



1.  
TUB.

Library of the Theological Seminary.

PRINCETON, N. J.

BV 230 .C8 1862  
Cumming, John, 1807-1881.  
Teach us to pray

*She*













*RECENT BOOKS*

By the Author of this Volume

---

THE GREAT TRIBULATION ; or Things Coming on the Earth (two series).

THE GREAT PREPARATION ; or Redemption Draweth Nigh (two series).

---

Price \$1.00 each volume.

# TEACH US TO PRAY;

BEING

EXPERIMENTAL, DOCTRINAL, AND PRACTICAL  
OBSERVATIONS

ON

## THE LORD'S PRAYER.

BY THE

REV. JOHN CUMMING, D. D., F. R. S. E.,  
Minister of the Scottish National Church;

AUTHOR OF

"THE GREAT TRIBULATION," "THE GREAT PREPARATION," ETC.



NEW YORK:

*Carleton, Publisher, 413 Broadway.*

(LATE RUDD & CARLETON.)

M DCCC LXII.





## P R E F A C E .



THESE lectures were very favorably regarded by the large congregations who heard them. They were believed by them to embody many precious truths and comforting thoughts, worthy of a more permanent shape. The preacher has complied with the desires of numbers of his flock by printing this volume, on the reading of which he fervently prays a divine blessing may rest. Making no pretensions to anything startling, novel, or eloquent, it may nevertheless be found to set old truths in a new light, or at a new angle, or in fresh and suggestive illustrations. The edification or comfort of his people is his earnest desire as well as most coveted reward.



Our Father,  
Which art in Heaven,  
Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy  
Kingdom come. Thy Will be done in  
earth as it is in heaven. Give us this Day  
our Daily Bread. And forgive us our  
Trespases, as we forgive them that  
trespass against us. And lead us  
not into Temptation; but deliver  
us from Evil: for thine is  
the Kingdom, the Power,  
and the Glory, for  
ever and ever.

Amen.





## CONTENTS.



LECTURE	PAGE
I.— <i>IT IS GOOD TO DRAW NEAR TO GOD</i> .....	11
II.— <i>OUR FATHER</i> .....	38
III.— <i>THE ADORING WORSHIPPER</i> .....	68
IV.— <i>A MISSIONARY DESIRE</i> .....	102
V.— <i>A SUBMISSIVE HEART</i> .....	134
VI.— <i>THE CRY OF THE CHILDREN</i> .....	164
VII.— <i>THE CRY OF THE SINFUL</i> .....	195
VIII.— <i>THE CRY OF THE TEMPTED</i> .....	228
IX.— <i>THE GREAT DELIVERER</i> .....	257
X.— <i>ADORATION</i> .....	282



## TEACH US TO PRAY.

---

### I.

*IT IS GOOD TO DRAW NEAR TO GOD.*

“But it is good for me to draw near to God.”—*PSALM lxxiii. 28.*

WE are by nature, says the apostle, far off from God. Such is the expressive portrait of humanity in its natural and fallen condition—“ye who were sometime far off.” We are told by another, “your sins have separated between you and God.” We are distant from Him, not physically, that cannot be; not locally, for He is omnipresent; not as if we could in any way secrete or hide ourselves from His eye, for the darkness is as light to Him, and the night shall be as light about us; but morally and spiritually, which is really and truly, we are far off, or at a distance from God.

This distance, too, is not a fixed thing, it is cumulative; that is, the longer it lasts the wider it becomes, so that he who has continued the longest period at this moral or spiritual distance from God, has reached the furthest, until, in many an instance, he plunges into that Atheism on earth, and ruin hereafter, which constitute the aphelion, or greatest possible distance from the Sun of all light and all love, Christ Jesus. It is, therefore, a very solemn thing, that distance from God is not a fixture, but a progressive and a cumulating estrangement, that has its final issue in everlasting misery, unless averted, and the subject of it becomes converted, and instead of being under the centrifugal attraction that throws him from God, comes within the centripetal attraction that draws him to God in Christ Jesus.

The effect of the distance from God is not simply cumulative in itself, but along with that increase of distance or estrangement, there is an increase of indisposition to go back. It is a very sad fact, but a very true one, that the further

from God a sinner goes, the less he is disposed to retrace his steps, and return. In other words, he hardens in insensibility to God's claims, as he proceeds, or rather recedes, and thereby his indisposition to have any communion with God is aggravated and strengthened day by day. As distance from the sun in the natural world is the deprivation or the deprivation of all light, and warmth, and genial influence, so a sinner's estrangement from God, as it increases, is the deprivation of all that can make him truly happy; for, disguise it as you like, or doubt it as you may, there is no happiness except the spring of it, real religion, be in the heart; and there is nothing but misery, disguised and diluted, it may be,—modified by temporary experience, if you like,—but still misery, as long as man is far off and remains at a distance from God.

Now, however bad this state may be, and it is very bad, it has one feature that is most redeeming. There is not an individual so far from God, that he is beyond the reach of God's saving

arm, or the sound of God's fatherly voice. It is our only comfort in this state of estrangement from God, that we are not beyond the possibilities of return, that the door is open, and the voice still sounding, "Return unto me, why will ye die? Come unto me, all that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." If so, it is good, oh, most good, to draw near to God.

The statement of the Psalmist, which is simply the experience of the Christian, for David was a Christian as truly as John, or Peter, or James, implies in the first place, that God has revealed Himself. We cannot draw near to a Being we do not know, and whose place we cannot find, and whose disposition towards us is wrapt in impenetrable secrecy. A God unknown is necessarily a God feared. An eternity that man has never sounded, or on which he has never seen light fall, is an eternity from which he instinctively, and necessarily, and naturally shrinks. A God unseen we may draw near to, but a God unknown we cannot draw near to. We may love

the unseen, but we can never love the unknown. But God has revealed Himself in all the features, attributes, and endearments of a Father. So that we may draw near to Him with the confiding love wherewith children approach an affectionate father, and breathe at his footstool the sublimest litany angels can utter, the simplest one that babes can learn, "Our Father, which art in heaven;" "whom having not seen we love, and in whom, though now we see him not, yet believing"—(and faith is the evidence of things not seen)—"we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." In other words, God has revealed Himself, we have not a God to be discovered by our researches, but a God revealed by Himself. God has left us one portrait of Himself, and only one, the only portrait of Deity that is lawful, His own holy and blessed Word. It is the autograph of Deity, it bears on it the signature, as it reflects the exact likeness of God Himself. And does not this suggest the inquiry—is it not very odd that men professing themselves Christians should have

made likenesses of God of gold and silver, and wood, and stone, and bread, and wax, and should have fallen down and worshipped them, but that they never should have thought of worshipping the only picture of Himself which God has bequeathed, His own holy Book? Why this? Because, while men worshipped gold, silver, and stone, the objects worshipped were dumb; but if they had worshipped this portrait, fire would have rushed from its mouth, as from the mouths of the Apocalyptic witnesses, and revealed in the splendor that consumed the idolater, "It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."

God has not only revealed Himself in this Bible for us to draw near to; but, secondly, God authorizes and asks, and encourages us to draw near to Him, and all this implies that He has first drawn near to us. There is nothing that a Christian does, or thinks, or feels, that is original; it is purely responsive. God's movement is the original, man's movement to Him is the

response to it. God's Word calling us is the original summons; man's echo, "I come," is the answer to it. Therefore, unless God has first moved, first loved, first chosen, we shall never move, we shall never love, we shall never choose. It is to ascertain whether you are elect or not, by just ascertaining whether you are Christians or not. If you have chosen God most solemnly to be your God, there is no doubt that He has chosen you to be his people. Instead, therefore, of trying to penetrate the impenetrable mystery that is above, ascertain the plain and the obvious fact that is below, Am I a Christian? If I am, then why should I trouble myself about election? I know that I am elect, by the fact that I see, and feel, and manifest that I am regenerate, and am a child of God. If we draw near to God, it is implied He has drawn near to us first.

And He has not only given a magnificent apocalypse of Himself by revealing Himself, but He has come so near to us that we can see Him, and yet remains so truly Deity that we cannot

miss God revealed in Him. The chasm between God and us made by sin—which is the explosive and rending element of the material and moral world—was so wide, and so deep, and so dark, that we had no wings to fly across it, no foot that could wade it; we could not spring an arch from this side to the other that should touch the opposing precipice that was above. If, therefore, God had not come down to us, we never had gone up to Him. If He had not drawn nigh to us, we never could have drawn near to Him, nor could the believer have recorded the blessed truth, “It is good for me to draw near to God.” If you will read the whole past history of God’s dealings with mankind, you will find that every page and chapter of it is a record of a distinct act of approach, on God’s part, to us His apostate family. He drew near to Adam when Adam would not and could not draw near to him, for Adam ran from God, tried to hide himself amid the trees of the garden, and only by God going after him, and drawing near to him, did Adam

stay, and finally draw near to God. God drew near to Enoch, when He walked with him, and took him, and he was not. God drew near to Noah, when, in the touchingly beautiful but simple language, He "shut him in." God drew near to Abraham, and made him His friend, His companion, and His confidant. All the ancient types are the footprints of God, drawing near to humanity. All the ancient promises are the sounds of the voice of our Father, asking after His suspicious, wandering, and still beloved family; all the sacrifices and institutions of Levi are the shadows of God that sweep over the world, or rather the sunshine of His countenance, telling us that the good Shepherd is after the lost sheep, that the candle is lighted, and that the owner is looking for the lost coin, that He may efface the superscription of evil that is on it, and restamp it with His own holy, and divine, and pure signature.

But God's nearest and dearest drawing near to us is recorded in the Gospels of the New Testa-

ment. He drew near to us there in such a way as man never dreamed of, and man still must receive as a mystery. "He came to His own, and," what an awful response, "his own received him not." He came clothed in our humanity, He entered the home of Martha and of Mary, He talked to the publican in his house, He visited the hall of Pilate, He came into the grave that sin had made, and mankind lay in, that He might draw so near and so close to us, that there should be no mistake that God had drawn near to us. How did man receive Him? If we were to hear in a strange land that God had thus come so near to us, and done it at so great a sacrifice, we would say, Surely the whole atmosphere rang with acclamations, and men shouted in ecstasy and joy, "Lo, this is our God, we have waited for him, Hosanna, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." Alas, it was not so. Men to whom He thus drew near at so great a sacrifice, instead of welcoming Him with shouts, cried with one voice, at least with few dissentient

ones, "Away with him, away with him, Crucify him, crucify him; it is not fit that he should live." How deceived was poor Plato, poor morally, though great intellectually, when he predicted, that God would at length come down to man, and tell him the secrets that were unsounded, that the whole world would fall down and worship him. What an awful fact, that the only spotless, unstained, holy Being that ever appeared upon the earth, mankind had so little sympathy with, because their hearts are enmity to God; that they nailed Him to a cross, and treated Him as the greatest of criminals! If, then, God's drawing near to us was thus received, one would surely infer God must have left us for ever. If His drawing near to us in such circumstances, and at such a sacrifice, was thus received, thus responded to, any one hearing it so far would say, Then God must have given us up as a hopeless race, as not worthy of another effort at retrieval. Did He do so? His ways are not our ways, nor His thoughts our thoughts.

We should have done so, but God did not. After we had thus rejected Him, and despised Him, and treated Him as a criminal not fit to live, and crucified the Son of God, and laid Him in an ignominious grave; God, so far from giving us up to the consequences that we had so deliberately elected, sent His Holy Spirit into the hearts of the murderers of the Lord of Glory, to persuade them of the greatness of their sin, and of the excellency of the Saviour, and of His readiness to save the greatest sinner that would lay aside the weapons of his rebellion, and draw near to Him for mercy and for forgiveness. And still that Spirit strives with man—still that Holy Spirit bids us retrace our steps, repent of our sins; for the crucifixion of the Son of God was not the act of a Jew, it was the deed of all humanity; and God, instead of punishing us with just and righteous retribution, sends His Holy Spirit to take of the things of Christ, and show them to us, so that we shall be ashamed of the past, repent of our misdoings, believe on

Him who is set forth as the propitiation through faith in His blood, and by faith have peace with God through Jesus Christ. I do say the history of God's drawing near to us is the most wonderful of all wonderful things, it reveals such a depth of love in God's bosom towards us sinners, as justified an Apostle who had been in the third heaven, and might be the most able to express it, "O the height and depth, the length and breadth, of the love of God! it passeth all understanding."

Having seen how God has drawn near to us by His Son, and still by His Spirit, I might add that He draws near to us in His providence. What are afflictions? Private and special messages to those whom He loves. What are bereavements and losses? Voices in the wilderness saying, "This is not your rest;" evidences that God is looking after you. What are the appeals of conscience, the remonstrances of judgment, the warnings we meet with, the checks we encounter? They are all proofs that

He has drawn near to us, and says, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man will open, I will come in and sup with him, and he with me."

Let us then, in response to these, draw near to God, who has thus drawn near to us, not by change of locality, but by a change of disposition; not by a change of place, but by a change of feeling towards Him. And to do so, let us draw near to Him by Christ, the Only Way.—There are not twenty ways to God; there is but one, and that one is announced emphatically and exclusively, "There is none other name given among men," that is, in human speech, or conceivable by human heart, "by which we can be saved, except the name of Jesus." And that name is so complete, that if engraven upon the living heart, and pleaded from the depths of that heart, it will be found to be the password of the universe itself. He that has that name has his free entrance everywhere and anywhere. He is free, not of an earthly city, but of the

universe itself. "No man cometh unto the Father but by me"—there is the exclusiveness of it; "him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out"—there is the liberality and the welcome of it.

We are to come by Jesus Christ as the way, but we are to come by the Holy Spirit as our guide; for the Apostle says, "We both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." Let us not forget, that if Christ be the way, the Holy Spirit is the effective, or the effectual, witness to that way. I can tell you the way, and your outer ear and my inner judgment will acquit me of speaking what is not true, yet you will go into the world and forget it; but when the Holy Spirit proclaims to the inner heart, Christ the way, as I proclaim it to the outer ear, then you see in that way an attraction that tempts you with all your heart to enter on it. The Spirit takes away your prejudice, your passions, your indisposition, your fears, your doubts, makes you willing, and then, in the language of the Prophet, you run,

and are not faint; you walk, and are not weary. You mount as with eagle's wings, until at last you find your home, your happiness, your rest, in the bosom of God our Father.

But, whilst we are thus to draw near to God by Christ the way, and in the strength and by the guidance of the Holy Spirit as the guide, yet there are means of God's own appointment which we ought to use, and in the use of which God has promised to draw near to us and bless us. Let me mention some of these means, because, whilst grace is sovereign, we must never forget that God having given a Bible, instituted preaching, requiring prayer, proves that God gives grace by the use of certain means. I admit that He gives His blessing, sometimes without means, sometimes in spite of means; but the general law that He Himself has instituted is, that in seeking Him in the way of His appointment, we shall most readily find Him. One of the means of drawing near to God—not the way for that is Christ alone, not the guide, for that is

the Spirit alone,—and making progress in this way, is reading God's Holy Word. You say—How can that help us? A wicked and worthless politician once made the remark, "Tell a lie every day, and often enough, to a crowd, and they will believe it to be truth." If there is any force in that sentiment, there is force in this: Tell men God's truth often enough, and they are sure to believe it. The repetition of great truths is one way of making men believe them; and when those truths commend themselves to the conscience, there is an additional reason why they should be believed. In man's conscience within, and God's Word without, there is an adaptation so complete, that the man who comes to church a sceptic, and hears nothing about the evidences of Christianity, but hears the explanation of what Christianity is, will come at last most thoroughly and heartily to believe, because there is in man's inner conscience, even in its wreck, and God's outer Word, such an adaptation that there will be an impression upon the

mind of him who hears, that the God who made the heart inspired that Book; and therefore, "Thy word, O God, is truth." Now, every word in this Book is a whisper of the Infinite, every promise is a fragment of heavenly light. In this Book we can hear God's voice as Adam heard it in Eden amid the trees of the garden, and hear it, not as the voice of a Creator only, but as the voice of a Father.

We are to draw near to God, not only in reading His blessed Word, but also in prayer. In reading the Scripture God speaks to us, in praying we speak to God. In reading the Bible He comes near to us, and we hear His foot fall as He approaches us. In prayer we draw near to God, and speak to Him as children speak to their loving and affectionate father, and He tells us, to encourage us, that there is nothing too good or too great that we may not ask, that our lips will be closed in asking long before His hand will be shut in giving, that it is His joy to hear prayer, His joy to give. We should realize this fact, that

God's delight is in giving, that as a fountain finds its expression in overflowing, as a river in rushing to the infinite main, as trees in bursting into life and blossom in the spring-tide, so God feels it His joy to give liberally, and to give exceeding abundantly, and to give above all that we can ask, or think, or desire, for Christ's sake. If, then, such be the response to prayer, oh, surely it is good for us to draw near to God.

There is another way, also, in which God draws near to us, that is, in the preaching of the Gospel. Preaching of the Gospel is not simply speaking what is good, but it is teaching what is written, and presenting it in every light, showing it in every relation, and pointing out how it applies to every peculiarity of human nature, every intricacy of human experience, and every difficulty of human life. For instance, a diamond has its intrinsic preciousness when you see it in a casket, and catch a glimpse of it; but he who wants to show its value will enable you to see it at every angle, and to see the light as it flashes

from every point of the precious stone. What the preacher has to do is to take the Bible, and show it at every light, encourage you to study it and learn it, and inwardly to digest it, until you feel that it is the most precious of all things, more precious than gold and silver, than honey or the honeycomb. In preaching, the silent page assumes the likeness of the eloquent sermon. The apostle, who, being dead, yet speaks, has his echo in the preacher who takes his place. The true succession to the apostle consists not in wearing his robe, or being historically descended from him, but in being the echo of his sentiments, the exponent of his truths ; so that men hearing the truth may see it and feel it, more perfectly than they ever saw it or felt it before ; and persons hearing a sermon, will say, not, How good a sermon, how argumentative, or how eloquent, but “It was good for me to be here ; a day in thy courts is better than a thousand ; the Lord God is a sun and a shield, he doth give grace and glory.”

The next means of drawing near to God, and the last that I will specify, is a Communion Table. This communion table is one of the ordinances of His appointment; and the man who does not hesitate to read the Bible, or to pray, or to hear the Gospel preached, should not hesitate to add to the ordinances that he does accept, the observance of this ordinance about which he hesitates, and to show forth the Redeemer's death till he come again. The communion table, not from anything in the bread, or by virtue of anything in the wine, or from him that ministers them, but by the promise and the presence of Christ, becomes a means of grace and nourishment to our souls; not by any sensible, or carnal, or sensuous influence, but by scattering seeds that were not there before, watering those that are there, strengthening, invigorating, comforting, encouraging. He draws near to us in breaking of bread, we draw near to Him in faith and love. Prayer is audible worship, praise also is audible worship, but the commu-

nion is silent worship by each priest in the sanctuary of his own heart, when God's ear only hears, and God's eye only sees; as if this communion table were provided to supply what the other ordinances do not supply. Men in the deepest adoration do not speak. A great affliction strikes one dumb, a great joy makes one silent; in the deepest worship men do not speak, the holiest feelings have no exponent, words limit, break, destroy the deep current that is within, and expressive silence alone muses God's praise. But though man cannot see or hear, God feels the pulse of prayer, and hears the beating wing of true devotion, and hears, and sees, and seals us as His own. At a communion table, if the children of God, we thus draw near to him in worship, communion and adoration.

This nearness to God is the very aim, and end, and object of Christianity. Our loss is separation from God, our gain is restoration to God. Hence, an Apostle describes it as the very highest possible state to which a Christian can be

raised, "Our fellowship, or communion, is with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ."

