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The springs of joy

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By
Robert F. Horton, D.D.

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The Springs of Joy

And Other Sermons

By
ROBERT F. HORTON, D.D.
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PREFACE

I CAN offer no apology for publishing this little book, except that Mr. Meyer, Secretary of the Free Church Council, wished it. He wanted me to give some of the fruits of my current ministry to a wider congregation than my own. Though I have endeavoured to recast and cut down the diffuseness of pulpit utterances, the reader will at once perceive that he is listening to preaching in print. My object is not literary reputation but spiritual fruit. If the Spirit was in the words uttered, the same power may work in them printed.

With a humble desire to serve and to help men, therefore, I launch this little bark on the tumultuous waters of our present-day life, hoping that it may convey or even rescue some troubled and anxious lives, and transfer them to a larger and more powerful craft before its course is run, and it is itself submerged in the waves.

ROBERT F. HORTON.

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THE SPRINGS OF JOY,

“ Rejoice in the Lord always: again I will say Rejoice.”—*Philippians iv., 4.*

Perpetual joy, and the praise which comes out of it, is enjoined by our religion; and, therefore, we must suppose that it is possible; but frankly it seems to be impossible. Our keenest pleasures, we are told by psychologists, are the release or the reaction from pain; and it seems, therefore, as if joy unbroken would be joy unfelt. But these injunctions of our religion, if we are attentive to them, open our eyes to a possibility which is far above and beyond the ordinary experience of human life. Observe the commandment is, “ Rejoice in the *Lord.*” It is not suggested that joy

in the *world*, in nature, in human life, or in human beings, can be perpetual and unbroken; but that there is a higher truth, there is a realm of reality, which is lifted above the things that are perceived by our senses and the experiences which constitute human life. It is suggested that we may obtain such a relation to that reality, that even in the midst of the trials and difficulties and sufferings of life joy may enter, and may maintain its laughing waters within us, very much as in the city of Rome, whatever may be the heat, the dust and the disease that afflict the city, the waters from the Sabine Hills, carried through the aqueducts, come flowing and dancing and sparkling out of the innumerable fountains; so there is always joy and light and music in the waters, which do not rise within the city but come from the eternal hills beyond. It is that kind of joy that we are to seek; the possibility of it is implied by the command to obtain it, and we are to seek it in order to show it, to exercise it, in this present life.

Now this point must be evident at once,

and no one will ever think of disputing it, that we can only maintain perpetual joy, a supernal joy, by living above the actual facts and events of human life. If we are immersed in the events and the facts of human life, completely immersed, there cannot be perpetual joy; there may be an occasional touch of pleasure, there may be even sometimes rich, transient delights, but human life is so constructed of cares and sufferings and sorrows that, if we are to live within it, perpetual joy is obviously impossible. Very few days can pass for any of us without cares and anxieties, even about the mere way in which we are to live. Complications of business, distractions, intrusions, the worries of household management, a thousand things that are all unperceived and cannot be classified, come pressing in upon us every day, and disturb our peace. The apprehension of the future, the anxiety for those we love, things which are perfectly natural and inevitable, will keep care always seated behind us.

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Post equitem sedet atra Cūra,
always within reach of us; and, therefore, it is evident that joy cannot be perpetual unless it is drawn from a source that is above care.

Then, pain of body and of mind is always within easy reach of us. The stroke of sickness comes upon us—it is so sudden and unperceived that we can never be sure that to-morrow will not find us laid upon a bed of pain. And perhaps we could bear that, but the thought is always present with us that those who are dear to us, dearer than life, are exposed to sickness too; frequently, these strokes of sickness fall and those who are precious to us lie helpless and suffering upon a bed of pain. Ah, you say to yourself, how is it possible to rejoice? And if death comes, and those whom we love are taken from us what possibility is there of joy? Joy cannot be lasting when disease and death are always within reach. It must be, therefore, perfectly evident that if joy is to be perpetual it must be derived from a source that is entirely above both death and disease.

But there are sorrows also, sorrows often much keener than cares or physical pains or even bereavements. Sorrows enter into most human lives, hopeless, irreparable sorrows; we miss all we desired, we are disappointed in every plan and scheme, we feel the burden of all this unintelligible world, we listen to the low, sad music of humanity until its threnody seems to move the soul to perpetual tears. Sorrow is always here in human life. And, therefore, it must be obvious that if there is to be joy that lasts it must be a joy that is drawn from a source that is entirely above human sorrow.

The cares and pains and sorrows are inevitable. It is quite idle to speak of them as if they were not real. There is a mode of thought that has come over to us from America which supposes that it is possible to get over the troubles of life by denying their existence. There is truth in that view, which we are trying to assimilate; in fact, this little book comes into being from that truth. But to keep denying pains and sorrows and cares

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which are obviously present, in the long run aggravates them. The only way to deal with them is to admit them and to face them and to surmount them. And indeed the founder of that strange and extravagant mode of thought had to recant it practically in later days by admitting some malignant power of animal magnetism which took exactly the place which evil takes in ordinary speech. The evil denied comes back under another name. Clearly, then, joy, the joy that lasts, cannot be found by escaping from things which are incidental to mortal life, and cannot be eliminated from it; but must be found in a sphere which is above human life, in a sphere of reality where joy is natural and eternal. If joy is ever to come to us as a lasting possession it only comes by keeping in contact with those fountains of eternal joy that are above human life, the overflowing of which submerges the low and transitory levels of our present existence. To discover those fountains of joy which give to human life, immersed in care and trouble and sorrow,

a lasting flood of joy is surely the greatest quest that we can undertake; and if the quest succeeds we have accomplished everything.

Now I want to remind the reader that God has entrusted to us all certain great faculties, which put us into touch with the fountains of joy, and that those faculties are so well within our control that we can use them or neglect them, train them or pervert them as we will. How to use those faculties aright is the great problem that is before us. I am not sure that I can make a complete enumeration of those faculties or even sharply distinguish them. But I will try to deal with six faculties that are entrusted to us for this purpose. There is the faculty of imagination, which finds its expression in art; there is the faculty of spiritual insight, which we sometimes call faith; there is the faculty of hope, which is said to spring eternal in the human breast; there is the faculty of love, which requires much explanation if it is to be applied in this connection, but fully repays our consideration; there is the faculty of discursive

reasoning, which is little understood and, therefore, little used, but is one of the great faculties of God for the creation and perpetuation of joy; and, lastly, there is the faculty of the persistent will, the will-power trained and used for a definite purpose. Now none of us is quite without any of these faculties; few of us are without the whole list of them, but they are often in a very immature state. They are undeveloped, we do not realise them, we do not treat them as powers which are to be used, and for want of knowledge the faculties decline. That may be granted at once, but it will become plainer as I go on. These faculties are given to us, they are our possession, and if they are used deliberately and intelligently I think it is true to say that it is quite possible to be in such contact with the fountains of ever-flowing joy that literally nothing in this human life can prevent the streams from pouring in. Whatever happens we may be "always rejoicing."

Now, I wish to show as I go on that these faculties of the human spirit are

never to be contrasted, but are always to be identified with religion. We have to see how religion is related to them, how it uses them, how it claims them. And what seems to me the great and radical fault of our religious teaching for many years past is this, that it has failed to show us how the faculties of the human spirit are, not antagonistic to religion, but its ministers, and how it is the purpose of religion to bring them into harmony, and to make them a perfect instrument by which the life of God may be realised in this present world and enjoyed for ever in the world to come.

Now, if in this chapter I take only a very partial view, and select one of these faculties for a brief examination, the reason is that this particular faculty is not only the most neglected, but also the one which is most injuriously contrasted with religion; I mean the faculty of imagination, which seeks its expression in art. I shall dwell upon this briefly, though I shall have more to say upon it in the next chapter. Art is the attempt to express the

beauty and the truth of things either in plastic form, or in words, or in musical sounds, for a definite and very remarkable purpose. The purpose is this: the beauty and the truth of things are fugitive; it is difficult to arrest them; they have gone before you see them, before you feel them; and the function of art is so to arrest and embody in form or word or sound the beauty and truth of things, that we may in a sense arrest them and possess them, and let them operate upon us as they are intended to do. Life without art is unhuman and intolerable because it is so incomplete. The mere succession of scenes and events that seem to constitute human life glides past us uninterpreted and practically unexperienced. Life is lived, but it is meaningless, there is no point in it, there is no goal in it. But the reason why art is so divine a faculty is, that it catches, or strives to catch, the meaning of it all, to see the beauty and arrest it, to sound the depths and realise them. When art intervenes the things which are slipping past us and evading us

are brought within our reach and held. The painter will take a scene in nature or a human face, will perceive a significance in it, which is derived from the universal though it is expressed in the individual, and he will, if he is a great genius, succeed in throwing on to canvas that individual fact related to the universal, a revelation of intrinsic beauty and meaning as long as the canvas lasts. That waggon going down the hill and crossing the brook at the dip of the lane is a fact so unimportant and so negligible that if you saw it in nature you would probably hardly observe it at all; but Constable takes it and puts it upon canvas with such effect that that plain country waggon in the water of the flowing stream is a joy and an interpretation for ever—that is the artist's function.

Or, to take another illustration, the transitory world haunts us with a sense of unrest and despair, and the fact that life is slipping through our hands will often make life hardly worth living; but the poet takes these very things and puts them into a language of eternal beauty!

“The cloud-capp’d towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
And, like this unsubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind.”

The artist by putting it into those words has changed the transitory fact into a thing of beauty and joy, and from the evanescence of things we derive a sense of the eternal, a feeling that the things that pass are not the real, but that the reality is there. That is the artist’s function. Art gives us life, not transitory and haunting as life is in experience, but life real, life eternal, life connecting the transitory and haunting facts in a whole which satisfies and comforts; and it is that view of the universal and the eternal that steadies the mind and reveals the reality of things. And when we get our spirit centred on that reality of things, when we escape the evanescent and the transitory, the disturbances and perturbations of the day, we are in the realm of joy, a joy which flows through us, and does not leave us until the vision fades.

We have had amongst us a great artist (he passed away a few years ago) who illustrated this high function of art in a way that we have not fully appreciated or expressed. It was the function of Watts in his great life to do a work which did not become completely apparent in his works of art, but only became apparent when his life was known, and it was seen that the life itself was the great work of art, while the works of his brush or chisel were only the more or less successful attempts to embody the great realities of his own life and experience. He dwelt, we are told, upon a high spiritual plane, and from this he did not step down to do the common things of every day, but the every day duties were lifted up to him to take their place in perfect harmony on the higher plane. Every picture he painted was an illustration of that, but an imperfect illustration, and from the picture you could not realise the man; but when you realise the man you interpret the picture. He had visions, he lived in visions. Even a few days before the end he beckoned to

those around him and told them that he had just looked into the Book of Creation, and understood that the whole could be comprehended, made plain, from that other point of view which is not our earthly one, and he added the glorious statement—he was looking into true being. “Now I see the great Book, the great Light.” It is a vision like that which makes joy. When a man is able even for a moment to glimpse the great Book, the great Light and to know the Universe as an intelligible reality and the whole of it ordered in a perfect way, his soul rejoices, and strictly speaking it never can rejoice until it sees that. That is the condition of joy, and when that joy comes the transitory perturbations of life are seen in their due insignificance. In that reality even the sorrows of life are seen as little flecks upon the infinite blue. There is an infinite sky, and the clouds that circle the earth and the dark things that go on upon the earth are infinitesimal in relation to that infinite expanse; and to see that expanse, to see the vision, to know the

eternal reality, makes joy possible in the midst even of these our darkest experiences. We are not grateful enough to God for great artists like Watts or Blake, those few rare spirits who have the vision, who live the life, and then try, imperfectly of course, to embody it all in works of plastic art. We are not grateful enough to the poets and to the musicians. They are our real teachers, they are our prophets, they are our connections with the things that really are; and we let them live and die and seldom praise them until they are gone, and even when they are gone we are grudging in our praise, and think it a great proof of our superiority that we can point out their defects and express our unconcern about their feeble attempts to express the real. We forget that art is an insight into God, and that therefore it is a part of religion. It is just as much religion as theology; art and theology are two attempts to interpret one thing, the sum total of reality, and what art does in one way theology tries to do in the other way; though I think it

is true to say that neither does its task well unless it is able to employ the other. When Watts passed away a poem was written, which I beg leave to quote :—

Here in an age when fashion's test of worth
Follows the price at which the markets buy,
When the great thought that slips the bounds of
earth

Gives way to craftsmanship of hand and eye,
When Art content to find perfection's goal
Through schemes of form and colour, light
and shade,

Cares not to make appeal from soul to soul,
Lest she should trespass on the preacher's
trade,

He knew her destined mission, dared to hail
The place assigned her in the heavenly plan,
Reader of visions hid behind the veil,

Elect interpreter of God to man ;
His means were servants to the end in view,
And not the end's self ; so his heart was wise

To hold, as they have held, the chosen few,
High failure dearer than the easy prize.
Now lifted face to face with unseen things

Dimly imagined in the lower life,
He sees his *Hope* renew her broken strings
And *Love and Death* no more at bitter strife

Now I shall say some more on this subject of art in the next chapter. I want

to explain if I can the sense in which Christ is the great artist, the relation of Christ to art and the relation of art to Christianity. But in closing this chapter I cannot help referring to a life that has been lived among us as a wonderful illustration of "always rejoicing," and also as a particular illustration of that part of the subject with which I have been dealing. Jonathan Brierley, whom we lovingly know as J.B., was cut off from the ministry by the failure of his health just when he had become a great power in the pulpit; when the ministry was not possible for him, with unabated courage and cheerfulness he turned to literature, and prepared himself to write by a thorough study of the French language, of French masterpieces, and also of the literature of the whole world. For 21 years he taught the whole world by his pen, in essays, that live and will live by their vitality and their truth; and what will always strike the reader of those essays will be that these things were written by a man in broken health, a man with dis-

appointed hopes, a man immured for the greater part of these years in a small dwelling, shut off from most of the communications of light and joy and health except those that he drew in by his own tireless and buoyant spirit. It will seem incredible that he wrote these things, these gay, bright sallies of wit, of wisdom, of hope and joy and cheer. He was rejoicing always in the midst of pain, of suffering, and deprivation. The disappointments of life had no more effect upon him than the wintry wind has on a person who is shut up warmly in the chambers of home. The whole world might battle against that man, everything might be taken from him, health, strength, recognition, money, means of living, and he would be gay and buoyant still. He lived the life of which I am speaking, he rejoiced evermore. This artist in words, this creator, interpreter, fresh in our memories, abiding for ever in our hearts, compels us to recognise the faculty put within us to enable us to maintain joy. "Again I say, Rejoice."

ART

In trying to discuss the question of the relation of Christ to art and of art to Christianity, our first thought always is that Christ does not seem to have much to do with art at all, and that Christianity, like the religion out of which it grew, Judaism, does not take art into account, perhaps even regards it with suspicion as a possible source of idolatry and wordliness. But a second reflection always leads us to exactly the opposite conclusion, for we notice how immediately from the very beginning of Christianity in the world this religion began to express itself in art. Already in the Catacombs, while the Church is persecuted and driven from the face of man, there is an art growing up; there is an attempt to represent Jesus not only in the symbol of the fish, but as the Good Shepherd, with the light step and the debonair bearing, carrying on his shoulder the sheep, or, as

Matthew Arnold said, "the goat." And the very earliest churches that survive, like San Clemente and Santa Pudenzian in Rome, are the testimony to us that the Christian Church at the beginning took the noblest form of art available, the Roman basilica, and used it in the worship of the new Faith. And at Ravenna those mosaics in the Baptistry and in S. Apollinare show us not only that art was employed in religion, but that religion had communicated something to art, something new and wonderful, for we cannot even conceive the art before Christ producing the mosaics of the Baptistry. Evidently beauty was seeking expression, the "beauty of holiness." Truth was not content to be expressed in creeds and formulæ, but must blossom into those lovely forms and colours which subdue the soul through the eye.

And Christian art has developed ever since, all through the history of Christianity, reaching points of culmination that are admittedly unsurpassable. In architecture it has reached such

achievements in the Thirteenth Century as Amiens, Chartres, Rouen and Salisbury and Wells. It has produced successive schools of painting, varied but all wonderful. It has developed sculpture—Michael Angelo—and varied forms of plastic work, not only for churches but for buildings and homes, in dresses and ornaments and instruments that all have the same stamp upon them—it is the Christian stamp. It has produced also, or at any rate captured, the greatest poets that we have ever had among us—Dante, and Spenser, and Milton; and Christianity has run out into those greatest poems that must last as long as human language lasts and human intelligence can understand them. It has made music its peculiar creation, for Christian music, so far as we know, differs fundamentally from the music before the music of the name of Jesus had been heard in the world. The greatest music always seems to become Christian. It is Bach's Passion Music or it is Wagner's "Parsifal" which touches the height of musical creation. And it

does not seem possible at present that any great music will ever be produced that loses the keynote of Jesus Christ Our Lord. It is therefore evident that Christianity is not divorced from, or indifferent to, art, but, on the contrary, it creates an art—an art which is not only distinctively Christian, but a very appreciable advance on the art which went before.

Now it is something to secure the position that art and Christianity are not antagonistic, a dangerous error into which fanaticism has occasionally fallen—a dangerous error because it is not the truth, and every error is a danger. It is something even to secure this position, that art and Christianity are not antagonistic. But to see clearly the connection between the two is more difficult, because neither the one nor the other has ever made much effort to express the relation. Religion, Christianity, takes its way without explaining art, and art takes its way without explaining Christianity. And to establish the relation, to bring them together, to

interpret them by one another, is a task well worthy of our thought, and it might incidentally result in one of the greatest spiritual revivals that the world has ever seen; for to bring the art of Christendom and the Christendom of to-day into close contact and organic connection would be to start Christianity itself on a new era of conquest in the heart and spirit of man. And I therefore seize eagerly on some words that were uttered or written by an artist, a Dutch artist, Vincent Van Geogh, who died in the year 1890, and venture to use the words, though I could not make them my own in their entirety, in order to catch a thought which seems to me most appropriate—the thought of an artist whose pictures I do not know. But this idea is to me more valuable than any picture of recent years that I have seen: “The Bible, which depresses us so much”—of course, I do not agree with that, though I understand what he means, and I quote all he says,—“which rouses all our despair and discontent and narrow-mindedness, and by its folly tears

our hearts in two, contains one piece of consolation like a soft kernel in a hard shell, a bitter core, and that is Christ." This artist-soul recognised that fairest among ten thousand and the altogether lovely, and he calls our attention to the fact, which becomes evident when we reflect that Christ, the character of Christ, the work of Christ, the story of Christ, the very setting of the story, is the greatest work of art in the world. The great artists have striven to reproduce him or things connected with him, and their effort to do that has made them the greatest artists—Raphael, Leonardo da Vinci, Fra Angelico. They have attempted to reproduce him or things connected with him, and in making that attempt they have risen to the height of plastic art, but they have not succeeded, as we all recognise, in making anything so beautiful as Jesus Christ Himself—they have tried and toiled after him nobly, but in vain. And the most human of the Gospels, the one which presents the person and life of Jesus in greatest fulness—the Gospel of St.

Luke—is, everyone admits, the most beautiful piece of writing in the world. Human language and human style have never achieved a victory more complete. That perfect work of art, said to have been written by a writer who was himself a painter, stands before us as a work of art because its subject is *the* work of art, *Jesus*.

If we could apprehend exactly what Van Geogh means, we should be in a position to advance very rapidly to a great conclusion. I cannot stop to illustrate it, but take one instance. If you recall that little paragraph in the Gospel of St. John, inserted there from some other source, which represents the Master stooping down and writing on the ground, while His word carries conviction to the conscience of the accusers of an injured woman, and represents him rising at last to his feet and saying to the woman, “Where are thy accusers? Did no man condemn thee?” and her replying, “No man, Lord,” and him saying, “Neither do I condemn thee: go and sin no more,” it does not require any skill to show that this is a perfect work of

art. It presents a picture in which every element of greatness occurs, a universal note is struck. The human element comes in, pity and love and healing and restoration are at work; and we know we are in the presence of an Artist—an Artist not in the mere forms and colours of art, but in the essence of art, which is beauty.

