagged with a thorn ; if two men are gazing at the same quarter of the sky, the one remarks only the black cloud, the other only the silver lining.

Certainly it is a precious heritage to be born with a hopeful disposition. The man who, when it is midnight, always remembers that the dawn is coming, and in the dead of winter keeps his thoughts fixed upon the spring, is a wise man ; and, in nine cases out of ten, events will justify his confidence, for the wheel of fortune turns round, and the part of it which is the bottom only requires half a revolution to be the top. The tide of opportunity rises at some time to every one's feet, and the hopeful man is best prepared to take advantage of it.

Most people require a little bit of success to make them hopeful ; a little encouragement, a little sunshine is all they need to cause all that is best in them to expand and to extract from them their

best work. But there are those whose hopefulness is of such a buoyant order that they can go on hoping even when everything is against them, and obstacles and reverses appear actually to add to their good spirits. Such natures are invaluable to any cause; they carry a breeze with them wherever they go; the gloom passes from men's faces at the sight of theirs and is succeeded by smiles; discouraged adherents rally again, and the impossible becomes easy. It was attributed to the late Earl of Beaconsfield, as a quality invaluable to the party he led, that his hopes rose in proportion to the difficulties he had to encounter, and that he was never so brilliant as when his back was at the wall; but everyone in any degree acquainted with the history of political parties is aware how rare is the power of maintaining a spirit of cheerfulness and steadiness in the cold shade of opposition.



Temperament may be the source of hope; but its origin may be deeper, namely, principle, and this is better. This is the peculiar quality of Christian hope, which is not the perquisite of those dowered with a certain temperament, but may, on the contrary, be the attainment of those most disposed to melancholy; for the reason of it is not in themselves, but in Another.

## II

When the attitude of the mind to the future is spoken of with reference not to the individual but to the race, we call it by more high-sounding names; the hopeful state of mind is called Optimism and the reverse Pessimism. Philosophers are generally understood to have risen superior to such frailties of human nature as temperament, and to be able to contemplate truth with calm and unprejudiced eyes; but this supposed superiority may be an illusion, and the bias

of natural disposition probably asserts itself in them as in other people. At all events, among thinkers there have always been optimists and pessimists. In the ancient world one sage was called the Laughing and another the Weeping Philosopher; and these adjectives might be applied with equal propriety to rival schools of our own day.

Pessimism feels in the marrow of its bones

the heavy and the weary weight  
Of all this unintelligible world.

It dwells, with an excess of sensibility, on the fortuitous and destructive element in nature—on the earthquakes and storms by which the intelligence of man is baffled and chaos brought back again; on the immeasurable conflict in nature between the strong and the weak, in which the latter must go to the wall; above all, on the misery and aimlessness of human life—on the prevalence of disease and the inevitableness

of death ; on the stupidity of the country and the depravity of the city ; on man's inhumanity to man, and on his still more appalling cruelty to womanhood and childhood. It is the mood of Hamlet when, smarting under

. . . the whips and scorns of time,  
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's  
    contumely,  
The pangs of despised love, the law's  
    delay,  
The insolence of office, and the spurns  
That patient merit of the unworthy  
    takes,

he exclaimed,

    O God, God,  
How weary, flat, stale and unprofitable  
Seem to me all the uses of this world.

It is the mood of the Ecclesiast, as he moves from scene to scene of human life, but can find nothing new under the sun—nothing to relieve the monotony of existence—but declares that all is vanity and vexation of spirit.

In most minds pessimism is only a mood, easily blown away by the zephyrs of enjoyment or

the sturdy blasts of action ; but some have allowed it to harden, till it has become a doctrine and a creed. There is a philosophical pessimism which maintains that the evil in the world so far outweighs the good, and that it is so hopeless to expect any real improvement, that the rational destiny of the human race would be to disappear by a simultaneous act of suicide. One would naturally suppose such notions incompatible with religion ; and, in fact, those who hold pessimistic opinions in doctrinaire form are usually disbelievers in an overruling Providence ; but, strange to say, one of the most widely diffused religions of the world is thoroughly pessimistic in spirit : Buddhism looks upon human existence as evil in itself, and as so great an evil that the true ideal of man is relief from the burden of personal existence through reabsorption into the formless All out of which he has come.