The constant effort of the Gospel is to make us obey the call, "Come unto me, ye that are weary; ye will not come unto me that ye may have life:" and the very last words that we shall hear on the eve of that vast eternity, that splits into two great compartments the inhabitants of the world, will be, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

The Psalmist says, "It is good to draw near to God." Ancient philosophers, before the Advent of Christ, always disputed among themselves what was the *summum bonum*, or what the Greeks called the *το καλον*—"the good thing;" and the different schools of philosophers were divided in their decisions what is the chief good. What philosophy could not discover, God has revealed to His servants. This is the chief good, — for that is the meaning — it is good, emphatically, distinctively, eternally, supremely good,

to draw near to God. If you want the *summum bonum*, here it is,—if you like to know what the highest possible happiness ever has been, or ever will be, here it is,—drawing near to God.

Whatever stops you in this upward ascent to God is wrong. Everything in form, everything in worship, everything in the sanctuary, should be an aid to it, not an obstruction to it. Everything in the preacher's sermon should be a help to realise it, not a blind to conceal it. The sceptic puts reason in the place of God, and thinks that when he has drawn near to reason, he has drawn near to the highest God; but he finds that drawing near to reason as the arbiter of truth is only drawing near to himself. The victim of superstition draws near to the altar, the priest, the sacrament, but he is only drawing near, not to himself, but to the consecrated shadow of himself, and no more, instead of holding those sacraments, and ministers, and ordinances, to be voices crying in the wilderness, "He cometh after us, whose shoe-latchet we are

not worthy to unloose; look not to us, behold Christ, the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world." To draw near to God, then, is man's highest happiness, man's chiefest good. There is no rest for the soles of our feet on this side of God. No pinnacle on which man was ever placed, ever satisfies man, for satisfaction is always in the future. We calculate, If I could only reach that point I should be happy; and when we have got there, we discover how true is the ancient declaration, often uttered, now felt, "Whoso drinketh of this water will thirst again;" and we begin to anticipate how true is that which follows, "But he that drinketh of the water that I shall give him, it shall be in him a well of living water, springing up into eternal life. Every spot on which man ever was, never gave him rest. The poor say, Ah, we are poor and destitute, have scarcely enough to live on. That is very bad, deeply to be deplored; but if you got those wants supplied, you would have no real happiness. It is quite a mistake to

suppose that you would. New wants would spring up on every side, and sorrowful it is, that those who seem to have no wants at all, set about creating artificial ones, digging out broken cisterns that can hold no water. Man is an inexplicable mystery in the light of anything but in the light of God's holy Word, but all past experience has proved, what all future experience will respond to, that in real religion, that is, in the love of God, the fear of God, the worship of God, the service of God, there is real happiness; and in anything from which this is absent, there is no happiness at all.

Have we drawn near to God? This is the first thing. The communion table is not God, it is merely an elevation on which we may see God more clearly, and which helps us to find and know Him more certainly. Have you drawn near to God? He who has no religion has no happiness. Life in such a case becomes a constant parrying of thoughts, anxieties, and fears. The whole life is spent in keeping at the most

respectable distance from self, and what self is, and what self may justly and naturally anticipate. You dread scepticism, lest it should destroy you ; you dread Christianity, lest it should disquiet you. You will not be a sceptic, because your conscience will not let you ; you will not be a Christian, because your passions will not let you. You have not the manliness to be one or the other. In the sight of God you are sceptics, for he that is not with Him is against Him ; but in your own estimate you are balancing between the two, in the hope that before the end comes you will drift into the one that is the safest. Let it be your determination to be on the Lord's side ; you will then have the happiness the Lord alone can give, and you will say on a dying day, when it is so desirable and delightful to be able to say it, It was good, and it is good, and it ever will be good for me to draw near unto God.

## II.

## OUR FATHER.

“After this manner therefore pray ye; Our Father which art in heaven.”—*MATT. vi. 9.*

THIS Prayer contains all that ever ascended to God from human hearts in any way acceptable to Him, and all that ever will descend from Him, in the shape of benedictions, upon us. Whatever is included in this Prayer you may ask; whatever is not included in this Prayer it is not expedient that you should pray for. We have in these beautiful words the fundamental notes of the varied cry that has risen from all the broken, the sorrowing, the deserted hearts of human kind, from the days of Adam to the moment in which we now live. It is so short that memory can easily recollect it; so simple, that your children can be easily taught it; so rich, so full, so mag-

nificent, that the ripest saint has not yet learned to exhaust it. Lest it should be thought that there is any supernatural charm in the words, our blessed Lord says in this Gospel, "After this manner pray." Lest, on the other hand, it should be thought that the words are of no value, He says in another Gospel, "When ye pray, *say*." Herein lies the reason of the difference of expression. Lest it should be thought that the words have a mediatorial virtue, which belongs only to Christ, we read in one Gospel, "After this manner pray;" but lest, on the other hand, it should be thought that the words are of no peculiar excellence, another Gospel contains the expression, "When ye pray, *say*." Who does not know that the heart often needs words to help its outpouring; and no less that words need the heart's inspiration to give them excellence or value? The words may be desecrated into thousands of Pater Nosters repeated by the lips, without a spring in the heart within; but the words also may suggest many a precious

thought, many a deep want, many a rich supply, that Christians feel they truly need. We are sometimes lame, and need a crutch ; we are sometimes so strong that we can walk without one. Many an English Episcopalian prays with a form or a liturgy in spirit and in truth ; and many a staunch Scottish Presbyterian prays extempore in the most formal manner possible. The fact is, it is not outside or mechanical arrangement that can secure true prayer ; it is the inspiration of the heart by the Holy Spirit of God ; and when the heart within is made right by His grace, all prayer of all forms will be in spirit and in truth, and acceptable in the sight of God.

In this very beautiful form is the universal Liturgy of the universal Church ; a liturgy that has no errors needing correction, no superfluities or repetitions that require curtailment ; it is perfect in expression, infinite in comprehension as the riches of Him that taught it, and the wants of them that need to pray it. Amid many of the cathedrals of Europe, darkened with a dead-

ly superstition, I dare say there are some unknown, obscure, and lonely worshippers kneeling upon the pavements, that breathe these words from the very heart; and in many of our best and most enlightened congregations I fear there are some, to speak in the most charitable phrase, that use these words as a form, and many more that use them without seeing the length and breadth, and weight and worth of riches that are stored within them.

In this command Christ not only teaches us how to pray, which is very important, but also lays before us the very words in which we should pray; that thus we may by praying in the words which He orders, plead the promise that He gives that He will hear us. He teaches us the words in order that we may feel that in seeking in spirit what he has expressed for us we shall not fail to reap from Him the fulfilment of His promise, that He will open when we knock, and give when we seek.

I cannot help noticing the fact that there seems,

from its connection with our Lord's beautiful edition of the Law in Matt. v., a reference throughout this prayer to the Decalogue given on Mount Sinai. The Law begins on Mount Sinai with the words, "I am the Lord thy God; thou shalt have no other gods before me." So here the Prayer begins where the exaction of the Law begins, not with "The Lord thy God," the severer relationship of Sinai; but with "Our Father which art in heaven," the beautiful revelation of Christianity. There are also in this Prayer ten clauses, which may be divided into two great sections—the first relating to God, the second to ourselves and our neighbor; the embodiment in the formula of prayer of what is demanded in the Law, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbor as thyself." I have thought too that there is in this Prayer, as in the Law, a shadow of that great and precious, not mere theoretical, but practical, truth, the Trinity. For instance, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me," the Father. "Thou shalt not

make any likeness of me, but see me only in the Son, in whom is my name. And thou shalt remember my Sabbaths, which are the outward signs of that sanctification of which the Holy Spirit is the inward Agent." In this beautiful prayer, first of all the Father's name is invoked, "hallowed be thy name;" secondly, the name of the Son, whose kingdom we pray may come speedily as the kingdom of the Prince of peace; and thirdly, the name of the Holy Spirit, through that regeneration which He creates, to do the will of God on earth even as it is done in heaven. Grace germinates in hallowing His name; it unfolds in the expansion of His kingdom; and, lastly, culminates and blossoms in His will reflected from the earth as the perfect fac-simile of what it is, and how it is done in heaven. We find in this Prayer the central petition, "Give us daily bread;" or, as the old Christians regarded it, Give us heavenly or supernatural bread—in order that we may hallow Thy name, and promote Thy kingdom, and do Thy will, and be

kept from temptation and delivered from all evil. And you will notice that the three last clauses are the echoes or the returns of the three first.—“Forgive us our trespasses in not doing thy will; and the temptation which has opposed the coming of thy kingdom; and the evil which prevents, and has prevented, the glorifying of thy name.” And all these three by implication lead us to Christ, by whose death our trespasses are forgiven, by whose resurrection we are sanctified against temptation, by whose ascension we are delivered from all evil. In the first three expressive clauses we have the fulness and the riches of God; “Thy kingdom; thy will; thy name.” In the three last clauses we have the emptiness and poverty of the creature, “Give us; deliver us; lead us not; forgive us our sins as we forgive them that sin against us.” Thus grace begins with all the fulness of God, enters into all the emptiness of the creature; and when the goodness of God that comes from Him has overflowed all the wants of humanity, and cov-

ered the wide earth with all the splendors of glory, then the whole returns to Him from whom it originally proceeded, in the ascending incense. "Thine the glory, the kingdom, and the power for ever and for ever." Such are some of the precious truths latent in every clause of this most noble and precious Prayer, a Prayer, the more it is studied, the more it indicates its origin to be the bosom of God.

Let us now view the first clause of it—"Our Father which art in heaven." "I am thy God" is the sublime introduction to the Law. "Our Father which art in heaven" is the endearing revelation of the Gospel, and the commencement of the first prayer that we are called upon here to breathe from sanctified lips. Our blessed Lord in teaching us here is not satisfied with saying what would have been most condescending love, "You may thus pray," but He turns privilege into duty, and says, "When ye pray, thus say." How precious that His precepts should be our greatest privileges; and that He takes what is our noblest

honor, translates it into our solemn duty, and so makes duty embosom joy, holiness embosom happiness, and obedience to His word become the measure of our enjoyment upon earth. Is there not something here very precious, that the very first cry that an infant learns to utter, "My father," is the first and the last appeal that a saint addresses to God; "Our Father which art in heaven;" as if God would teach us that nature's earliest cry has in it a lingering undertone of Adam's first prayer in Paradise. Your children, as they give expression to the human relationship, remind you that as children by adoption of a yet greater Father you may still say, what was first and shall be last, "Our Father which art in heaven." Is there not also a suggestive thought for every parent in that word "Father"? "If ye," fathers, "being evil, notwithstanding that evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father which is in heaven give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" So that whenever you read or pray this

Prayer you may have this blessed thought—that all the affection that I as a parent feel to my children, that affection, infinitely expanded and enlarged, God feels to me; and without the drawback of the imperfections and the alloy that mingle with my human feeling, and more or less debase every function of the unsanctified heart. Thus children may learn to lisp, by extending the experience of earth into the confines of heaven, the petition “Our Father;” thus parents may learn how willing God is to give to them the richest expressions of His goodness, by remembering that the fatherhood of God is their own fatherly sympathy, without its imperfection and infinitely enlarged. Creation cries from all its depths and its heights, “Our Creator;” its animal economy cries with a constant appeal, “Our Preserver;” but God’s redeemed company of them that have washed their robes in the precious blood of the Lamb, rise into a nobler key, and give expression to a deeper and more joyous relationship, “Our Father which art in heaven.”

We lost our relationship to God the Father by the disruption of the Fall—we receive that relationship back again through Jesus Christ, the Mediator; “for to as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God.” I do not know one truth more distinctive of the Gospel than the fatherhood of God. The Jews had but a dim, shadowy impression of it. The Gospel of St. John has the word “Father” applied to God about seventy-two times; as if it was the endearing relationship that John would constantly dwell on. And the Apostle Paul tells us, in the Epistle to the Romans, that God has given us the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father. And we see in this blessed truth, too, that God is not the Pantheistic Being which some believe, regarding poor nature, so poor and meagre, as their god, and worshipping the creature as if he were the Creator. He is a personal Being enthroned above all, but accessible to the meanest and the greatest sinner that seeks access to Him in the name and through

the merits of Jesus Christ the only Saviour. In this Prayer we have revealed to us the glorious truth, that while God is King, Lord, Sovereign, Judge, all these attributes are softened and shaded and subdued in their transit to us by the blessed medium of fatherhood, or His relationship to us as a Father.

As we have seen in the first the fatherhood of God, we learn in the second place the brotherhood of all true Christians. He is revealed not only as the Father who is enthroned in the heavens, not only as "*My* Father which art in heaven," but as "*Our* Father which art in heaven." No sooner does the Christian heart feel its individual relationship to God righted and restored, than as the reaction of it it feels its restoration to all the brethren of mankind resuscitated and revived. If we trace the earliest effects of the Fall, we shall find that Adam lost his Father in Paradise, and showed his sense of loss by running from God and trying to hide himself in the trees of the garden ; that, secondly, man lost

his brotherhood to all mankind, for Cain slew his brother Abel. Thus the very first effects of the Fall were man's loss of the Father; when instead of drawing near to Him as a Father he fled from Him as a Judge: and, secondly, man's loss of brotherhood, when Cain rose up and slew his brother Abel. The very first effect of Christianity is to restore these two lost but golden links; and hence we have here, first, the fatherhood of God, and, secondly, the brotherhood of all believers: "Our Father which art in heaven." In the first instance I bow my knee and say, interested in the safety of my individual soul, "My Father;" but scarcely has my heart unloaded itself of that precious thought than it is instantly lost in the yet nobler and broader one, "Our Father, which art in heaven." Faith in its first pulse says "My Father;" but as it is the definition of faith, "It worketh by love," therefore in its second pulse it beats "Our Father." Here is a prayer that a Christian never can offer only for himself. It is so worded that

the instant we begin to pray for ourselves, there runs through it intercession for all our brethren of mankind ; “ *Our Father, give us daily bread ; forgive us our sins.*” By a beautiful law the Christian’s closet widens in the family, the family widens into the congregation, the congregation into the church, the church into the catholic company of all that love the Lord Jesus Christ, and are the children of God by true and real adoption. All sectarian, selfish, individual, let us add provincial, denominational, national feeling, is merged and overflowed by the warm and the genial love that sees in heaven our Father, and in all that worship Him in sincerity and truth brethren we love and worship with on earth, and shall worship with in heaven hereafter. If we could pray more feelingly, with a deeper sense of what the expression “ *Our Father* ” conveys, there would be less of that narrow, limited, sectarian feeling, which is not the monopoly of a sect, but unhappily the besetting sin of all mankind. There is no doubt that some

are praying this prayer when we think there are none ; and that many are muttering it with eloquent lips, who never yet have learned to pray it at all. And what a solemn thought that some poor, lowly, unknown ones in the depths of the Western Apostasy at this hour thus pray with us. Many an inhabitant in Lucknow, in Petersburg, in Paris, may be at this moment saying with us, "Our Father." Methinks, if this thrilling thought could only pervade the hearts of all mankind, wars would cease to the ends of the earth, and the spear be turned into the pruning-hook, and the sword into the ploughshare. At all events the fact that there is no Christian upon earth who does not say this prayer, "Our Father," seems to indicate the impossibility of a total dislocation of humanity, or of an antagonism so lasting that it cannot be healed. We know at all events that wars will not cease among the nations till all men have been taught by the Holy Spirit to say "Our Father." It is only in the light of religion that

society can be permanently ameliorated ; it is only in the light of the fatherhood of God that all hearts will reciprocate the brotherhood of all mankind. Hence revolutions begin from below and spring from beneath ; reformations originate from above and spread below. We must begin with Our Father in heaven in order to see our brethren upon earth ; and when we can thus begin, we may be sure that we shall not end until the whole earth be filled and covered with the glory of the fatherhood of God, and all mankind as brethren, in the grand words of the Apocalypse, sing, "Salvation and glory and honor and blessing unto our God and to the Lamb forever and forever."

We come now to the third thought contained in this beautiful clause, "in heaven." First we have studied the nature of the Prayer by way of prefatory remark ; next we have seen its distinctive revelation of the fatherhood of God ; next the brotherhood of all believers ; and now let us lift up our hearts to the home of all that

happy brotherhood—"in heaven." "Our Father which art in heaven." Heaven was the point of our departure from God ; heaven is the point at which our return terminates. The prodigal son left his father's house ; spent his substance in riotous living ; repented, was restored, and reinstated in his father's house again. We prodigal sons left our Father's home ; we spent all we had in riotous living and in estrangement from Him ; we are brought to repentance ; we return and find in our Father's long forsaken abode Paradise restored and ourselves at home again. Now this interesting thought, that our Father is in heaven, reveals to us first of all, God's supremacy, sovereignty, and therefore ability to see and to supply all the wants of His repentant family. God sits on the circle of the heavens, and sees the least as well as the greatest of mankind. The common notion, is that God is so great and magnificent a being that we cannot conceive that He will concern Himself with such tiny ephemeral things as men

are, or with such small things as the wants of a widow and the sighs of an orphan. But I need not tell you that God revealed in the mysteries of the microscope, appears grander to our sight than God revealed by the telescope. We naturally think that what is materially great is most magnificent: it is not necessarily so. There is more of God's wisdom in weaving the exquisite texture of a bee's wing than in creating the countless orbs that like the sentinels of a mighty host lie upon the confines of infinitude. If we take the petal of the rose, bursting into full maturity in June, it seems as if he had nothing else in the universe to do but to paint that exquisite petal. He seems so concerned with each tiny thing, that you are tempted to infer that His whole skill, resources, beneficence, power, were exhausted in adorning it. This conveys to us this most precious thought, that God is as deeply concerned in my least want, my lowliest sorrow, my least personal care, and in providing for it, as if He had nothing else to do in the boundless

universe save to take care of me and my soul. What a blessed thought that God is as near to me, as deeply concerned about me, that He has expended as much of redeeming love upon me, as if He had nothing else to do but to save me. Read the Bible often and you will see how frequent is, if I may use the word, its egotism. "Thou God seest," not us, but "*me.*" "What must *I* do to be saved?" "Believe *thou.*" "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon the earth that I desire beside thee." "Thou knowest my sitting down and my rising up; thou knowest my thoughts afar off." I think that is one of the most magnificent expressions in the Psalms, "my thoughts afar off." Before a man clearly comprehends a thing, while the thought is looming, misty and shadowy, upon the edge of the distant horizon of his mind, even then God sees it, knows it, estimates its issue, and comprehends its whole character. This God, our Father, is sitting on the circle of the heavens, looking down, acquainted with, inspecting, providing for,

sympathizing with the least of His family, as truly as with the greatest creature that surrounds His throne and worships continually before Him. Blessed thought, that we can say "my Father" first, but may not stop there, but must proceed to "Our Father;" and that this our Father is in heaven, seeing, inspecting, sympathizing with, and providing for all; and that heaven, wherever it may be, in which He is, is the home to which we are all tending. That one expression, "Our Father in heaven," makes it home; it is that one word that gives the future its homelike aspect, and teaches me this blessed truth, that when I shall appear there, after I have laid aside this mortal and left it in the grave to be prepared for the resurrection morn, I shall enter into no strange land or distant colony; here is the island of my exile, there is the home where I shall be for ever with my Father, and our Father, and all that have fallen asleep in Jesus, and are worshipping before the throne and in the presence of the Lamb for ever and for ever. We

all shrink from death ; and surely death is a most unnatural thing ; it is of all things the most unnatural, the most horrible, that this exquisite organization should like Abraham's Sarah be buried out of sight ; the nearest, the dearest, and the best beloved not venturing to gaze at it any more. That is not natural ; God never made me to die ; God never made me to have a head-ache, or a heart-ache, or a grey hair, or a wrinkle upon the brow ; these things are not original, they are superinduced by sin. And what makes us brave death is not that we love life less, is not that we love death more ; but that we see in the grave the vestibule only of the everlasting home, and that when we descend into its deepest depths it is only to begin the ascent to that sunny table-land where is the presence of our Father, and of all that have preceded us to glory. Hence the very expression, "Our Father in heaven," is the evidence that heaven is our everlasting and our happy home.