Let me offer an illustration from the modern mission field. Next to Uganda there is a native State known as Busoga, and the king of this State was, until a few years ago, a typical African despot. He armed his troops and carried war into his neighbours' territory, chiefly for plunder. He had a vast harem of women, whom he would take with him into battle in order that they might carry his weapons; two wives carried his weapons in each battle. He was a sceptic who delighted to pour contempt upon the magicians of his own country, and to deride the spirits on which they called. He would invite these magicians to his table and put before them fish because they regarded it as unclean,

and if they would not eat it he delighted to have their lips and ears cut off as a punishment. He was the typical savage, the barbarian. And no effort that was made by missionaries or others affected him until in the year 1906 it chanced that they were showing some stereopticon pictures of the Life of Christ, and that series of pictures presented to King Tabingwa actually converted him. He became another character. He sought baptism, and was baptised in the presence of a thousand of his subjects. Many of his subjects have sought baptism, following his example as he followed Christ. The complete transformation was produced by seeing the life of Jesus as it was presented in the comparatively imperfect form of the stereopticon. That is an illustration which brings home the point. There is in the person and the life, the character and the work of Jesus, an element that we can only call "creative art." It captures the world; it is the most beautiful thing the world has seen or ever will see; it is the very fountain-head of art, of beauty.

But there is another relation of Christ to art which Van Geogh points out, and I will quote his words. "Of all philosophers and sages, Christ was the only one whose principal doctrine was the affirmation of immortality and eternity, and the nothingness of death and the necessity and importance of truth and resignation. He lived serenely as an artist, as a greater artist than any other, for he despised marble, clay, and the palette and worked upon the living flesh; that is to say this marvellous Artist, who eludes the grasp of that coarse instrument the neurotic and confused brain of modern man, created neither pictures nor books; he says so himself quite majestically. He created real, living men immortals. That is a solemn thing, more particularly because it is true." So far from Christ being indifferent to art, He is, we learn from this artist, the supreme Artist. And since he came—you will observe this, for it is very striking—since the time of Christ no one has done anything to last in art who has not been conscious of his influence, and been

working on his lines. Christ is the Artist who works upon the one lasting material, human beings. He makes characters, he makes souls that are beautiful here, which as they pass leave on the faces of their flesh the divine radiance of the world to which they belong. Thus Christianity is the finest of the fine arts, working on the noblest materials and producing the most lasting results.

I am grateful to this artist for these suggestions, and I think you will be grateful to me for telling you of them if you have not seen them, for the more you reflect and work upon these lines the more amazing seems that assumption that Christianity has nothing to do with art. It has produced art because it is itself the greatest art, the highest art, and Christ is the supreme work of art and the supreme Artist himself.

But now if we discover the clue which explains the course of Christian art, do not we also find the criterion for estimating all art movements to-day, and was there ever a period when it was more necessary

to get some criterion, when art is rushing into all kinds of extravagances, and when it is producing all kinds of ugliness in the name of art? Do we not require a criterion, and have we not discovered it here? We can even use the phrase "Art for Art's sake" when we have discovered that Christ is the great work of art and also the great Artist. We have the standard of beauty and truth that we need. With this standard we cannot mistake the decadent, the unclean, the merely sensual, for beauty. With this standard we know at a glance that beauty is allied to purity, and that it comes out of the beauty that is God the *eternal* beauty, and is allied with immortality; it despises death and triumphs over it. We want that standard, for until we get that standard the corrupt human heart is always tearing down the reality of beauty and substituting for it those false iridescent colours that play upon the surface of decay and death. That great poet of America, Walt Whitman, has learnt unconsciously from the great Artist,

Christ, when he says in words which I think I ought to quote :—

“And I have dreamed that the purpose and essence of the known life, the transient, Is to form and decide identity for the unknown life.

If all came but to ashes of dung,
If maggots and rats ended us, then alarum!
for we are betrayed!

Then indeed suspicion of death.

Do you suspect death? If I were to suspect death, I should die now :

Do you think I could walk pleasantly and well-suited toward annihilation?

I swear I think there is nothing but immortality, That the exquisite scheme is for it, and the nebulous float is for it, and the cohering is for it;

And all preparation is for it! and identity is for it! and life and death are altogether for it!”

That is the most modern note you can strike, and it is the lasting note.

The greatest artist is necessarily he who brings life and immortality to light; for art will wither and die unless it is connected with immortality and eternity. Life

is brief and art is long, and art cannot live unless it is for ever. The great artist is he who is able to bring the eternal into the consciousness of man, and to overcome that deadly heresy we call death, that blight of beauty, that destroyer of the things that satisfy and comfort the heart of man. If there is no immortality there is no art. Unless someone can rescue for us the eternal reality, art perishes. And when once that achievement has been made, and the great artist has brought life and immortality to light, mankind cannot go back into Paganism or Christlessness. The old charm has gone. I grant you that many so-called artists do go back into Paganism, but their art vanishes with them. I grant you that much of the art of to-day is Christless, but it is not art that will last, and it is already art that has ceased to please and has become an irritation and torment to the modern mind. The dragon-flies that have floated out into the summer air can never again find beauty in the muddy earth at the bottom of the pond; and when one's heart has expanded

in the living air of immortality and the life that Christ has brought into the world, one cannot crush it back into the muddy past; every effort made to do it exposes us to a pitiless failure and to the derision of men who come after. The world moves onward and upward, and the light of Eternity flashes upon the upward march. Woe be to those who turn backward and downward and renounce their immortality and the eternal life! Ruin awaits them and the execration of the race that will not willingly march towards annihilation.

I claim, therefore, art as Christian, essentially Christian. Art is one of the ways by which joy may be maintained, and by which we may obey the commandment to rejoice in the Lord always, and again to rejoice. I say it is one of the ways—not the only way, but one of the ways—by which it is possible for human life to be a sustained melody of joy; and we are not at liberty to disregard this way. Art need not decay—the joy of art need never decay. It need not decay because beauty is everywhere. It is not a

refined discovery of a few select minds. Everywhere beauty is to the seeing eye; and where the eye cannot see, still beauty is there to the hearing ear; and where the ear cannot hear, still beauty is there to the touch; and even if touch fails, beauty is there to the thought. Wherever consciousness is, beauty can be found. The poetry of life, the art of life, can penetrate a mind that has lost its senses, like the mind of Helen Keller. It can penetrate every mind; and beauty, that divine creation, that flash of the life of God, can reach us any day and anywhere. It is never gone, it can always be recovered. And it has been the function of art to teach us this truth, and to keep us ever in touch with it. Art shows us the beauty of the mountain ridge, but also of the level road. It shows us the beauty of the multitudinous sea, but also of the little stagnant pond. It shows us the beauty of the great primeval forests, but also of the budding hedgerow. It shows us the beauty of the cultivated flower, but also of the daisy and the winter aconite and the little snowdrop

in the grass. It shows us the beauty of the rolling clouds, the gorgeousness of those argent masses. It shows us the beauty in the running brooks, and we can find "sermons in stones, and good in everything" under the guidance of this which is called art. It has taught us ourselves to murmur by the running brooks a music sweeter than their own. The poets have caught the music of the world, and they have put it into harmony of words that cannot pass, and the musicians have caught the music of the world, and as long as we can perform their melodies, and hear them, the fugitive airs that would be gone are arrested by the artist and made the possession of mankind. It has taught us to look on human beings—yes, this is perhaps its greatest achievement—to look upon human beings with untold delight—the exquisite mechanism of the body, the workings of the mind, the expansion of the soul. Michael Angelo said, "Nor does God vouchsafe to reveal Himself to me anywhere more than in some lovely mortal veil, and that alone I love because

He is mirrored therein." It has taught us to see beauty; this is the function of the drama—a function that it does not always fulfil, perhaps seldom attempts to fulfil. But it has taught us where it is real to see beauty in human relations, exquisite human relations, in sacrifice, in devotion, in fidelity. It has shown us a sacred beauty even in sorrow, the wistfulness and pathos of life reaching out to an assured fulfilment. Some haunting cadence falls from our dirges, some piercing joy issues from our broken heart. This art, when we come to understand it, is found to be an instrument of joy which God has put into our hands, and we are bound to use it with reverence and devotion, and the more so because there is ever among us a base band of decadent artists who use it with the very opposite—with irreverence and with impiety, and who turn the beauty of God into the degradation of man.

Do not set art against religion, and so encourage the artistic nature to put art in place of religion. The true artist should

never do that. The artist who has lost religion ceases to be the artist. We make the mistake frequently by pitting art against religion. We drive the artist out of religion. Music is *his* religion, we say about men; beauty is *his* truth, we say about others; *his* worship is only to see form and colour and put them on canvas or in marble—and so we encourage the idea that because he is an artist he has parted with his religion. We pit the two against each other, but that is a false antithesis. Our religion is all-inclusive. It includes art, it creates art, it purifies art, it beautifies art. And let us say it fully and candidly, and let the artist understand it from the standpoint of religion—it is right that the artist, the painter, the musician, the poet, the architect, the dramatist, should put all his religion into his art and should use his art to express his religion. Every great artist has done that. No great artist survives who has not made his art the expression of the religion that is in him. And if he does that thoroughly

his religion will flow into all the other parts and aspects of his life, as we have seen in such a great artist as Watts, and in Burne-Jones, and in a thousand others who have made immortal contributions to art. And while the artist thus throws his religion into his art, we, who throw our religion into our work, whatever it is, may profit by the labour of the artists in their work, may take the beauty and the truth that they clothe in these parti-coloured raiments of the Divine. We may make our lives beautiful in the light of the artists who have worked for us, just as we profit most by that supreme work of art, and by that master of all artists, Christ himself.

“Whatsoever things are lovely, think on those things,” and by thinking on those things that are lovely you become gradually incapable of thinking on those things that are unlovely; and all the putrescence that passes for beauty in a decaying age and a corrupted city becomes nauseating to you—it is not beauty but defilement, it is an ugliness which is akin to death.

Think on those things that are lovely, and chiefest upon the "Loveliest among ten thousand"; the "Altogether Lovely," the Christ of God, the Revelation of the eternal beauty to the wondering heart of man.

SPIRITUAL INSIGHT.

The discoveries of modern science have opened a new range of possibility in the understanding of the material world in which we live. The Röntgen Rays have taught us that matter is not solid and opaque, as it seems, because under their influence it is possible to see through the flesh and to detect the bones which underlie—that is, to see the invisible. And the analysis of matter that has been the work of the modern physicist for many years has transformed our view of it even more completely. It is discovered that matter is composed of molecules, and the molecule of atoms, and the atom—an invisible point—is still the complete system in which the ions of electricity whirl round with inconceivable rapidity, so that what we have taken to be solid matter is really composed essentially of rapid movement; its apparent stability is a delusion, the movement is

the reality. This again has brought us to see the invisible. Science apparently is taking it as its task to-day to teach us that the things which appear come from a reality more real than appearance, a reality which does not and cannot appear because it is beyond our senses.

Now I quote these facts to-day not as illustrations or analogies, but rather as a clue. This is the clue that modern thought is giving to us, to teach us to discover and to understand the faculty that is within us, within the human race, the human mind, the faculty to which we may give the name of "spiritual insight"—the faculty that leads us through the seen to the unseen, the unseen which is the explanation of the seen. By this faculty we are able at least in occasional and happy moments, or through the work and teaching of more gifted seers, to recognise behind, beneath, and even within the things that meet our senses a reality deeper, and we must say truer, than the fitful, shifting things of the senses. The things which do appear are

explained by that which never can appear. By this faculty we recognise God, Who entirely eludes our senses, in the world, as the *anima mundi*, the soul of the world. By this faculty we recognise the soul, which entirely eludes our senses, in the body. By this faculty we recognise the nexus which binds together men as comrades, as societies, as humanity—a reality which entirely eludes the senses. By this faculty we are able to see life in death, so that though the body before us becomes inanimate and even settles into dissolution, we are sure that the one whom we know and love is passing on into other modes of being, of life. By this faculty we discover a meaning, a trend, if not a goal, in human affairs; and become aware, or at any rate we obtain glimpses, of the fact that the way of the life of humanity upon the earth is like a river which issues as a little trickling stream from the eternal hills, widens out into the plains, and then ultimately must gather force to sweep with resistless current, in a deeper bed, and with great joy, into the infinite main. But that

this faculty were given to us, the world and time and man and life would all be so inexplicable and baffling a mystery that we should be demoralised by it; it would not be progress but degeneration which would be presented to man as his fate upon the earth. This faculty is our regeneration; to injure it, to lose it, is the most disastrous catastrophe which can happen to mankind; to keep it, to train it, to use it, is our life and our joy, our eternal life and our triumphant joy.

Now let me for a moment recall that vision of Watts that came to him just before he died, to which I referred in the first chapter. He said that he had looked into the Book of Creation, and understood that the whole could be comprehended, made plain, from that other point of view which is not our earthly one. He said it was a glorious state, he was looking into true being. "Now," he said, "I see the great Book, the great Light." That genuine vision of the painter before he passed into what seems to us the dark, must not be considered as exceptional,

though it is not very often that people put into words these great spiritual experiences. It is not the experience necessarily of the sickbed or of the hour before death. Such an experience comes to men often in the very height of their health and the full possession of their faculties. Another great artist, James Russell Lowell, in one of his letters said, "I had a revelation last Friday evening. I was saying something of the presence of spirits (of whom, I said, I was often dimly aware), and Mr. Putnam entered into an argument with me on spiritual matters. As I was speaking, the whole system rose up before me like a vague Destiny looming from the abyss. I never before so clearly felt the Spirit of God in me and around me. The whole room seemed to be full of God. The air seemed to waver to and fro with the presence of something, I knew not what. I spoke with the calmness and clearness of a prophet. I cannot tell you what this revelation was. I have not yet studied it enough. But I shall perfect it one day, and then you shall hear it and acknowledge its grandeur."

The late Professor William James, in "The Variety of Religious Experience," in the chapter on Seeing the Unseen, or the Realities of the Unseen, accumulates a number of instances of people who have seen—just as Russell Lowell saw, just as Watts saw—the reality of things; instances which, coming first-hand, may be cited, as Professor James shows, to prove how natural and inevitable the idea of God is to certain minds. One of these examples that he quotes is that of a woman who was the daughter of a well-known opponent and writer against Christianity; she says, "To this day I cannot understand dallying with religion and the commands of God. The very instant I heard my Father's cry calling unto me my heart bounded in recognition; I ran, I stretched forth my arms, I cried aloud, 'Here, here I am, my Father.' O happy child, what should I do? 'Love me,' answered my God. 'I do, I do,' I cried passionately. 'Come unto me,' called my Father. 'I will,' my heart panted. Did I stop to ask a single

question? Not one; it never occurred to me to ask whether I was good enough, or to hesitate over my unfitness or to find out what I thought of His church, or to wait until I should be satisfied. Satisfied? I was satisfied. Had I not found my God and my Father? Did He not love me? Had He not called me? Was there not a Church into which I might enter? Since then I have had direct answers to prayer so significant as to be almost talking with God and hearing His answer. The idea of God's reality has never left me for one moment."

It would be well for us all to read that chapter on the Reality of the Unseen, written by a great psychologist who has examined the facts of the religious life. That chapter establishes beyond all question what possibly we know from experience, that there are persons who have visions, and there are moments when most of us have visions, and in those spiritual visions reality draws nearer, and we find what actually is.

But a number of questions naturally

arise when we hear of such things as these, and they are questions which I would urge you to put and press, for they all admit of answers if we are determined and if we face them honestly. The questions which come to us are these: Is this vision only a hallucination—is it fancy as opposed to truth? Or, again, Is this faculty the gift of a few exceptional natures—is it not absurd for me, an ordinary person, a commonplace matter-of-fact mind, to expect any such experiences as these? Or, again, What use is it to me to know that others have had the visions—have felt God, have been assured of spiritual realities—if I am always sense-bound and earth-bound? Questions like these come quite naturally, and as I say they ought to be faced, and they can be answered, not in a moment, but by the testimony of life. I do not attempt to answer these questions summarily, but I would say one word to those who bar all further questions by declaring that the spiritual insight of which I speak is mere hallucination. Whatever you do, do not make that mistake. Whatever

question remains unanswered, try to settle this; the moments of spiritual illumination which have come to the great minds of our race, the inspired minds that have been the might and strength of our race, are not to be treated as illusions; at any rate determine that spiritual insight shall be considered as giving its own evidence of itself, and shall be judged by itself and not by exterior criteria. You know that truth is always difficult to establish, you know that scepticism is possible in everything, that scepticism may deny even one's own identity and existence. Scepticism can be carried to any length, and truth, its definition and its defence, presents to us a perpetual problem. If any of us is even asked to define what is meant by truth and reality, as we all know, we are bound to give up the attempt in despair; there is no satisfactory definition, and there is no possible proof of truth. We are, therefore, cast back upon a central instinct within us for finding what reality is. The reality lies in the soul, in the spiritual nature; and as all

truth and reality can only be established there, you see the peril that lies in denying the truth which is only asserted by that spiritual reality. If you lose the truth of the spirit you lose the criterion of all truth, and reality disappears. Let us settle it with ourselves that the spiritual insight of mankind is the most certain thing that mankind possesses, that spiritual insight is self-evidencing; it carries with it the conviction of an overwhelming reality that external things never can carry, because they are not in that sense real at all; that spiritual insight is our real organ of truth, and we must not discredit it or lose it. When a man has had the vision, even for a moment, he knows that he has seen the truth. As that poet whom we so often quote said,

“He that has felt the Spirit of the Highest
 Cannot confound or doubt Him or deny,
 Nay, with one breath, O world, though thou
 deniest,
 Stand thou on that side, for on this am I.”

I urge, therefore, as earnestly as I can, that you settle it, that even if you have not the vision, if you have no spiritual insight,

if you have to conclude that there are multitudes who have no spiritual insight, however far you have to go in narrowing the number of those who really see, still cling to the fact that the reality of those higher moments and clearer visions of the human spirit is the greatest reality we possess, and it is from that reality we must start to establish the reality of things. Never from the mere things material and temporal do we reach reality, but only from transcendent reality do we ever reach any reality in things.

Now I would remind you that the Bible is a literature of spiritual insight. It is the record of men and women who have had the vision, and it records faithfully for us a large part of the vision that they have had. It is the account of events which have been the result of that gift, that inward gift, of spiritual insight and of the interpretation of those visions by that unseen reality of the Spirit. The Bible is a collection of books, we say; but it is an

extraordinary collection of books, it is an evolution of books, it is a development reaching a climax in the spiritual insight of Jesus Christ and in the supplementary insight of those who knew him and received him, and were in a measure able to interpret him. It is that spiritual insight that makes the Bible for the race. It is not denied, of course, that there is spiritual insight outside the Bible; there is spiritual insight in much of the literature of the world, in many of the religions of the world, and indeed in most human beings in the world; but the point is that the insight gathered within this Book and deployed through the long development of this literature is enough to meet all the needs of men. The spiritual insight here is sure enough and long enough and final enough to set aside the objection that men may be left without the spiritual insight that they need. While a book like this can be bought for a few pence, while it can be made the study of day after day, the companion of a life and the guide of the way by which we are treading, while every-

one can have a Bible and everyone can read it and study it if he will, you can never say that men are left without spiritual insight and without spiritual guidance. This is the Book of Spiritual Insight, that is its definition. It has gathered together from the experiences, the varieties of religious experience, that illustrate the inward vision, the sight of God, the sight of the world, the sight of the soul, as it is in the reality of things; and the Book is yours, and if you do not use it and if you remain blind in consequence you must not blame God or life or the world—you have shut the light away, and therefore naturally you remain in the twilight or in the dark.

But still the question may press upon us, can all have the gift, and can I?—and I think the Bible is curiously candid upon this point. Though the texts one quotes are difficult to understand and sorrowful to believe, yet the Bible says very distinctly “All men have not faith”; and of course the spiritual insight of which I am speaking is the exact equivalent of faith.