Optimism is the reverse of

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pessimism, and it is far more characteristic of the modern world. It is sometimes said that the golden age of the ancient world lay behind, whereas that of the modern world is in front. The golden age of the ancients was a scene of peace and plenty, produced without man's aid and to be enjoyed without exertion; the golden age to which the modern man looks forward is to be the creation of his own foresight and industry, and idleness will be excluded from the earthly paradise. Whatever it may be due to—whether to an instinct of the more energetic races or to the wonderful improvements and progress witnessed in recent centuries—the belief is almost universal among the Western peoples at least, that there is a good time coming, and that the course of humanity will continue to be upward and onward. Philosophy has sometimes tried to find in human nature a reason to justify this belief; but the

great majority concur in it without any close inquiry into its grounds.

It is usually said that Christianity is optimistic. And this is true; but it might also be said that it is pessimistic. It does not believe in any inherent law of amelioration in this world. It looks upon human nature as fallen and incapable of its own salvation. Left to himself, man would grow worse, instead of better. But through this very pessimism Christianity is led to optimism; because, despairing of man, it lays hold upon God, and it cleaves to Him with all the more tenacity the more conscious it is of the gulf into which without Him it would fall.

### III

Thus by two pathways we have been led to the conclusion that hope for man is not in himself, but out of himself. It is not subjective, but objective. Of course, as a feeling it is subjective, but

that to which the feeling clings is not evolved out of man's own interior, but presented from the outside: it descends from above; and hence its substantiality. A classical author says, 'Hope is pursued by fear, and is the name of an uncertain good'; and this is profoundly true when it rests on nothing but temperament or sentiment. It is different, however, when what it clings to has a divine guarantee.

This Christian hope possesses. The objects to which it is directed are revealed in the Word of God. Thus, St. Paul says, 'Through patience and comfort of the Scriptures we have hope.' In fact, God Himself is both the inspirer and the object of hope. Hence He is called again and again in Scripture 'the God of hope.' So the Son of God is called 'Christ our hope'; and in another place St. Paul denominates Him 'Christ in you the hope of glory.' These are sufficient indications of the source whence



Christian hope is derived, and of what imparts to it stability. The feeling in our breast may come and go, but the object outside remains the same yesterday, to-day and for ever ; and, the oftener we return to it, the more will doubts and fears fade away.

Whether it be the future of ourselves as individuals or the future of the world we are contemplating, it is equally true that Christ is our hope.

Consider, first, our own individual future. If our future is in our own hands or dependent only on other human beings, we must be in the greatest uncertainty about it ; for who can tell what a day may bring forth ? But, if it is out of our hands and in His, how safe it is, and how confident we may be about it ! If He has begun a good work, He will complete it. As the arc of a circle, however fragmentary it may be, carries on the mind to the perfect whole, so Christ's work, though now imperfect, always looks on-



wards, and contains the promise and the potency of perfection. Painful even as may sometimes be our depression on account of our failures, when we think of our lives as our own work, we have only to consider them as His workmanship, in order to be assured that our character will one day be without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.

In the same way, when we are thinking of the world at large—of its condition and prospects—there is overwhelming cause for sadness as long as we regard it as of man's making or of our own creation. But take in the fact that Christ has entered into human history, and that He is now controlling all events and guiding them to a foreordained issue, and then depression evaporates and we glory in the progress of the kingdom of God. The Father has given the kingdom to the Son, and the Son must reign till all enemies are put under His feet.

The little contribution which we call our life is taken up into this whole and glorified in it. So is the work of our Church, or the work of our generation. In itself it is trivial, but, in the place where He puts it, it is indispensable; for it is the link binding the past to the future. It is an arc of the circle of God's purpose and Christ's achievement; and the grandeur of the whole is in the fragment. I often think of the new consciousness of time imparted by Christianity. A Christian man thinks not only of what he is doing to-day, but of what that which he is doing to-day will be doing a hundred or a thousand years hence.