Now these three heads—Father, Our Father,

in heaven—are just the three thoughts grasped by what the Apostle calls faith, hope, and charity, or love. Faith pierces the skies and sees a Father; faith develops itself in love; and love looks over and abroad the earth and says, while reciprocating feelings of love with all mankind, “Our Father;” and faith and love are the nutriment of hope, that unfurls its wings and pierces the sky, and sees our Father in heaven; our future, our eternal, and certain home. Thus from this great thought, from this precious communion, the scepticism that disbelieves, the selfishness that monopolizes, the despair that commits suicide, are lost in faith, in love, in hope. “Love never fails. Whether there be prophecies they shall fail”—although let me add that word “fail” is wrong. The Greek word there translated “fail” means “cease.” It ought to be translated, “Love never fails. Whether there be prophecies they shall be worked out to fulfilment; whether there be tongues they shall cease; whether there be knowledge it shall vanish

away." Tongues as at Pentecost are gone ; knowledge as inspired is gone ; works as miraculous are gone ; but love, which begins in faith in the fatherhood of God, grows in the atmosphere of love to Him and to all brethren in Him, ends and blossoms for ever and ever in the Paradise of our God and in the presence of the Lamb. What a precious clause ! Have we ever thus regarded it ? have we ever seen and drunk of those sweet springs that are in it ? If we believe these things, (and I need no external proof to convince me that this Prayer was taught by God ; none but infinite wisdom, infinite love, could ever have taught such a prayer ; I need no arguments, I need no miracles, to convince me this is divine ; I need only to study this blessed book. I find in it depths that we have never yet sounded,—lights that have not yet leaped forth from its shadows,—evidences of inspiration, so strong, irresistible, and manifold, that the man is a fool that says the Bible is not the Word of God,—) if we believe that God is our Father in heaven,

our everlasting home, then what encouragement have we in prayer! Do we not often when we pray go into God's presence hesitating, shrinking, alarmed? and is it not too true that almost all liturgies, however excellent, have in them too much of the deprecating and the terrible; of fear, of alarm, of dread? But should not the feeling with which we ought to go into God's presence be, certainly not that of presumption, but that with which an infant leaps into the bosom of its mother, or a child goes into the presence of its father? And, therefore, we are not, when we pray as Christians, to deprecate God's wrath as if we were criminals in the dock, but to ask a Father's blessing, as children of our Father which art in heaven.

What comfort have we here in the conviction of sin! We know there are times when a mysterious breath sweeps through the soul, and awakens in conscience presentiments, convictions, that will not be laid. In that moment, when we see what sin is, in the light of that

Lamb whose blood can wash it away, how precious is this thought; "I will arise, and go"—where?—"to my Father." "I will arise and say, 'Our Father which art in heaven.'" And "as a father pitieth his children, so doth the Lord pity them." If this be true that God is our Father, what comfort in affliction! My amazement is not that the natural and the unsanctified man rushes to the judgment-seat unsent; but how men can stand the shocks, tribulations, losses, bereavements, pains, and agonies of this present world without helps from heaven to sustain and comfort them. As long as I am not a child of God, as long as I am not a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, so long all things that betide me are penal, the inflictions of an angry judge. But the instant that my heart is changed, and my standing is transferred, and I am made by adoption a son of God, then, instead of being penal, everything is paternal, for it comes from our Father. Instead of being punishment, the bitterest and the severest blow is only the

châstening of our Father's hand. Here too lies the difference between the reasoning of the Christian and that of the world. A mere worldly man argues thus : "I have lost all my property ; God has taken it. I have lost my children ; God has taken them. I have lost my health ; God also hath taken it : therefore God is angry with me, and is working against me, and is ready to consume me." Such is the reasoning of the world. But a Christian says, "God is my Father ; therefore He has taken these children to His own bosom ; therefore He has taken away that wealth which was taking His place ; therefore He has removed that health which was standing between me and heaven." The worldly man reasons from nature up to what God is, and arrives at the conclusion that God is angry : the Christian reasons from what God is—our Father—down to nature ; and therefore feels that all things under His impress work together for good to them that love Him.

Christianity is a happy religion. The Christian

alone can be happy, he alone must be happy ; of all men upon earth he is summoned to “ rejoice, and again rejoice !”

What brilliant hope have we ! When all the storms of this present world are lulled ; when all its trials, its fears, and its griefs are over,— and very soon they will be over, for every year seems as we grow older to run away faster ; and the very world itself in which we live as it nears to its close seems to revolve with accelerated speed,— when this life of ours, that seems for its shortness like a bubble upon the waters, is finished, we alone may begin to sing in our last moments, “ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore our Father ; who hath begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Christ from the dead.” And if He be our Father and we be His sons, then we are heirs, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. A Christian may not have sixpence in possession, but he has unsearchable riches in reversion. He may not have an acre upon earth he can call his

own; but he has the wide walk of heaven for ever and for ever.

Let us learn from all this what a motive we have here to obedience. We are not called to obey Pharaoh, a hard task-master in this world, but to serve our Father. The service of the law for reward is the service of a slave, ever wretched, ever miserable, ever incomplete: the service of a son is joyous, because his Father's yoke is easy and His commandments never grievous. What a basis for increased love and charity amid all the members of the Church of Christ! If there should be in this dispensation, what I fear there will not be, the thorough outward and visible union and communion of all the people of God; if there should arrive a day when we shall only be rivals in doing the greatest good, and agree to differ upon those things upon which we shall probably never here or hereafter absolutely agree, for such uniformity and monotony would not be the highest excellence; if ever all the people of God should

feel, in the beautiful language of John, that there are many folds but there is but one Shepherd; if ever holy catholic feeling should be a resplendent and universal reality; then the doom of Babylon, the decay of Mahometanism, the commencement of the dawn of millennial glory, would be at our doors. Such results are, in the page of prophecy, either in this or in the next dispensation, sure of coming to pass. In the mean time, if we only think that we are children of the same Father, it will matter little that one wears a surplice and another a silk gown; that one worships with a liturgy and another without it; that one believes in Presbytery and another in Episcopacy. All ecclesiastical systems are just like Railway Committees, provisional only while this dispensation lasts; waiting till the true and Divine Church comes down from heaven like a bride adorned for the bridegroom, inwardly all holy, and outwardly all beauty; and when that which is perfect is come that which is provisional will

be all done away. All our Churches are about to be broken up,—Church Established, and Church Dissenting,—but Christ's Church is never to be broken up. When the earthen vessel is broken the inner treasure will circulate the more; when the ship is broken on the rocks the crew will all be saved. And at all events we shall be taught this lesson—a lesson that Paul taught the Corinthians, and that many afflictions have not yet served sufficiently to teach us,—“Who is Paul, who is Apollos, who is Cephas; who is Luther, who is Cranmer, who is Knox; but mere ministers or servants by whom ye believe?” Christ alone remains all and in all.

“My Father's house on high,  
Home of my soul, how near  
At times to faith's far-seeing eye  
Thy golden gates appear!

Here in the body pent,  
Absent from Him I roam,  
Yet nightly pitch my moving tent  
A day's march nearer home.”

## III.

## THE ADORING WORSHIPPER.

“Hallowed be thy name.”—MATT. vi. 9.

I ENDEAVORED in the last chapter, on the words “Our Father which art in heaven,” to show the great beauty, comprehensiveness, and grandeur of this simple but sublime Prayer, commonly called the Lord’s Prayer. I noticed in my introductory remarks, that lest it should be supposed that there is a charm in the very words, it is said, “After this manner pray;” but in another Gospel, lest it should be thought that we cannot pray without the use of these words, it is written, “When ye pray *say* ;” teaching us that the first thing we are to regard is the spirit and the meaning of these words; and the next, and by no means the insignificant thing, is the use of

the simple but beautiful words themselves. I noticed also how this Prayer contrasts with almost every human prayer; we have here words so simple that a child can learn and understand them; and yet in their significance so far-reaching and sublime that the most experienced saint still falls back upon them. I noticed too the very interesting fact that the spirit of prayer is not, such as some are tempted often to feel, to approach God as a guilty criminal approaches a judge to deprecate his wrath; but as a child, a sinful child it is true, but a child still, approaches a parent, to ask his forgiveness and his blessing. There is in all our prayers in private, or in the family, or in the sanctuary, too much of the deprecatory, too little of the filial, the confidential, the trustful. And therefore this Prayer begins with what is the key-note of the whole; "Our Father which art in heaven;" "Our Father, hallowed be thy name;" "Our Father, thy kingdom come;" "Our Father, give us, thy children,

daily bread." I noticed the other interesting thought, that the great revelation of Christianity is what I called the fatherhood of God ; and the second is the brotherhood of all true Christians. The prayer here is not "*My* Father," as man would selfishly utter it ;" but "*Our* Father ;" in order that the feeling of the brotherhood of all may go with you to the throne of grace. I noticed that you have in this Prayer just the restoration of what we lost in Paradise. What did we lose there ? When man fell, the first thing he lost was a sense of God as his Father ; and the second thing he lost was the feeling of man as his brother ; for when Adam sinned he ran and hid himself, and said he was afraid—no more the child trusting in a Father, but the refugee running from one he believed to be an angry Judge. The next thing was, " And Cain rose up and slew his brother Abel." The second great loss of man, after that of God as his Father, is that of affection to his fellow-man as his brother. Now in this Prayer God is re-introduced through the Atone-

ment as Father ; man is re-introduced as brother ; and therefore, not satisfied with saying “ Father,” nor with saying “ My Father,” we rise to a loftier pitch and give utterance to a more catholic petition, and we say, “ Our Father.” I noticed also that we have here not only God our Father, man our brother, but heaven our home. We lift our eyes to the home where God is. What constitutes a home ? A parent. Our Father is in heaven, and to Him in common with all Christians we lift our eyes and anticipate our last and happy home, which Jesus has gone to inlay with His presence. “ Let not your hearts be troubled—ye believe in God, believe also in me. I go to prepare a place for you ; and I will come again and receive you to myself, that where I am there ye may be also.”

Having thus given a sort of *résumé* of what I said before, let me now direct your attention to the second clause, strictly and properly the first petition in this comprehensive Prayer. It is, “ Let thy name be hallowed.” At Athens no name was

found for the unknown God. To us it is revealed in letters of light. His name is the aggregate of His excellences. Yehovah Rophi, the Lord that healeth thee. Yehovah tzidkenu, the Lord our Righteousness. Yehovah Shammah, the Lord is there. Yehovah Jireh, the Lord will provide. It is enunciated in Exodus xxxiv., "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin." This name is legible in Scripture from Genesis to the Apocalypse. They that fear the Lord think upon His name, that is—the name of our Father. Where do we find it? Our very baptism should ever bring up before us the recollection and the sense of that grand name; for we are baptized not in the *names*, as if there were Three Persons, but in the *name*—the singular number—of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.—But if we wish to see that name, and each syllable of that name, in all its beauty, we refer to Ex. xxxiv. 5, where we are told, "And the Lord de-

scended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord." Now here is the name that we wish to be hallowed—"The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin." What a magnificent name! It is an answer to the objections of every poor, depressed, downcast sinner. Are you poor, blind, miserable, ignorant, and have nothing? He is the Lord the Creator. Have you a heart very wicked, very depraved? He is the Lord God; the strong, the omnipotent God; able to change it. Do you say, But I am a sinner, and how can I deal with him? He is merciful. Do you say, "But I can offer Him nothing for his mercy?" It is added, He is gracious—that is, He gives His mercies gratis. Do you object, "But I have sinned for many years, and lived thoughtlessly and without Him?" He is "longsuffering." Do you say, you have drawn upon His mercy so often that you are

afraid He will give you no more? He is "abundant in goodness and truth." Do you add, however, still that you are afraid that as nearly six thousand years have elapsed, and so many have drawn upon Him, that He must at last be exhausted of all His mercy? The answer is, He keeps mercy for thousands of generations—for that is the meaning, not thousands of persons but thousands of generations. But do you say, "I have committed all sorts of sin?" If you are heartily sorrowful for it, and desire to abjure it, blessed thought! God forgives all sorts of sin;—forgiving "iniquity"—that is one sort; "transgression"—that is a second sort; "and sin"—that is the third and last sort. But do you say, "If men believe this they will be sure to plunge into all sorts of wickedness?" Surely human nature is not so base as to make the very exuberance of God's goodness a reason for living in profligacy. On the contrary, so sanctifying is this that God at the same time "will by no means clear the guilty." We here pray that

this name, each syllable of which is a text full of precious thought, may be hallowed. Dumb nature, the creation the animals, the irrational animal, glorify Him; but it is the rational, redeemed, intelligent family that hallow or sanctify God's name. God's name is just Himself; the word "name" in fact is constantly employed in Scripture for a person. For instance it is said, "Thou hast a few names in Sardis which have not denied me." And again, we speak of a person as having a great name; that is, being distinguished for genius, or talent, or power in some department of life. Now God's name here is just Himself; and when we pray that His name may be hallowed we pray that we and all living men, and the whole brotherhood of the Christian Church, and the whole race that He has made, may one day in their hearts, in their hopes, in their faith, in their lives, in all they are and in all they do, sanctify, adorn, trust in, praise, worship, that great and blessed name.

Having begun this prayer with the filial ex-

pression of confidence, "Our Father," we may expect that the very first question that our Father will ask of His children will be, "If I am a Father, then where is mine honor?" When we begin this Prayer with the filial expression, "Our Father," so far is it from making us presume irreverently upon His relationship to us, that we give expression in the very next breath to the words "Hallowed be thy name." In fact, begin with hallowing the name of God, and you begin wrong; begin with expressing your relationship as sons to God, and you will go from loving Him to reverence, and so glorify and sanctify Him. We begin with the expression of filial confidence, "Our Father;" we proceed with all the reverence and the homage that a creature owes to the Great Creator, and we say, "May we never in thinking of Thee as our Father forget that Thou art also our God. May we never as sons so far trespass on Thy affection as to forget that Thou art the High and the

Mighty One whose name is Holy, Holy, Holy, the Lord God of hosts.”

In illustrating this clause of the prayer let us look at it first in reference to creation ; secondly, in reference to history, or God’s providential work in the world ; and thirdly, in reference to the visible Church, into which we are baptized ; and lastly, in relation to our own personal and individual hearts. Let us examine it first of all in reference to creation. After man had lost the fatherhood of God, he made an attempt to dethrone God, to erase His name from every nook and quarter of the habitable globe, and to inscribe his own name upon stone and star, upon tree, and fruit and flower ; taking from God his glory, and appropriating to himself what he had thus stolen from God. And still, if you trace the influence of this feeling throughout the world, you will find that in the schools of science, in the vocabulary of the learned, this very name, this divine presence, instead of being hallowed, is covered with inscriptions that tend,

if not to erase, at least to obscure it. We speak for instance of nature as if it were a living creature, and make it a substitute for Him whose Spirit inspires it. We speak of the laws of nature, instead of calling them, as we ought to do, the provisions of God. We say it is a law of nature the sun rises. It is really the decree of God. We speak of the fixity of these laws, as if God had left the creation to itself, and retired from ruling it, or handed it over to material phenomena; as if in addition to its being fallen it were finally forsaken. The truth is, what we call a law of nature is in Christian phrase an impulse of the finger of God; and what we pronounce to be a property in matter is simply a volition on the part of God. The gravitation of water, the attraction and repulsion of the magnet, the march of orbs in their spheres, the revolution of the earth on its axis, the falling and the flowing tides, the rising and the setting suns, the flight of the eagle and the fall of the sparrow, are each, not the expressions of a law that God made five thousand years ago,

and left to act, but are each the direct response to the direct touch and the immediate power of God. When we substitute a law of nature for a volition of God, we so far fail to hallow His name. If we use phrases merely for the sake of convenience in science, but never fail to look through the phrase and regard it only as a veil hiding God, or a man's words substituted for the acts of God ; if, in short, we see him in all, we do not fail to hallow thus far and therein His name. But the philosopher will naturally say, the regularity of the sequences, as they are called, of nature is the evidence that God has created and left the world to certain laws. For instance, we find it as a matter of fact that seed cast into the earth does germinate ; that fire does burn, that water does roll down to its level ; that spring and summer and autumn come in beautiful succession, and therefore we argue, says the philosopher, that these things are laws, and God has struck these laws upon the world, and retired and left them to work out their mis-

sion. The answer to all this is, the very fixity of these things is only another proof of the beneficence of God. If autumn sometimes came in March, and spring sometimes came in August or September, we should not know when to sow or what to sow, and we should have no hope that we should reap wherein we had sown. But because these seasons remain fixed and orderly, the expressions of God's exuberant beneficence, are we to take the very fixity which is the evidence of his beneficence, and make that an evidence that He has left the world to itself and under the domination of blind law? God acts not by caprice but in infinite wisdom, and the very fixity, if I may use the phrase, of His action is its evidence of His boundless wisdom, His great beneficence. Strange but sad it is that man construes it into a proof that God wound up the world as a man winds up his watch, and then left it to uncoil itself till its day should be finished. The truth is, it is God's touch every instant that makes the heart beat. There is no

law in your heart, separate from God's will, why it should beat ten minutes, any more than there is why a stone should beat ; and there is no evidence why a piece of bread should nourish you any more than a quantity of dust. I know the popular reply, "What nonsense ! No more reason why bread should nourish than dust ! Is there not so much oxygen, and so much carbon, so much gluten, so much saccharine matter ?" But this only carries a little farther back ; why does the saccharine matter nourish ? why does the gluten nourish ? why do all these things combined nourish ?

The old-fashioned theology of ancient days best explains ; bread nourishes because God blesses it, and my heart beats because God touches it. The law comes from the Lawgiver, and responds to His touch ; and what philosophers call the laws of nature are simply the provisions of God's goodness. We pray here that in the halls of science in the schools of the world, in its colleges and in its universities, in the languages of the learned

and in the vocabularies of science, not that law without the Lawgiver, but that God's name may be hallowed.

Let us now study this Prayer in reference to God's providential dealings in the world, that is, in reference to history. God is as much in national history as He is in natural science ; as much and truly in every flower that grows in nature, and in every chapter that is written in history, as He is in every text that is inspired in the Bible. We are so prone to retain the old leaven of the Popish element, and to think God is confined to what we call sacred things, sacred pages, sacred places. God is everywhere ; all earth is His, the universe is His ; and not an angel can worship before Him, not a hair can fall from the youngest or the oldest head, without His permission. But how often are we prone to calculate contingencies, to arrange, to locate, to proportionate, and to hope, without once thinking of God. Creation seen without a Creator is scarcely so dreary a dungeon as history viewed without God.