“All men have not faith.” It says again, “Who among men knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the things of God none knoweth, save the Spirit of God.” And there is a word of the Master, a strange and almost terrible word, concerning the Pharisees who had asked him if they were blind, and he made the astonishing answer, “If ye were blind ye would have no sin; but now ye say, We see: your sin remaineth.” I say, therefore, the Bible is curiously candid upon this point; it never says that all men have the spiritual faculty, it does not maintain that all men are on the same plane or the same level. It rather implies that some men live on the heights and some live in the depths, some have their head in the sunshine and some have their spiritual nature involved in gloom. And it is a terrible thought, a thought that fills us with pity and love, that a great number of people around us are in that spiritual darkness; there are people without the faculty altogether. They see the world but never God; they see the

body but never the soul; they see human beings but not spiritual organism; they see the succession of events, but no goal, no far-off divine event to which the whole creation moves. They are living as it were in a dense gloom of the spirit; the thing has no meaning for them; they cannot have joy in any deep or true or lasting sense; all they can hope for is the pleasure of the senses and the employment of the senses in a world which will, with the senses, pass away. These people, multitudes there may be—we know not how many they are or who they are—these people we are certainly never to judge; we are to regard with the utmost sympathy and love those who are deprived of the spiritual faculty. If I pity a man who is blind and cannot see the beauty of nature, shall I not the more deeply pity the man who is blind and cannot see God? If I pity the person who through some mental deficiency is never able to work his way through this world, is doomed to perpetual failure, shall I not more pity the person who appears without the faculty that works

in the spiritual world and attains a place in the eternal order? Surely pity and love should go out most to those who are most deprived, those who have not the light, who have not the power to see or to understand the spiritual things, the things of the soul, the things of Eternity. I put in this plea because it seems to me that we are always judging one another as if we all had the same gifts, and we condemn men because they cannot see the spiritual light which is clear to us. But I would venture to hope and to believe that those who are without the spiritual gift are very few; I would venture to believe that even those who are darkest might have their eyes opened—that a prophet might say, “Lord, open this man’s eyes,” and those eyes might be opened to see all around the spiritual things, the world in the spiritual order. And at least if I cannot judge on that point I am persuaded better things of my reader who has followed me so far. Have you not had your moments of vision and revelation? Have there not come into your soul at

times with overwhelming evidence the realities of the spiritual world? Are you not convinced that the visions of the Prophets, of Isaiah, of the Psalmist, of St. Paul, are real visions, are real things? Have you not met and heard people who have the vision and who speak in the deep authentic voice of those who know concerning God and the soul and the things that are eternal? And do you not, reader, resolve by God's grace to use, to exert, to train, this faculty that is in you? When Christ says to you, "What shall I do to you?" do you not reply to Him, "Lord, do this, that I may receive my sight: open Thou mine eyes that I may see that Spiritual World in which Thou livest." I do not believe that the deprivation of spiritual light can be final for anyone. It seems to me that God must be working all through the Universe, and not here in the world alone, to endow His creatures with this, His supreme gift. You are blind to-day, but you may see to-morrow; you are blind now, but there may come that process which

shatters all the nerves of sense and opens the eyes of the spirit. I spoke lately to a lady who is blind, and asked her if she had any spiritual vision as the result of losing her sight, and she made the beautiful answer, Yes, she had, she had been reading the Gospel of St. John—she had learned to read in the blind alphabet—and she had found it a totally new book; it was full of meaning to her which she had never perceived before. The eyes were closed that the soul might see. And it is often the case that God has to shut the eyes of the body that He may open the eye of the soul.

But now I must conclude this chapter. Whatever may be our view of the spiritual faculty, its possibility for us all, its reality to any, there is this point about which there can be little dispute: this spiritual insight is a spring of joy, and by it joy may be made continual and indeed in a sense must be continual, for it reveals the Universe, of the real, of the good, of the blessed, behind, above and beyond the confused things of the senses, the shifting

unrealities of time. It reveals something so transcendently consoling, so rippling over with eternal joy, that he who has the spiritual vision must through all trials and troubles be still rejoicing and always rejoicing. Open to that inward eye is a world of conquering light and life and love, in which all darkness and cold and death are disappearing. Always present to that inward vision in the midst of these perturbing things of time is God imper-turbable. Always to that inward vision Jesus moves among men. Always the Spirit breathes. To that inward vision all souls are God's. To that inward vision Jesus lives and loves and saves. To that inward vision the Spirit is quickening even the dead bones in the valley, and calling the lost into life and love. To that inward vision sin is not the reality, but goodness only. To that inward vision earth is not the reality but Heaven, an eternal World. This insight banishes from the soul its worst enemies of gloom and darkness and despair. It does not permit fear even to haunt the

mind; it takes away fear, anticipation of a future evil, apprehension of coming calamity—it is all lost in a reality which abides, which is not subject to the transformations and the degradations of time.

In heavenly sunlight live no shades of fear,
The soul there, busy or at rest, hath peace,
And music floweth from the various world.

HOPE.

There are many very beautiful designations of God in the Epistles of St. Paul; for example in Rom. xv he is called “the God of patience” and “the God of consolation,” and at the close “the God of peace.” But the designation of “the God of hope” in v. 13 is probably the one that is most suited to a world which is ever tending to despair, and to an age that is tinged with pessimism. “The God of Hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing through the power of the Holy Ghost that ye may abound in hope”—that is to say, that God is able to make us by His Holy Spirit as hopeful as He is Himself by fixing our hope on Him and Him alone, and when our hope is so strong and so fixed that we are as hopeful as God is, it is evident that we shall be as joyful as God is; the secret of eternal joy is found in the hope that He gives the human heart;

and that joy can abound even when art has failed us, and when spiritual insight is dimmed.

I wish to say first that it is a revelation to speak of God as "the God of hope"—it needed a revelation to show it and to prove it. In the old Greek myths it was represented that the gods had sent Pandora down to man with the chest containing all the ills and sufferings that afflict humanity, and that when she brought her baleful gift to mankind she opened the lid and let all the ills escape and wander over the earth. But there was one redeeming thing that remained in the chest hidden under the rim, and that was Hope—that is to say, according to the thought of the brightest and cheerfulest spirits that ever lived, the Hellenic race, the envious gods sent all the ills of man, and it is only a sort of after-thought or chance that Hope survives amidst the sorrows of men. One struggling gleam of light pierces the clouds in which envious heaven involves human life.

Now what a contrast it is from that view

of religion and of God to take this phrase, "the God of hope," and to be led to believe, as we are by the Christian revelation, that God not only is the God of hope but the giver of hope to all, and that by hope He is constantly revealing Himself in human hearts and human lives.

I shall try to confine myself to two points which can be made perfectly clear. First let us try to define what hope is, and then we shall try to see what is involved in giving to God the designation "the God of hope."

Now by Hope we mean a deep underlying conviction in the human heart that the future will be good. When the ship is on the reefs, Hope points to the open sea. When winter holds the earth, Hope whispers of spring. In the moment of disease, Hope speaks of health. In the article of death, Hope speaks of life. In the time of moral corruption, Hope prophesies goodness. Whatever else may have dominion over us and over the world, Hope is firmly convinced that the Kingdom of God will come. But in order

to complete this definition of Hope, we must take into account the extraordinary fact that Hope never entirely dies, but "springs immortal in the human breast"; and just when it seems to be absolutely crushed it puts out a shoot again like the little crocus piercing the wintry soil. When the storm has gathered and the clouds are closing in, Hope will awake like the voice of the bird, and will utter one long and passionate trill that reminds us of what is to be. As Keats says, "There is a budding morrow in midnight," the hope of the dawn is at the very centre of the dark.

Now this characteristic must be included in our definition, for we do not see what Hope is until we see that it is unquenchable and is there in human nature never to be destroyed—the conviction in the human heart which never can be extinguished, that the future will be good. Men might almost have inferred from this fact of human life and human nature that God is the God of Hope. It must be God who thus breathes into us poor mortals this immortal spirit of Hope. It is strange to

us sometimes to realise in reading the literature of the past, and the un-Christian literature of to-day, that it required a revelation after all, a revelation from God, to teach us that God is the God of Hope. It is God's doing that in human life and in human hearts Hope cannot wholly die—it always springs afresh. Directly a hope is realised, Hope comes again to point to something further on. It will never be expelled from the human heart, it will never cease to succour human life.

There is a sad poem of Coleridge dated February, 1827, which is the very expression of despair :—

“With lips unbrighten'd, wreathless brow, I
stroll :
And would you learn the spells that drowse
my soul ?
Work without hope draws nectar in a sieve,
And hope without an object cannot live.”

It is the one moment of despair in the

Poet's life, and yet here is the extraordinary fact—this very poem in which he complains—

“ And I, the while, the sole unbusy thing,
Nor honey make, nor pair, nor build, nor sing”

—this very poem, which is the expression of his uselessness and of his despair—is itself a little work which will live for ever, because it contains within it possibly the most perfect emblem of Hope in the whole range of English literature. It is this little poem of despair which begins with the immortal lines :—

“ All Nature seems at work. Slugs leave their
lair,
The bees are stirring,—birds are on the
wing,—
And winter, slumbering in the open air,
Wears on his smiling face a dream of
spring !” —

Just where the man gets to the very depth of despair he utters the note of Hope.

Now I turn from the mere definition of Hope to that which is involved in giving to God the designation “ the God of

hope." I would put it in the very broadest way, and leave the reader to narrow it down, and to search out its conditions as he easily can. But what is meant by God being the God of hope is that your desires, your deep and permanent desires, will certainly be fulfilled. "O rest in the Lord, wait patiently for Him, and He shall give you your heart's desire." Life holds in its unknown, unfolding, unexpected turns and events that which can and which will bring to pass your deepest and most permanent desires. Your dreams are realities because God is the God of hope.

I know it seems impossible. Things have been against you. All you meant to do you feel you cannot do, and what you meant to be you sometimes think you never will be. It has passed like the cream of the morning when you awake, those thoughts and purposes of your early life, the schemes you formed, the love and passion that thrilled through your nature when you were young. I know—you longed for love—human

hearts do long for love. You longed perhaps for one whom you loved supremely, as most people do. You longed for work, you longed for achievement, you longed to accomplish something before you left the world. You longed for a completed and a rounded life, for something which will at last entitle you to say "The thing I purposed is accomplished, the love I desired has come." Now what I have to say to you is this: It will come, it shall be, because God is the God of hope. "We always may be what we might have been," because God is the God of hope. "All that is good shall be good," because God is the God of hope. This is the meaning of hope directly it is applied to God, because God is omnipotent, and God is love, and if God is hope and we hope in God, all that we hoped for shall be, and all that we dreamed shall come true. There lies the secret of joy in a life which is so disappointing to many of us; there lies the promise which enables us to go on. Let me speak to you personally as if I had taken you by the hand and looked into

your eyes, " My brother and my sister, as I speak of the God of hope, all the love of which your individual nature is capable shall come to you. Lovers and friends shall gather round about you that you never suspected, that you never dreamed of. The hope that dared not express itself shall be fulfilled. You shall be satisfied. Even if there is some apparently hopeless desire, some love so deep and tender and yet so impossible that you dare not express it to any human being, I tell you it shall be, for God is the God of hope. Presently the hunger will cease, and you shall be satisfied, and will acknowledge that God is omnipotent, and that love is God and that He is the God of hope. The work you have striven to do, the thing you have longed to achieve, shall be done, it shall be achieved. As the seed will spring, and from the ground so dark and dead will produce the plant, and then the plant will bear the flower, so that longing of your heart to achieve shall bear the fruit in due time. That tranquil and rounded and satisfied life which seems to float on the

horizon and to recede from you as you approach, that very life will come, and you will fold your hands in peace and say with a deep sigh of contentment, 'I am satisfied,' because God is the God of hope. It lies in the fact of God, in the nature of God, because He is Hope and Omnipotence and Love. It shall be, it must be, and if you say to me, as probably you do, 'But hopes are dupes, and I have been always disappointed. I never get what I want. Nothing ever comes, and hope deferred makes the heart sick,' I have to answer you, 'You have forgotten God, you have taken your eyes off God; you have let them wander upon the world and upon men and the disappointments and the fallibilities of human nature. But let your eyes be lifted up unto God. He is the God of hope; let Him be your hope, and all these things shall be. Hope thou in God; for you shall yet praise Him for the health of His countenance.'

But here, of course, it is necessary to point out how the God of hope widens the range of things, and what causes our

despair is the narrowness of our vision. We have mistaken the horizon; we suppose that the immediate horizon of the earth or of the sea is the limit of things. We imagine that that horizon, the grave, is the termination of things, but the very nature of the God of hope forbids the grave to be the limitation of things. The anchor, which is the emblem of hope, is cast within the veil, beyond the present experiences, in a full and complete life of which we see but a part, a fragment, the beginning, the opening vista. If you lose sight of the real horizon and contract your vision to those terminable things of human life, it is possible that despair will settle upon you, but it is never necessary for a man to disbelieve the eternal realities. No man is condemned to doubt of life eternal, no man is robbed of the inheritance of that life which God gives and which Christ came to the world to impart. He brought life and immortality to light in the Gospel, and no man need blind his eyes to that light. He opened the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers, and no man need

be shut out. He has gone into that heavenly Kingdom to prepare mansions for those who believe on Him, and no man need be without his mansion. It is entirely our own fault, it is our perversity, it is our logical unspirituality which prevents us from taking the fast hold of the anchor which is cast within the veil. On earth there is the broken arc, we all admit that, but in Heaven the perfect round. When Christ is in the world, as he certainly is, he is the hope of glory, and when he enters into any human heart, as he always may, he becomes the hope of glory there. He is our fulfilment and our confidence, and all the otherwise imperfect and failing buds of earth, that are so quickly blighted, open up and grow and flower and bear their fruit in him. His own resurrection was the pledge and promise and foretaste of a vast fulfilment which forbids us ever to despair for ourselves or for the world, and hangs for ever in the heavens the banners of the dawn. When Christ came hope came, immortal hope, hope of immortality, and all the aspect of human life was

changed and that hope abides, our guest, our leader, the source of our unfailing joy. Here, therefore, the whole range must be opened to the human eye, and we must understand that we are not limited to the things we see, and when I venture to foretell to you the fulfilment of all these dreams and desires and hopes, I could not help dwelling in my own heart upon this extension of the vision. It is that wider vision that gives the promise of the fulfilment of the hopes of men. Every good, every blessing, every love, every noble activity, everything which has ever stirred you with a sense of eternity, everything which has ever moved you forward to an uncertain but desired future, is really the pledge and the promise of God that it shall be. In those wider spheres of which this world is evidently the promise but never the fulfilment, all shall be that you expect. The hope that seemed hopeless shall blossom again, and the thing that seemed lost shall be poured back into your bosom. O think of that! Heaven is the place of fulfilled desires, of satisfied long-

ing; Heaven is the realisation of good which was not possible here, but the glimpse and the desire were given to you as the pledge. Why did He put it into your heart to desire that great good? Does God mock His creature? No; it was only the way of planting the seed in your heart which shall blossom in His eternal love. There is joy which does not pass, the even regular use of faculties which do not wear out, the tranquil blessed fellowship of kindred souls; and there the beatific vision, the vision of God after which our poor eyes strain in this world, will all be plain, for not with human eyes but with the insight of the spirit we shall see God and live.

In Fra Angelico's picture of Paradise—one of the most exquisite and childlike productions of the artistic power—he represents the Angels and the redeemed Saints circling on the green pastures of Paradise, and their faces are directed to the gate of the Heavenly City where they can freely enter. In that company of the redeemed and of the angels,

Fra Angelico introduces this exquisite touch : there is a tonsured monk embracing an angelic form, a woman's form, and the heart of the painter-monk has said to itself, This monk, this nun, are immured in the convent and the monastery, and cut off from their human love here on earth. Fra Angelico probably did not venture to say even in his wildest moment of criticism that that monastic life was a delusion and a peril to the life of man, but he actually introduces into Paradise this thought, that there, when they enter Paradise, that hungry monkish heart is brought right into the embrace of that woman's love that he was never allowed to know upon earth. It is a child-like thought, but it is essentially true ; it goes to the very root of the matter. By Paradise is meant the place where there are no monks and no nuns, where there is no marriage and giving in marriage, because there the great hunger of the human spirit for human love is fulfilled in the larger and in the eternal ways.

Human life and human faculty mean the awakening of endless possibilities, a

dream of satisfaction and accomplishment, tasks attempted and done, hopes of a life perfect and complete—and human life and experience are constantly disappointing us, meeting us with frustration and failure and disillusionment and bereavement, until at last poor human spirits wither upon the stalk, and life drags itself wearily along to the grave because life promises so much and appears to give so little, because desires grow and apparently are not fulfilled. But you forget—we are always forgetting—hope is there, and hope comes from the God of hope, and that is the strong conviction of what will be, the certainty put into the heart of man by his very Maker, that the good will come, the future will be good, the anchor is taken by the hand of Christ, and it is fixed within the veil. We look into those eyes of Christ, majestic after death; we can see him in the imagination, we can feel him in the spirit. He has risen from the grave, we look into those eyes majestic, and we read there the meaning of it all, our very being is warmed and

thrilled through and through with the sacred exultation. He has triumphed over death, he has triumphed over sin, he has triumphed over the world, he has triumphed over human life, and he holds within his hand the fruits of victory, and bids us come and share them. We look into his majestic eyes and we know that the God of hope gave him to us and drew us through him to our eternal bliss. We must wait and be patient, but the God of hope who makes us abide with hope in the power of the Holy Ghost will give us the full realisation—hope will be emptied in delight.

Now I trust I have not spoken in any way that will mislead. It is not necessary or possible in each statement of truth to say everything. I judge that most people are perishing because they have forgotten the eternal realities and the blessed promises of God which are open to us all. And it is sometimes good to remind ourselves that without examining too closely the means and the conditions there shines for ever before us the glorious Star of hope;

the God of hope is ever calling us and drawing us into the fulfilment of all we desire and believe. It is true that the world to-day wishes to cut off from us Heaven and the hope of eternal life. It is true that many arguments are urged against it, some from socialists and some from philosophers and others from men of science. We are told to dismiss the thoughts of immortality, and to content ourselves with the narrow limits of our human life. We are told that it were better to rest upon assured facts than upon the empty dreams that the prophets and dreamers have presented to us in the past. They may talk for ever to us in that way, they can accomplish nothing. You cannot cut off the rays of Heaven when God has given those rays—you cannot make men cease to believe in immortality when God has put that belief into their hearts. It is the God of Hope that has put within us the certainty of the Eternal Life and of the bliss and glory that wait His children. No man can argue—we take refuge in God instinctively; and where we take refuge,

there we clutch the anchor of hope—no one can argue men out of immortality, for the very spirit of reason refutes the reasoner. You cannot deprive men of Heaven—you might disprove it again and again, and show that they could not live beyond the grave, but the little bird of Hope will begin to sing in the very portal of the tomb. We need not trouble for the faith, nor be anxious for religion; God takes care of that. He is the God of hope, and as He has breathed upon us, writer and reader, that ineffable breath of hope, that confidence in Him, that sureness of a future which we do not see, so He does all through the world in every nation and in every age. When the foolish heart of man denies, God affirms; when the poor sinking heart of man despairs, the God of hope appears; and all through the world, and as long as the world lasts, He will hang in the heavens the sign of Hope until Hope is emptied in delight, and we pass from what we see into the things unseen and eternal.

“LOVE.”

We have now examined the faculty of imagination, which seeks expression in Art, and the faculty of spiritual insight, and the faculty of hope. Let us pass on to the faculty of love.

Now it will not be doubted that love brings joy, and if love were perfect and continued joy might be unending. But permanence is the last thing that we can attribute to love in the sense in which we ordinarily use that word. The world is full of broken and faded loves—love that lapsed into indifference, love that even turned into hatred. Everywhere there are people who were obliged to use that which Mrs. Browning thought the saddest word in the whole range of speech: “Loved *once*.” They loved once, but now they look at each other as they pass with averted head, and wonder what there was that attracted their affections long ago.

How can we speak of a joy that is permanent depending on a thing so fleeting and uncertain as love? That is the question that has to be faced, and in order to answer it we have to draw certain distinctions which we often do not make, either because our language is confusing or because we do not pay close attention to the facts of the human soul. These distinctions are three: We speak of that passion which draws the sexes together by the name of "love," and we speak of the character of God as "love," using the same word; this produces unspeakable confusion, for no language that is adequate to distinguish the fine distinctions of human feeling would ever dream of confusing those totally different passions. A second distinction which we are apt to omit is this: that between the love which is defined by certain objects and the love which is an essential quality in the subject; for the love of certain objects or certain persons may co-exist with passions the very opposite of love; but the love which is defined by the subject which possesses it

as true love excludes the opposite passions ; and it is only when the opposite passions are excluded that love can be a source of continued joy. And there is a third distinction which we constantly fail to notice, the distinction between the love which is merely human and the love which is really divine, described by St. John as the abiding of God in the soul.

Now you may think it quite unimportant that we should fall into these confusions in the use of words, but I think before I have done you will recognise that it is a source of spiritual weakness, and one of the main hindrances to the attainment of a settled spiritual life that we are not clear in our thought, but use the same word for different things without distinguishing the difference. I am going to try, therefore, to clear these confusions, to draw the right distinctions in the use of the word and the application of it to human life.