#### IV

Not only is Christ called our hope in Scripture, but the vitality of this virtue is specially connected with His resurrection, according to the saying of St. Peter, God 'hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by

the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.' What is the reason of this? how does Christ's resurrection specially kindle hope? It does so because it is the most authentic glimpse ever afforded to mankind into the eternal world. The instinct of immortality is innate in man; so much so that even pagans as early as Cicero and Seneca could argue for its trustworthiness from the fact of its universality; and other noble heathens, like Socrates and Plato, developed impressive arguments in support of the doctrine. It is a beautiful belief, and the best of human beings naturally incline to it. Yet in all ages, while so doing, men and women have been tormented with a doubt due to the fact that none ever actually came back from the other side of the gates of death. Why should not the gates of adamant be opened from within? why should not one at least be allowed to appear—even for an hour—a

representative person, worthy to be the mouthpiece of all the dead? Such is the irrepressible longing of the human heart; and the answer to it is the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. He was the representative man, worthy to appear and speak for all; and He showed Himself after His resurrection by many infallible proofs.

But the resurrection of Jesus is only like the claw of a prehistoric specimen from which the skilful naturalist can construct the whole animal. If it be true, then immensely more is guaranteed; the life to come, in all its essential features, is rendered indubitable; and hope proceeds to fix its tentacles in it. In Scripture Christian hope is called by such names as 'the hope of eternal life,' and 'the hope which is laid up for you in heaven'; and St. Peter, who has been called the apostle of hope, as St. Paul may be called the apostle of faith and St. John

the apostle of love, speaks of 'an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.' Undoubtedly this future inheritance is the supreme, though not the exclusive, object of Christian hope; and in the apostolic age, at the commencement of Christianity, it laid extraordinary hold on the hearts of men. So occupied were the early Christians with the inheritance on the possession of which they were about to enter, and the splendour of which threw all earthly possessions and prizes completely into the shade, that they were in danger of neglecting their homes and their business, and St. Paul and others had to urge them to think with more moderation on the subject. So eager were they not to be kept away from it that they not only willingly faced the persecution and martyrdom by which they would be carried more quickly thither, but even courted them; so that their preachers had to

warn them against rushing at their own will upon death.

// All this is changed now. The world is too much with us, and it is so real to our apprehension that the other world appears shadowy. The hope laid up in heaven does not captivate us much. Why is this? Perhaps it is because we take our profession of religion too easily; we are too afraid of giving offence; we provoke no opposition; we do not take up the cross and follow Jesus. The result is, that we are comfortable and unmolested. Ay, but we pay the penalty of our comfort. Our spirits grow gross and vulgar; and our hope loses its intensity. When Christians were sacrificing everything in this world for Christ, the world to come was exceedingly credible and delightful; and I have no doubt the day may come when, Christians being persecuted for their faith, the hope of heaven will again be as great a power as ever.

It is a power when it is realised. It is no mere idle expenditure of emotion on distant objects, having nothing to do with the present. To think often of heaven breeds heavenly-mindedness. They who intensely desire to be in heaven instinctively make themselves ready to go there, realising that heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people. As St. John says, 'every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure.' And St. Paul calls hope 'the anchor of the soul.' When the winds of passion are blowing, and the billows of temptation rising, and the darkness of doubt brooding, the soul is ready to drift on the hungry rocks ; but the recollection of the immeasurable prize, to be won or lost in the hereafter, steadies it and enables it to avoid the danger, till the day break and the shadows flee away.



## CHAPTER VII

## LOVE

PROFESSOR DRUMMOND entitled his little book on love *The Greatest Thing in the World*, and the vast circulation which it secured in every part of the globe proved how the suggestion had appealed to the general mind. But he was only following the hint given in the saying of St. Paul, 'The greatest of these is charity.' And St. Paul was only following in the wake of Jesus, who, when asked, 'Which is the greatest commandment in the law?' replied, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it,

Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.'