God is as much acting in our present natural history as when he marched Israel, by the pillar of fire by night and the pillar of cloud by day, from Egypt into the land of Canaan. I do not believe in chance. Our creed does not begin, "I believe in chance;" but, "I believe in God the Father Almighty, the maker of all things." I do not believe that chance has any more to do with the management of nations than it had with the manufacture of the stars, or of the stones of the earth, or of the fruits and flowers that blossom in its bosom and adorn it with their beauty. All this is perfectly compatible with man's responsibility, and with man's free will; just as God making the earth, and carrying on the march of the material earth, is perfectly compatible with the fixity of what we call the laws under which it is governed; so God in history, carrying events to their consummation, and allowing nothing to happen without his cognizance, permission, or control, is perfectly compatible with our vigorous use of means. I believe that the day of every

man's decease is fixed in the purpose of God ; but, though I so believe, I will still do everything in my power to preserve the life which God has given me ; for the same God who has fixed the day of my decease has also fixed in my heart the love of living, and therefore the duty of taking all the means to live that He in His providence puts in my power. I know I never can harmonize the purposes of God with man's free-will ; I feel I never can sufficiently explain them ; but because I cannot explain, it does not follow that these things are not true, or are inexplicable. We are far more ignorant than we are apt to think ourselves, many things are true which we are not able to harmonize, reconcile, or explain. But whilst I use all the means of life in my power, to know that I am immortal till God has nothing more for me to do, is surely a blessed thought ! Your sons, your husbands, your brothers, may go forth to that dread and terrible work that will soon spread sad sorrows on our shores, with this sustaining thought, that

while that son, or husband, or brother, will use all the skill of modern military experience, and all the weapons that are prescribed for offence or defence, and will take his place in the battalion, and advance to his dread mission as if all depended on himself, yet he may carry into the thickest of the conflict this thought, "There is not a bullet can touch me till God allows it; not a sword can cut a hair from my head till God commissions it; not a force in war, or fever, or pestilence can scathe me till God gives permission;" this is enough to make a hero. All this is perfectly compatible with the use, the vigorous use, the common-sense use, of all the means of safety that God may put in our power. If I believed that human passions were at this moment reigning uncurbed in Europe, and that Autocrats and Emperors are left to do just as they like; if I believed that accident and impulse were determining the eventualities of the world; that there is no plan, no programme, no grand and blessed issue; if I believed there was

no helm with a sovereign hand at it, and no chart written divinely, I should plunge into absolute despair, and conclude that chaos was coming back, and the civilization of a thousand years about to lapse into the barbarism of days long since gone. If I so believed, I should feel I was a leaf tossed upon the winds, a bubble amid the eddies of the river; hope would die, confidence would go, and I should literally be of all men the most miserable. But we hallow God's name when we recognise God here, there, everywhere. Whether we can interpret unfulfilled prophecy or not, we admit that in this book, the Bible, as matter of fact which nobody can deny, there is what is called prophecy; as for instance Isaiah's prophecy, Jeremiah's, or Ezekiel's. There are prophecies in the Gospels, there are prophecies also in the Epistles. What does prophecy imply? If there be predictions in this book stretching to the end, this fact that God has predicted what shall come, and that He has thus written what shall come, is sufficient

evidence that He will preside over all that happens to evolve and bring to pass what He himself has foretold. Grant me that there is in this book inspired prophecy, and the irresistible corollary from it is that God rules in providence. Grant that in this book God has written down what shall come to pass and must come to pass ; and it follows that He has predicted, and thus bring that issue which He Himself has previously laid down. In short, it is of all things the most difficult to look at creation and infer, no God. And I can well understand the force of the expression, "He that says there is no God is a fool." But it is no less difficult to look into the chapters of history, and to see what is taking place around us in the world, and to believe that all is chance, or accident. No, we are not only spectators, but actors in a magnificent world-wide drama. The great author of it, God, has written it ; each man takes his place, each actor in it has part, and the issue of it will be what the beginning of it was in part—glory to

God in the highest, on earth peace, and good will to all mankind.

Thus we have seen how to hallow God in creation; and also, how to hallow God in providence, or in history. Let me consider the way in which we are to hallow God, and pray that His name may be hallowed, in the visible Church. By the visible Church I mean any one congregation of Christians met together in Christ's name. This is the normal idea of the Church of Christ. The idea that there is no Church where there is Episcopacy, or no Church where there is Presbytery, or no Church where there is Congregationalism, is sufficiently absurd—it is/ give utterance to a sentiment not found in God's word; and those persons do violence to good sense who talk such nonsense. The real definition of a Church is that given by our blessed Lord, "Wheresoever two or three are met together in my name, there am I in the midst of them;" the rest is but development—very beautiful it may be, and very expedient also; and you

may have your strong preferences ; but when you dig down to the radical definition of a Church of Christ, it will be found to be two or three met together in His name. We are to hallow God's name first of all in public worship. We are to address none but Deity. It is to desecrate His name, to pray to angels, to saints, or to the Virgin Mary ; or to give to any creature, the most exalted in the universe, a portion of that praise, glory, and honor, which is justly and exclusively due to God. Again, we fail to hallow, or rather we desecrate, this great name, when we draw near to God in any other name than in that of Jesus Christ alone. I cannot conceive a more real, if not intended, insult to our blessed Redeemer than to think that He is not able to mediate between God and me, or that His mediation is so feeble that there must interpose the Virgin Mary, or the most exalted saint, or archangel that is beside the throne. There is none other name in which you can be saved but Christ's ; there is none other name in which we

are to pray but Christ's. We want no other ; and if others were offered we repudiate them altogether. Never forget that great thought, that when the high priest of old went into the holy of holies to make intercession, not a priest, or Levite, or human being, dared go with him ; he must appear and intercede alone. So Jesus, our High Priest, has gone into the true holy place ; and whilst He intercedes He must be alone ; neither priest, nor angel, nor saint, nor Mary must be with Him. What a striking evidence has He given us of this in John ii. Mary, as all the ancient Fathers have said, actuated by vanity, and therefore surely not immaculate, said to Jesus, "They have no wine." What did He answer ? Did He say, "Yes, queen of heaven ; thy intercession for these thy poor relatives is most proper, and therefore at thy bidding, and because of the virtue of thy intercession, I will turn all this water into wine ?" The very reverse took place, for He said in language most respectful, but no less decisive, "Wo-

man, what have I to do with thee?" It is important to notice that as Jesus comes out before the world, Mary retires into the shadow ; she was mother once, she is woman now. It is as if He had said to her, " Mary, I must tread the wine press alone ; I alone must endure all the agony and bloody sweat ; not even a mother's tears must mingle with the blood of the suffering Son. I must pay the penalty ; mine must be all the glory , and, therefore, Mary, retire into that obscurity from which thou didst emerge for a little time ; my name must shine refulgent above even a mother's name, and none other name must mingle its music with mine ; it is the only name in which men can be saved." He alone must carry the censer, He alone must have the priestly ephod, He alone must intercede. We want no other. Were the greatest saint in heaven, were the Virgin Mary to come down from her happy place, for if, the apostle supposes an angel to come, we may suppose her to come and to offer her assistance, we should do her the greatest ser-

vice, as we should yield Christ the greatest glory, by bidding her stand aside, that He may be all and in all. When Alexander the Great stood before the cynic Diogenes, and addressed him, "Diogenes, basking in the sun as you now are, tell me what is the greatest favor that I, the monarch of all these realms, can bestow upon you?" the cynic replied, "Please your Majesty, the greatest favor you can do me is to stand aside from between me and that sweet sunshine in which I have been basking all the day." If the Virgin Mary were to offer me the greatest favor she could do me, I would say, "Stand aside that I may live still in the sunshine of that Sun of Righteousness under whose wings there is healing, and in whose name alone I worship." We do not hallow this name when we substitute outward worship for the worship of the inward heart. The bowed knee is good, the eloquent prayer is good, the musical praise is good; but these are all as the tinkling cymbal and the sounding brass, if the heart be not there. The

absence of the heart is the absence of the fire that burns the sacrifice. It is the spirit of adoption that enables us to say, "Abba, Father;" it is the spirit of holiness that enables us to say, "Hallowed be thy name." We fail to hallow this name when we substitute in the house of God artistic, and sensuous, and material, and visible pomp and splendor for spiritual and true worship. I have no doubt that in the sight of a holy being, in the sight of God, and it may be in the sight of angels, and I am no Goth, I am no Vandal, I have sympathy with the beautiful—the noblest productions of a Titian, or a Salvator Rosa, or a Rubens, must appear mean, cold, and absolutely poor. If such be the case, to suppose that those ugly caricatures in which all perspective is extinguished, and where what was defect in the middle ages, because they had no knowledge of good drawing, is canonized and made an excellence in the 19th century; whether of our Blessed Lord, or of angels, or saints, can be any consecration to the sanctuary—seems im-

possible to an educated and reflecting mind. The plainest and the simplest sanctuary is surely the best adapted for worship; for the moment that pictures attract the eye of the worshipper and thus withdraw his heart from the worship, there is too much painting there to be truly beautiful, or at least to be of spiritual use. The highest beauty is not that which the painter's brush can impart, or the architect's genius create; it is the inner beauty of true holiness. Those Cathedrals in this very land of England so exquisitely beautiful as pieces of art, were all built when religion was at its lowest ebb. About the time the Cathedrals of York, and Lincoln, and Canterbury, and Winchester, were built, Hildebrand was treading on the necks of kings; the people's children were literally growing up barbarians and savages; the common schools of Europe were a few miserable cells connected with convents and monasteries; the bishops and priests were the proud lords of the world, and dictated to kings, cabinets, and emperors, and shook thrones by their nod. The

people were slaves, the priests were despots, religion was superstition, the poor pined of hunger and altars were adorned with gold. Morality was scarcely ever at a lower ebb. At this dark epoch these beautiful Cathedrals were reared. What does this teach? It is possible to be good architects and bad bishops; to heap up splendid ornaments in the church, and leave souls to perish outside of it. What we are to covet is not that exterior artistic beauty which is good enough in a play-house, appropriate in an opera, admirable as specimens of the arts and sciences; but unfit for the solemn sanctuary, where there should be good taste, true beauty, but no gaudy decoration; as in dress, so in architecture, the greatest beauty consists not in that which is most blazing and ostentatious, but most simple and severe. We fail to hallow God's name when we desecrate the Christian Sabbath to amusement, to business, to trade, to reading newspapers, to feasting, drunkenness, and such like. As one of the morning newspapers most nobly and elo-

quently said, what are called Sabbatarians, that is, people that believe in the Fourth Commandment, have the best of it in saying that the Sabbath should be observed as God commanded that it should be.

And when one looks at what some statesmen advocate in this matter, one is tempted to wish they would let religion alone, and attend to those departments in which they are more likely to excel. If we spend the Sunday in feasting, visits, and excursions and similiar amusements, we desecrate that day which God has hallowed, and perpetuated as the symbol upon earth of His own magnificent and holy name. If the working classes surrender the Sabbath they know not what they are doing. They give up not merely the day on which they may be prepared for heaven, and be made happier, but the only day that will be a rest to their aching and their weary frames. And if you ever consent to displace the Sabbath from its divine basis, and to hold that the Sabbath is most expedient because

it lets man have a physical rest, the mill-owner will soon say, "The Sabbath having no divine authority, I do not see why you should have it for amusement, I want you and it for business," and very soon it will be turned into one of the working days of the week. But if you hold fast this, that I must hallow the Sabbath because God has so enjoined it, because it is a "divine obligation," you take up ground on which you can stand. Man's present physical and mental rest is laid deepest in his divine obligation of the Christian Sabbath. Man's right to have respect from man, springs from God's right to have the Sabbath consecrated to His service. But let us look less to statesmen for legislation here. After all, the best guarantee for our holy Sabbaths are crowded sanctuaries. We must lean less on law and more on the growth of that inner life which Christianity feels. A Christian people will make a happy nation and holy Sabbaths.

We often fail to hallow God's name by those ecclesiastical distinctions and divisions in which

too many still glory. One says, "I am of Paul, I am of Apollos, I of Cephas." There is among worldly men what is called hero-worship; there is among superstitious men what is called saint-worship; and there may be among Protestants what is nearly as bad, sect-worship. The moment that we think there is no Church like the Church of England, or no Church like the Church of Scotland, and that to worship outside the one or inside the other is to fall into some frightful heresy, we are making the name of a Reformer, or a church, or a sect, something more than it should be. In all the sanctuaries of the land God's name alone should be exalted and hallowed.

We are to hallow this name personally in our own hearts and lives. "Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts." "I will be sanctified in them that come near unto me." But how are we to do so? By having those hearts renewed, and by looking to Him alone to do it; by being lights in the world, the salt of the earth, living epistles seen

and read of all men. There is no such credential of Christianity as a Christian; there is no such proof or treatise on the evidences, as a consistent, holy, spotless life. That man who as a Christian is most consistent in his personal, social, official, national responsibilities, speaks and votes for Christ when dumb. In increasing fruitfulness we are to hallow this name. Our blessed Lord says, "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit." When you see the verdure of spring, the blossom of the summer, the golden fruits of autumn, you see the creations of the sunshine, the dew-drops, and the good soil. And when you see holy, consistent, and Christian life, trees of righteousness, a chosen generation, a holy nation, showing forth the praises of Him who hath called them out of darkness into His marvelous light; you see there men glorifying God. And we glorify Him and hallow His name also by missionary exertion. If you have felt Christianity to be precious to yourselves; if you have felt it so precious that you have embraced it as the salva

tion of your own souls; and if you look around you in the world and see thousands in darkness and perishing for want of light; the very first instinct of your hearts will be to make known God's ways upon the earth and His saving health among all nations. And when either by His own grand arrangements or through your humble exertions that day shall arrive when the whole earth shall be covered with His glory, and His name shall be exalted above every name, and one song shall occupy all nations; when "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive glory, and thanksgiving, and praise, and honor," shall be the universal anthem; then God's name will be hallowed in science, hallowed in creation, hallowed in history, hallowed in the visible Church, hallowed in individual hearts, and prayer shall cease to be offered, for we shall not pray the Lord's Prayer as now, but we shall translate it into praise, and say, "Our Father, hallowed is thy name; thy kingdom is come; thy will is done in heaven

as it is done on earth; thou hast given us daily bread; thou hast forgiven us all our sins; thou hast delivered us from every evil, and led us into no temptation; and thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen."

We hallow this name, not out of terror, or dismay, not to escape a pit full of pain, or to reach a paradise full of pleasure, but because we love Him who so deeply loved us. Our inspiration is not the hope of heaven, but the self-forgetful passion of gratitude and love.

## IV.

*A MISSIONARY DESIRE.*

“Thy Kingdom come.”—*MATT. vi. 10.*

“*THY* kingdom come” is literally, “come that kingdom of thine;” “that very kingdom of thine;” as if previously predicted in the prophets, and looked for by the people of God. In considering this petition, and the great truths it necessarily involves, we are tempted to ask as we read the petition, “Thy kingdom come,” has God ceased to reign? Is not His kingdom a perpetual presence? Does He not rule in the midst of the nations of the earth? Is He not the King and Governor of all? Does He not cover all space with His presence, and control all events by His power; guiding stars in their orbits, counting the hairs of the head, inspecting

the minutest atom, and weighing the heaviest orb ; so that the greatest is not above and beyond Him, the least is not beneath Him ? Is He not therefore King and Ruler over all all the earth ? I answer, He is. God is as much in the facts of history, as He is in the texts of the Bible ; and every fact that occurs at home or abroad is as much associated with God in some shape as any one text that we can select from the New Testament Scriptures. It is altogether an erroneous notion we sometimes entertain, that God speaks in the Bible only, that He lives in a place of public worship only ; and that religion and religious thoughts have to do with religious and theological things only. God speaks in providence as emphatically as He speaks in the Bible. God is amid the tents of Meshech as truly as in the sanctuaries of England. God is not restrained to what we call consecrated places ; He fills all space with His presence ; and He is nearer the humblest heart that prays to Him upon the ocean's bosom than He is to the encaustic tiles

and the tessellated pavement of the noblest cathedral on the continent of Europe. But it is no less true that a great interruption of God's presence occurred nearly six thousand years ago. God made man holy, therefore happy; His viceroy upon earth, to rule and govern in His name, subjecting to His jurisdiction all created things. But explain it as you like, or be puzzled by it as you may, sin the great disturbing element crept into the world; and from that day to this, and, as far as we can see, till sin shall be expunged and all things restored to their original orbit, the world will be distracted and perplexed by antagonisms and hostilities, and with men that resist His will, deny His jurisdiction, and often and impiously defy His judgments. We see around us in the world at this moment and each in his own heart—that little world in which he has a still deeper stake—affinities hostile to God. There is not a soul on earth that has not sometimes, perhaps not expressed words, but felt on some occasions, "I wish there were

no God : I wish He did not see me ; I wish He did not know what I am about." Such thoughts have occurred to many more than once. Yet what fearful thoughts ! The most awful atheism and blasphemy combined are in these. That one thought felt in one single individual is evidence of something that has gone wrong in this world. How also can we explain tears that waste it, the pestilences that have swept it, the blood that has deluged its greenest spots, and made them very *aceldemas* ; except upon the supposition that some dire intrusive element has crept into our world, as fever creeps into the human physical economy, and disturbed, disorganized, made feverish and restless, all humanity all created things ; and that while the kingdom will come, the evidence is irresistible in every land, and more or less in the sensations of every heart, that the kingdom in its fullness, in its glory, and in its completeness, is not yet come. It is the burden of prophecy, it is the subject of prayer, it is not yet the record of his-

tory before us. The origin and the explanation of all this disturbance is that man sinned; and this explains all. You cannot explain our present physical or moral position without the Book of Genesis. Philosophers have tried it; men that smiled at the idea of a woman taking an apple from a tree and bringing by such a trivial thing death into the world and all our woe, have presented their solutions; but not only have infidels been amazed, but their own successors have smiled that any could be such fools as to believe their own solutions: and we fall back upon this simple, severe, but sublime record, of Genesis, that that one act did open the flood-gates of sin; and we and our children taste the bitterness of that apple that Eve thought would taste so sweet, as it was so pleasant to the eye. The fact itself of any one sin viewed in its outward act seems a trivial thing. What is stealing? Putting your hand on another man's purse—a mere mechanical act. How should putting your hand into another

man's purse and filling that hand with a few gold sovereigns, transport you beyond the sea to Botany Bay? It seems absurd; but it is so. Why is it so? Because that one act is in its moral nature very bad, and is evidence of a wrong state within, and the source of many evils without. When Eve took the apple, if apple it was, from the forbidden tree, it was evidence of emotions rising from the depths of her heart, alien to her true nature, hostile to God, denying His supremacy: and telling Him to His face, "You have said this fruit is bad and will do great mischief if I touch it. But it is so beautiful; and then I am told by this wise personage who has introduced himself to my notice without an introduction or an apology, it will make me so wise; and therefore though thou, O God, hast told me this, yet I think my judgment is perfectly trustworthy; and I will give deference to it." There was thus induced a moral state of things altogether wrong. But you say, "What a pity that God made such a tree, with

such consequences!" Rather exclaim, What a pity that God made you a creature: this is as rational an objection. The very law of a creature is obedience and subjection to a creator; and as there must be obedience, which is an outward thing, and the expression of an inner state, there must be an outward sacrament or outward symbol by which that obedience shall be visibly perpetuated, or visibly broken. God might have said to Eve, "You shall not walk in that path; you shall not go near that flower; you shall not look into that bright stream; you shall not smell that fragrant rose." Any one of these would have been substantially the same. There was no poison in that tree; there was no moral sin in that fruit that she ate, any more than in the fragrance of any of the flowers in the garden. The sin was in doing what God forbade; and that outward act was the first step in apostacy from God, and brought into the world death and all our woe. But why did God allow her to do so? might He not have prevented all

this by preventing her touching it? Such objector would be the very first to complain that God restrains our will. What is it that men clamor for every day? independence: each man wishing to be a sovereign for himself. And the very objection that you urge against our constitution rebounds upon yourselves. God made Eve free; with every inducement to persevere in obedience; with every dissuasive to violate that simple law; with every inclination to obey, with every disinclination to rebel. And yet she rebelled. And if the Eves of England had been placed in her circumstances they would have broken the law sooner, and if possible, precipitated a greater ruin upon them and their descendants. If you ask, why has God allowed sin to enter? There I must stop. Whence sin came I cannot explain; we only know there are mysteries far back of all that we do know, that make us feel in our proudest moments very humble, or at least very little; and teach philosophers to say, what the greatest and chiefest of

them all so beautifully said, "I am but a child gathering shells washed up by the sea waves; the great depths of the ocean are unsounded by human plumb-line and far beyond." Instead of quibbling about the why, or disputing the wherefore, let us rejoice that the issue of all will be greater glory to God; and that this blessed fact I am commissioned to preach to every human being, that not one living soul that hears the Gospel will ever be condemned for what Eve did; but if condemned it will be for this, that he has rejected the great remedy, Christ and Him crucified; which puts right all that Eve left as her legacy of wrong, giving glory to God and salvation to the very chiefest of sinners.