Now first I take this distinction between the passion of the sexes and the Love that is defined as God. In the Greek language that distinction is, of course, maintained

by the use of two totally different words. The love of the sexes is called *eros*, and personified in the god of love *Eros*, or in Latin *Cupid*; but the love of the other kind, the lasting kind, is in the classical Greek always *philia*; and when we pass into Christianity, and the new religion demands new language, a word is invented, *agape*, meaning a love which is capable of being the definition of God. Now to confuse those two totally different words *eros* and *philia* is disastrous; and to confuse those still more different things *eros* and *agape* is often fatal to some of our best religious perceptions. For the nature of *eros*, the love between the sexes, is necessarily fitful, fierce, passionate and changeful; the nature of *philia* is necessarily steadfast and calm and strong; and the nature of *agape* is eternal. When we call by the sacred word "love" that fitful passion of the sexes we run a risk of degrading the word "love" and of confusing two things which are only remotely connected. The feverish excitement of the lover which leads the Japanese to treat that kind of love as a

madness from which we hope to recover, that irrationality of erotic passion, the total want of restraint and perspective, and the uncertainty of it, the fact that it is never sure to last and almost always burns itself out too soon, makes it a fatal error to call it by the same name that we give to the God who is love, the God who would have us abide in Him and so abide in love. It is no disparagement to *eros*, to the erotic passion of the sexes, to say that it is totally different from *agape*. That passion of the sexes has its justification physiologically and racially. It is a passion which we may share with other animals. It has its place, I say, and is not to be depreciated; but on the other hand we are not to disparage love by giving that sacred name to the merely animal movement that draws the sexes together. By giving one name to two so totally different things we involve in error our instincts and our reason. We make the instinctive passion seem to be what it is not and cannot be, and on the other hand we turn the great abiding Love that looks before

and after and belongs to Eternity into something frail and fallible, stained and foolish, like that fierce passion that corrupts and injures, as well as blesses, human life.

If love were truly understood it would, of course, be defined in terms of unselfishness. The poet described it correctly as it should be when he said that

“Love took up the harp of life and smote on all
its chords with might,
Smote the chord of self, which trembling,
passed in music out of sight.”

But it is quite notorious and obvious to everyone who observes, that the love of the erotic kind is not unselfish—it is one of the worst forms of selfishness. When we speak of people in love we do not think of people who are turning their thoughts to mankind, but of people who are turning their thoughts entirely to themselves. We speak of lovers and we mean by lovers just the very people who love least because they love only one another; and so do we misuse that sacred name of love that we

speak of people who are approaching marriage as lovers, and drop the name when they are married as if they had become man and wife and ceased to be lovers. A man in love is often so self-absorbed that in his moods and jealousies and craving he will hurt the very person whom he thinks he loves, and meanwhile he will regard his rivals with venomous hatred, and will deem it a point of courage and virtue to dispose of them.

This kind of love, therefore, is not the source of joy. It is the source of a feverish rapture and excitement, but not of joy. Hamlet reckons among the intolerable ills of life "the pangs of despised love," but he might equally have included the fevers of that kind of love, even when it is reciprocated, and its satiety when it is satisfied. It must often strike the reader who does not know any but the English word, as he reads the 13th Chapter of I. Corinthians, "the Psalm of Love," how totally inappropriate all that is said there actually is to the erotic passion of which I am speaking. It was surely

better when the old version, the Authorised Version, used another word altogether, "charity," lest the confusion should be imported into that great Psalm of Love. Hardly any of these sayings apply to *eros*—"envieth not," "vaunteth not itself," "never faileth." Why it is the very disease of that hot passion that it is full of envy and jealousy and resentment, "sudden and quick in quarrel," imperious in self-assertion, and yet it fails—fails so quickly, so disastrously, just when it is most needed; lasts up to the point where it is satisfied and then turns coldly upon the object that it professed to love. This passion which we share with the animals, and which is only part of the physical constitution of the Universe, must never be confused with the sacred passion that we share with God, the passion which is indeed God in the soul and in humanity.

But again, to proceed to another distinction that I mentioned at the beginning, when we define love only by its objects, saying that we love certain persons or certain things, we do not in the least touch

the centre. The fact is that we have our preferences and our predilections for people and for things to which we give the name "love," meaning that we like them better than we like others. But that kind of liking, that mere predilection, should never be confused with love. We like the selected people because they please us or gratify us. In such a "love," as we call it, there may be little more than the grossest selfishness. We like to be with people who please us, we like to get from them the charm they are able to give, and that kind of selection and appropriation is often accompanied by an absolute disdain and dislike of other people. The more the love of that kind in a person's heart, the more probably will be the hatred in the same heart, and we speak of such people as people of strong love and strong hatred—the likes and dislikes are equally strong. This kind of "love," as it is called, leads to many of the calamities of life and to a great part of the misery of society. This "family love" as we call it, which makes us love our family and treat with contempt

those who do not belong to it, this kind of love which makes us treat well the society in which we move, but keep at a distance in scorn and derision all who are outside this society, this "selective love," is one of the main causes of misery in the world. The shame and contempt and degradation that are introduced into our English life by this loveless love—this proud selfishness that loves itself in its family, and loves itself in its society, and makes that very love the burning scorn of everyone else—that is not the fountain of joy but often the very cause of pessimism. The love of which Jesus speaks, the love which forms the subject of the I. Corinthians xiii., is wholly different from this. It is defined not by its objects—if you notice, the objects are never mentioned—it is defined entirely by itself. It is not that which loves someone or something, but that which *loves* and loves always. It is a quality in the soul, it is a passion for the whole, a passion for the world, a passion for mankind, arising out of a passion for God. It is a love

even to animals, a love to things, a love to the whole scheme of which this chapter is speaking—a spirit that must seek to heal and to bless and to help and to save, a spirit which demands nothing and gives everything; that looks upon the privilege of life as the opportunity of service, which like Christ, who demanded nothing from the world but a Cross to die upon, asks of mankind not its love but the chance of loving *it*, and the opportunity of giving to it something of itself, because this kind of love must give and give and ever give, pouring out itself upon the world that needs it. It is this kind of love that Lowell wanted when he asked that the love of his life might not be of the narrow single type, it should grow all the way like that Eastern tree whose limbs take root and spread forth constantly.

“ That love for one from which there does not
spring
Wide love for all is but a worthless thing.”

And yet so confused are we in our thought that we constantly use the word

“love” to cover that shallow selfish passion accompanied by hate and scorn for other people, and the sacred *love* which is the definition of God.

And just one word upon that last distinction, that vital distinction, between love which is merely human and love which is really divine, the very essence of God. We must learn to distinguish. The love that is merely human may be like the love of God and yet only the broken shadow or reflection of that divine love, and not therefore to be confused with it. In that lovely old song we used to sing of “The Bridge” the poet mentions how in crossing the bridge over the river and looking back upon the past he always remembered seeing the moon reflected in the river.

“And the moon and its broken reflections and shadows did appear
Like the symbol of love in Heaven and its broken image here.”

Now we must be careful if we would arrive

at any true conception of love to distinguish sharply between "the broken image here" and the perfect Love that is above in the heart and being of God. That love on earth, which is but a broken image of the love in Heaven, must not be taken as the love of God. It may be aiming at it, it may be of the same quality, but fitful and irregular and inconstant, by no means sure to bless, sometimes absolutely cursing the people that it loves—that kind of love is not the love that is called God. It is not that love which, abiding in us, becomes the very revelation of God and the perfection of God in the soul. That love of God shed abroad in our hearts must be conceived as what it is in its pure reality, for it is that of which we must speak when we say that it is the source of continued joy. The love of God, the love that is God, God that made all, that sustains all, that cares for all, that hateth nothing that He has made, that strives even with self-sacrifice for the blessing and service of all—that is the Love, and that Love alone, which is the flowing fountain of joy. It never can

cease to bless its possessor because it never can cease to bless its objects. It flows out ceaselessly, in service, in comfort and in help. It seeks to impart itself, it goes out, to those who need it; it covers a multitude of sins—indeed our sins are submerged under its tide and evil is burnt up in its fire. It turns aside from none, but brings health, cleansing, fertility, wherever it goes. That is the love—the love of God shed abroad in the heart—which I have maintained is the great faculty given to us to produce perpetual joy. Such a love—for, of course, we are human—has its favourites, its darlings, its affinities. It is not supposed for a moment that because this divine love is in us we are colourless and insipid and unable to show to individuals the peculiar tribute that our affection would offer to them. But the point of it is that such a love brings to those who are thus privileged in love nothing but blessing, nothing but gifts of God, nothing but help upward and Heavenward and homeward; but in a degree and in a definite degree this love of God flows right through

those that are its objects and reaches all beyond. It does not stop at the limited circle; it loves those who are near just because it loves all that are beyond, and the love of one widens into the great love of all, the humanity which is the love of God. It is its very property to embrace and to benefit everyone that it can reach.

Now I trust that in these few sentences I have made clear to everyone those distinctions which we so frequently obliterate, partly through the infirmity and incapacity of our English language, and partly through our hazy conception of the facts of the soul; and in closing I point out one great and wonderful truth which brings all that has been said into a harmony. Of course, it is the purpose of that divine love to flow back, as it were, upon those lower loves and to transform them and to redeem them. And thus, when that Love of God Christ Jesus came into the world and altered human life at every point and in every detail, one of the first things that he did was to sanctify the love of the sexes

and to raise it right up from the plane of *eros* to the plane of *agapé*. One does not always remember it, but we are likely presently to remember it only too painfully as the world is surrendering Christ and slipping away from the great ideals that he gave. But what Christ did for married love was one of the miracles of his incarnation. He took that mere erotic passion, that utilitarian passion that seems simply to exist for the welfare of the race, and he transformed it into the most sacred relation of life. He made it come to pass that he himself and his Church were the symbol of the love between a husband and wife. He taught the husband to love the wife as he himself loved the Church—a love full of sacrifice and self-giving, a love redeeming and healing and uplifting; and he taught that the wife should love the husband as the Church loved him, a love wholly spiritual and absolutely eternal because upon it rests the very hope of eternal life. This is what he did, and you will strive in vain in all this wide world to find marriage

what it ought to be anywhere except where the love of Christ binds the two together in that divine transcendent union. It is not possible to unite two souls upon the plane of the earthly love—they must be lifted into the divine life and redeemed by the precious blood of Jesus if they are to love one another with an eternal love. Divine love must have entered into that human relation—that very relation which apart from it is so bitterly disappointing. Have you ever realised the tragedy that is constantly happening in our human life? Those two lovers go to the altar and then from that time forward they fall asunder. In a little while it is a by-word that the man feels no pleasure greater than getting away from his wife, and the wife is wearied of the man. And satire talks of that sacred relation as if it were almost a matter of course that because they are wedded they have lost the sacred gift of love. What a tragedy! Yet it is inevitable—it is what has happened always and in all ages—until there comes in that divine redeeming power; and it is the love of God in the

soul that unites the man and the wife together.

And as Christ transformed the marriage relation, so that love of Christ on His Cross came into the relations of men and women in society, making them able to get over the constant diseases and corruptions of social intercourse. Until that love of Christ enters society what a miserable thing society is—the rivalry, the enmity, the detraction and the scandal, the injustice of man to man, the plotting and scheming against one another. If there is a society without Christ it is always the scene of pollutions and corruptions; there is always something which springs up constantly like noxious weeds. But Christ enters and makes it possible for people to live together in a kind of holy and divine tie, caring for one another, respectful to one another, helping one another, covering each other's infirmities and forgetting each other's faults. He makes it possible for everyone in looking on every other in society to be "to his faults a little blind, and to his virtues very kind." It is

Christ's entrance into society that transforms it; it seems hardly possible for human beings anywhere to love a few wisely unless God's love, the love of all, has entered in to set its tone and to feed its fire. It was said of an old man of 72 who had been touched all his life by this love of Christ, that his face was the record of past joys and a love letter to all mankind. That is the temper and the attitude of the mind which makes life a tranquil joy—not the feverish love to one, not the selective love of a few, but that sacred passion in the heart, the love of God shed abroad there, that reaches out to all, the divine faculty which cannot endure that any should be unloved, and will therefore perhaps be more ready to love the loveless and to seek and help the helpless than to show its affection to those who are dearest and nearest. The germ of that sacred love is given in our human relations, in parents and children and friends and lovers, but it is by no means a full-grown plant, and it is often destroyed before it grows. We are here from the beginning in a training

of this sacred faculty of love. Life itself is offered us as the chance of learning it and acquiring it; but that supreme gift of God—the love that is in Christ Jesus, the love of Christ upon the Cross, is to make us able to rear this tender plant to its maturity and bring it to bear its fruit. He who was lifted up upon a Cross is the secret of a love that conquers all. A love of Christ constrains us, lifts us from low thoughts to the heights of divine love. It penetrates, it changes, it overflows, that love of Christ in the soul, the depth of the riches of Christ, the love of God in Christ—it penetrates men, it makes them new, it turns the love of man and woman into a sacrament. It makes the relations of people in society a church. It can make of the mutually suspicious nations a family. It is the great re-creating and regenerative principle. It is He, the great Lover who fulfils that text in us—as we love one another, so God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us.

In that strange revelation of human passion, the love letters of Charles Stewart

Parnell, the attentive reader, watching that lawless love undermine the life and work of a great political leader, cannot but tremble before the havoc wrought by an elemental force, which worked like a Fate or an Até, and the question rises insistently, What could have prevented the disaster, How could this 'love' have been a true and uplifting and inspiring love? What was missing? The answer comes, Christ was missing. Christ is God's love in the world; but love, without God's love, may easily be our undoing, the cause of our most irreparable disasters.

REASONING.

The gift of reasoning, of settling a point by thought, of drawing from the premisses a legitimate conclusion, of inferring from facts collected a law, or of deducing from a law other principles that are not yet established—that gift of reasoning which is so distinctly a gift of man that the rudimentary faculties pointing to it in other animals only make us the more conscious of our privilege, our prerogative of reason—was certainly given to us by God in order to sustain us in joy, a fulness of joy, in the world that He has made.

If that gift is used, if it is used rightly and with a conscience, it serves the highest purposes of human life, and leads us insensibly from human life to the divine, and from this world to another. On the other hand, if it is neglected, if it is omitted from the practical life of man, we quickly take our place with the lower

animals—driven like them by mere appetite, governed by instinct instead of the nobler principle. And if it is abused, used but used wrongly, used but without a conscience, used without a deeper principle of the moral nature co-operating with it, this gift of reason can carry us by a deadly impetus into a perfect abyss of death, into the denial of the good and the beautiful and the true, and the rejection of the very light which God has shed on the human mind by His own being. But used, used with a conscience, evidently our reason is meant to be the strong evidence of good and even of God; meant to be the vehicle by which we come to Him, or at least come within reach of Him, where another faculty carries us right into His presence.

Ruskin said, “None of us yet knows, for none of us has been taught in early youth what fairy palaces we may build of beautiful thoughts, proof against all adversity.” That is the use of the mind.

Now what I have to say falls under two

heads, which I put in a somewhat antithetical form because it is more easy to remember, to recall, and to carry on the thought so conveyed—first the joy of reason, second the reason of joy.

Now let me say a few words about THE JOY OF REASON. The faculty I am speaking about enables us to leave the region of mere sensation and instinct, and to contemplate things, the world and life, in continuity, connection, with a purpose, with a cause. It was said by one of the Latin poets about one of the great Greek thinkers: *Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas*, "Happy he who was able to discover the causes of things." That is a source of happiness; there lies the fascination of Natural Science if it is properly pursued, that facts begin to fall into order, causes are traced and results follow, and the union of facts leads to a unity of thought. It is that unity of thought and purpose that delights the mind. When we are able to contemplate the manifold facts, which in their separation are only confusing,

brought into line and directed to a purpose, there ensues a singular joy. Few books give more joy to the person who diligently studies it than Darwin's "Origin of Species," because there the close reasoning, the inferences from a multitude of sifted facts, producing a beautiful style in the effort to be perfectly clear and convincing, sets before the mind a possible explanation or history of organic life. It suggests that it is not confused but purposeful, and to the thinking mind it is the most clear and convincing demonstration of God, the over-ruling Reason that is directing the whole course of development. Such a study, if it is undertaken carefully, braces the mind and fills it with just the same kind of joy that comes in the climbing of a great mountain—it is an effort but a joyful effort, it is a triumph when we stand upon the summit; and it is safe to say that nothing, except the great imaginative efforts of fiction and of poetry, brings greater joy than such an experience, the result of honest toil and consecutive thinking.

But to pass to another point—think for a moment about the use of speech in conversation. Conversation while it is desultory and superficial, made up of petty stories or jests or personalities or trivialities, easily becomes tiresome, and if not tiresome still demoralising. We sink to the level of our trivial talk, and discover our degradation by the fact that we are not ashamed of it. But whenever conversation deserves the name, when it becomes the sparkling conduit of reasoning, an argument presented *pro* and *con* by the interlocutors, when it passes into a careful and honest statement of reasons for an arguable position, it is stimulating and entertaining. A brilliant wit, a stored memory, a sympathetic spirit, or, in default of these great gifts, only the honest purpose to arrive at truth in talk and to speak the truth at which we arrive, may easily make social intercourse one of the greatest and most lasting of human joys; and a discussion in a congenial circle, where minds are stimulated by the

sympathy of thought, may be a much greater entertainment and a truer refreshment of our whole being than any physical exercise. They say that conversation as an art is dying out. If that is so, we ought to seek to revive it at all costs, for to lose it is to lose one of the great treasures of the human spirit.

But apart from books and apart from conversation, the mind even by itself is able to pursue trains of reasoning which lead to fruitful conclusions. It can seek out and arrive at truth, and principles which become the guide of life. Thought in the quiet of the human mind becomes creative, it discovers, it connects, it makes. And therefore a man who thinks, who has learned to think consistently, becomes a power in the world. The man who, on the other hand, cannot think, is always a dangerous influence; his very flashes of thought become misleading if he has not really thought. "A thinking man," said Carlyle, "is the worst enemy the Prince of Darkness can have" because the thinking man

gradually overcomes the Prince of Darkness; shedding light upon his own spirit, he flashes it into those dense darknesses which surround human life. The mind when it is thus exercised becomes singularly buoyant and elastic and even indomitable. We had a most beautiful example of this in the life and work of Jonathan Brierley, to whom I referred in an earlier chapter. Limited as he was by bad health, and cut off from the chosen work of his life in the Ministry, and then shut up for years in a small suburban villa and cut off largely from the society of his fellows, not even possessing a large library but with a very limited equipment at hand, how did he retain that cheerfulness of spirit, that sunny outlook, that gaiety, which made his weekly article the inspiration of hundreds of readers? He addressed, and more effectively, a larger congregation than any preacher ever reaches. What was it that produced the effect? If you come to examine it, you find it was the vigorous exercise of the brain, drawing on a wide range of facts

and thoughts, and trying to think out continually a reason of things, a philosophy of life. "One hour of honest thought," a great living writer has said, "One hour of honest thought is worth whole weeks of ecstatic adoration when ecstasy is not based on knowledge and adoration does not issue in action." J. B. was an extraordinary illustration of that. With him thought became a spiritual power, and we saw clearly in that instance how wise it is to supplement the merely emotional side of the religious life by the vigorous and searching criticism of the intellect.

Having dwelt for a moment upon the joy of reason, the fact that in the reasoning powers that God has given us we have a source of constant joy, if only we use those powers and do not abuse them, let me now turn to that other point which I call the reason of joy. This is one of the most encouraging facts in human life, that when the reason is diligently used it leads to the discovery of the reason of joy. It is found that joy has a defence. Desultory thought and mental indolence produce

depression of spirit; nothing is reached but a confused view of the world, which is anything but reassuring. And that careless thought which results from living too hurriedly easily leads to a feverish depression. But that must not be mistaken for thinking. And because that kind of thought produces depression, we must not be blind to what reason really shows. When we try to think honestly and connectedly we are led without knowing it to an optimistic view of the world and of life. When we do not confine our attention to some scant part of nature, but strive to enjoy and feel it all, we are reassured. It is the privilege of the soul to know and to understand the whole, and the whole can only be understood and explained in terms which become insensibly the terms of good, of life, of God, and even of love. Plato described the philosopher as the observer of all time and of all existence. That magnificent description of the thinker shows at once that joy results from thinking. As the mind ranges over the

whole, and receives the inspiration that never comes from isolated parts, it begins to exalt with a steady and unwearied joy.