The belief that love is the greatest thing in the world may be called a growing conviction; the more mature the mind of mankind becomes, the clearer is its verdict to this effect; and this is the judgment of those most entitled to express an opinion. Inferior minds have, indeed, different ideals; and in earlier ages other qualities were placed far before love. Thus, strength long had its worshippers, and it will always have them among the immature and unreflecting, who bow the knee to physical development and material resources. At a more advanced stage cleverness was considered the greatest thing in the world; and there are still multitudes who testify unbounded admiration for the intellectual force which can crush an adversary or the adroitness which can circumvent him. But, while the notoriety of the hour may rise loud round those distinguished

for strength and cleverness, it is found, when the clamour subsides, that the abiding homage of the human heart can be given only to those who have served their circle or their generation with the ministry of love. 'Love never faileth.'

## I

It is one of the most signal evidences of the goodness of the Author of our existence that in the scheme of Providence there is provision made, between the cradle and the grave, for the supply to the individual of many different kinds of love in succession, while the heart, on its side, puts forth one new blossom after another to the very end. We open our baby eyes on love, with which we have been already surrounded before we were able to appreciate it—the love of parents. Then, as the family fills and its connections multiply, we are enriched with the love of brothers and sisters, cousins and

other relatives. When we emerge from childhood into that period of life in which the currents of the heart are most copious, we begin to experience the love of country and of comradeship ; friendship springs up with those of the same sex, and a still dearer tie with the opposite sex. This tie finds its consummation in marriage ; and then follows the love of offspring, with its manifold lights and shades of joy and pride, anxiety and sorrow. To some it is vouchsafed to experience the love of grandparents for grandchildren ; and at even a later stage a fresh bud may burst on the old tree in the love of great-grandparents for great-grandchildren.

Even these are not all the kinds of affection of which the heart is capable ; but these are enough to show that under the one name of love many feelings are included which really differ widely from one another. The love, for example, of those of the

same sex is exceedingly different from that of persons of opposite sexes, and a person who has experienced the one may have very little idea what the other is like. One or more kinds of affection may be omitted in the development of a human heart through no fault of its own, but through the appointment of Providence; and such an omission may not prejudice the growth of an affectionate nature; but the heart cannot miss any of its legitimate opportunities without suffering loss; and, as a rule, those are happiest whose development has been most normal—the heart unfolding each new blossom as the season for it arrives, and every kind of affection being experienced in full measure. It is sad for a child whose parents are alive never to have received in its fulness the love of father or mother, or never to have given its own love back in return. It is a kind of mutilation and must leave the whole nature per-

manently impoverished. If any kind of love is denied to us providentially, it is well to make up for the loss by loving more amply in some other direction. For example, one who has no brothers or sisters should have all the wider a circle of friends.

## II

Professor Drummond, in another of his books, *The Ascent of Man*, has written with great beauty on maternal love, which he evidently regarded as the choicest flower and blossom of earthly affection. He traced its history down through the dim æons of prehistoric times, from the jealous instinct of brute mothers to its most perfect refinement in the womanhood of the Christian world; and he showed that this instinct for the preservation of the life of others had been the great counterpoise to the instinct of self-preservation. Thus from immemorial ages there

has been woven into the web of the world's history not a single but a double thread—not only the struggle for existence, often degenerating into cruelty and violence, but the struggle for the existence of others, marked all along its course by self-sacrifice. And so it has come to pass that the world has been, not merely a field of battle and butchery, but a scene of heroism and ever-waxing beauty. Whether or not we accept the assumption that the maternal love of to-day is a development which has grown from millennium to millennium, till it has reached its present depth and tenderness, at any rate no man who has enjoyed the privilege of watching it at close quarters—its purity, its passion, its cooing happiness and elation, the power it imparts to the mother of overcoming sleep and rendering with cheerfulness and dignity the most menial services—will fail to bend before it in lowly worship and acknowledge



that, if there is one divine thing in this world, it is a mother's love.

But even those kinds of affection which have been less celebrated have their honour and value. The love, for instance, of brother and sister may be of exquisite tenderness, as it may be of priceless profit to both parties, when he, the stronger, learns gentleness by stooping to her weakness, and she, the weaker, acquires courage and strength in the effort to keep step with his career. There are few figures more touching in biography than such a sister as Dorothy Wordsworth, the companion of one engaged in achieving a difficult and noble life-work in the eyes of the world, which she is furthering all the time with the ministry of frugality, practicality and good sense, content to remain invisible in the background, her unselfish heart satisfied with the honours that are falling upon him.