There is in every prophecy, the earliest beginning in Paradise itself, the intimation of a kingdom more glorious at the close of this dispensation than that which constituted its dawn and its commencement upon earth. It was first announced in Paradise itself, "The woman's seed shall bruise the serpent's head." We find the

dying Patriarch, before he closed his eyes upon his sons, speaking of a Shiloh who should come to reign, and to whom the gathering of the nations should be. David sings its joys, Daniel proclaims its dawning glories; Jesus appeared the King of it; and Pontius Pilate, contrary to his own designs, was constrained to inscribe the magnificent truth upon the Cross of Him that will be crowned, "Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews." To ascertain the nature of this kingdom, let us first of all view it as the kingdom of grace, existent and progressive now; composed, first, of principles, perfect in themselves, but imperfectly developed in and by us; and next, of persons, accepted in themselves, yet imperfect in sanctification. Secondly, let us view it as the kingdom of glory, where there are perfect principles perfectly developed, and perfect subjects perfectly sanctified. Let us view it, then, first as the kingdom of grace; namely, with principles in themselves perfect, but imperfectly developed in us; and also as composed

of persons accepted in Christ, but imperfect in themselves. Now at present this kingdom is very much a hidden and unimpressive influence. "The world knows us not," says John, "as it knew him not." Nobody at this moment can infallibly chalk out the Church of Christ; no one glancing over all that surround a communion table, or kneel together at the footstool of the heavenly grace, can say, This is a Christian and that is not. And the moment we begin to discriminate and weed, as we would wish, the tares from the wheat, we find do not diminish the number of the tares, and we do great injury to the precious wheat. This kingdom is at this moment growing in the silence and the secrecy of individual hearts, in the sequestered and lonely places of the world; its great characteristic being, while its blessed King and Lord at present is clad in obloquy and contempt, that "not many rich, not many great, not many noble, are called." It is like the light of the morning, that dawns softly, then increases more and more unto the perfect

day ; or like the fruit trees and flowers in spring, there is a long preliminary process beneath the soil and out of sight, before the fragrant blossoms of May and the golden fruits of Autumn come forth. This kingdom first comes into us, and then we come into it. It becomes in each Christian a personal possession ; “The kingdom is within you.” And lastly we become its subjects, and the heirs of the kingdom of God. Here, too, now, is the difference between God’s way of promoting the highest good and man’s way. Man begins at the circumference, and works inwards towards the heart ; God begins by planting His kingdom a living germ in the individual heart ; and thereby influencing the whole man, and progressively giving tone and shape to all society. The constant tendency of man is, to think that he can regenerate the world by science, by literature, by steam-engines, by railroads, by newspapers, by Acts of Parliament ; and every day he finds, though he pursues his course as if he had never failed in it, how great and palpable his mistakes

are. But when God goes forth to revolutionize the world, He does so by regenerating individual hearts, and radiating from those hearts an influence that makes the world holier, and happier, and wiser. The constant shout of the world is, "Lo here; lo there;" the constant response from heaven is, "The kingdom of God is within you;" and if it be not there, it is not yet the time to look for it elsewhere. Man can beautify the world; but he can neither make the world, nor right it when it is gone wrong. There is much that he can do; but he has to learn that there is much more that it is folly, if not atheism, to attempt to do. This kingdom is defined by an apostle in words that are extremely comprehensive. Paul says, "The kingdom of God"—this kingdom of grace that we pray may come—"the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." There is the magnificent definition of what the kingdom of God is. It is first negative; "It is not meat and drink." And these two

words are used for all external, appreciable, ecclesiastical, or secular things. It is nothing outer. Not ceremony; these may be too many, or they may be too severe, or they may be too few: but these do not constitute one atom of the kingdom of heaven. There may be a liturgy, or there may be none; there may be infant baptism, or there may be adult baptism; there may be kneeling, or there may be standing. But these things are mere extrinsic arrangements of no value; they do not constitute an atom of the kingdom of heaven; for it is not meat nor drink. Nor is it, in the next place, anything ritual. It is neither the robes of a priest, nor the position of the building, nor the attitude—east, west, or north, or south—of the worshipper. It is neither Episcopacy nor Presbytery; it is neither Established Church nor Dissent. You may be Christian in any of these, and you may be Christian in none of these. These are the mere fringes on the robe, they are not the robe itself; the mere decorations, not the substance. Christianity can

live and flourish with them ; it can live in spite of them. "The kingdom of God is not meat nor drink." These things vary like the clouds in the sky ; but the stars in the darkest night shine bright and luminous when all the clouds have swept past them. These things vary as the politics of the world, useful, expedient ; one it may be more preferable than the other ; but none of these are essential. And remarkable it is, the great battles that agitate, and deface, and discredit, the Christian Church, are not upon the inner ground which I proceed to unfold, but upon this outside ground which is defined by the Apostle as "meat and drink," or form and ceremony. What is the quarrel between one? Episcopacy or Presbytery. Between others it is infant baptism or adult baptism. Between others it is a liturgy or no liturgy. And the bigotry is not all upon one side. I have met members of the Scottish Church, so bigoted that they have believed, and said they believed, it was impossible to worship God through the very beautiful

liturgy of the Church of England. And I have met members of the Church of England who regard those as scarcely above Jews or Mahometans who do not worship according to their forms. There is no monopoly of bigotry in any Church. Wherever man attaches an over-importance to "meat and drink," to form and ceremony, to Episcopacy or Presbytery, he is at least on perilous ground; he is certainly on highly controversial ground, for it is there that all the volcanic explosions have occurred that have made infidels more bitter, and the Church of Christ to be less influential as a kingdom among mankind. But this kingdom is none of these. What is it? It is, says the Apostle, "righteousness." First an outer state, then an inner character. Here is the outer state; "He that knew no sin was made sin for me, that I might be made the righteousness of God by him." That is my sins as a believer were imputed to Christ, and He suffered all the penalty; His righteousness as the Saviour is imputed to me, and I receive, therefore,

and therefore alone, all the honour, the happiness and the glory. In other words, every subject of this kingdom is clad in white robes, which is the righteousness of saints. He is justified by that only righteousness which Christ bequeathed as the Lord our righteousness. In other words, my title to heaven, my right to everlasting glory,—that which I will plead, and satisfied that the plea can no more be rejected than God can be dethroned,—is not anything I am, or anything I have done, or anything I have paid, or anything I have suffered ; but that which has been done and paid for me, the righteousness alone of Jesus Christ my Lord. This righteousness is also internal or character. Christ's righteousness, my title, is imputed to me, and remains the outside fair robe in which I am clad ; the Holy Spirit's righteousness is imparted to me, and my heart is inlaid with it as the most precious and enduring ornament. And wherever there is this outer righteousness, constituting my title to heaven, there is this inner character, constituting my fitness and

my qualification for heaven. We are justified by the righteousness of Christ, imputed to us as a title; and we are sanctified by the righteousness of the Spirit, imparted to us as a character. The first constituent element of the kingdom of heaven is therefore righteousness. He who is thus justified, and thus sanctified, and thus born again, is a subject of the kingdom of God, whether he worship in a meeting-house, a chapel, a church, a cathedral, on the banks of a river, or on the brow of a mountain. God has enfranchised him as free of the universe; and, whatever be the sect or the denomination that he may belong to, he is a member of the kingdom of Christ and an heir of the kingdom of glory. What a pity that we do not keep this great truth, clear, firm, fast, in our inmost hearts. In proportion to the importance we attach to the inner thing, righteousness, will be the smallness of the importance we attach to the outer thing, called "meat and drink." And hence, when this feeling is right we shall like best the church—whatever be its form or its ecclesias-

tical polity, if there be nothing in it essentially wrong,—in which these everlasting truths are brought home to our minds with the greatest clearness, impressed upon our hearts with the greatest emphasis ; where, in short, we learn most clearly the way that leads to heaven, and the happiness that may be drunk from many of those secret and sequestered springs that are in it, and that God has left for our good.

The second element of this kingdom is peace. “Peace is the very earliest fruit of righteousness. Justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” We are told in Scripture that the natural heart is not only hostile to God, but enmity to God. We are told in the same Scripture that the instant my sins are forgiven ; and that I can see on the clearest grounds that I can be admitted into heaven by the righteousness of Him whom I embrace as my only Saviour ; all my fears of the future are dissipated, all my dread of the after consequences of death is annihilated and I can go forward into scenes of peril, into

places of danger, into sickness, into the grave itself, not insensible to these things, for that would be stoicism, but triumphing over these things through the possession of that peace which springs from the deep conviction that I am justified by the righteousness of Christ alone. The atmosphere of my soul may be shattered by the storms of conflicting passions, and my heart oppressed by the fierce democracy that they create within it, but I no sooner lay hold upon Christ, the King of Righteousness, the Saviour, than its atmosphere is calmed, its storms are hushed ; and I enjoy peace, even when I listen to the thunders of Sinai ; peace when I gaze on its lightning flashes athwart a clouded sky ; peace when I look at the great White Throne ; peace when I look abroad at all the turmoil of the world in which we live : an inner peace that is not the denial of my sinfulness, but casting it all upon Him who has borne it all away ; a peace that is not ease, but conflict with sin ; not acquiescence in evil for the sake of quiet, but conflict with evil for the sake

of Christ. "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace." "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." The kingdom of God is righteousness in me, and peace that passeth understanding. Here is the true Peace Society ;—namely, the kingdom of God. You never can secure peace by outward applications. If the human body has degenerated into a state of disease, all the plasters you can apply will not heal it. The cure must be something that will touch its internal springs of health. If the volcano is pouring out its streams of molten lava, all the showers of heaven will not quench it, you must go deeper than that, and take away the secret sources from which its fires are fed. So war in the world, and among the nations of the earth, is to be put an end to, not by speeches against it, nor by a universal compact, "I am determined not to make war any more." The result of this will be only the more wicked, taking the opportunity of invading the least suspecting, and turning the un-

suspiciousness of the one to the benefit and aggrandizement of the other. The true way to secure peace is not, depend upon it, to burn your fleet, nor yet to disband your army, it is rather to be the other way. The true way to obtain lasting peace, a peace that nations, communities, individuals, will feel and hold fast, is to spread that blessed Gospel till it rises and reaches the cold heart of the northern autocrat, pervades the bosoms of kings and emperors, and cabinet ministers, and statesmen; and when all men have learned how precious this Gospel is, and have tasted the sweetness of its peace, then, and only then, the sword will not be locked in its scabbard, as some would propose, but turned into the ploughshare, and the spear will not be left in the manufactory, as some say, but beaten into the pruning-hook, and the nations will war no more.

The third element of this kingdom is joy. "Righteousness, peace, and joy." It begins in righteousness, it advances in peace, it culminates

and flowers in joy. Joy is to peace, just what sunshine is to daylight; a brighter manifestation of happiness. And now where these three fruits, righteousness, and peace, and joy, are found, there you have what our Lord calls the kingdom of God within you. Only let no Christian be discouraged. It is possible that some who read this have got hold of the righteousness which is the first element, but are yet strangers to the peace and joy that follow; or it may be that others have a firm grasp of the righteousness, but their peace very wavering, and their joy very faint and dim. Nevertheless, trust, be patient, read, pray: and righteousness will diffuse itself in an atmosphere of peace, and that peace will create the sunshine of joy, and you will learn that God will not quench the faintest spark, or extinguish, or forsake, or forget the lowest cry for righteousness, peace, and joy.

Having thus seen the constituent elements of this kingdom of grace, let us now turn to the subjects of it. The elements of it are righteous-

ness, peace, joy ; the subjects of it are the possessors of these elements. They are called in Scripture "the sons of God," "a chosen generation, a holy nation," "the heirs of God," "the servants of God." The kingdom comes first into their hearts, they are then translated as subjects into this kingdom. Instead of enumerating their characteristics from the New Testament, let me state that they constitute altogether a Catholic kingdom. There is not a word in the New Testament more beautiful than that word "Catholic." It is because we are Catholics that we never can consent to be Roman Catholics, or Anglican Catholics. The meaning of the word "Catholic" is "over all." Hence Peter's Epistles are addressed to the Catholics. John's Epistle is addressed to the Catholics, that is, to those Christians of every name, denomination, form, ceremony, usage, throughout the whole world, in whose hearts there has been planted that kingdom which is righteousness, and peace, and joy. This kingdom embraces not merely

contemporaneous Christians, but all Christians of all ages that are past, and Christians that are now in heaven and in glory. There is but one universal Church; part of which is not yet born, but is in the purposes of God; part of which is living, but not yet born again; part of which is now in heaven, and part of which is struggling amid the trials, the storms, and perplexities of this present world. All these combined together constitute the one family of Christ, the one holy Catholic kingdom; to which Christ's name is the only pass-word, to be a member of which is requisite that you belong neither to Episcopacy, nor Presbytery, nor Independency; but that you have in your hearts righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. And this company, some of whom existed before the Flood, some in the days of Abraham, some in the desert with Moses, some in the Church of Rome, thousands and increasing thousands of whom are in every denomination upon earth, all together when complete, shall be presented to Christ a glorious

Church, without spot, or blemish, or wrinkle, or any such thing. But for any one to call himself a Catholic, whilst he denounces all that submit not to his ecclesiastical polity, is to misappropriate the word and mistake his own character. This kingdom is a united kingdom. There may be no visible uniformity discoverable by the eye, there may be on the contrary great variety of aspect; different ceremonies; different forms and usages, and yet true unity. The great blunder into which most people fall when they hear the pretensions of the Roman Catholic Church arises from want of distinguishing two things infinitely different. The Roman Catholic Church has uniformity, but she has no unity. The Protestant Church has unity, but it has no uniformity. Uniformity is a thing superinduced from without, not something originated from within; but unity is something originated from within; identity of belief, of principle, of trust, of joy, and of hope. And among all true Christians, the great truths that they hold in

common, outshine infinitely all the points of collision, and unhappily discord, that sometimes break out amongst them. And if true Christians thought more of the great things and the glorious things on which they agree, and troubled themselves less about the little things, and often paltry things, about which they differ, there would be not increase of unity, for that is already perfect, but there would be increase of brotherly love, affection and sympathy, throughout the whole Catholic and visible Church of the Lord Jesus Christ. In one sense I admit the Church of Rome has unity, but it is not in the highest sense; but it teaches us a lesson. In the Roman Catholic Church, all the divisions that prevail amid their denominations, which they call by a higher sounding word, orders, are forgiven each by the other and all by the Pope, on the condition that Redemptorists, and Friars, and Passionists, and Jesuits, and all the rest, shall cling to the chair of St. Peter, as it is called; and hold the Pope to be their head and

their centre. That teaches us a great lesson. All the differences that subsist among Christians should be forgiven and forgotten, on condition that all cling to the Cross of Christ and to the Son of God, the only Saviour, King, and Lord. They forgive their differences because of their hold of a human creature; we may forgive ours, seeing that we are children of the same Father, brethren of the same Elder Brother, subjects of the same King, and heirs of the same glory.

It is in the next place a holy kingdom. Not that every subject of it is perfectly holy; nay, it is too true that the best Christians sin, and the holiest man upon earth must say every day, "If I say that I have no sin, I deceive myself, and the truth is not in me." But the difference between a Christian and a worldly man sinning is this. If a Christian sin through some sore, sudden, unexpected trial, his very first impulse is to be recovered, reinstated in the enjoyment of forgiveness, learning from the past the path of safety for the future. But when a worldling sins

he remains in it, wallows in it, delights in it, feels it to be his joy. When a man is cast into the sea, he escapes from it as fast as he can, he cannot live in it, it is not his element, and he would not be there if he could escape from it. So with the Christian who is led into sin, it is not his element, he hates it, he shrinks from it, and he cannot continue there, it is not the element made for him, nor he made for it. And in the next place, it is a happy kingdom. After all, Christians are the happiest men. And it would be very strange if God were to make worldlings happy, and leave Christians sad. It has always appeared to me that the only happy man upon earth must be a Christian, and if he be not happy, do not say Christianity is a gloomy thing, and preaching evangelical religion makes men miserable, but "These men have not seized its grand and salient truths, and have not yet become thoroughly impressed with its sanctifying and its ennobling influence."

Lastly, there is the kingdom of glory, on which

I cannot dwell. When all kingdoms that oppose themselves shall be beaten down, the kingdom of Mammon craving for supremacy shall be utterly destroyed, the kingdom of Antichrist shall sink like a millstone in the deep sea, and no more be heard of at all. The kingdom of Mahomet shall disappear, already waning and almost extinguished from Europe. The kingdom of Satan shall come to an end, the Jews shall be gathered home to their own land, and to the god of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob. Those bodies that we deposit in the grave to be kept and treasured there, united to Christ till the resurrection, we shall come back from heaven to receive again, and put on these bright shrines for glorious souls, as trophies of what redeeming love has done and what the Cross has purchased. And there shall be at the last day not a handful, not a solitary few, but a mighty multitude that no man can number, out of every nation, and people, and kindred, and tribe and tongue. Death shall be destroyed, his very footprints shall be effaced from the earth.

Graves shall cease. There shall be no more sacraments, for we need no symbols where the original is present. There will be no more prayer, it will be translated into praise. There will be no more preaching, but we shall all know even as we are known, and all shall be taught of God; and all nations shall be happy, and the whole earth shall be filled with His glory. Now it is prayer, "Thy kingdom come;" then it will be the anthem peal, "Hallelujah! the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. The kingdom is come." Meantime, the slave toiling in the mines cries, "Thy kingdom come." The poor over-wrought needle-woman, working from early on Saturday morning, often till early on Sunday morning, to minister to the thoughtlessness of the fashionable few, cries, "Thy kingdom come." The nations groaning under war, earth torn by artillery, the sea ploughed by hostile fleets, all nature groaning and travailing in pain, longing to be delivered, lifts up one piercing prayer, "Thy kingdom come." And it will come, and God will be glorified, and earth

will be happy, and all things restored to more than their original glory, and the King shall reign and prosper over all the earth.

The last and only possible universal empire approaches—the waters of sin ebb daily—the first rays of the morning sun gild the mountaintops with rosy light—the cries of six thousand years are about to be answered—out of chaos will emerge an image of beauty and glory, such as heaven never saw and earth never beheld.

“O Thou ever begotten light and perfect Image of the Father, come out of Thy royal chamber. O Prince of the kings of the earth, put on the visible robes of Thy Imperial Majesty—take up Thy unlimited sceptre, for the voice of Thy Bride calls Thee, and all creatures sigh to be delivered.”

## V.

*A SUBMISSIVE HEART.*

“Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.—*MATT.* vi. 10.