Now it is true that even in antiquity there was a weeping as well as a laughing philosopher; and it is true that the Nineteenth Century, with its sick hurry and divided aims, produced a school of pessimistic thinkers of whom the brilliant writer Schopenhauer was the leader. But it is also true—and this is one of the most singular facts in the line of thought which I am following—that even the pessimist like Schopenhauer, when he makes his thought clear, and follows out the reason that is in him, somehow infects the reader with joy in spite of his pessimistic conclusions. He gives just the same kind of satisfaction to the mind as the great tragedian; for though all perish at the end of the tragedy the mind is not depressed, but is somehow exalted, by the very catastrophe. The pessimistic thinker, if he will think honestly and earnestly, leaves upon the reader something of the same result. It

is true that he has landed us in despair, but he has as it were at the end opened up some world of reality to which his very despair drives us. Men cannot think consistently without becoming cheerful. They cannot see things as a whole without becoming optimists; and the great philosophers—those whose names you remember (lesser philosophers are quickly forgotten)—are without exception sources of joy to those who study them and follow their thought. Aristotle, the master of them that know, and Plato, the idealist, but for that reason the discoverer of reality—these great thinkers of antiquity refresh the reader with a feeling of life and light and joy, for they bring to us the sense of a mind that is controlling everything. Plato even gives us the vision. He shows us how the phenomenal world is only to be explained by the ideas that over-rule and inform it, and those ideas lead up to the master idea, the Idea of Good. We are left face to face with the only explanation of the Universe as the idea of good

which is not distinguishable from God. And what is to be said of those ancient thinkers is to be said with equal force of every great thinker who has established his reputation in the course of the ages. When you come to Kant and to Hegel, and to their best representative to-day, Rudolf Eucken, exactly the same conclusion is reached. Kant in his "Critique of Pure Reason" appearing to disturb the foundations of your thought, subjecting to criticism the very methods by which we know, leads us to the great regulative ideas of the world, the soul, and God, as the necessary presuppositions of knowledge itself. Then he leads us on into the moral world, and what seemed to be questioned in the region of abstract thought is reaffirmed in the region of the moral authority. That categorical imperative of his, "Thou shalt because thou oughtest," becomes the light upon the life of man, as august and authoritative in the world of mind as the starry heavens are beautiful and commanding in the universe of matter. And Hegel, though

he moves in a rare atmosphere of abstraction, presents the reason of things as an inherent and inevitable logic which leads only to goodness and indeed to God. So it has ever been with the great thinkers—the little thinkers cannot think strongly enough to reach the conclusion, but every great thinker reaches a conclusion, and the conclusion he reaches is always good, is always God. Eucken has been teaching us quite in the line of the great philosophers, that the only explanation of things is to be found in a self-existent spiritual world with which we are brought into relation by our thought and by our action, by the whole range and round of human life. The fact is that when thought is active and persistent it cannot but insist upon a universe, and when it insists on a universe it must believe that the universe has a meaning, and when it sees that there is a meaning in the Universe it is impelled to the conviction that that meaning is good. Thus thought impels us to optimism. All things are necessarily seen

to the thinker moving, and moving to some far-off divine event, to some conclusion worthy of the mighty struggle, to the purpose for which all exists. And the thinker inevitably, if he goes on long enough and earnestly enough, explains the sorrows and the sins and the backslidings of the world in which we live as the incidents, only the incidents, of a great movement, an evolution, a progress, which points to endless good—just the moraine of dust and detritus thrown up by the slow advance of the pure and irresistible glacier. The thinker cannot but be an optimist. He must, if he thinks and reasons, reason his way to goodness and to God.

Now we all can, and indeed in a sense we all must, ¹ philosophers. Directly we think, in proportion as our thought is real and vital and honest, we reach the same encouraging conclusion. We might express it almost in the Apostolic phrase, "Every thought is brought into subjection to Christ"; or, to put it in another form, if we begin to think, we are driven to a

conclusion that the government of things is wisdom, is love. We are driven to the Father that is looking down upon his children in human life. We are driven to the conviction that things do make for righteousness slowly but surely. We are compelled to admit that suffering is redemptive. We find the solution of the problems of life in the daring supposition that love rules all, that the Ruler of the world is love, that self-giving for the good of the rest is the very pith and marrow of the world in which we live. Driven, if we think, to recognise the forces of good and evil as to our present intelligence antagonistic, we are impelled to choose the good and to eschew the evil—nay, to throw ourselves whole-heartedly on the side of the good, to do battle with the evil, even unto death. No man can think honestly and earnestly without becoming a champion of good against evil and a witness of God against the devil.

And thus reason leads us to joy; not perhaps to a full meridian of joy unclouded and serene—that meridian of

joy of the soul is reached not by reason but by spiritual insight—but to a joy like the breaking of the sun upon an April day, always dispersing the clouds, always promising that it will be well, always supporting the expectation of the clearer heavens in the later summer. Reason will lead a man to that kind of joy, intermittent, not secure; but it may lead also to the joy that lasts, the joy of the spirit. Therefore I conclude with an exhortation—“Come and let us reason,” let us think on things. Let us on the one hand make a diligent use of our mental faculties such as they are, and let us on the other hand try to find the security against their abuse. I urge especially upon young people to use their minds conscientiously. Do not allow that faculty to rust within you. That faculty is like a machine which gets out of gear and becomes useless, if it is not used. Face the fact that your mind can get out of order for want of conscientious use. And what costly machine in the world do we use so

carelessly and neglect so frequently as this, the costliest of all, our mind? "As thou wouldst be ashamed," said Richard Baxter, "to let the tongue run all day and say 'I cannot stop it,' so shouldst thou be ashamed to let thy thoughts run on random or on hurtful things and say 'I cannot help it.'" Do let me remind you that if you let your thoughts run on random or on hurtful things you are ruining the machine. You should use it for the purpose for which it is intended, that it may be kept in order. Over the portal of Hell it is said is written "Don't think," and over the portal of Purgatory it is written "Think in scraps," but over the portal of Paradise is written "Think conclusively," because Heaven is the place of developed and harmonious thought, where the finite reasons of men have come into perfect harmony with the reason of the Creator, the Infinite, where they see not only His glories and His perfections but the whole perfect Universe through His eyes and with His intelligence, the eyes

that are of purer and sweeter light than to behold iniquity, the intelligence that is working through iniquity to the final completeness of the good. With such eyes, I say, they see in Heaven, and Heaven is the place where the mind has come into such harmony with God that it sees God and the world in God's light. It is a high thought-paven way that leads to Heaven—not the way of indolence and careless thinking, not the way of indifference to truth and the clouding of the mind by the passions of the body, the high thought-paven way in which the soul her own commission sees.

But it is evident from experience that while we are to reason together we need some guide, some criterion, some test of truth, to save our reasoning faculty from confusion. When thought is "free," as we call it, it is not necessarily right. Free thought may take a wrong direction and may quickly fall into servitude—it may fall into the servitude of ancient delusions and false reasonings or of the

traitorous passions. You must not suppose that free thought is the guarantee for right thought or even for truth. "I call that mind free," said a great thinker, a preacher, "which sets no bounds to its love, which is not imprisoned in itself or in a sect, which delights in virtue and sympathises with suffering wherever they are seen; which conquers pride, anger and self and offers itself up a willing victim to the cause of mankind." Yes, that is free thought, but freethinkers very seldom think in that way or reach those conclusions. It would be hard to call up to mind a single freethinker who offers himself up a willing victim to the cause of mankind. So when we speak of free thought we must remember that free thought may be bad thought, and may lead to error and not to truth; and rationalism often comes to be something which discredits or even destroys. There are some so-called "thinkers" who land us in blind alleys of death; and some who are not thinkers, using their minds undirected, stray into

those fatal ways. Who has not observed it, in contact with people and even in reading some books, that there is a free-thought which becomes the very negation of truth and the destruction of life? You may be sure that a free-thought which leads to the foul and the unclean, a free-thought which overturns the realities and foundations of the moral life, a free-thought which cuts out God and denies the soul, is a thought which is only free in the sense that it is free from truth and free from reality. We want a thought which is free from untruth, from immorality, from Godlessness, from self, only that free-thought leads to discovery and to life. And how is our thought to be preserved, and how, using the reason, shall we escape its abuse and reach conclusions that really make for good in the world, and in life? I say it very reverently, it seems to me that our security in thinking is only found in the absolute submission of our finite thought to the authority of the thought of God. And what is the thought of God? If we are not mistaken,

Jesus Christ is the thought of God. He is called the *Logos*, the reason that became flesh. He was God and was with God, and he becomes the way and the wisdom precisely because he is the thought of God embodied in a human life, passing through an experience amongst men in order to express God to men. And therefore to bring our thought into subjection to Christ is to get the true freedom of thought, for coming then into contact with the reason of the universe, we are kept from the wandering mazes of thought and the blind alleys of death. I venture to suggest to you if you will take the Christ-less thinkers of our time and study their books—I do not hesitate to recommend it—you will see that by losing Christ they have lost the reason, they have lost the explanation; the *Logos* has vanished from the world, and the world remains unintelligible and even misleading.

And because it is by bringing our thought into subjection to Christ that we are spared

the misery and the decay of bad thinking, prayer in his name becomes a mighty instrument of thought—prayer in His name and self-conquest by His Cross. These are more than we ever know the conclusions of true and clear thinking. A man who has learned to pray in secret, and to master his passions in the wrestle of the soul, has made great strides towards rational thinking. “An hour of solitude passed in sincere and earnest prayer,” said Coleridge, “or the conflict with and conquest over a single passion or a subtle bosom-sin will teach us more of thought, will more effectually awaken the faculty and form the habit of reflection, than a year’s study in the schools without them.” How eternally true it is. You miss in many of the people who write to-day the note of the man who has learned to pray; and what is even more serious, the note of the man who has been in conflict with and has obtained conquest over the viler passions of the body. And no man thinks rightly while he is the slave of lust, no

man sees truly while his appetites govern his thought. You cannot be a thinker in the right sense unless the mind is pure; and in order to get the mind pure you must be washed in a fountain for sin and uncleanness. And therefore Christ stands for us the security of wisdom, the way of life for the thought of our time, the *Logos* that became flesh and dwelt among us—
“Come, therefore, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.”²

THE USE OF THE WILL.

We now come to *the will* as the means by which it is possible to maintain that perennial joy which is commanded. But if we speak of the will to be joyful as sufficing to give joy, it seems as if we are touching upon that kind of forced mirth which is more painful than grief itself. And yet the will has much to do with happiness and cheerfulness and gladness, and it is necessary for us to try to understand its capacity. And there is the more need to consider the question because undoubtedly most people greatly will to be happy, and seem to exercise their will in that direction so persistently that they might seem to deserve success. I received a letter the other day in which the pathetic words occur, "Do you think it wrong to wish to be happy? I am not even sure that I want to be good. I do want happiness very very earnestly." And as many people appear to desire happiness

and use their will in that direction and yet get little but sorrow, and give little but sorrow to others, it seems a question that needs to be investigated.

I shall try, therefore, in the first place to point out what the will is and what is its operation, and then I shall try to show what is the connection between the working of the will and that happiness which is the quest of my correspondent, and probably the quest of everyone else. But when I say that I am going to define what the will is, let not the reader be alarmed—I am not going to involve him in a metaphysical discussion. I remember that Milton pictured the lost spirits in Hell discoursing about free will and fate, and “they found no end in wandering mazes lost.” I am not therefore speaking philosophically, but only practically. The purpose is to bring out the meaning of the will.

Now in modern discussions of the subject there is a disposition not to speak of the will as a faculty at all, but rather to speak of the will as the person. It is not

quite correct for me to say "my will"—it would be more correct to speak of myself as the will, because this is precisely the point that makes me a person, a personality. I am a *will*—that is to say I am not a mere link in a chain of mechanical connection, I am not even a mere part of an organism—but I am an originating force. I am a power, I act, I choose; and indeed my life is made up necessarily from day to day of the innumerable choices, or decisions between alternatives which are presented to me by the circumstances in which I am living. I cannot of course do all that I like, because I am in the midst of powerful forces, physical and psychical, which greatly limit my powers, but it is still true to say that everything I do is the result of a choice of mine. I have determined and so I do—I am limited by circumstances, but yet the thing done, the outcome, is my choice. Now this freedom of choice, and the constant action resulting from the choice, is a fact of experience which no argument can ever overthrow, and it is that

freedom of choice that is the will. We should not speak perhaps of the freedom of the will—the will is the freedom of choice. It is the power to choose and the determination, the self-determination, which forms my conscious life—the one thing of which I am conscious, the one force which I really know; the one certainty—everything else is relatively uncertain—the one *certainty*, is that I am a will—that I choose and that I have a freedom, a certain limited degree of freedom.

Now this personality, which is a will, is much easier to know than to define, and I am not now attempting to define it. But this personality or freedom is God's dread gift. He has made us wills, "the living will that shall endure when all that lives has suffered shock." It is a dread gift, because by its very nature it implies that I can choose wrongly. I can make my choice go dead against God.

"You can divide the universe with God,
Keeping your will unbent, and hold a world
Where God is not supreme."

But on the other hand, unless God had given to me this dread gift there would have been no moral achievement, no moral victory, there would not even have been any moral life. To deny the freedom of the will is to make morality impossible. It will be seen then that, since this is a dread gift of God, the joy which results from the use of the will must be a trembling joy, for there is always a possible alternative. If joy is to be constant and eternal there must be something else that comes in, joy can not depend upon the limited human will alone—and yet it is true that the will decides by its repeated choices whether it shall be joy or not. It makes the choice of joy, or, what is more important, it makes the choices that lead to joy. If we are capable of joy, of divine joy, if Christ can speak of giving us his joy and of our being full of joy, it is just because God has entrusted to us this dread gift. He has made us persons. He has given us the power of choosing, our moral life depends upon it, consists of it—we are perpetually choosing, deciding, the will is

in operation, and upon that depends our capacity of joy. There could be no joy in the deep sense unless there were a will, and unless that will were free. You stand in the midst of things a most mysterious being. You are a thought of God—you are not only a thought of God but in a sense you are part of God; God has thrown you off as an image of Himself, the sharer of His dread prerogative of freedom. There you stand in the world with your power to choose, making your choices day by day, necessarily choosing though not choosing of necessity. By your choice all is determined. Those decisions of the will are making the happiness, the blessedness of your life and of what is to come, or the reverse. You are by your choice becoming a blessing to the world or a curse to the world, a blessing to yourself or a curse to yourself, a joy and honour to God or a reproach to God who made you. That is the great gift that is given us—that we are free beings, and our lives consist of free self-determination. That we call “the will.”

In the "Guesses at Truth" it is said that the only way of setting the will free is to deliver it from wilfulness—by which is meant that if our will is determined at every point by random desires or by our bodily appetites, it is practically bound; it is like a sovereign who is nominally the infallible ruler of Christendom, but is practically in the hands of his ministers. The freedom is nominal, not real. If the will is constantly determined by desire, by the appetites of the body, it is a sovereign in bondage. Therefore the poet said,

" Me this unchartered freedom tires,
I feel the weight of chance desires,"

and he turned from the "chance desires" to Duty, "the stern lawgiver," for direction. But though Wordsworth calls duty in a Hebrew phrase "stern daughter of the voice of God," it is not found sufficient to depend on an abstract idea. "The stern daughter of the voice of God" must give place to God Himself. We must go behind the idea of duty if we are

to have this will of ours rightly determined—we must go to God. The whole choice of life is right just in proportion as it gets into harmony with the will of God and our true freedom lies in choosing habitually and constantly and resolutely, exactly along the line of that infinite will, the will of the Being who is the Author of all, and in whom the whole reaches consistency and effectiveness. By choosing the will of God, centrally, and allowing the will of God to determine our choices in detail, the freedom of the will is achieved. It has then become free in the true sense—it is the sharer of the freedom of God. In that exquisite line of Dante which should never be out of our mind, which cannot be translated into English, though it sounds so simple,

In la sua voluntade e nostra pace,

(you cannot put it into English; it means that it is only in His will that our peace can be found) is struck the obvious truth. It is only where the human will chooses

according to the Divine will and becomes divine, that peace results—peace and joy. “Our wills are ours to make them Thine” —that is the point. The idea of surrender is incomplete; we are to use our will in harmony with the will of God.

But now, when we see this point—a point not difficult to see, indeed almost obvious—a real difficulty emerges; to choose the will of God, to find what the will is, to act in accordance with it, is the crux of life. And here let me say at once that unless Christ and Christianity, the revelation of Christ, shows what that will of God is, and how we are to do it, I do not know where to find that truth in the world. It is practically in this connection Christ or nothing. If Christ is true we can find out the will of God, and we can do it. If Christ is not true we do not know how we can find it out. The liberty with which Christ has set men free is not only the liberty from a law that was a bondage, but the liberty from a haunting and distressing uncertainty as to what God is or what God’s will is; that distressing condi-

tion of the human mind, not knowing the will of God, is the cause of all our sorrows.

Now we might all admit—probably we should and do admit—that the only peace and blessing must be from coming into harmony with that infinite will which has made everything, that is to say, with God. And we might all admit that Christianity offers us the only clear and convincing guidance about the will of God and how to conform to it. But the difficulty to-day is that many—an unknown number of our community—have lost faith in the Christian revelation, and to them even Christ himself recedes into the shades of the past—he is withdrawn from them, the ruler gone into a far country. He seems to them a being that was conjured up by the desire and need of human beings, and not a person that was given to us by history and by life as a reality from God. There lies the difficulty for the modern world. I do not find many people who are inclined to deny that Christianity would show us the will of God if it were true, but they say that we cannot be sure that

it is true. Now the question is, what can the will do in such a situation? What choice can it make? How is it to get guidance on the great fundamental need—to know and do the will of the infinite Being? The late William James made us familiar with the phrase “the will to believe,” and much exception has been taken to it. It is said that if you only believe because you will, there is no guarantee for truth. But James in his contention opened up a new possibility. He showed the connection between the will and the intellect, and suggested that probably it is not true to say that a belief is false because it is reached only by the will. It may be that that is the only way to believe. Belief is always and necessarily reached by an exertion of the will. The will determines to what we shall give our attention. If I determine to give my attention to the subject of painting I become in a little time acquainted with the laws and the effect of that art. If I determine to pay no attention to it I remain to the end of my days in practical ignorance

of it. Now in just the same way the will determines whether we give serious attention to Christianity, to the Christian teachings, to the Christian Gospel, to the Christian conception of life. Supposing a man obstinately determines that he will give no attention to this, that he never will face the meaning or the claim of Christianity, that he is not satisfied that Christianity has been a force contributing to the world's welfare, and he is not interested in it, he must remain in the misery of doubt if not in the sin of denial. It is his own choice—he has not given attention to the subject, and he can therefore know nothing about it. He has chosen his ignorance.

But the difficulty comes again when you will to face the claim. A man may be determined to face the whole thing, and give the best of his thought and investigation to the evidences of Christianity, and he may draw back from his effort with a feeling that the evidence seems insufficient, "the vision fades in ancient shades." Some criticism, he may say, is denying the

historicity of Jesus; and theological criticism is unsettling the traditional doctrine of the person of Jesus. Criticism paralyses the will—the will which would have been content to be convinced is prevented from yielding because the criticism of to-day seems to deny certainty on the point. What then to believe? Now that I take to be the attitude of multitudes of people to-day. For the man who will not investigate, will not give his attention to the question, there is nothing to be done. But most people have a great desire to believe, and wish they could be Christians; the difficulty is, they think that the evidence is inadequate, that the historic foundations have given way, that the literary proofs are torn to pieces. Then what ought the will to do?

Well, may I venture to suggest the answer to that question? Every man must form to himself some conception of life and of the universe, and he ought to choose the conception which is the noblest and truest to him. When he comes to

enquire what is the noblest and truest conception of the universe, might he not say this—I am not sure about the historic fact of Christianity, but let me try to get at what the meaning of that fact would be. That fact would seem to be that the infinite God is to be conceived of as the Father who loves men, a Father so interested in the men He loves that He seeks them and draws near to them. That infinite Father is supposed to take so deep and personal an interest in men that He gives to men Christ as the means of drawing men to Himself, and the Spirit as the way of living His life in men. It results from that conception that practical morality is summed up in two simple injunctions—you must love God and you must love men. You must love God because God loves you. You must love men because they are in a sense your brothers, as God is your Father. This twofold law of life is illustrated by the Cross, the principle of sacrifice—a man is not to think of himself, but is to lay down

his life for the good of all, for the saving of all. Out of that Cross of sacrifice breathes the Spirit, the Spirit of God entering into men and giving them guidance in truth and holiness of life, producing the best life that can be lived. Now may not a man reasonably say, there is a conception of the universe, a conception of God and of man and of life, issuing in a certain type of morality and producing a certain type of character—can I better this? Can I even suggest a more ennobling conception of life, a more stimulating motive for living and living well? Does anything offer itself in competition? Can I find any person, any philosopher, any religious teacher, who can suggest or prove anything better than this? When a man has come to look at it in that light, he says honestly “I cannot better this. It is the best that has been done. This is the highest view that has ever been taken about life. I am not sure about Christianity, but I am quite sure that no philosopher, no theosophist, would ever dream a loftier dream than this.” And so

a man can properly say, "As I am obliged to act upon the supposition of some condition or meaning of the universe, I take this—the best—to act upon. I will act upon it; I will act as if it were true; I will shape my life according to that principle. If I find the hypothesis has been wrong, at least there is this comfort—I shall have lived nobly according to the highest I can see or dream. If I should find it is right, well then, glory to God in the highest."