The love of friends has had ample justice done to it from the time of David and Jonathan down to our own time, when Lord Tennyson has—in *In Memoriam*—raised to his friend, Arthur Henry Hallam, a monument more enduring than brass. In this poem we see what friendship can do to quicken any one's best powers and to develop all that is noble in character; for a superior friend's generous expectations are a standard to which one's own achievements must strive to rise, while, if his character is of the right stamp, his presence serves as a second conscience, administering the requisite check when one's own conscience is for the moment remiss, and forming a tribunal before which one cannot appear with a base purpose in his mind.

Of course, however, it is love between man and woman which is love *par excellence*. It is this that poets speak of as the one experience which, if obtained and

held, makes life a success, but, if missed, makes all a blank—

For life, with all it yields of joy and  
    woe,  
Of hope and fear,  
Is just our chance o' the prize of  
    learning love.

In works of imagination love occupies the same place as Christ does in sermons : it is the element on which the savour of the whole depends.

In sober fact, this is in many respects, the greatest thing in the world. Never is a human heart purer—purer from selfishness and purer from animal desire—than when it falls honestly and thoroughly in love. Nothing marks a more decided and undeniable advance in civilisation than an improvement in the mode of conceiving what love is and in the modes of carrying on the relationship—such as can be noted, for example, in a comparison of the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries. Nothing is such a spur to the exertion of all

a man's powers as the desire to provide for the fruition of love ; and a pure love, housed in a happy home, is, next to the grace of God, the best blessing any man can win.

### III

Though, up to this point, I have been speaking of many kinds of love, these have all been between man and man. Is there no other of which the heart is capable and for which it is destined ? Yes ; there are objects of love for the human heart both below and above man.

Of the objects beneath man much need not be said ; but I will not miss the opportunity of remarking, in passing, that the affection of the Arab for his steed, of the Indian for his elephant, of the shepherd for his dog, is a sentiment creditable to human nature. The treatment of the lower animals is one of the most accurate measurements of the stage which civilisation has

reached in any country. Cruelty to these dumb companions of man's earthly lot hardens the heart and coarsens the character ; and few movements can be more acceptable to the Creator, who pours out His love on even the humblest of His creatures, than the societies formed in our day for promoting kindness towards the lower animals.

But it is to love at the opposite end of the scale I wish to advert—love to beings above man.

Even so wise a representative of the ancient world as Aristotle says, ' There is no such thing as love to God ; it is absurd to speak of anything of the kind ; for God is an unknowable being.' Words cannot be conceived which would bring out more clearly the contrast between the circle of thought within which the ancient world moved and that wherein those move who have obtained their notions of the universe from the Bible. Even in the Old Testament God is a

being who loves, and loves intensely: 'Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him.' 'Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.' 'Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore, with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.' 'I will betroth thee unto Me forever; yea, I will betroth them unto Me in righteousness and in judgment and in lovingkindness and in mercies; I will even betroth thee unto Me in faithfulness; and thou shalt know the Lord.' In the New Testament the revelation of the love of God is carried much further, till it culminates in the incomparable saying, 'God is love.'

It is often said that any modern child acquainted with the rudiments of science stands on a far higher level than Aristotle, though he was the most scientific head in

the ancient world, so far have the discoveries of modern times left the ancient world behind ; and it is just as true to say that any modern child acquainted with the Bible stands as high above Aristotle in the knowledge of God. To Aristotle God was, according to the sage's own admission, an unknown being ; but to those who have the Bible in their hands He is a being known, living and infinitely loving ; and this renders possible the budding of the noblest blossom of the heart—the love of God. Just as a human heart is born with the kinds of love already discussed—love to parents, love to friends, love to children, and so on—potential in it, waiting only for time and opportunity to burst and develop, so every heart is born with the capacity of loving God ; and this must, in the nature of the case, be the highest and most influential of all such capabilities. But the sunshine which opens the bud, causing the

potentiality to become actuality, is the love of God revealed and realised. So St. John explained its philosophy—‘We love Him because He first loved us.’