I STATED in my first discourse upon the opening address of this most sublime, yet simple, Prayer,—so sublime that the highest saint may still study it, and yet so simple that the youngest child may learn it,—that it begins first of all in one Gospel with “After this manner pray,” lest we should suppose that in the words there was inherent that virtue which is only in the name of Him in whom they are presented. But in another Gospel it is given, “When ye pray, say,” teaching us that the words have their value, that they are so appropriate, so expressive, because inspired; that better words we do not need, simpler ones we cannot conceive: and, therefore, to use this Prayer in the public assemblies of the people

of God, seems a duty clearly inferred from what our blessed Lord has said. I noticed in the next place its opening address, "Father," the great restoration of our sonship as children, and His relationship as a Father. But lest we should be selfish it is "*Our* Father," the fatherhood of God, the grandest revelation in Christ Jesus, the brotherhood of all believers, the necessary inference from it, and therefore "Our Father." I noticed also "In heaven," teaching us that heaven is our ultimate, our common, and, thanks be to God, our certain home. The fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of all believers, the same common and happy home, opening its everlasting gates to receive the worst and the oldest that flee to that Father in the name of the one Saviour, breathing in the spirit of adoption, "Abba, Father, Our Father in heaven." I then noticed how the three petitions that follow seem almost to contain a shadow of a Triune Jehovah. "Hallowed be thy name," the Father; "Thy kingdom come," Christ the King; "Thy

will be done in us," the work of the Holy Spirit in us; "Thy will be done in earth even as it is done in heaven." I noticed too the interesting thought that the text, "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all other things will be added," is here unfolded in the daily prayer that Christians are taught to use. The Christian begins first by recognizing what is due to God, before he ventures to ask what is needful for himself. He begins by saying, "Our Father, hallowed first of all be thy name;" next, "Thy kingdom come;" next, "Thy will be done;" then, "Give us our daily bread, forgive us our sins, lead us not into temptation." I noticed also the interesting thought that we have first of all the riches and fulness of God, we have last of all the emptiness and necessities of the creature. "Our Father, *thy* kingdom, *thy* name, *thy* will," that is the fulness of God. Then, secondly, our wants, "Give *us*, forgive *us*, lead *us* not into temptation, deliver *us* from evil." God all fulness, the creature all wants;

that fulness ready to be poured into every want, till our hearts are filled with grace, and finally with glory.

In this lecture we would meditate on the clause, "Thy will be done in earth as it is done in heaven." There is a great distinction we are prone to overlook in thinking of the will of God. There is, first of all, His will carried out in the phrase, "It shall be;" there is, secondly, His will embodied in the phrase, "It ought to be." There is first of all His will embodied in His decrees, known to Himself in His secret purposes, unfolded faintly in His ancient inspired prophecies; and this will must be, and shall be, carried into absolute execution. There is, secondly, His will embodied in His precepts, His commandments, His invitations, as these are scattered throughout the Gospel; and this is what we are to obey, and what we pray may be carried out on earth, as it is now carried out in heaven. The first shall be in spite of all opposition, however formidable or great, the other is what

ought to be, and to which we respond emphatically when we say, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." The first we need not help God to fulfil. He retains to Himself the awful prerogative of purposing, and He retains with that the sublime prerogative of performing what He has purposed. But the second, or God's will as it is expressed in His law, His invitations, His precepts, His commandments, He asks us, first for His glory and next for our good, to carry out into practical development, and day by day to pray that this will, as expressed in every law in the Decalogue, as embodied in every page of the Bible, may be so carried out that earth shall become the facsimile of heaven, and the light of one the reflection of the glory of the other; and this island of ours, called the earth, on which we stand, shall be re-knit to the great continent of heaven from which it was broken off, and there shall be one kingdom and one King, and His name one, over heaven and earth. In reference to the first definition I have given of God's

will as it shall be, in contradistinction to God's will as it ought to be, or God's will in His own purpose, in contradistinction to God's will as it is revealed in His precepts, I would refer to such passages as these as the evidence of the existence of such a distinction. For instance, "Who hath resisted his will." Again, "He worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." And again, "If we ask anything according to His will," that is, His purpose, "he heareth us." These and similar expressions denote a sovereignty in God, an everlasting will and purpose that will be fulfilled, in carrying out which He controls some things, restrains others, and sanctions many. The second idea of God's will, or, as I have expressed it, what it ought to be, as it is embodied in precepts and laws, is indicated in such texts as these. "Whosoever shall do the will of God," that is, His revealed will. "Doing the will of God from the heart." "To will and to-do of his good pleasure. "Filled with all knowledge of God's will." We see then two

classes of thought in the expression "will," one series of expressions indicating a will inscrutable by us, but fixed, permanent, and purposed by God; another a series of expressions indicating a will revealed to us, and which we are called upon, as possessed of the revelation of it and responsible thereby, to seek to carry out. God's will in His purposes, and prophecies, so far as it is revealed, is carried out by rational and irrational beings, by good men and by bad men; by lightning and tempest and storm; by sin and even Satan himself: God thus using the bad and sanctifying the good; and making all things work together and conspire to evolve what will be the ultimate issue of all—glory to His name and salvation to the greatest number. God's will, as revealed in His law, is addressed to rational, responsible, and intelligent beings only, who have a moral faculty capable of knowing law, and a sense of responsibility for obedience or disobedience to that law. Let us keep in view this great distinction in studying the clause of this Prayer, "Thy will be

done in earth, as it is in heaven." When we pray that God's will, as embodied and expressed in His own purposes, may be done, we mean that we may have patience, resignation, submission, meekness, whilst he is carrying it out. Regrets at dispensations we cannot avert are useless; fears, doubts, and murmurings are sinful. And in proportion as we repine, murmur or complain, at what is clearly the will of God, we so far give evidence that we cherish in the depths of our hearts this terrible prayer, "not Thy will, but my will be done on earth." Whilst there is felt all this meekness, patience, submission, there need not be insensibility, which would not be human; there need not be pusillanimity, which would not be manly. On the contrary, we shall find in the greatest men who have shed the lustre of their deeds upon the world through which they have passed, a combination of great meekness and forbearance, an absence of all pretension; and yet a heroism that quails not in the greatest peril, and a courage that shrinks not from the noblest

achievements. The Apostle Paul, than whom a more heroic spirit never lived, when he saw God's will clearly indicated as God's absolute purpose, said, "Now I go bound to Jerusalem, not knowing what shall befall me; neither count I my life dear; bonds and imprisonment await me;" here was perfect submission, patience, and acquiescence. Nor was there wanting what was fitted to disturb his mind. He was in perils by land, in perils by sea, in perils among false brethren, in perils among wild beasts, and in prison. Yet his spirit never quailed in the least degree in the heat and burden of the heaviest trial to which that magnanimous apostle was subjected. If we cannot labor and thus evince our devotedness to God, we can at least endure. The missionary is carrying out God's will by labor; the sick Christian on a sick bed is equally carrying out God's will by patience, meekness, and resignation. It is not the most successful laborer in the vineyard that most thoroughly carries out God's will; but it is the most patient sufferer in the

shadow of affliction, or amid sorrow and trial, who no less glorifies God and prays fervently, "Thy will be done in earth as it is done in heaven."

Let me in the view of the first aspect of God's will—namely, His will expressed in His purpose—ask, Are you bereaved of some one to whom you were deeply and tenderly attached? Has that relative yielded to pining sickness, or fallen on the field of battle? It was no accident; it was not an intrusion unincorporated in God's economy or unknown in God's purposes; in some shape that bereavement was a link in the chain that knits a world that is gone away to that throne to which it will be recalled: and it is as impossible that it could have been otherwise as that God should leave His throne and resign the world to the government of another. And therefore when that loss occurred, however painful, poignant, and bitter—and you would not be human if you did not so feel it,—you must say, as the mother said of old, "It is well; well for me, though I

cannot see it; well for the departed." In the blank which the lost one has left behind you can now pray with deeper fervor, "Lord, our Father, thy will be done in earth, as it is done in heaven." Or are you at this moment almost ruined by some great calamity? Have you been deprived of the estate you had accumulated by years of toil and of labor? Have your hopes been disappointed; has your confidence been betrayed; have your expectations been deceived; and are you constrained to say, like the mother of old, "I went out full and the Lord hath brought me home empty; the Lord hath testified against me, and the Almighty has afflicted me?" What has happened to you, however painful, is the formula in which God is pleased to carry out His will in your case. You cannot penetrate the mystery of it; you cannot comprehend the why, the wherefore, or the whereto; and it would be strange if the finite could comprehend the infinite. But it is a delightful thought, that what you know not now you shall know

hereafter: and that impenetrable mystery, that strange dispensation, which becomes more perplexing the more varied the aspect in which you view it, and more painful the more thoroughly you comprehend its consequences was God's will; it was carried out, under His eye; it is best that it should be. Though painful it must be, and though we cannot explain it, we can still pray, and prayer unloads the heaviest heart—"Thy will be done in earth, as it is done in heaven." God gives us health, strength, life, blessings, not as a freehold but as a leasehold; and He reserves to Himself the prerogative of cutting short the lease when and where and how He pleases. And blessed thought! when He takes away, He takes not as a robber that which is mine, but as a proprietor that which is His own. When He takes what I cherish most deeply, He takes but what He gave freely; and therefore we can say, not only in the language of this beautiful Prayer, but in the words of the patriarch, amid the dim twi-

light of an earlier dispensation, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." I do not deny that it is natural to feel. It is a mistake to confound insensibility with great faith, or poignant sorrow with want of faith. The truest Christian may feel the most acutely. Pain, sorrow, grief, at bereavement and losses, are part and parcel of what we call human nature. To ask a person not to weep at the loss of the nearest and dearest, or not to be cast down when amid the wrecks of all that shone around him once so brilliant, is to bid him turn his heart into granite or his nerves into iron, and cease to be man. There is far more common sense in what an Apostle says, when he bids you "weep, but as though you wept not; and rejoice, but as though you rejoiced not; and use the world"—use it; not be monks, ascetics; not deny yourselves the enjoyment of the blessings God has given you; but use the world, only "not abusing it; for the fashion of the world passeth away." What a

magnificent citadel of strength, justified by the deepest and the truest sense of man, is that blessed book, the Bible. Between the epicurism that says, "Eat, drink, and be merry, and to excess; for to-morrow we die;" and the asceticism which says, "Leave the great their position, the rich their wealth, the learned their learning; and be a monk, a nun, and live in a cell or a monastery;" the Bible decides. You are neither to join the sty in which the swine of Epicurus wallow; nor are you to enter the ascetic retreat in which the followers of Antichrist foster pride, ambition, and quarrelsome temper, whilst seemingly denying themselves in other things; but you are to weep as though you wept not, and rejoice as though you rejoiced not, and possess as though you had not; and use the world, not cast away the world, only remembering that you abuse it not, for its fashion speedily passeth away.

Thus we learn to pray, under all the circumstances to which I have referred, "Thy will be

done on earth ;” and yet this does not imply we are to have no feeling. Perhaps the best illustration of this is in one single text, the shortest in the Bible, but the most significant, “Jesus wept.” Tears are holy ; sorrow is thus consecrated ; His tender spirit has sounded its depths ; He is our sympathising High Priest, able to succor them that are in trial ; for he Himself was tried in all points like as we are, yet without sin. Let us cease to argue and begin to acquiesce ; and our tears not forbidden will be dried, and our sorrows not sinful will be healed. Or to put it in another form, are you at this moment in some circumstances of peril ? Is some one in whom you are deeply interested exposed to peril ? Aid, assist, minister with unwearied hand, and with an attention that never flags and a sympathy that never fails ; but yet look higher. Have you at this moment a parent, a brother, a husband, amid darkening scenes where tragedy seems to follow tragedy, as if there were some mystery that we can neither unravel, nor explain, nor

carry to a triumphant close? Do not be afraid, do not cease to feel; but still cast your care upon Him who cares for you. Here is the only light in the midst of all; God's will is carrying out. The process may be a terrible one; the expenditure awful; the losses beyond all arithmetic to calculate, or all words adequately to express: we know not what He doth now; but I have not the least doubt, we shall know. His is a mighty hand that none can resist; but, oh blessed thought! it is a loving hand that none should fear, suspect, or shrink from, even when we cannot understand the why and the wherefore of its action. It is quite true that this thought, this deep thought, of God's will being carried out, does not turn shadow into sunshine; it will not replace in the deserted home the appearance that filled it as with music, and lighted it with sunshine. It is true it will not reverse the past, or bring back them that are gone; it does not dilute the intensity of your sorrow; but it does take the sting from it. It

does not extinguish your feelings, but it quells the corroding fever, it lays the beatings of the anxious heart; it shows you that submission is service to God, when you freely and heartily render it. When Aaron saw his two sons struck dead for their crimes, it is most eloquently written, "He held his peace." When Moses, for one rash word at the smiting of the rock at Meribah, was told he could not enter the land of earthly promise, he neither murmured nor repined, but submitted. And when Job heard of shock thundering on shock, and calamity treading on the heels of calamity, he held fast his faith, and refused to give up his trust. When Stephen saw rushing on him, to stone him to death, those he had tried to benefit, he prayed for them. And the Great Captain of the faith offered as His first prayer, "Father, forgive them." "Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and the finisher of our faith; who for the joy set before him endured the cross, despising the shame; and is now set down at the right hand of

God." What comforts us in the thought of all this is, that all the predictions contained in Scripture are not one of them impeded in their march a single day by the most powerful opposition the most depraved can offer. God's purpose is, "The whole earth shall be filled with my glory; the kingdoms of this world shall become mine." Sin shall be expunged, Satan shall be cast out; the sleeping dead shall be quickened; the waking living shall be changed; and the whole earth shall be filled with His glory. And what seems to us an obstruction we shall find, by experience and by patient waiting, to have been an impulse.

Pharaoh, the Egyptian autocrat of old, resolved to hold fast the prisoners of hope in the dungeons and the slave-quarries of Egypt. He seemed to have all his own way for a season. But what was the actual fact. That slavery, with the autocrat presiding over it, was but the dark background of a magnificent panorama, revealing on its outspread face the sea cloven in twain,—the rock giving forth water,—Israel marching in triumph-

ant exodus to Canaan ; and lastly, finding themselves in the rest on earth that awaited the people of God. When we look abroad now upon what is taking place on the earth, we are often tempted to doubt, to fear, or to fancy that something has gone wrong. In the great Revolution of 1793, good men and holy men came rashly to the conclusion that God had given up the world to Satan and to sin. But the issues have proved it was all the reverse. And now "wars and rumors of wars" that come thundering on every breeze ; the restlessness that we see in our own country and elsewhere, as if the vibrations of the great earthquake of 1848 were not yet laid,—that exhaustion of social confidence, that failure of trust in those in whom we were wont implicitly to repose it, that darkening of the future yet deeper and deeper ; those perplexities and difficulties felt and expressed by our leading men in the high places of the land ; those beginnings of sorrows painful to be borne, and terrible to contemplate, that few prophesied, and which they

that predicted seemed to others exceeding what was possible or probable; all nevertheless the march of events to a glorious issue; were included in the grand programme of eternity, and embraced in the original purpose of God. We cannot alter them, we cannot improve them, but we can pray as we witness them, "Our Father, thy will be done in earth, even as it is done in heaven."

Let us look at this clause in another aspect. We are at this moment, perhaps, laboring in the ministry, or acting in some religious society, or in some way trying to win souls. Do we see no success attending our labors; no blessing descend upon them? Do we see those to whom we looked up fail us? prospects that shone in the distant horizon once, obscured and darkened now? We are not to despond, we are not to give up, we are still less to despair. It may be God's great will that we should toil, harrow, plough, weed, sow—very humble work; and that others who are to come after us should carry home their sheaves in the glad harvest rejoicing. If such be God's

will, we must mind the duty that devolves upon us, however arduous it may be ; and rejoice that others will enjoy the privilege denied us ; for it is still God's will done on earth, even as it is done in heaven.

Let us now contemplate the second aspect of this clause, or God's will as it ought to be carried out in His precepts, as expressed in the passages we have already read. "If any man will do his will he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God." "This is the will of God, your sanctification." "This is the will of God, that ye believe in Jesus whom he hath sent." "Whoso will do the will of God is my brother, and my sister, and my mother." Now this will, or what it ought to be, is, in our attempt to fulfil it, our very highest happiness. God has so linked allegiance to Himself with the enjoyment of happiness and peace, that you never can be happy in this world without illustrating and embodying in your life what is felt previously in the heart—obedience to the will

and commandment of God. And we pray in this Prayer that our lives may be a transcript of Christ's; that His will may dominate in our hearts; that we may be living epistles, seen and read of all men; that His will may be done in us, through us, by us; and that we shall welcome what we see to be His will, whether it come in bridal robes, clothed and radiant with joy, or in sackcloth and weeds of woe, as at a funeral procession; not asking what shall be the issue, but satisfied to discover that what we see, and feel, and, it may be, lament, is the will of our Father in heaven. This will we pray may be done in us, through us, by us, as it is done in heaven. Some, in explaining this, have said that this means, as it is done by angels in heaven. I do not think it relates to them. I do not find angels represented in Scripture in any aspect as the models that we are to imitate, or their attainments as the height and pitch to which our aspirations are to aim. The great secret of much of the evil that crept into

the Christian Church, and overspread the whole of mediæval and Western Europe, was the idea that angel life is a model or type of the life that Christians are to express and embody in this world. We are not to imitate the angels; we have nothing to do with the angels as our examples; it is their duty to minister to us; and nowhere in Scripture is a model which is not imitable by us, and which we ought not to try to imitate, set forth as the great model of Christian character. I think the will done in heaven is by that portion of the great family of our Father which has now crossed the flood; and who do that will perfectly; and which the portion of that family still left outside in this outer court, pray may be done in us, through us, and by us, His frail family on earth, as it is done by, and through, and with His perfect and redeemed and ransomed family above. If we desire to ascertain how they do it, we have only to open that magnificent, but often neglected book, the book of Revelations; and there you find "they

are before the throne ;” that “ they serve him day and night in his temple ; they hunger no more, neither thirst any more ; they are fed by the Lamb, they are led to living fountains of water ; and all tears have been wiped away from their eyes. And they sing a new song. And these are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. In their mouth is found no guile ; they are without fault before the throne of God.” What we pray for, therefore, is, that the earth may become a portion of heaven ; that time may melt into eternity ; and that God’s will, now done by the redeemed, the justified, the sanctified, the perfect above, may be day by day approximated to in its perfection amid the unsanctified and the imperfect upon earth. But how is it done by them ? First, it is done perfectly. Every precept is exhausted in their obedience ; and all precepts from the least to the greatest they are living personations of. In the second place, His will is done by them without ceasing. “ They serve him day

and night without ceasing." It is not the obedience of passion but of principle; it is not an impulse that, obeyed to-day, exhausts its spring, and leaves them to move off at a tangent and in another direction to-morrow. It is ceaseless. And it is, in the next place, without a single exception, interruption, or disturbance. There is there, we are told, "a great multitude that no man can number, out of every kindred, and nation, and people, and tongue." There are degrees of glory; for "one star differeth from another star in glory." There are diversities of gifts in heaven, and yet there is no discord in their song, no shadow on their life, no disturbance in their peace, but all God's will is carried out by all, in all its details, with all their might; and in the next place, without reluctance or regret. At present we often feel—I admit it is sinful, but it is fact—duties to be burdensome, denials to be painful, services to be sacrifice. It is a yoke; though it be an easy one, it is still a yoke. Christ's will is a burden, a light one I ad-

mit, but still a burden. And the Christian feels on earth that he cannot do all that he would, and is obliged to say what Paul was constrained to say, "The good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do." In this world a Christian is in a cold, uncongenial, and wintry clime; exposed to the beating storms and the descending hail, the fairest blossoms are fleetest, and oftenest nipped by unexpected frosts. But in that better land he blooms no longer an exotic, but indigenious; he is in his own clime, amid the sunshine of his Father's house, in the company of them who have passed with him through much tribulation; and there without reluctance and without regret, but as the expression of his spontaneous and instinctive delight, he bears fragrant fruit, beautiful to look on, and glorifying to that God who has made him what he is. And lastly, there they serve without end. The service is ceaseless; they weary not, they rest not; by a singular though apparent contradiction, "they rest from their labors," and yet

rest not. The song is ever new because it is never exhausted, the service is ever sweet and never sacrifice ; and what now we feel to be in some degree painful, self-denying, perplexing, difficult to do, we shall there feel to be the increase of our enjoyment, not the exhaustion or the dilution of it.