When Mill ended his theoretical demonstration of Utilitarianism by giving as the rule of practical living, "So act as that your conduct would win the approval of Jesus of Nazareth" he was taking the line that I suggest. Now as we see Christ's daring claim from this point of view, it reveals itself with an unexpected majesty. Christ ventured to say to men, "If any man *wills* to do the will of God, he shall know of my doctrine whether it be of God." He was content to rest the truth of his teaching as a message from God upon the will of man to do the will of God. It is a very

remarkable thing. Christ's idea of giving evidence about himself is not documentary. He speaks almost scornfully of those men who think by searching the scriptures to find life. What he says is, "If a man wants to find the truth of Christianity, all I ask of him is that he should with all the power of his *will* determine to do the *will* of God." No other preacher ever ventured to rest his claim upon a principle like that, but it is the principle of Christianity. It is when I have made up my mind that if I can find God's will I will do it, and that it must be the all-important thing in this universe to do God's will—that all the teaching of Jesus seems to shine with a light from Heaven. It is the revelation of the will of God, it is the guidance how to do it, it is the *power* by which even I can bring my will into harmony with God's.

It is then in this sense that it lies within our will whether we come to Christ, and whether we believe in him, whether in a word we are Christians; and therefore he

says to us—harping upon that one word the will—“Ye will not come unto me that I might give you life.” We see the meaning of that constantly recurring phrase in the New Testament, “Whosoever wills”; it does not mean “wishes,” it is “whosoever *wills*” that is saved. That *will* to do the will of God, that *will* to believe, to go by faith in order to do the will of God; that *will* to make religion an experiment, a practical experiment, of obedience to the highest truth we know, and the clearest teaching we can get, it is simply that will which leads a man into the Christian life, so that he finds himself incorporated into Jesus Christ. Christ just according to his own statement, in the illustration of the branch in the vine, enters in as the result of that will; and when a man is engrafted in Christ as the branch is in the vine, then Christ says, “These things have I spoken unto you that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be fulfilled.” “Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name; ask and ye

shall receive, that your joy may be fulfilled." "But now I come to thee," he says in prayer, "and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves."

The Will, then, has much to do with gaining and maintaining joy; we are made free in order that we may live the harmonious and joyful life. But it is useless simply to will to be joyful. The anxiety to be happy does not necessarily result in happiness. There is a way of joy, a conception of life, a power in life, set before us—it is a gospel, good news. The will chooses that way, takes that conception, submits to that power, and by that choice joy eventually comes.

In conclusion, these faculties are ours, Imagination, Spiritual Insight, Hope, Love, Reason, Will, at least germinally, and may be developed, and brought into harmonious operation.

By these faculties we find Christ, believe in him, receive him, and enjoy him, and his prayer is answered that his joy may be fulfilled in us.

CHRIST'S METHOD WITH THE BAD MAN.

Zacchæus was a bad man; not that he was a criminal, not perhaps that he was particularly vicious, but he was a bad man in the way in which we use that word to-day, the man who has done everything and sacrificed every scruple in order to make money.

We do not learn that he was a bad man simply from the fact that the multitude exclaimed "He is a sinner," because that charge arose out of the national prejudice against those persons who were the agents of the Roman government in collecting the taxes from a subject people; they therefore regarded the publican as bad because he was a publican, even though he might be in other respects an excellent and exemplary man. But we know that Zacchæus was a bad man from the language of the Lord himself in reply to the

charge that was brought against him that he had gone into the house of Zacchæus as a guest. The answer that the Lord made to that charge was that he had come to seek and to save that which was lost. Zacchæus therefore was lost—a lost soul. He was lost not only in the hasty and unthinking judgment of the multitude, not only in the opinion of the wisest and best people who knew him, but in the opinion of Jesus; and it was because he was a lost soul that the Lord adopted the treatment that is recorded in this story. What Jesus did was done not because Zacchæus seemed better than he was, but because Jesus knew what he was, and knew that he was lost. When the people charged Jesus with going into this house of Zacchæus because he was a sinner, Jesus did not defend Zacchæus and declare that he was no worse than other men; he accepted the statement and justified himself in the action he took because his mission was to save the lost.

Now the method that he adopted with

this lost man only strikes us with the proper astonishment when we have caught the point. His method is this: he does not denounce the man—he might easily have denounced him before the people and everybody would have approved. He does not even rebuke the man—He might have turned to him and charged him with the specific offences which everybody knew, and which his own conscience confessed. He does not denounce him to the multitude, he does not rebuke him, he does not say one discourteous word to him, he does not charge him with any fault. He does not adopt the method which I fear is the method we mostly adopt with people of this kind and with our fellow-sinners generally, he does not let him alone, he does not leave him to justice or to the Nemesis of time. He does not slip past the tree saying to himself, “We need not trouble about Zacchæus; he will find where he is by and by.” No, the method of Jesus with this lost man is, that he asks a favour of him.

He throws himself upon the man's hospitality, he puts himself in the position of the suppliant.

Now Jesus was quite accustomed to be without hospitality, He often had nowhere to lay his head. He did not therefore ask for lodging that night because he was not accustomed to sleep in the open. If it had been a Pharisee or one of the chief Priests He would probably never have asked that he might abide in his house that night. He only asked it because the man was a publican and a sinner. He asked for that hospitality aloud in the presence of everybody. There was nothing he could have done at that moment which would have been so absolutely unpopular as what he did, and therefore he asked for that lodging in the house in the hearing of everybody. He subjected himself to the criticism, the condemnation, which he well knew would come. No one had a good word to say for that publican; everyone there was agreed that he at any rate was a sinner, the very worst of the worst. If there had been an outcast

in the streets of Jericho, a son of Abraham, a Jew, however low the man had sunk, however bad the man was, there would have been a few charitable thoughts for him; but for this publican, this wealthy man, who gained his wealth by being the subservient tool of an alien Government, and who used the position given to him by that Government to exact more than was his due from the helpless subjects of the Roman power—this man who was no son of Abraham, whatever might be his claim to be a Jew—for this man there was not one spark of pity, not one touch of charity in any heart of all that listened to Jesus. He was odious, execrable, worse than the worst, the outcast and scum of human society—and with that man Jesus asked that he might go and lodge.

And the result of his method is as striking as the method itself. Zacchæus had climbed up into the sycamore tree out of idle curiosity. He could not see because he was little of stature, and the general unpopularity which made itself

felt whenever he was in public prevented people from making way for the little fellow. He climbed up into the sycamore tree that he might get a glimpse of what was going on. There was no desire to touch Jesus or to consult him or to seek him. There was no movement of repentance in his heart, no desire to do better. From aloft in the tree he watched the Teacher surrounded by the people with a sort of cynical contempt. Probably his one reflection was as he watched, how much better off he was than this poor peasant from Galilee and the people who were crowding round him. No doubt he thought to himself "I could buy them all up and have something yet to spare." Looking down from the height of his selfish and ill-gotten wealth, conscious that everyone hated him, and with that hardened cruelty which comes from the sense of the hatred of our fellowmen, despising and scorning them all, and resolving that he would use his power to extort even more from them—conscious of his power of them, not of any power they had

over him—he was there in the sycamore tree, looking at Jesus.

But to his utter astonishment the Master saw him, and he spoke to him. Yes, he directed to him some words prefaced by his own name. He knew him by name. “Zacchæus,” he said, “make haste and come down.” Some inexplicable drawing occurred in his heart at the very sound of the voice, something moved in his nature, some impulse which he could not have described; and at the moment, without any reflection, he hastened to extricate himself from the branches of the tree and to slide down to the ground in obedience to this appeal. And he took Jesus to his house, all the multitude condemning Jesus for going, and he himself palpitating with a strange, new sensation. He took him to his house not only with alacrity but with joy; he joyfully received him into his house. His whole being was warmed by a great emotion that he had not felt for years. There was something stirring and awakening within him; in the house a sudden moral change took place, one of

those extraordinary conversions of the moral nature which have become more intelligible to us to-day than they were of old, and here accounted for by the cause which causes all moral changes, the presence of Jesus, the word of Jesus. When they had entered the house he felt the movement, and directly he had placed Jesus upon the divan, preparing for the reception he meant to give, he suddenly started to his feet himself, and standing up before the Master he uttered the words that are recorded. He said, "The half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything wrongfully I restore it fourfold." It is in the present tense, and at first it sounds like a declaration of his habitual good deeds, a vindication of himself before the Master; but that interpretation does not bear a close enquiry. "The half of my goods I give to the poor"—that is evidently a single act, a sudden resolution—I divide my goods now and give them to the poor; and that that is the real meaning is also proved by what Jesus him-

self says, "To-day is salvation come to this house." He recognises a change, a complete change—this conversion of the heart. He sees that this gift, this restitution that he is making, is the result of that conversion. The method has been completely successful, the bad man is transformed, converted, changed there and then into a good man. The rapacity of years melts away, and he parts his goods to the poor—the guilt of years, the evil conscience is touched and changed, as he gives back what he has taken four-fold, in the presence of the Master.

"Forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham," that is a Jew; but it does not mean of course, that Jesus has received him and pardoned him because he was a Jew. He was ready to see that a Jew had a special claim upon him. "Should not this woman be released from her infirmity forasamuch as she is a daughter of Abraham?" He was not ready to admit that a Jew as such would be saved. The Prophet had declared God could raise up

from the stones children of Abraham. To be a child of Abraham would be no claim for redemption, and one of the parables of Jesus represents the man in Hell still speaking of father Abraham. No, Jesus does not mean that Zacchæus is received and forgiven because he is a son of Abraham. He means that the populace had as it were disfranchised and expatriated this guilty man—did not regard him any longer as a child of Abraham, but as a traitor and a renegade. And the word of Jesus restores him to his position, declares that though he is a bad man, though he has forfeited all claims to the respect and affection of his fellow countrymen, he is still a son of Abraham. He has not lost his position, because he is a son—that is the meaning of it. “Forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham.”

It is Christ's sublime power of seeing the gold underneath the tarnish, of discovering the heart of good in evil things. The image and superscription of God remain for the eyes

of Christ upon every human being, however fallen, however lost. This was the characteristic of Jesus that gave rise to the beautiful legend that might possibly have been in the New Testament. The dog was lying dead in the courtyard and everyone passed it with an exclamation of disgust—that pariah animal, always detestable, more detestable now when it is in dissolution and offensive to every sense. Everyone passes it with scorn, everyone criticises its ugliness, and its foulness; and Jesus passes it, and he says, “I think the dog has very beautiful teeth.” He has fixed at once upon the one redeeming feature, the one beautiful point in that mass of putrescent evil. That is the character of Jesus.

St. Francis of Assisi, who in so many ways strove to follow in the very footprints of our Master, acted on just the same principle in his dealing with the three robbers as the story is told in the Fioretti. There were three robbers who came to Monte Casale, where brother

Angel was in control; they asked for food, and brother Angel, indignant with them for their enormous crimes, repelled them from the house and bade them begone. But when St. Francis returned, with a little loaf and a little flask of wine in a wallet which he had begged from Christian charity, he was indignant with brother Angel for what he had done. "Because," he said, "sinners are brought back to God better by gentleness than by cruel reproofs. Wherefore our Master, Jesus, whose Gospel we have promised to observe, saith that they who be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick, and that he was not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance, wherefore he oftentimes ate with them." He bade therefore brother Angel on holy obedience to go and seek those robbers and to take them the little wallet of bread and wine, and when he had found them after searching through the hills of the Abruzzi he was to fall down at their feet and crave their pardon for his rudeness to them. And brother Angel went in

holy obedience, and finding the robbers fell at their feet, and humbly confessed to them his cruelty, and entreating them to do no more ill, bade them come to Francis, who would maintain them if they would give up their evil practices. And while brother Angel went to accomplish the command we are told that Francis set himself to pray, beseeching God to soften the hearts of those robbers and to convert them to penitence. A great remorse seized the robbers, and they came to St. Francis and were received into the Order of the Brothers Minor. Two of them quickly died, but one of them remained for fifteen years in a holy obedience of life converted by the love that they had found in Francis, who had taught them that Christ, the Blessed One, came into the world to save sinners.

Now, if Christ has won you or me, he has done it in this same generous and surprising way. He has seen us sceptical and self-sufficient and greedy and self-indulgent, looking at

him with an idle curiosity or even with unbelief and positive denial; for there may be some here who have denied him altogether and turned their backs upon him. But he has appealed to us without reproaching us. He did not begin, as others do, by denouncing us. He did not even begin by reproofing us. He began by loving us. He began by asking a service of us. He did not consider your unfitness, but fastening on the one sound spot in you, he asked you to do something for him. He has braved everything to claim you and me, and to abide with us; for the world still decries him because he comes to such poor unworthy creatures as you and I are. That is the reproach of the world still. The world's greatest excuse for not accepting Christ is the kind of people that Christ consorts with—with us, us poor miserable creatures so unworthy to be his. That is the world's charge still, that Christians are such a poor sort, that Christ cares for those whom the world properly condemns. But Christ cares for us, Christ chooses us, comes with us,

is as ready to come with us as with those proud people who scorn us. He would as lief sit with this poor person whom nobody cares for as with the proudest person in London society. That is his way. But his grace to us has won us, his belief in us has conquered us, his trust in us has drawn us to himself, has made us his ready followers. He has believed in us, and any good that comes of us is due to this fact, that he has treated us in this way. Because he saw us and called us there has grown up in response to him some desire of holiness within us, perhaps some little achievement of holiness. It was because he sought you you began to be good, because he found you you have become a little like him. We were all like Zacchæus or worse until he came and called, and said "Come down. To-day I must abide at your house."

Now as he has acted so to us, we should act to one another in the same way. Here he shows us the one way of reforming criminals. The way to reform criminals

is not to punish them but to believe in them. We should not put them in the house of correction but in the house of love, the house of mercy. The way to get at them is to cherish in them the beginning of better things. The warders appointed in prisons should be men who can love and pity. They should be people who go into the prison not to earn a living, but to seek and to save the lost, people who are convinced that the guiltiest can yet be brought back and the most defiled can be made clean. It is the only way to deal with criminals, it is the only way to save the lost. We shall never do it by prisons or by punishments, but by Christ and Christ's method. Christ always finds in the human heart the point from which redemption can begin. It was beautifully said about Livingstone that when he went to Africa he did not go, as people usually go to Africa, to find gold. There is a gold mine now in that very creek that is called by Livingstone's name, and men are there all athirst for gold. But Livingstone did not go to Africa to find

gold. The gold he sought was the souls of African people, and how they responded to him ! He found the gold ; the only gold worth finding in Africa was found by that Christ-heart that could love the people. O, that we might as a country understand this most obvious lesson of the life of Jesus, that there is no way of saving people but by loving them ; that there is no meaning in life except to seek and to save ! The lost are just our opportunity. Societies may be necessary ; I do not ask that we should give up forming societies for saving people ; but they are not to be a pretext for our not doing it ourselves. You are to save people. " It is my privilege," you should say to yourself every day, " by His grace to seek and to save some Zacchæus, some lost man, whom I may bring to Him."

And remember that this method applies not only to the criminal class, and to this respectable kind of sinner, the Zacchæus-class, but to the world-hardened people absorbed in

business, money-making and pleasure—the method applies to them all. That is the way to deal with the rich man, just as that is the way to deal with the criminal who has been sent to prison. It is also the way to deal with everybody. It is the only way to deal with them—Christ's way. Go for the good that is in each person, and if there is no good in him go for the best there is—there may be just a little that you did not know at first. Get hold of that, though it be but one gentle thought in a character that is really brutal and selfish. Thought it be but one touch of a noble spirit in a person who is essentially mean and common and unclean, go for that. On that single touch of good build; elicit it; you will be surprised how it grows. A man grows visibly better directly anyone begins to think him good. Whenever anyone sees in you a virtue and mentions it, the virtue grows. There is no limit to dealing with people on those lines—Christ's way. It works wonders, transforming wonders, miracles, wherever it is tried.

When Florence Nightingale was nursing the soldiers at Scutari, she had as many as three or four thousand men, the rough element of the British army thrown upon her hands—and they were bad in those days. They were always drunk whenever they could be, and the officers at the Crimea gave up all thought of preventing them from getting drunk—they regarded that as the natural position. Their own officers regarded them as brutes. But Florence Nightingale loved them; and she was not content with ministering to them and healing their wounds; she saw their moral wounds and she yearned over them. And what was the result? Those masses of men drawn from the slums of the city, or the outcasts of the countryside, learnt to treat her with absolute chivalry. Never did she hear from any one of them a word that might wound the sensitive ear of a lady. They would not swear nor do anything discourteous in her presence. They were models of courtesy. She lived all her life thanking God for knowing the British soldier

because he was so perfect a gentleman. She had made them gentlemen. She believed in them, she trusted them, and of course they were what she expected them to be. It is the only way.

Why do you fix your mind on the fault of that man? Why harp on it? Why are you always saying how unworthy he is, how untrue, how incapable? It will do no good. The more you talk of it, the more you think of it, the worse he will become. Does it ever strike you, the reason why people are so unsatisfactory is that the carping spirit is always pointing out their faults, pressing on the sore place and making it sorer still? No, dwell upon that man's virtues, dwell upon the little good he shows. Show him you notice it, you value it. Do not hesitate to say you think well of it; for a little good in a worthless character is a priceless jewel. Do not be afraid of praising him. Let him know that you love that little jewel in him, that it sparkles like a diamond in the dust-heap of his character, that you would like to use

it, and will use it. That is the way to deal with **people**. Then they change, their whole character changes. O, human nature is a beautiful, an exquisite thing. It is trodden down by the regardless feet, it is degraded by the cynical tone, it is injured and impaired by the sinful heart. You do people ill and then you abuse them, you ruin them and then you despise them. That is the way. But human nature is a beautiful thing, an exquisite flower. It can grow into such a bloom, it can emit such a fragrance, that it is quite fit to be in Heaven and under the very eye of the Living God. The human heart is beautiful. The human life can be beautiful. Believe it, live for it. Go this week, wherever you are, in your business or in your home, determined that you will see the beauty in every person that you meet; cherish it and encourage it and elicit it. Then you are walking in the way of Christ. Then you are obeying Him. You shall say to some poor little contemptible avaricious Zacchæus, some rich man lost in himself and ruining others by his self-absorption,

“ Make haste and come down; to-night I should like to abide in your house.” And he will do it—the human heart always responds to the touch of Christ. If it does not respond to our touch in the Church to-day it is because it is our touch and not the touch of Christ. Let the hand of Christ be upon the wounded heart of the world and he will heal it. Let the voice of Christ be heard speaking to the lost and they will listen. When they hear that voice it goes right home, and they long to come to him, for there is an irresistible longing in the human heart that is never put into words; it is not a selfish longing, it is not a base thing. The mightiest passion in the human heart is a great desire for something that it does not understand, and that is Jesus Christ. And when they find him, and know that he is calling them, they come, they cannot resist him. He draws them as he drew Zacchæus, and a sudden conversion takes place in the heart. They lose taste for what the world wishes to be, and become what Christ would have them be—his, to follow him.

STRENGTH FROM CHRIST.

When it was said in the presence of John Smith, who was an under-master at Harrow School, and whose life was, as far as we ever can say it of any human life, a perfect and saintly one, that someone had a very difficult task before him, he exclaimed in astonishment, "Difficult? Difficult? Why he is a Christian." All power is given unto me in Heaven and on earth, saith the Lord, and he exercises that power in and through those who are in him. If we can maintain the connection that is contained in this little preposition "in," "*in* him that empowers me," we may remove not only the word "difficult" but the word "impossible" out of our vocabulary.

Before examining and illustrating this wonderful fact may I notice the persistent mistake of the crowd, even to-day, that Christianity is an added burden to life—

that it is an interference and not a help. I know two pious people living very near to this spot who have to endure the contradiction of sinners day by day. Whenever they express their faith and their hope to their neighbours, the careless people living in the house and in the neighbourhood, will say to them, "Why do you bother yourselves about that?" They live, they enjoy, they earn, they pay their debts, and they imagine that they are greatly relieved from the trouble of religion, and that the unfortunate persons who believe have an extra weight upon them because they are Christians. What a strange delusion that is, for it means that these critics do not see that they are entirely without the only power that prevails, that they are left to themselves in just this world, and this situation, where they themselves are not enough. "I link my earthly feebleness to thine almighty Power." How can that be a hindrance? How can it be anything but a help? And yet that is the definition of Christianity—"I link my earthly feebleness to thine almighty Power."