I was much struck by this testimony of some one as to his own experience: ‘All that I ever heard—and I heard much—about the love of God was to me sound and smoke, until I realised that the Son of God had given up His life on the cross to redeem me from my sins.’ And there is no doubt that this is the way in which most people begin to love God, if they love Him with reality and with intensity. It is not only that the love of the Father is supremely and finally revealed in the gift of His Son; but in Christ Himself the divine love shines forth in the most affecting and attractive of all forms; it shines out all along the course of His life with increasing brightness; and it blazes from His cross. We, therefore, love Jesus first, and then the Father: we



come to the Father through the Son.

There can be no doubt that, ever since He was crucified on Calvary, Jesus Christ has commanded the love of tens of thousands in every generation, and that the strength of Christianity at any time is accurately measured by the number of those who love Him and the intensity with which they do so. If the question be asked, 'What is a Christian?' many answers could doubtless be given ; but is any of them more to the point than this : 'A Christian is one who loves Christ?'

Sometimes this love dawns upon the heart with sudden rapture, similar to that which, in the relations of human beings, often accompanies what is called falling in love. But this sublime happiness is not vouchsafed to all. Many who undoubtedly love Him have no recollection when they commenced to do so. The essential question is not, how-

ever, how love began, but whether it is growing. And love to Christ grows exactly by the same means as love to any one else—by being constantly in His company, by speaking often to Him, by gazing on the beauty of His character, and by not forgetting all His benefits.

#### IV

Some are jealous of expressions of love to God because they suspect that these may be substituted for acts of love to man. And it cannot be denied that zeal for God has sometimes been associated with cruelty and hard-heartedness towards man, as, for example, in the burning of heretics and the torture of witches.

But such cases are exceptional and unnatural. The normal effect of love to God is love to man. Professor Drummond has drawn attention to the fact that the correct translation of a verse quoted already is not, 'We love Him because He first loved us,'

but, 'We love because He first loved us.' The love of God realised leads to all kinds of love, because it breaks down the natural selfishness of the heart, which is the great obstacle to every kind of tender feeling towards others. Is it not a contradiction in terms to speak of loving Christ when we do not love our fellow-men? If the word of Jesus has any weight with us, if His example, in any degree, influences our conduct, if His spirit has even faintly entered our heart, then we cannot be loveless to our fellow-creatures. 'This commandment have we from Him, that he who loveth God love his brother also.'

In spite of the satire so frequently poured from the pulpit and through the press on the behaviour of Christians to one another, the fact is, the feeling of true Christians for one another is very deep and tender. Let them meet anywhere—even in the ends of the earth—and recognise one

another as such, and their hearts leap together at once, and there is nothing they will not do for one another. If they hesitate to give such recognition, it is because they are not sure of their ground ; but let them be sure, and kindness immediately follows.

I venture even to say that the average behaviour of Christians to those whom they cannot identify as real Christians proves that the love of God in their hearts has improved their feelings and their conduct. It is, indeed, impossible to feel for such the same love as for those who are brethren in the Lord. But all men are potential Christians : they are all capable of being saved and becoming heirs of immortality : and this gives them all a claim on our love—not only on our evangelistic and proselytising zeal, but on our humanity and kindness. On this subject let me quote a few words from the same author with whom I commenced this chapter. Ad-

—  
dressing a band of missionaries, Professor Drummond once said: 'You can take nothing greater to the heathen world than the impress and reflection of the love of God upon your own character. This is the universal language. It will take you years to speak in Chinese or in the dialects of India. But, from the day you land, that language of love, understood by all, will be pouring forth its unconscious eloquence. Take into your new sphere of labour, where you also mean to lay down your life, that simple charm, and your life-work must succeed. You can take nothing greater, you can take nothing less. You may take every accomplishment, you may be braced for every sacrifice, but, if you give your body to be burned, and have not love, it will profit you and the cause of Christ nothing.'



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