Thus we pray, "Thy will be done" in the imperfect Church below day by day increasingly, until it reach the standard after which it is done in the perfect Church above.

The lessons we learn from all this are various and precious. First of all, the law binds in heaven just as it binds on earth, that is, the law is done in glory as it is done in the realms of grace. Secondly, this is one of the springs of the happiness of heaven, that God's law is there done perfectly. Why is the happiness of the Christian imperfect on earth? Just because his heart is not fully holy and his character is not yet perfect. Why is the happiness of the redeemed in heaven perfect? Because God's will is there done perfectly.

As we look around us how much there is to induce us to pray. Look at the visible Church, torn by disputes, rent by controversies. What ground for prayer that God's will may be so done that this poor, darkened, imperfect, sinful Church may yet, and that speedily, be developed into what it shall be, a glorious Church, without spot, or wrinkle, or blemish, or any such thing. Look abroad at the world at this moment; what darkness in its distant realms, what misery in its homes, what restlessness amid its populations, what sufferings from the sword, what evidences of poverty, and distress, and famine, and disease, and sorrow, and sickness, and death! And as we gaze on the shattered world and upon its weeping tenantry, are we not instinctively prompted to pray from the very depths of our hearts, "Thy will be done in earth, even as it is done in heaven." Look at the Moslem, sensual and debased, overspreading the loveliest lands of the East. Look at the Russian, worshipping a wooden cross as his God, and having no other religion

than what is material and sensuous. Look at the Romanist, giving to the Virgin Mary the place, the honor, and the glory that is due to God. And can we, as we see such sorrowful spectacles, help giving expression to the prayer, "Thy will be done here, even as it is done in heaven!" Look to Pagan lands, to India, to Africa, to any section of the globe that you like, and our prayer must still be, "Thy will be done." And blessed be His name, it will be done. The kingdom shall come; His name will be hallowed, His will shall be done, the whole earth shall be filled with His glory, the prayers of David the son of Jesse shall be ended; and the culminating glory of this kingdom shall arrive, and the expansion of this prayer into praise will come, when we shall no longer pray, "Thy kingdom come," but when we shall sing—a mighty multitude that no man can number—"Hallelujah! the kingdom is come, the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth."

God's will is clearly written out in His Holy word—His will is not yet translated into every

tongue, phenomenon, thought, mind, and heart. Nations are everywhere rising up against it in ignorance of it. But steadily His purposes pass into facts, and in the shop, the school, the press, the parliament, the Church, and the world, His will is developed.

By and by earth shall reflect the splendor of heaven, and men be the representatives of God, and the universe the grand temple in which His will is felt, and sung, and done, for ever and ever.

## VI.

*THE CRY OF THE CHILDREN.*

“Give us this day our daily bread.”—*MATT. vi. 11.*

“GIVE us this day our daily bread,” is well paraphrased in the words of a catechism full of the soundest sentiment,—“Of God’s free gift we may receive a competent portion of the good things of this life, and enjoy His blessing with them.” Let us ponder this clause in its most expressive and comprehensive Prayer—a Prayer obligatory upon every section of the Christian church, used always in its services of old, and never to be omitted now ; so simple that a child can understand it, so rich in thought that a dying saint will still pray it, and not to cease until the form of prayer has culminated into the form of praise, and all heaven and earth say, no

longer with stammering lips, kneeling at the footstool, "Hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done," but when heaven and earth standing before the throne clad in white robes, with palms in their hands, shall sing, "Thy name is hallowed, thy kingdom is come, thy will is done in this earth, even as it has been done in heaven, and now we are fed with asking, and forgiven, that forgiveness never to be repealed or to be revoked for ever."

We have prayed away in the course of this Prayer the terror which drives us from God as if he were a tyrant, when we prayed, and were taught, we trust, by the Spirit to say, "Our Father." We have prayed down selfishness—that idolatry of self which is all attention to its own wants, however trivial or few, and all inattention to the claims of God and the wants of mankind, however paramount and weighty—when we were taught to say, "Our Father, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come." We began to pray first as in heaven, "Our

Father which art in heaven ;” and next to endeavor to bring down a portion of its glory ; we now resume our place upon the earth, and begin to pray from the earth to heaven for the supply of wants that here must be satisfied, “Give us this day our daily bread.” We soared upward to heaven in adoring faith, saying “Our Father which art in heaven ;” God comes down to us now in beneficent love, giving us daily bread. In the first half of the Prayer we sought the kingdom of God and His righteousness first, in the last half of the Prayer all these things we ask to be added. The first half is the fulness of God, the second half of the Prayer an expression of the wants and necessities of mankind, “Give us this day our daily bread,” “The mere creature, unrenewed in the Gospel, cries first, last, middle, and without end, “Give us this day our daily bread.” For this he toils every day, for this he prays continually. His anxious and only query is breathed on the streets, “What shall I eat, what shall I drink, and wherewithal

shall I be clothed?" Or he turns his question into prayer, and asks not for the life to come, for of that he dreams not; but for this present life, "Give us this day our daily bread." One man makes his daily bread his all. For this he toils, prays, and lives. Another starves and stints, and even tortures the body with every imaginable denial, refusing daily bread, as if this were merit in the sight of God. The one is in the world and of the world, a sensualist or an infidel; the other, in order to get out of the world, foolishly flees from it, and thinks he escapes its temptations, its perils, and its sins, by running from its duties and its obligations. The true Christian neither idolizes the body by making its wants his all, nor does he deny the body what are its just and legitimate demands. He has learned from God, "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things." He that made the body fearfully and wonderfully at the first, does not refuse to provide for it; and he that tends its sleeping dust a hundred

fathoms in the deep, deep sea, or beneath the green sod, will not surely refuse to provide for it daily bread while it lives on earth in the light of heaven, a temple of the Holy Ghost. There is a materialism that makes the body all, there is a spiritualism that would try to live as if we had no body at all. The first is reprobated by the Apostle when he says, "Whose God is their belly, whose end is destruction;" the second is reprobated by the same Apostle when he condemns "neglecting the body," as one of the brands of the great Papal Apostasy. What a wonderful prescience, what intense common sense, what forethought, what evidence of inspiration is in this book! The same holy writer who reprobates living to the flesh, and for the flesh, as if that were man's chief end, no less firmly reprobates the asceticism of the monk, the friar, and the nun, when he denounces, "neglecting the body." What a contrast to both these extremes is the conduct of the early Christians! It is not said of them, they fasted

and denied themselves the food that was needful for their efficient service to the Lord, nor is it said, they pampered their appetites, and were absorbed in cares about what they should eat and drink, and wherewithal they should be clothed; but in language simple, significant, and just, it is written, "They did eat their meat with gladness and with singleness of heart." We are neither to fast like the monk nor to feast like the epicurean, but to eat and drink like the Christian; and whatever we do, to do all to the glory of God, and in the light of His holy word.

The very first idea we are taught here in this prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread," is dependence upon God. How beautifully is this expressed by the Psalmist when he says, "The eyes of all things wait on thee." What a thought! "The eyes of all things wait on thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season." The sparrow on the house-top; the eagle on his mountain eyrie; the stormy petrel careering on

the winds and over the restless waves; the lion in his native forest, making it ring with the echoes of his royal voice; the watch-dog baying in the stillness of the night; the cattle lowing on a thousand hills; the bee humming in the sunshine on unwearied wing; the leviathan of the deep, the minnow in the stream, the trout in the brook; all lift their eyes to God, and cry in language never unheard, and express wants never refused, "Our Father, give us this day our daily bread." "The eyes of all things wait on thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season." Abstractly, we all recognize this dependence upon God; practically, I fear we do not. How often do we find ourselves, as Christian men, attributing to second causes that which comes down a direct and gracious transmission from our heavenly Father! Second causes, as they are called by a very questionable phrase, are really and truly the earliest emergence of God's purposes in visible shape. For instance, the orbs must shine, winds must blow, rains must

fall, clouds must gather ; and a whole series of processes go on in the sky above, and in the soil below, before the harvest of next autumn can be reaped. We attribute the golden harvest to these processes, instead of attributing those processes to God, and giving Him alone all the glory of the harvest. There is no vitality in laws ; the vitality is in the lawgiver. And if He is pleased to work through laws, it is just as much God's work as when He acts without them. When you see the few loaves by a word turned into food for five thousand, you say, "There is God." But, God's footsteps are just as unmistakeable in the golden harvest of every year as in turning the few loaves into food for five thousand. When you see the water in the jars turned into wine, you say, "That is the finger of God." But you are so accustomed to see the earth, and the rain, and the sunshine making the vine flourish, the grapes ripen, and the wine be pressed out of them to cheer man's heart, that you say, "This is nature ; or second causes."

God is in the one as truly as in the other; only at Cana of Galilee he lifted the curtain and let men see it; in the vines and in the corn of this year He is behind the scene, and you can see the effects only of His action and presence.

But it may be asked, and it has been repeatedly asked by many, Can this prayer, so suitable to the poor man, who has to toil for his breakfast before he is allowed to partake of it, be lifted up as suitably by the rich man, who has much goods laid up for many years to come, whose barns are full, while all the good things and the great things of this world are at his disposal? This prayer suited David, the shepherd son of Jesse; and it suited no less his own princely son Solomon. Job, when he was the richest Emir of the East, needed to pray thus; Joseph, with all the granaries of Egypt at his command, did also pray. "Our Father, give us this day our daily bread." One act of indiscretion, one extravagant speculation, on the part of the rich, may sweep away all the accumulations of a lifetime. And there-

fore the richest needs to pray that God would continue to him what in the past He has given him—daily bread. A blight upon our harvest, a worm gnawing at the root, a premature or unexpected frost, an overwhelming deluge of wind, and rain, and lightning, and tempest, may leave us without bread for next year; and the poor in their hunger will lay their hands upon the wealth of the rich; and the wealthy will feel amid the horrors of such a convulsion that they too needed to pray, though they believed it not, "Give us this day our daily bread." Rich and poor are more bound, and tied, and linked together than at first sight appears. When the rich think they have only ground for pride or for praise, and none for prayer, they are more to be pitied than the poorest man who earns his daily bread, and lifts his daily litany, "Give us this day our daily bread." But to show that the rich need to pray this as well as the poor, we must not forget the fact, that to have bread is not necessarily to have nourishment. We need not merely bread, but the

power of extracting nutriment from that bread after we have eaten it. The poor pine frequently for want of bread; but the rich perish as frequently for want of appetite to eat it. I know not which is most to be pited—the poor man, who has an appetite, and no bread; or the rich man, who has plenty of bread, but no appetite, or capacity of being nourished and fed by it. Money can purchase bread; but all the money of England cannot purchase health. And if it needs two things, health within as well as bread without, that man may live; then the richest and the poorest must kneel upon the same dead, low level, and cry with the same fervor, “O Lord, our Father, give us this day our daily bread.” We need also the blessing with the bread, or the bread will be poison; and that blessing will make a crumb a banquet, withheld it makes a banquet poison; “for man doth not live by bread alone,” but by something needed to give that bread its value, “by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.”

Let us look at this beautiful Prayer in another aspect. We have seen, first of all, the expression that runs through it of dependence upon God. We have seen, in the second place, the absolute need of rich and poor, in all the varied grades and circumstances of social life, to breathe this same prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread." Let us look at what is suggested by this petition, one of the most interesting thoughts contained in the whole Prayer, namely, that God is here regarded as the Giver, "Give us this day our daily bread." The first and earliest thought of God, which we learn in the light of the Gospel to renounce, is that He is a hard taskmaster, a stern exactor; ever demanding duties, never supplying strength to enable us to fulfil them. Our most frequent thoughts of God are those of one constantly commanding or exacting; rarely do we cherish thoughts of God as of one constantly giving, and leaving the gift to suggest what we owe to the Giver, in the shape of responsive gratitude, adoration, and praise. If we

think of God always as an exactor, if our last and our earliest thoughts of Him are those of a being enthroned on Sinai, ever launching forth the terrible command, "Thou shalt, and thou shalt not," instinctively we come to cherish toward Him the feelings of slaves; we shrink from His presence, we are capable of no noble and elevating obedience; we walk with Him as a slave walks with his master; ever paying what He is ever exacting, and never feeling towards Him an emotion of gratitude or responsive love. But if, on the other hand, we look upon God only as the Giver—the Giver of the greatest blessings, the greatest graces, and the sweetest oftenest, and as an exactor never—our feelings will soon swell into confidence, and gratitude, and joy, and adoring love. Our apprehension of God as the giver is evangelical, our apprehension of God as the exactor is essentially legal. If you wish to render God the noblest obedience, forget that He exacts anything; think that He gives everything; and the gifts of God, like

seeds deposited in the heart, will germinate and grow up, and produce all manner of precious and fragrant fruit; till it is evinced that he only who entertains thoughts of God as a Father, ever giving, is most holy, most bountiful, most just; while he who has thoughts of God as one ever exacting and demanding duties, and never giving blessings, lives a wretched life, and exhibits a low standard of obedience. It was he that thought God was a hard taskmaster, reaping where he had not sown, who rendered nothing in return. It was he who received five talents, and looked upon the master as the great giver, who multiplied the five, by diligent and laborious increase, into ten. Let us ever think of God as the giver. Never be afraid that this will lead to license. The legal way, if I may use the expression, the way that never was in practical existence since Adam fell, is demanding of the creature obedience; and the result invariably has been that the natural heart, enmity to Him, has recoiled from Him and fled; and prayed

that it might not hear the sound of words any more. But in the Gospel the great idea of God is of one giving grace and glory, natural bread and living bread; and then, without adding a command, leaving it to the creature's heart, thus enriched and blessed, to feel and count as it may, "How much owest thou unto my Lord?" And what too is very remarkable in this aspect of this interesting Prayer, our own idea of our own relationship to God very much gives tone and coloring to our feelings in reference to others. Man is very much to others what his idea of God is to himself. They who look upon God as an exactor will exact most of their fellows, and they that look upon God as the bountiful giver will be first to give most richly and munificently to others. Hence, by a great law, the greatest tyrant must necessarily be the most irreligious man; and the greatest and truest philanthropist must have the root of his philanthropy in true and enlightened Christianity. When men see God as the giver of all they

have, and the giver of more than He promised ; the giver of all they enjoy at the footstool, and the giver of all He has promised beside the throne: their hearts are opened in responsive gratitude to Him, and in rich and inexhaustible liberality among all mankind. But when we are drilled and initiated in the dreadful idea that God is a severe taskmaster, constantly demanding obedience, but giving nothing wherewith to discharge it, we harden into the feeling and character of slaves towards Him ; and in the recoil we become taskmasters and tyrants towards all the rest of mankind. So true is it that religion is the cement of all national and social life ; so true is it that kings, and queens, and emperors, will be gracious and merciful, and beneficent, and good, in the ratio in which their minds become enlightened, and their hearts impressed with true and living religion. If you exact from man and give nothing, it is in his very nature to recoil. You insist by your Parliament that man shall hallow the Sabbath,—a process, however,

that will not succeed in making him truly do so, —the poor man and the unenlightened man instantly look up to the Parliament as exacting like a hard taskmaster. But if, when you exacted obedience in hallowing the Sabbath, you had first given a portion of the Saturday, you would have found that the gift of half the Saturday would have been so appreciated by the poor, when they saw you first as the giver, that they would have listened to you as the exactor on the Sunday of what was right, and dutiful, and just. But alas, too often, in Congress, Cabinet, and Divan, man accepts any rule of life but the divine one, any precedent but the true one; yet he always finds in the long run that the nearer all legislation is conformed to, and catches, the inspiration of this blessed Book, the more popular, practical, and useful it becomes. Depend upon it the Bible is a thousand years ahead of the 19th century; and the 19th century, with all its attainments, a thousand years behind it.

Some one perhaps may be disposed to add

If God be the giver of bread to all His creatures, and in that light we are now to regard Him; would it not make the gift still more unequivocal, and the gratitude of the recipient still more intense, if God were to give us always bread, without requiring that we should toil and work for it? I answer, No. At first blush that seems to you right; on real consideration it will appear utterly absurd. God did not canonize indolence in Paradise; for Adam and Eve were appointed to toil; when toil, however, was enjoyment, and not, as it is on this side of Paradise, often drudgery, exhaustion, and death. The curse pronounced upon man was, "In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread." And every man, by a great law, must work either his brain, or his hand, or his foot; he must in some way, by a law ancient as the earliest wrecks of Paradise, earn his daily bread. But the peculiarity of Christianity is not that it repeals the curse by making it cease to be; but that it overrules the curse into a richer and more enduring

blessing. And hence it takes the toil, which in its first stroke, was a curse, and makes it now to be daily bread; to be through Christ, and in Christ, and in moderation, a positive blessing. Do you find men that have nothing to do, happy? Just the reverse. Their first thing is rush into strange speculations, and quixotic schemes, for want of something to do. And who do we find is the happiest man? The man that thanks God when he rises for his rest, goes forth in God's strength to toil all day; and comes home at night to thank God again for His protecting and persevering goodness, and to taste, what, depend upon it, the rich never eat, the sweetest bread on earth, that which has been earned by God's blessing upon the labor of one's own hands. If you were to ask bread from God without working for it, it would be equivalent to asking a stone, or rather asking of Him a serpent. Does not all history attest that it has been where man has had most to toil, that he has attained the highest excellence as a social

being? Is it not on rugged soils, and amid winter colds, that the noblest specimens of nations have developed themselves? It is the devil's prescription, "Command these stones to be made bread;" it is Christ's declaration, "Man doth not live by bread alone; but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." And it is therefore the Christian's prayer, "Give me wisdom to guide me; strength to labor, health to enjoy. Our Father, give us this day our daily bread."