Now let us look at the remarkable words, which are not and cannot be fully conveyed by any translation. If you read the Greek you would find that there is no word "do" in the text—I can "do" all things. It may be understood but it is not there, and what the words mean as you read them is rather this: I have all strength, strength of all kinds, strength for all things. It does not so much mean I can *do* all things. There may be many things which St. Paul could not do, which you and I cannot do, because we are not meant to do them. I may not have a voice, and therefore I shall not be able to sing because of my relation to Christ. We all have our limitations—we are not raised above them by our relation to Christ; we remain the same humble little creatures still. Therefore it is not so much, I can *do* all things, for obviously there is a decisive limit to the doing of us all. I need hardly remind you, too, that the "all things" do not include evil

things or un-Christlike things. God cannot do all things in that sense—He cannot lie, He cannot deny Himself, He cannot be unkind. The *all* therefore is limited to the things which Christ would wish done and enable us to do. But, as I say, it is not the doing that is in Paul's mind. He means rather something of this kind: I have all strength, all strength that I require, all that is necessary for what is demanded of me, all physical strength, all mental strength, all spiritual strength. Weak as I am, strength is made perfect in that weakness because I am poised in and environed by the whole scheme of God. I fit into my little place, and the power of God is in it all, and because I am there in His scheme according to His appointment all the power that is necessary moves through me, and all that is to be done will be done by me. My task will be accomplished because of the strength that flows through me. The supplies of power are divine; they are sure and constant and unailing.

And this fitness or sufficiency results

from the connection with Christ, "in him that furnishes the power,"—the dynamic, the word is exactly the word that in English is translated dynamic—"the dynamic in me." By him, in him, Paul has Christ's power to work.

Just as in a great factory where all the power is generated at one spot, perhaps by one engine, and is all conveyed and distributed to each part so that every wheel is turned, every hammer is lifted, every implement is employed in a perfect harmony and with complete efficiency, the power distributed according to the direction, so it is to be understood that an individual life placed in Christ is in the line of power, and exactly what is wanted is supplied. But the difference is, this is not a factory, nor is it a machine, but it is a divine Person whose omnipotence moves the universe.

You have the power supplied to your part of the whole—just enough power, no surplus, received just at the right time, not before. There is no sense of inherent strength or fitness, no occasion for boast-

ing, you are never tempted to say "I can do all things," and stop there. No; of yourself you remain as before. Still you say: I am powerless, I am useless, I am an unprofitable servant, but in *Him* that *empowers* me I can do all things. In contact with Him, united with Him, drawing upon Him, I am equal to the task of the moment, and I am assured that I shall be equal to every task of the future—all things will be possible.

Our whole struggle, therefore, is to be *in Him*—that is the crux. When a man gets in Him all is right—doubt disappears, he becomes conscious in a sense of the steady driving power that is in his life and working on things around him. He is borne along, is made perfect; he approaches difficult tasks without fear, and is undismayed by the threatening forces that are opposed to him. But the crux is to be in Christ and keep in him; to keep in Christ demands a faith and often a struggle.

There are a thousand temptations and

obstacles that keep us out of the place of power. You never pass a day of your life but someone will try to show by word or by practice that it is impossible to be in Christ, that there is no Christ to be in, and that if there were you could not be in him; you are surrounded all through the battle of life by these questions and doubts and denials, and I tell you the struggle is to put them all aside and to abide in Christ, in him that empowers you.

You remember how Cromwell when he was dying, though he had faced all his arduous life in this faith, asked for these verses from Philippians iv. to be read to him. He listened. "I have learned to be content. I can do all things." And the dying man repeated the words to himself and said, "It is true, Paul. You have learned this and attained to this measure of grace, but what shall I do? Ah, poor creature, it is a hard lesson for me to take out, I find it so." There at the end of his life he was still finding it so—"A hard lesson for me to take out"; but when he came in his rumination to the words of the

text, faith began to work, and he said, "He that is Paul's Christ is my Christ too," and he drew comfort and joy out of the wells of salvation before he passed away.

Yes, that is the struggle—to get in Christ, to get hold of Christ. May I urge it upon you—get at that truth yourself. Do not hold back, do not put it off—get in Christ to-night; do not leave this building until you are in Christ; push through the obstacles, get over the doubts and the misgivings, get a foundation sure. Get into Christ so that you can say, however tremblingly and however modestly, "I do believe at last I stand in Christ to-night—no longer in myself, no longer dependent upon myself; my feet have got down upon a foundation, and I am in him, and now his power will accomplish all." I say, linger on your knees to-night with your heart prostrate before him until you reach that point. It is all important.

But now when you are in him—and I dare venture to hope and believe that one or another of you has stepped into him even while I have been speaking—you

begin to get your feet upon the ground there, upon the rock—look how it all works out, look what comes into your life, and just dwell upon two things—the assurance that comes, and the confidence in attempting even the most difficult things that Christ calls upon you to do. Let me dwell on those two things for a moment—and first, the assurance that comes. You may be in great calm and peace about the ultimate results of life if you are in Christ. There will be no missing of the mark there; he will take you right through. You are not at the mercy of storms and currents and winds and waves.

I saw a beautiful comparison the other day.

The difference between the man who is only under the influence of the world and the man who is in Christ is the difference between a sailing ship and a great steamer. The sailing ship is liable to be drifted out of its course or arrested in its progress by contrary winds, and if the winds fail the ship lies idle and cannot move. That is the man of the world, who is in the world

and of the world, and the world does what it likes with him. There is no driving power within, it is all from without. He is the sport of the winds and waves. But you in Christ are like a great steamship, with its towering decks, sitting solidly and peacefully in the tumultuous seas, not dependent on the winds from without nor greatly hindered by them, but driven steadily forward by the power within.

Christ is in you, propelling you through the billows, steering you to the haven. A great peace falls on the soul when the fact is realised that you are in Christ and Christ is in you.

The haven will soon open. Into those quiet waters the great storm-tossed ship will glide to its anchorage, and then there will be the welcomes on the quay and the friendly voices and the loving faces—there will be home. In Christ you may be quite calm. He takes you right through to the end. The goal is in sight to him though not to you, and he guarantees that he will bring you safely,

through. There should be a great assurance in our hearts if we are in Christ.

Then one word upon the other point. Sure of him, we may face tasks which he gives us to do though we feel ourselves quite unfit for them. We may be content to know that he makes no mistake in his calls. He calls us to do a thing which, as we see, is beyond us; or a thing which, as we see, is directly contrary to our bent and to our particular capacity, and yet he makes us see that we are to do it, and in him we shall do it, or rather he will do it in us. When Westcott was quite an elderly man of 64, when he had spent all his life in the study and the professorial chair of Cambridge, he was suddenly called by Lord Salisbury to take the heavy charge of the bishopric of Durham. His interests had never been in parochial or diocesan work, he had no practical knowledge of it, but he had once said to Dr. Vaughan, of Harrow, that he should not wonder if before his day was over he might be called to some such charge; and when that call came to the quiet student at

Cambridge at the age of 64, he laid aside all his personal preferences, and wrote to his son, "In the prospect of such a charge every thought of fitness vanishes; there can be no fitness or unfitness, but simply absolute surrender. I think I can offer all, and God will use the offering." And what was the result? That delicate and frail scholar went from the cloister at Cambridge into the bustling mining population of Durham to exercise episcopal rule over that great see, and it was found that he was just as efficient as a bishop as he had been as a professor. All the past life, which seemed complete in itself, was quietly laid aside, and he passed on to another completeness—an even greater completeness, some thought—in the quiet strength of trusting in his God. He could do all things in Him that empowered him.

Now does this opportunity of service come to any of you, and are you tempted to decline it on the ground that you are unfit? Do not refuse it too rapidly—look

at it again. It may be this call, just precisely this call, that is to be the occasion of your getting into the secret of God's power. Because He calls you to do what you cannot you are obliged to get into Him; and do not refuse that call of duty, that difficult task—make sure whether He calls you, but if you think and see that He calls you, bravely face it, and you may find that, powerless as you are in yourself, you have discovered exactly this point that the Apostle dwells on: "all strength is mine, I am empowered."

Let me tell you a saying that is given in that lovely book, "Christ's Folk in the Apennines." The cholera was raging in the district, and there was a peasant woman, Marina, a very beautiful woman of 25, with her two little children, who in the demand and the need of the dying patients offered herself to nurse them. She went into the dangerous atmosphere and nursed them with her own hands, and with great tenderness and skill; people protested against it, and said, "Why should you expose your life

for those who are not connected with you at all?" Her answer was, "The poor things must not be neglected, and I am as fit to do it as anyone." Then she said to her friends who spoke to her about it: "You see, when you have a call everything is easy." Now if you have a call to do anything for God you can do it—you can do all things in Him that empowers you.

In conclusion let me say: As this is the nature of our strength, a strength which is not in the least our own but the empowering of Another, as it is a strength that is poured into us and through us, and does not remain in us for our comfort or for our pride, we can explain the singular fact—that our work has often to be done, I think it has chiefly to be done, without any self-satisfaction, and even without the knowledge of the effect which is produced. All great and true work for God is practically unconscious work. We are parts of a system, an organism, a great body, the body of Christ, and our little activities are connected with the whole; but they give no

sense of completeness in themselves. Just as the limb in the body has no completeness, it cannot set up itself as an agent on its own account, but is only part of the body, so every true worker for God is a limb in the body, a little part of a great whole, and consequently the work that he is doing for God seems to him quite incomplete.

It is quite incomplete, quite unsatisfactory, and quite ineffective, because the effect is not produced by his work but by the whole, and the power that runs through him runs through the whole. You must not be surprised if in your work for God there is an eternal sense of self-dissatisfaction, a mourning over the incompleteness and futility of it all—it is a necessary part of great work for God. Others will see it, you will never see it. Others will understand what you are doing for the world, you will never get a glimpse of it yourself. Your part of it is to do something which demands faith and patience and courage, and not to wait for

a recognition or even to look for any effect at all.

In a great continental belfry a man with wooden gloves upon his hand was striking the keys of a board in order to ring the bells up there in the tower. No music was heard within, only the ugly clatter of the wood and indistinguishable clangour; but down in the noisy streets and away out in the quiet country ways the bells sent out their silvery peal; their music and their sweetness fell upon the wearied hearts and comforted them, and entered the empty hearts and filled them. Music rings out from the bell tower, but the man who makes the music is hard at the drudgery of the wooden board—for him there is no music, there are no bells, only the sacrifice of service and the fidelity of devotion. That man is blessed by the work of others, the bells from the next church tower comfort him, but his own bells do not reach his heart. For him the drudgery and the toil and the sacrifice, but God will use him to bless the rest of mankind. You must not think of reward, you must not think of

success; you must think of the call and of the obedience to the call; the duty done in the dark and in the noise without any comfort but your own heart in Him that empowers you.

Now if you have this great Christ empowering you, and if you are living in him and working in him, you may go about your task with a manly confidence and strength. You need not fear that there will be any ultimate failure. You need not trouble about the rewards. Our God does not leave His servants unrewarded, though He seldom rewards them here. He does not leave them in the lurch, though they often think they are left. You need not have any concern. Do not withhold your hand, do not spare yourself, do not think of any personal end to be gained, do not expect applause, do not work for pay—go on, and He will keep you and carry you through. Concentrate your thought and life on Him and Him alone, and yield yourself wholly to His will. Let Him use you, Let Him chastise you, let Him try you, let Him punish you if he

will, let Him have His way with you—it is the best way for you, it is a glorious way leading to ultimate victory. The results are perfectly sure—you may dismiss all thought of immediate result in the absolute confidence of the eternal results of your life. Get into Him, abide with Him, and you can do all things in Him that strengtheneth you.

The sweetest lives are those to duty wed,
Whose deeds, both great and small,
Are close-knit strands of one unbroken thread,
Where love ennobles all.
The world may sound no trumpet, ring no bells,
The Book of Life the shining record tells.

SPIRITUAL REVIVAL.

It was one of the last papers of George Tyrrell's in which he spoke about spiritual revival, and made a suggestion that I think we ought to take to heart. He noted that spiritual revivals for many centuries past had turned upon an appeal to men's faith in Hell and Heaven and in the Scriptures as God's word. He noticed from Wesley and Whitefield on to Moody—and he might have added to Dr. Torrey—that this was the motive that was put in the foreground of the appeals. Then he went on to say that appeals of this kind to-day are not effective, and the reason why they miss the mark is that scepticism has touched the presuppositions on which they rested. The simple beliefs in Hell and Heaven and in the infallible word of the Scriptures which prevailed without question for many centuries cannot be relied on. The thinking

people regard them with misgiving, and raise questions about them directly they are mentioned; and while it is true that a vast number of unthinking people do not question, it is never safe to make the appeal to the unthinking on the assumption that they will not be influenced by what the thinkers are thinking, for subtly and surely the thought of the thinker penetrates the unthinking world. George Tyrrell, therefore, in this paper asks, "Is there any other way in which men may be convinced that religion is a real, a supreme necessity of life, that the salvation of their souls is more profitable than the gain of the whole world?" He goes on to say, what perhaps does not strike us at first, but it repays enquiry, is that the appeal of Christ was never directly to Hell or the punishment or even to the reward of another life. His appeal was always a call to prepare for the Kingdom of God and for entering into the joy of that Kingdom here on earth. It was a call to die to a lower self, the lower, particular psychic self, in order to reach a higher self, the

richer, the fuller, the universal, the spiritual self. And not only is that true of the teaching of the Lord, but if you come to look carefully into the New Testament you make this curious discovery, so contrary to the traditional teaching of the Church, that the appeal of the New Testament as a whole is never to the motives of reward or punishment in the world to come, but to the motive of the love of God, to what is called in the New Testament "the Grace of God that brings salvation," and the sacrifice of Jesus, that motive being considered sufficient and complete without any reference at all to a future world.

Tyrrell also says that Christianity is a life of sacrifice for the ideal in conduct, recognised as the will of God, the peace, the dignity, the meaning of life, which comes from the sense of union with the Power that works for the ideal in all nature and for righteousness in man. He therefore said that if he had to preach—and you may remember that he was suspended from his pastoral work by the Roman

Church—if he had to preach, in place of Hell fire he would urge the hollowness of the self-life until men loathed it and cried out “ Who will deliver me from the body of this death, this self-life ”; and then said he, “ I should turn to the Christ-life, not only the love of Christ but the love of all Christ-like men, and make its reality, solidity, eternity, stand out stereoscopically.”

Now this suggestion, which was made by a man who to the last was a faithful son of the Roman Catholic Church, deserves our thought, and it has made a deep impression on my own mind because I recognised that although we all feel as he did we seldom venture in the pulpit to say it, and I cannot help recognising in my own experience that if I preach, or if I listen to preaching, that turns upon the threat of punishment in the world to come, there is a kind of chill in the audience, and a suspicion arises in one's own mind. People naturally say, “ If you are telling us that we are to go into the punishment of Hell and there to bear that punishment

for eternity, you must give us some authority"; and if your authority is simply a text that is quoted from the New Testament they insist on enquiring whether that text is rightly understood—whether it is not the mistaking of a metaphor for a physical fact; and even if that were passed over, the modern mind instinctively asks, "Before you preach that doctrine of Hell fire you must show us how to square it with our conception of God, our idea of the God of love and power who has been presented to us from our infancy." And the modern mind, however we may account for it, is always ready at a moment's notice to surrender all faith in God rather than hold a faith in a God that does not commend itself to the complete moral sense. The modern mind is more ready than people have ever been in the past to give up the hope of a future life altogether rather than sketch pictures of that future life which cannot be verified and which may be grossly misleading. I say I recognise the truth of this situation, and if ever you have attempted to preach upon a text

about the punishment of the future world without entering into careful examination, and determining to touch some moral bottom, you soon become conscious that your audience is not with you, that their moral sense does not respond; the appeal fails, it does not get home, it alienates men from the Gospel of Christ, but it does not turn them away from their sins.

Now what George Tyrrell said seems to me perfectly true. If instead of dwelling upon the threat of a future punishment I begin to explain, however imperfectly, the nature of the self-life; if I try to show the torture, the gnawing, the insatiable craving that comes in the self-life, the self-centred life, the self-seeking life; if I try to show the manifest death that is implied in that self-life, as it is called, so that it ought to be called death rather than life, suicide rather than seeking to save life; if I attempt to show this, and at all succeed simply by touching upon the facts that we all know, and by opening the conscience to the inward reality, the response

is deep and genuine. It is a truth so manifest that no one can deny it, and it grips the conscience with an overwhelming power. If, for example, any sermon could press into a few minutes the lessons of such a book as George Meredith's "Egotist," and bring home to us the horror, the loveless torture of the egotist, who is to all appearance a virtuous man, but is literally ruined by the fact that his horizon is himself—I say if that can be brought home in a sermon there is not a person who misses the point, and every egotist stands self-revealed, and if he has any sense he seeks to escape from the manifest torture of his egotism. And recognising that the constant practice of our Lord was to speak in strong and significant symbols, there is great reason to believe that when he spoke of "the worm that gnaws and the fire that is not quenched" he was referring to something equally manifest to the conscience of men, and he did not mean to imply that those punishments are material or even future, but that they are spiritual and actually

present. He was referring to that worm that gnaws and that fire that is not quenched in every human being who lives for himself, who seeks his own ends, who sacrifices virtue and truth and love in order to achieve his own ends, and who thus becomes the egotist, the self-seeker. He is speaking of a hell which is manifest and unmistakable to everyone who has trodden the deadly path of self-seeking.

And, on the other hand, when we turn, as George Tyrrell did, to direct our attention and the attention of men to the Christ-life, whether it is the life of our Lord himself or that Christ-life that has been lived by those who walked in his footprints, we immediately find that we are touching solid ground. We are speaking of something that everybody can understand. It is something that goes home. We see from observing others, we find it if we try ourselves, that when men sacrifice self in order to serve, joy begins—that when men are willing to give up comfort and ease and what is called happiness—when they do actually give up comfort and

ease and happiness, and devote themselves to lifting the burden of others, to easing the lot of others, to ministering to the joy of others—their own lives become liberated, their own hearts expand, they have saved their souls in losing them, because they forgot that they had a self at all, and poured it out in the service of others. They recover what is infinitely better than the self they lost—it is the divine self which is in human beings ready to be developed when the divine road is taken, and this is no doubt what Christ means when he says that he is the way. I cannot, of course, determine that it is all that he means. There may be much more, and indeed we frequently discover much more, in these sayings of our Lord. But this he certainly does mean when he says that he is the way. You will get along the way *only* in His footprints; you will reach the goal *only* in him. It is that life of self-giving, that life of absolute and unshrinking sacrifice, that life that seeks to save, to bless and to heal, that life that loves, and gathers in, the world, and

loses all thought of itself, that is the way; and unless we are in that way we have lost the way and are treading the path which leads to destruction. That is the way, and he says significantly that in order to walk in that way you should take up your cross and follow him. The way of the Cross is the way of saving the life. The surrender of the life is salvation—to lose your life is to find it.

There has been published quite recently one of the most remarkable illustrations of this truth of our Lord that literature has given to us, the "Life of Florence Nightingale," by Sir Edward Cook—a life which springs into the rank of classical biographies directly it is published. That "Life of Florence Nightingale" is rich in teaching on many points, but the point I want to use it to illustrate is perhaps the central teaching of the whole. There was a girl brought up in comfort and even luxury. Her life was one long round of enjoyments, of interests, of travel, of society; and her parents, thinking they were consulting her interests, would not

allow her to enter into any other kind of life than that of the wealthy and luxurious girl at home. The mother confessed in after years, when Florence Nightingale had achieved her work, that she would have prevented her daughter from entering upon the path that led her to service and to usefulness. But while Florence Nightingale was, as it were, condemned to that kind of life which in our ignorance we desire, she was intrinsically miserable, she was restless and dissatisfied. She told her friends in letters which are now published how the weary days of luxury and pleasure went on, how in the comfort of the home evening she longed for night to come that she might go to rest and escape the tedium of a useless existence. There burned in her heart the desire to sacrifice, to serve, to give. She wanted nothing from the world except the opportunity of doing something for it; she would give up anything which she possessed if only she might possess the cross of service. And she mentions how when she would go to some party in London

and alight from the carriage to cross the pavement on the crimson carpet, to enter into the festal room and the happy assembly of guests, she saw only the wan faces of the street wanderers who ranked up on each side to see the guests go in. She wished to be with them and not with the guests. Her heart hungered after those who needed her, and she could not be satisfied with simply enjoying the adulation, the respect, and love, that were showered upon her by society. When she was over thirty years of age, at last her parents did permit her to spend a little time at Kaiserswerth, on the Rhine, where Pastor Fliedner had instituted the new Order of deaconesses, and in that life at Kaiserswerth, where this delicately brought up woman had to rise in the small hours of the morning to clean rooms, to live upon the barest and most unpalatable fare, to nurse the sick and to go through all the monotonous drudgery of a hospital, when she was condemned, as you might call it, by herself to this life, she all at once discovered that she had begun to live. She

writes with joy and satisfaction that this is all she ever demands of life, that she may serve in this way. When the Crimean War broke out, and the terrible revelation was made in "The Times" of the condition of the sick before Sebastopol, our men dying like flies, with no medicine, no surgical instruments, no alleviations, a most remarkable thing happened: Florence Nightingale wrote to the Minister of War, Sidney Herbert, and Sidney Herbert wrote to Florence Nightingale by the same post—the letters crossed. The letter of Florence Nightingale was to offer her services to go to the trenches at Sebastopol or to the hospital at Scutari, the request of the Minister of War was to this woman, who had been known for some time as seeking to understand the mysteries of nursing, that she would go. She went to her task, and there in toil which might have worn out the strongest constitution, day and night in the sight of anguish and death—she actually saw 4,500 men die in the hospital at Scutari—there in what one would call the very way of

suffering she found her true life. And when that task of the Crimean War was over, having found the secret of life, she would not return to the luxury and the comfort of her home, but she retired as it were into a privileged invalidism, and there for fifty years she devoted all her powers, working with the energy of a genius and with the insight of one inspired, to secure the welfare of the soldiers and of all sufferers, especially the soldiers whom she had adopted as her children. There is recorded in that *Life* one of the most wonderful things I have ever read, that by intervening in the interests of the Army in India, and getting at the Governor-General and using her powerful influence upon him, she was able to reduce the death-rate of the Indian Army from 69 per thousand, at which it stood, to 8 per thousand—one of the most extraordinary achievements of a woman's genius that we know of in the history of the world. It was that life of heroic effort, continued for 50 years, always labouring behind the scenes, never allowing her

name to appear, pressing steadily upon the Government and the officials, and bringing them all into line to promote her purpose and to achieve her end, it was that life of heroic service which was exactly like the life of her Lord and Master—the Christ life—and it brought with it the peace, the satisfaction and the joy that he promised. The two friends who accompanied Florence Nightingale to the Crimea, Mr. Newton and Mr. Bracebridge, were drawn into it by her. They sacrificed themselves in just the same way; they left their homes, their comfort, and lived that life of horror in the hospital of Scutari; these young Englishmen, strong and healthy, gladly left home to serve her at Scutari, freely, constantly, devotedly. They delighted to give, in response to her self-giving, which had stirred within them the deepest and truest springs of action. She found herself in losing herself, and she taught others to find themselves in the right and the only way, the Christ-like way, the way the Master trod, and the way the servants tread it still.

It is very curious that this simple truth, which is as plain as the day, does not get recognised more frequently and acted upon more consistently. Whenever you come to consider it you see that everything illustrates it, and that the opposite opinion—that life consists in comfort, ease and pleasure—is disproved by every fact that can be adduced. Look—if I may turn for a moment to another illustration—look at the action of the Antarctic explorers. Shackleton is going again to the South Pole to cross the southern continent of the Antarctic. He tells us that his motive is sentiment; he does not profess that he is seeking material reward or material wealth—sentiment, he says. There is a sentiment in men that inclines them to traverse an unknown continent and to brave danger and death in the pursuit of such a purpose. Take Scott himself and the journal which he has left behind him—one of the memorable things in literature. Commander Scott goes out to the South Pole. At first it seems as if it is simply the restless desire to do what no

one has done and to gain the reputation of achievement. At first you wonder what good can result from it, what gain to science, what benefit to mankind. But as you look more closely you see that that personal element, the desire for fame, the wish to score a great success and to shine in the eyes of the world, plays but a very little part in the mind of the man, and certainly would be a most insufficient motive for the sacrifices he makes and the hardships he endures. It dawns upon you in contact with the heroic spirit of a man like Scott that men have in them always the heroic, that always at the centre of a man's being is something which is scornful of luxury and comfort and ease, something that is ashamed of dragging on through idle and useless days that do not benefit the world or advance the cause of humanity. Scott is an eminent example of humanity. Everyone is like that at the centre. There is always a craving that his life may not be altogether wasted, that it may contribute to some good cause. There is always the readiness if the occasion offers

to give and to sacrifice and to suffer if that cause may be promoted. The noble soul, and in proportion to its nobility, is possessed with an irrepressible desire not to get but to give, not to hoard but to spend, not to live but to die—to give life itself for someone, for humanity, for God. And in that record of Scott, that party in which there is one devout and avowed Christian, what a truth shines out! Wilson is the one avowed Christian; he is there cheering them all the time with the cheer of the Christian faith. When the men are cast down, despondent, he raises :

“Rock of ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee.”

All the time he shows the spirit and the power of Christ in his brave death and his manifold services; that spirit of Wilson is the light that shines all through the record. That is the truth, you feel; and Scott felt it was the truth, and the other men felt it was the truth, and they tried to draw into their own experience this

genuine Christ-life of their comrade. They tried, and not in vain, until the whole party seemed possessed with the same great thought, and enlightened by the same great light—the light of service, the light of the Cross, the interpretation of life that is given to us in the suffering Son of God.

It is always the same. I think we misread men, we misread one another, we do not understand what is at work in the human heart, although it is always there at work. We do not know mankind within but mankind without. We know ourselves that our great longing is to give and to spend and to suffer for some noble cause, but we cannot believe that such is the universal sentiment, and we suppose that other people are sordid, are content to live and die for themselves. We fit upon the rest of mankind the cap of selfishness which we repudiate ourselves. But men are not like that. Everywhere men—I mean, of course, women too—from the example of Florence Nightingale pre-eminently women—men and women are not asking for comfort but for the glory

of sacrifice, the permission to go on and to lead the world on, and if necessary to let themselves die in the forward progress of the world.

The fireman, who the other day heroically saved three women from death in the burning house, set out, as he told us afterwards, thinking it would be just the ordinary fire, with the chance only of extinguishing the flames by applying the hose. But when suddenly the opportunity of sacrifice and service presents itself to him, the man going out in the mere performance of an obvious duty, rises automatically to the moral heights, he ascends into the burning storey, he faces the danger he brings the imperilled women safely down. In perfect calmness he does the deed of heroism which had been prepared beforehand by the heroic spirit within.

That is man. You do not half suspect man, you do not understand the human being, until you know that what he asks for is service, though it be by death—sacrifice for the good of the world. To

lay down his life is what he wants, not to get it or to keep it.

That offer of Garibaldi to the volunteers in Rome rings, and will for ever ring, in the ears of men. "What do I offer you," he said to the men pressing forward to be enlisted. "Why I offer you neither pay, nor quarters, nor provisions. I offer hunger, thirst, forced marches, battles and death." And they all volunteered. That is man everywhere. He is not seeking comfort, ease, enjoyment; he drops into these, and he knows he has dropped down from the heights—he slides along a scale, the greased scale of the modern world and of the corrupting influences of a great city. But the man does not like it—he is ashamed of it. In the dark watches of the night the young libertine gets up and cries out to God for a life worth living, for something to do in a world of earnest action. Do not believe that there is a human being who gladly, willingly accepts the useless, idle, self-indulgent life. Everyone is ashamed of it, and everyone

asks for something better if only it be possible. That is to say, the way of Christ is the way that all men acknowledge to be right, and in a sense it is the way that all men wish to tread. We all acknowledge it directly the story of Jesus is read. We look through the Gospel and we nod our head at once—"Yes, that is what life should be, that is what a man should be." We never think that Napoleon is the model of the race, but always Jesus. We never really admire the man who has set out to achieve something for himself, to leave a great name, to hoard up great riches, to be great among men. We never admire that man—we are interested in him, he is a curiosity, he is a kind of abortion of the human race; but all our hearts go out to Jesus, all our judgment goes after him as he walks the way of the Cross, as with sublime indifference he faces poverty and scorn and homelessness, and gives and ever gives, and loves and ever loves, and dies for the human race. In those footprints we want to tread, like

him we want to be. We would rather be on a cross and save the world than on the couch of ease and be useless to our fellow-men. This was what made Christ tell us to take up the Cross and follow him—not because the Cross is painful, but because it is the only blessed way, the only way that leads to life. This is why he bore the Cross himself, this is why he permits you to carry it too. It is this that determined Paul to know nothing save Jesus Christ and him crucified, because Jesus Christ is the perfect man, and his crucifixion is the perfect way. No man can show you a better life than Christ's, no man can show you a better way than the Cross.

I do not know whether I carry conviction to your understanding. It may be a difficult thing to prove to a man that in the privations and sorrows and bitter scorn, the life of toil, the faithless kiss, the crown of thorns, he is really following the sacred road, but I am not attempting to prove it to your understanding—I am content that I prove it to your heart. You know it,

you acknowledge it, you feel it. And who would not choose if the alternative were offered—there goes Jesus along the way of pain to the Cross and the execration of the moment for the praise and glory of all eternity; and there goes Pilate, the honoured Governor of Rome, wearing the purple, retiring from his government in honour with praise and wealth and luxuries. You can follow Jesus or you can follow Pilate—do you hesitate, is there a soul that ever hesitates? I will not follow Pilate, I will follow him, the man sobs—the Man on the Cross. He laid down His life, I will lay down my life. He loved the world, I will love the world. He never sought self, I will not seek self. Let self perish that I may live, let the lower go that the higher may come, let it be no longer I but Christ that liveth in me. That is your choice, I know it is. You may not carry it out because you may be dragged down by circumstances, you may be immeshed in all the trammels of the world, you may be caught by some temptation, degraded, corrupted—you

may not carry it out. That is what you want, that is what you would give everything to get, that you might find his footprints and walk in them, though it be the way of the Cross. "For whosoever would save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the Gospel's shall save it."

THE LORDSHIP OF CHRIST.

The lordship of Christ is not something different from the lordship of God, but Christ is the way by which God establishes His throne in humanity ; just as to speak of Christ dwelling in the heart and to speak of the Spirit of God dwelling within is not a different thing, but the Spirit of God is the means by which Christ enters and abides in the human heart.

Now the great object, the one thing needed by us all, is to have the Lordship of God established in our lives so that we are dominated by him, and his will is done within us. That is what Christ calls "the Kingdom of God," or "the Kingdom of Heaven," and that means in comparison with ordinary human life, peace and power and progress and perfection.

A writer, Mr. Peil, some time ago mentioned the extraordinary change that had come in the very demeanour of the students of Tientsin when China was

changed from an Autocracy to a Republic; "It was as if the young men had begun to realise their responsibility and to enter upon a new phase of their life." And then Mr. Peil went on to say, "the change of the seat of government in a young man's life from self to God is far slower and harder to make, but we see it in the making, and rejoice when it is made." We are concerned in this congregation with that change of government, if it has not taken place, substituting God for self. We are engaged in a revolution, not political but spiritual. It is a change of dynasty that is needed, and the change means the whole difference of life, for self is an autocrat—a blind autocrat and cruel autocrat—and God is not an autocrat. He governs on another principle altogether. It is true to say that God is more like the elected President of the Soul's Republic, who must be elected periodically, not for years only, but yearly and even daily, who must be elected to reign over you because He will not and cannot reign where He is not wanted,

and where the submission to Him is not perfectly voluntary and whole-hearted.

Now it is that submission to God as ruler in the life that is the work of Jesus Christ in the world. For that purpose he came, to establish the reign of God in the hearts of men and ultimately to establish it in the whole world ; and the way by which Jesus Christ accomplishes that change and places God on the heart's throne instead of self is fourfold : first by his death, secondly by his life, thirdly by his word, and fourthly by his indwelling.

I. Let me urge upon you the necessity of putting his death first, for you will never find any human heart that is perfectly subjected to the will of God that has not come at it by the Cross of Christ. It is from the Cross as his throne that Jesus Christ takes possession and rules over human hearts ; and for this reason chiefly, that the great obstacle to the reign of God in the heart is sin—self and sin, the two are much the same—and the way by which the reign of God is established in the human heart is by the destruction of sin

and the dethronement of self ; and that was done upon the Cross. He did it there once for all, and he stands for ever challenging us, by the appeal of his sacrifice for the sin of the world and his sacrifice for us personally, to that allegiance and submission which are the secret of our peace. "I did this for thee," He says, "What hast thou done for me?"; and depend upon it you never come to the real sense of his lordship until you have felt at the centre of your being what he has done for you in dying for your sins and cleansing you from them in his most precious blood, so that you, being renewed in the spirit of your mind, are constrained to surrender in love and devotion and obedience to him who has died for you.

II. But then in the second place he claims and obtains his lordship over us by his life, the life he lived when he was on the earth, and the life he is living still in Heaven. That life he lived deliberately, that we might see what human life ought to be; that life in Heaven he lives, ever interceding for us

that he may bring our lives into conformity with his. Because he lives we shall live also; and by his life as he lived it and then as he lives it now, our lives are subdued and fall into the *Imitatio Christi*, the likeness of Jesus.

III. In the third place he claims and obtains the possession of our lives and his supremacy over us by his words—the words which are the spirit of life, the words such as man never spoke, the words which have an infinite meaning and which grow more full of meaning as life goes on; at the beginning of our lives we read the words of Jesus as a matter of course, and at the end of them we breathe them with wonder, scarcely comprehending how in words so simple the infinite truth of God could be so completely conveyed. To have the life of Jesus as he lived it on earth and the word of Jesus as he spoke it always penetrating your life is the secret of submission to God. You should take a piece of it every day, a paragraph of the Gospel, and you should go through the Gospel and repeat it year after year,

living every day in practical contact with a passage of the life of Jesus, with the words of Jesus as he spoke them; and it is that life lived daily in company with him, within hearing of his voice, that becomes at last the perfect obedience to God. You walk with Jesus, and as Jesus obeyed you at last learn to obey and to do what God tells you and to submit your life to his government and his alone. Your prayer should be the prayer of Thomas à Kempis, "Let thy servant be exercised in Thy life," and let it be every day and all the day long.

IV. But there is a fourth way in which he obtains this supremacy over us, and that is nothing less than his indwelling in us. He can dwell within the human heart, and there living he can do more than speak and more than control—he can actually make the life, the life no longer yours but his, he can live in you and live through you and make his life tell upon the world in your life. And it is by that indwelling of Christ in the heart that he has accomplished his greatest

work and brought men into most complete obedience to himself. No man who is really obeying Christ absolutely ever thinks that he does it by his own power; no man ever thinks that that life he is living is his own life. Just in proportion as Christ has taken possession of the life within, the soul knows that it is no longer *it* that lives but Christ that liveth in it.

Now these are the ways in which the lordship of Christ is established in human hearts and the way in which God is taking possession of the world. He gets hold of men through Christ, through the life, through the word, through the indwelling of His beloved Son; and just in proportion as human life becomes Christ-like Gods reigns in it it, and when at last the world submits to Christ the Kingdom of God will have come.

But to make this general statement more practical I want to remind you that this life and death and power of Christ in human hearts is the work of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Spirit takes the things of Christ and shows them and teaches

them to us. It is by the Holy Spirit coming that the mere talk about Christ becomes the life of Christ within us. It is by the baptism of the Spirit that the feeble human person becomes a real Christ-power in the world; and that gift of the Spirit should not be forgotten by any of us for a moment, for it is only by that gift of the Spirit to us that we can ever hope to be in perfect subjection to the will of God and to live the life of Christ among men.

May I give you an illustration that was mentioned to me accidentally as I was crossing the sea by the father of the child of whom he told it. He said that his little child in America every morning and every evening had been looking at his father's likeness just above his bed, longing to see his father who had been far away in India for many years; and the child looking at the picture of his father said to his mother one day, "Mother, I wish father would come out of the frame." Now if you maintained Jesus Christ to be the portrait of the Father, the

Holy Spirit is the way in which that portrait comes out of the frame, out of the frame of the Gospel story and the New Testament writings, a living working reality, into the life, into the soul of the person who receives the Holy Spirit. The illustration seems to me to express exactly, though very simply, the relation of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

The question, therefore, for us all is constantly whether we can receive and whether we can entertain the Holy Spirit of God. I have to plead with you to receive the Holy Spirit, and you have to bring your whole being to the point where the Holy Spirit can really enter you and live in you. Remembering that the Holy Spirit of God cannot dwell with sin, cannot live in a corrupt heart, cannot dwell with the defiling passions and appetites which are our danger and our curse, and knowing what it implies to be filled with the Spirit, I have to plead with you, as, of course, I have daily to plead with myself, to receive the Holy Spirit and to be filled

with the Spirit all the day long. I want to urge that plea upon you to-day, especially because coming back from this visit to America I feel that the journey will be all in vain unless I may bring to you, this Church, everything that I took to Kansas City and everything that I received in Kansas City at that great Convention. I want to plead with you, this Church, that this lordship of Christ may be established in every heart, for only when the lordship of Christ is established in every heart can the Church be really under the lordship of Christ. It is always a personal thing; there is no power by which God dominates the Church except through the Spirit in the hearts of those who believe, and therefore for this Church to be filled with God it is necessary that each of you should be filled with Him.

I have often reminded you of that event in the history of Florence long ago when under the great enthusiasm produced by the preaching of Savonarola the people of Florence made a great bonfire of their vanities, the instruments of their pleasures

and their vices, and sweeping through the streets of the city thronged the great Duomo shouting "Jesus is King"; and I would plead with you to-day, my people, my friends whom I know so well, to make a great bonfire of your vanities, your pleasures, your emptiness, your extravagances, and to lift up your hearts and say "Jesus is King." I ask you to let him reign over your business, so that when you enter the Church you bring with you hearts that have been under his sway all the week. We want the reign of Jesus so established in this Church that no one can ever enter it without being challenged by the King and brought in obedience to his feet; and we want to speak in such a manner about his reign and to show so truly what it means that a great desire will be created in the whole of this neighbourhood to come under that sceptre of Jesus, that lordship of God, the Kingdom of Heaven.

For what an infinite blessing the reign

of Jesus is in the heart! In your heart it means victory, yes, victory over sin.

The Bishop of Durham mentioned in a book the other day the beautiful remark of a man made in a conversation at Keswick. They were talking about the temptations of life, and how many had succumbed to them, and this man, as everyone knew, had kept his garments unspotted, and was walking the plain, straight, wholesome way that the pure heart takes; someone asked how he did it, and he gave this beautiful answer: "Directly temptation comes," he said, "I close my eyes fast and I say 'Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ.'" Victory always came, and it always does. It applies to us all in every condition of trial and temptation. If you will shut yourself in with Jesus and appeal to him he is always there, and makes you more than conqueror over the most severe and deadly trial of the flesh and of the spirit. And it is not only that he gives us victory, but O, that companionship of the Lord! He is king, it is true, but he is a king

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gracious and condescending, who comes into the closest fellowship with his subjects. He does not keep you at a distance; it is a warm intimate communion he permits you when you have bowed your knee to him.

I would remind you again of that beautiful fact in the life of Phillips Brooks. He was overheard in his state room one day when he was crossing the Atlantic, and happily for us the man who overheard it has recorded it—that great strong man was heard upon his knees in his cabin, and the words that he was saying were these: “Lord Jesus, thou hast filled my life with joy and peace, and to look into thy face is earth’s most exquisite delight.” Christ is the King. You are without him, you are without everything; you have him, you have all, for he is Lord and Saviour. He is the guide of your soul, he is the friend and companion of your life. There is no sorrow but he can heal it, there is no sin but he can wash it away; there is no difficulty but he can

overcome it; there is no complication but he can extricate you. If you have him you are walking through life humble, it is true, and humbled daily, humbled by the sense of your insufficiency but exalted with his companionship and assured of his victory. I ask you, therefore, to make him King, and not obscurely, not only in private but in public, make him King, set him on the throne.

If you at home abide,
 Make Jesus Lord.
 If you must cross the tide,
 Make Jesus Lord.
 When you confront the foe,
 Make Jesus Lord.
 When joy and comfort flow,
 Make Jesus Lord.
 If you are strong and brave,
 Make Jesus Lord.
 When you approach the grave,
 Make Jesus Lord.
 As from the grave you rise,
 Make Jesus Lord.
 Then entering Paradise,
 Your purged enraptured eyes
 Shall see Jesus Lord.

I plead with you, make Him Lord to-day, and before I close this service I request, if you do mean to make him your Lord, you will arise there from your seats and will allow us here to tell him we have brought to him our hearts and our lives. Let us make it clear to them who are around us as well as to him who is in Heaven who it is who shall reign over us, our Lord, our Saviour and our King. Now I ask you to rise that we may give to God our hearts and our lives. Let us stand up.

O, our God, our God and Father, we turn unto thee our God in Christ Jesus to-day to make him Lord and to submit everything to thy holy and perfect will. Take the government of our hearts, take the direction of our lives, take our appetites and passions, and take our desires and make them thine. O lead us in thy way, O keep us from falling, O make us truly disciples of Jesus, and lead us until we see his face. In this Church which thou hast blessed for so many years,

where thou hast shown so many great and blessed things in the past, come and do greater things still. Make us as a solid body consecrated to thee, and let us pour out our love and all we have and are in the service of our King, Jesus Christ. We pray thee to accept us now, unworthy as we are, for his sake.—Amen.

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