"Give us *this day* our daily bread." This word is very remarkable. It is not, give us for month, or for this year, but "Give us *this day* our daily bread." It is Christ's command translated into prayer, when He said, "Take no thought for to-morrow." The Greek word means, carping, troublesome thought. "Take no thought for to-morrow," for to-morrow will take care of itself. Or, as it is beautifully worded in the very chapter from which this text is taken, "Behold the fowls of the air; for they

sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns ; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they ? And why take ye thought for raiment ? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow ; they toil not, neither do they spin : and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith ? Therefore take no thought,—no carping, irritating thought,—“ saying, What shall we eat ? or, What shall we drink ? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed ? for ”—how beautiful—“ your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.” Or as it is in one of the Psalms, “ He knoweth our frame ; he remembereth that we are dust.” But you object, that when one regards it in this light, it tends to throw back all society into a state of savagism. Would you wish man to be the fisher in the stream, the hunter in

the woods ; dependent on the precarious success for the bread each day that he is to eat ? I answer, No. This prayer destroys all anxious hoarding, not enlightened forethought. It destroys all improvidence, not Christian prudence. It bids you labor for bread and pray for it. And when there is to day more than you can eat, let it eaten to-morrow, after you have satisfied the hunger of the needy and the dependent about you ; and so doing you will act in the spirit of the prayer, " Give us this day our daily bread." But I reverse my reasoning, and I put the question to you, if you object to this as not indicating that providence and forethought that ought to exist in what you call a commercial country, does your anxious care about to-morrow do you any good whilst you feel it ? Does such anxiety about the autumn enable the farmer to weed and to sow with greater efficiency ? Does it make the merchant more successful ? Is it not all the reverse ? Excessive anxiety about to-morrow is taking to-morrow's burden and to-day's burden.

that is, the weight of two days, upon shoulders that are only strong enough to bear one day's load. Your anxiety about to-morrow, in addition to your inevitable anxiety about to-day, is taking two days' burden upon shoulders fitted only to bear the load and pressure of one. And instead of your anxious thoughts about your Christmas payments, or about next week's commercial bills, making you one whit more able to meet them, you find you are harassing yourselves to-day, and you are not adding to your preparations for next day. Whereas, if you toil to-day in God's strength, seeking daily bread, acting neither extravagantly nor avariciously, you will find that He that sends to-day's bread will not forget you to-morrow; and that if you are careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication make your wants known to God, you will neither have the spirit of the miser, nor the spirit of the gambler, nor the spirit of the man ever irritated, ever anxious, and therefore never successful; but the spirit of him who

prayed of old, "Give me neither poverty nor riches, but feed me with food convenient for me." A man's life consisteth not in the things that he possesseth. Covetousness is idolatry.

"Give *us* this day our daily bread." This "us" suggests a most interesting thought. We cannot ask for ourselves the supply of our daily wants without asking bread for all our brethren of mankind. What a beautiful provision is here, that we cannot approach God as applicants ourselves, without instantly feeling that we are interceding priests for the wants of all! This great law runs through the whole of God's moral and material government. For instance, the seed cast into the soil in spring, it is notorious to every farmer, does not all come up. On the contrary three-fifths of the seed sown in spring goes to feed the worms of the earth and birds of the air, and you cannot help it. If you should try to shoot all the birds in the air, and should succeed, you will find that you have multiplied the worms in the earth. And if you were to with-

hold the three-fifths, and sow only the two-fifths, thinking you would starve the birds and the worms both, you would soon find you would merely punish yourselves and starve mankind. God has made a law, there is no escape from it, that only two-fifths of all that the farmer sows shall grow up into the harvest, in order that none may sow only for themselves. God has incorporated this law with your very prayers; that no man should be able, in the exercise of a selfish monopoly, to pray, "Give me this day my daily bread;" but that every one that prays as the Master teaches, shall be constrained in the exercise of catholic liberality and sympathy to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread." It was the miserable prodigal that said to his father, "Give me the portion of goods that falleth to me;" it is the sanctified Christian that prays, "Give us this day our daily bread." Property is sacred; communism is antichristian; but property is indicated in the very bosom of this clause to have its duties and its responsibilities also.

I cannot help noticing an objection I have often heard, and frequently read from Roman Catholic divines, that all the pauperism now found in England is simply, they say, the result of Protestantism ; whereas, in their countries, where they have monks, and nuns, and eremites, and anchorites, and ascetics of all sorts, the administrators of all the property of the land, there is little or no poverty. I answer by asking where do we find the pauperism of England ? Not among the people who go to church, and chapel, and Sunday-school. This is notorious enough ; it is among the people that despise all these, and have no religion at all. And therefore the reason why there is so much poverty in England, is that the Protestantism which is accused as its parent has really not reached the masses that are the subjects of that pauperism. But when they speak of Protestantism being the source of all the poverty of England ; is there no poverty in Ireland ? Is that a happy and a prosperous land ? Read the

remarks of every visitor ; they will tell you that the squalid poverty of that land, where the priests have all their own way, is a by-word among the nations of the earth. Is there no poverty in Italy? I am told the beggars there outnumber the monks ; that begging is carried on everywhere from morning to night ; and that if you wish to see poverty in its most squalid and repulsive shape, you must go to Romish Italy, and Austria, and Spain. Wherever Protestantism prevails in all its purity, people become independent ; there you may help the labourer and he will thankfully accept it, but he will not descend to be a pauper. But wherever you find that great superstition which flings this objection against us, you find begging is a profession, so respectable a profession that ecclesiastics adopt it. Instead of Protestantism being the mother of pauperism, it repudiates it, and ends it in proportion as it spreads. But Romanism, wherever it exists, raises swarms of beggars as its legitimate product ; and therefore has the respon

sibility of all the mendicants that are scattered over the length and breadth of the country in which it dominates and prevails. This very Gospel, on whose forefront is written that magnificent thought, "The Gospel is preached to the poor," nevertheless, tells the monk, "If any man will not work, neither should he eat." And wherever this law dominates, sustained as it is by the higher sanctions of this blessed Book, man will respect himself, and take assistance when he needs it, and you owe it when you have it; but he will not, if he can help it, become a dependent mendicant upon any man's bounty whatever. I venture to say that in Scotland, the most Protestant country probably in the world, with all its faults, at this moment you will find a much less proportion of beggars than in any country upon earth. You will find natives of that country in every land, reflecting so far credit upon their nation, and indicating wherever they go that the religion that teaches men to have a hope in heaven, inspires them to exercise a trade or to toil and labour upon earth.

In offering up this prayer, then, "Give us this day our daily bread," I revert to the thought with which I set out in noticing it, that the poor are included when we, the richest in the land, pray, "Give us this day our daily bread." The poor reap your fields, they build your palaces they dye your purple, they weave or spin your fine linen; and when you include them in your litany at the throne of grace, you only do what is the discharge of a grateful obligation, and not an imperious and inevitable command. Let the sparrow, fed without garners; and the lily, clad without a wardrobe; above all, let the magnificent truth, "He that spared not his own Son, but gave him up for us all; how shall he not with him freely give us all things," teach us to depend upon His faithfulness; to look up to Him for the exercise of His bounty; and never to forget that the least blessing that we have came by the way of the Cross. God will not give a crumb of bread except through Christ; He will not refuse a crown of glory in His name and for His sake.

And above all, in conclusion, let me ask you, while seeking and toiling for—and so combining the means and the blessing—your daily bread, never to forget that there is a higher bread, even living bread, that cometh down from heaven, of which we need also to eat. Let us evermore ask that bread. Christ is the bread of life. And happy will that man be who gets neither poverty nor riches, but food convenient for him to eat below ; and is nourished meanwhile and sustained by that living bread which fits him for a home beyond the stars.

And may God evermore give us daily bread ; may He evermore give us living bread. And when we think how great and how manifold His mercies are, may we never hesitate to respond to Him in gratitude and praise. “The eyes of all things wait upon thee, and thou givest them their meat in due season.” The granaries of Egypt are exhausted, and the hopes of the harvestmen occasionally fail. But there is still bread for to-day. Be thankful for to-day, and do not worry your

spirits about to-morrow. The dreaded to-morrow, source of sleepless nights, no sooner comes than its shadows flee as we cross its margin. As we enter its cloud a voice calls down, "Your bread shall be given, and your water shall be sure."

## VII.

*THE CRY OF THE SINFUL.*

“And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.”—*MATT. VI. 12.*

IN my first discourse upon this interesting and precious Prayer I noticed the revelation of God as a Father; of every Christian as a brother; and of our common and eternal home in heaven;—the fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of Christians, the everlasting home of all that believe. We considered, in the next place, the meaning of that prayer, “Hallowed be thy name;” that is, may it be exalted, magnified, glorified, made known. We noticed that God is glorified in proportion as He is known. A finite being needs his finite characteristics augmented in order to be honored; but an infinite being is honored and glorified in proportion as he is revealed. We next referred to the clause,

“Thy kingdom come.” “The kingdom of God is not meat nor drink ; but righteousness, peace, joy.” The kingdom of grace ends in the kingdom of glory ; when the great King shall reign over all the earth. We noticed the petition, “Give us this day our daily bread ;” man’s need of daily bread ; his common wants that need a common and every-day supply. Now we come to the central clause in this sublime and expressive litany, around which in some degree all the rest revolve ; and without which, as far as we are concerned, the rest would be of no profit, “Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.” Or, as it is written in another Gospel, “Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.” In the first half of the Prayer, we find man seeking first the glory and the kingdom of God ; and in the second half, man seeking blessings and mercies for himself and for all his brethren of mankind. In the first half we have all the fulness and the richness of God, “Hallowed be thy name ; thy kingdom

come; thy will be done." In the last half we have all the wants, necessities, and needs of mankind. "Give us bread; forgive us sin; deliver us from evil; lead us into no temptation." We have given God first of all the glory; we have asked next the blessing for ourselves. We have also embodied in prayer what we ought ever to exhibit in our practice, "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all other things will be added." There is running through the whole strain of this Prayer the feeling, "Give us bread, and forgive us sin, and deliver us from evil; but only in that way that will hallow Thy name, and advance Thy kingdom and do Thy will." I noticed also in my general remarks upon this Prayer, how comprehensive it is; and also the singular fact, that in one Gospel it is varied in its language from the way it is given in another Gospel, in order to teach us there is no magic in the words. And yet, when our Lord says in one of these Gospels, "Pray," he adds, "When ye pray,

say ;” but in this Gospel, “ After this manner pray.” It seems, therefore, it is not absolutely verbatim as it is given in any one of the Gospels, but it does seem, nevertheless, so comprehensive, so rich, so precious, that I feel that public worship in which this Prayer is not used as the Saviour taught it, to say the least, is extremely defective.

We have asked our Father to give us daily bread ; owning our dependence upon Him—humbling yet ennobling thought,—our dependence upon Him for the least crumb of bread that we eat below, and for the brightest crown of glory that we anticipate above. We now ask of the same, “ Our Father ” the pardon of sin ; as vital and precious a pre-requisite for the life to come, as daily bread is for the life that now is. We cry as creatures, “ Give us daily bread ;” we now cry as sinners, “ Forgive us our sins and trespasses.” We have acknowledged in the last petition wants that God alone can fill ; we acknowledge in this petition sins that God alone

can forgive. The sense of hunger makes us pray, "Give us daily bread;" the sense of sin awakens the cry, "Forgive us our sins." If we had a choice, and it is a happy thing that we rarely have, we would rather choose that God would not give, than that He would not forgive. No gifts, such as the richest ever inherited; no width and splendor of dominion, such as the greatest conqueror ever carved out by his sword; can be any compensation in a dying hour in the absence of peace with God. But where there is forgiveness of sin, and we know that we have it, it sweetens the blessings that we possess, and it makes easily endurable the want of them. For in sickness and in sorrow, or at seventy—in all time of our wealth, in all time of our tribulation, in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment, this is peace, this is power: "Blessed is the man whose sins are forgiven, whose transgressions are covered; and to whom the Lord imputeth no iniquity." But before we own ourselves sinners, seeking pardon, we previously

confessed ourselves sons in the presence of our Father. Sons, however, as we are by grace, we have not ceased to be sinners by nature. "If we," the sons of God, "say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us: but if we," sons, "confess our sins, he," our Father in heaven, "is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." We have not only inherited sin, but we have added to the weight of the inheritance by our personal and practical transgressions. This is not the place to enter now on any vindication of what is so true, our inheritance of Adam's sin. It may however be worthy of remark, in connection with this, for the sake of those who may doubt or deny it, that suppose that each babe born into the world were born an Adam or an Eve, innocent and undefiled as they in Paradise before they fell; what, and how sorrowful, would be your thoughts as you first gazed upon that babe! Here would be another terrible experiment, whether this child shall stand or fall?

here, too, would arise the awful foreboding, if this child fall, do we know of any remedy? for there is no Gospel applicable here. How much more precious is the thought that this babe, laden with Adam's sin, is not the nursling of despair, that you have not to go to heaven to bring down, nor to go into the deep to fish up; but that close to you is the Lamb of God, waiting to bear that burden away. The father has sinned and the children suffer; this is the universal law, we are all familiar with it. The possessor of an estate, for instance, squanders it; his children are beggars in consequence. The drunkard destroys his health; his children are diseased. Thus we may read in the aspects of social life what the Spirit has inspired in every page of the Bible, "By one man's disobedience many were," and by some other man's disobedience every day many are still, "made sinners."

In asking this great blessing, forgiveness, let me entreat of you to ascertain where you stand.

The commencement, "Our Father," is not a preface, lost the instant you enter into the body of the Prayer; it is the key-note, the ground note, of every clause in this magnificent Prayer. It is, "Our Father, hallowed be thy name; Our Father, give us daily bread; Our Father, forgive us our trespasses, our debts, as we forgive our debtors, or them that trespass or sin against us." When we pray for pardon, we must remember that we are sinners, but we must never forget that we are sons. When we kneel to pray day by day, we do not kneel before God as an angry Judge; ourselves frightened, terrified, cringing criminals, but as sons before God, our Father. We do not deprecate His wrath, but we ask in the spirit of sonship His fatherly mercy. The whole prayer of the world is deprecation of wrath; the whole prayer of the Christian is imprecation of blessing. The man of the world stands before God a criminal in the dock; dreading, shrinking deprecating: the Christian kneels before his Father in heaven, and as a son,

a sinful son—often a prodigal son—always a sinful son, he asks of a father who never forgets, nor forsakes, nor turns a deaf ear, mercy and forgiveness. We do not ask forgiveness that God may be our father: but we go to our Father, and ask of Him forgiveness because He is our Father in Christ Jesus. If you can carry the feeling with you when you pray, that you are really approaching a loving Father, and approaching Him as sons and heirs, asking the pardon of sin, it will not make you hate sin less, but it will make you admire the Saviour more, and love our Father also yet more. There is no real, deep, poignant sense of sin until you have a deep joyous sense of God as your father. When the moral law discloses your sins, you feel and see them; but there is a rising and rebellious feeling in our inmost heart that impels you to think the law too severe, the legislator too exacting. But when you draw near to God, and see your sins in the light of a Father's face, you feel that your sins have been ingratitude, and that you have

smitten not a king, a sovereign, a legislator, but a parent. And hence, when the prodigal, felt where he was, and whence he had fallen, and what he was, the deepest spring of penitence in his heart was in that bright recollection in his memory, "Father." And hence he said, "I will arise and go to my father," holding fast his paternal and filial relationship; and seeing his sins only the more heinous because they were sins not against a master, but against a father. The Christian will ever have the deepest sorrow for sin, the deepest sense of its heinousness, while his deepest impressions of that sin are pregnant with hope; whereas the natural man's deepest conviction of sin drives him nearest to despair. A Christian's sense of sin carries him to our Father; an unregenerate man's sense of sin carries him away from our Father.

This petition, "Forgive us our debts," is in harmony with and linked to all the rest of the previous petitions of this Prayer. God hallows His name when He grants forgiveness of sin.

What is God's name? It is proclaimed in Exodus, "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin." And therefore when a Christian says, "Our Father, forgive us our sins," he is really praying also, "Our Father, let thy name be hallowed in doing so." And also, when a Christian prays, "Forgive us our sins," he promotes God's kingdom, for every sin that is forgiven is a stage nearer its development, every sinner that is pardoned is a new subject placed beneath its beneficent sceptre. We also exhibit an expression of His will. And when God forgives us our sins, God the great giver of all, and the exactor of nothing, gives us daily bread as the expression of His goodness; and God the great giver of all, and the exactor of nothing, forgives us our sins as the expression of His mercy. Thus, ever as we utter each petition, ever as we use each clause to express a new want, we cast light and

glory upon all the previous clauses. Each petition as we advance reminds us of the depths and sins that need forgiveness. Is God the Father? How little of the joyous and confiding sense of sons have we cherished! Does not the instinctive thought grow up in each heart that God is a terrible, angry being, from whom we shrink? and is it not the last thought we attain, a thought implanted by grace, that He is a Father we may confidingly approach to? When we have uttered "Our Father," how little of fraternal, brotherly, sisterly feeling have we cherished towards all our brethren of the same household! When we pray, "Our Father in heaven," how little have our thoughts and affections aspired to, and found their resting-place in, that blessed home! When we pray, "Thy name be hallowed," how often have we sought to exalt other names to a level with His, or uttered that name rashly, or given it a subordinate place! When we pray, "Thy kingdom come," how many obstructions have we presented to its pro-

gress, how little have we done to promote it, how few and far between the sacrifices we have made for it! When we pray, "Thy will be done," we are reminded that we have tried to do our own will in spite of what we know to be God's will, and wished our own will only done, and His will altogether subordinate. When we have prayed, "Give us daily bread," how often have we snatched the bread, and given no glory to the bread-giver! How often have we attributed to human causes and to secondary laws the glory due to God alone! Thus the very blessings that we ask disclose in their bosom the sins of which we are guilty, and we can see our sins not only reflected from the great White Throne, where they cannot be forgiven, but from the throne of grace also, where they can be forgiven as soon as we ask forgiveness.

There is here another interesting thought. It is this: in praying for forgiveness each for himself, we are necessitated to pray for forgiveness for all mankind. We do not here say, nor in-

deed in any one clause of this Prayer, "Forgive me my sins," but "Forgive us;" we are members of a brotherhood ruined by sin, and we seek now to be members of a brotherhood restored by grace. We cannot pray as sinners, "Forgive," without praying as priests, and supplicating forgiveness for all that are connected and associated with us. God has so ordered it that no man can seek a blessing for himself in the spirit of the Gospel without seeking blessings for all his brethren of mankind. The only book that extinguishes selfish monopoly,—the wretched feeling that cares for our own wants, however small, and nothing for the wants of others, however great,—is the Bible. He who can pray the Lord's Prayer from the very heart, with the spirit and the understanding, must be a Christian of no common type. Yet we must never forget it is possible to repeat a thousand Pater Nosters, and yet never to have prayed one "Our Father." It is possible to pray as they do on the continent of Europe, as a penance, instead of

praying it as a privilege. What a monstrous idea that a priest should say to a poor sinner, "You have sinned, and as an expiation, atonement, and punishment for your sins, you must repeat Pater Nosters, or Our Fathers, twenty, thirty, or forty times." What a horrible caricature of the Gospel to make that a punishment which is essentially a privilege, to make that expiation which is a child's address to a loving and affectionate Father! Only let me add, though it may interrupt the strain of my remarks, what is notwithstanding important, that many Protestants have a little of this old Romish leaven still lingering in their hearts. Luther well said, "Every man is born with a Pope in his heart;" we would all be Popes, and they that would pull down the Pope many a time would wish to occupy his place. We are all born with this Popish disposition. How does it develope itself! Enter into some High Church family, tainted with the new Tractarian leaven. A child has misconducted itself at Church on Sunday morning. At

three o'clock, after lunch, the mother takes the child, and tells it what it has done; and then says, "You must learn a collect this afternoon as a punishment for what you have done." What is this? The parent playing the priest, and introducing Popery into the nursery. But, you say, surely the Scotch Church must be free from that; it can have no tendency of that sort. There is just as much Popery in this matter in the Scotch Church as there is in the English. I have heard a mother say to her child in Scotland, "You have been very naughty, learn a Paraphrase, learn the 23rd Psalm." The truth is, Popery is the monopoly of no Church upon earth, it belongs to the human heart, the grace of God alone can put it down. Let us teach our children, let us teach in our nursery and in our schools, that to be allowed to go into God's presence and say, "Our Father," is a greater honor than to be introduced into the presence of our earthly sovereign; and that to be allowed to say, "Our Father," is alike the greatest happiness and

highest honor ; never, oh ! never, a punishment an expiation, or a penance.

Our sins are here set forth under the aspect of debts. In another Gospel it is, "Forgive us our trespasses ;" or wherein he have transgressed the law. In this Gospel it is, "Forgive us our debts ;" or what we owe to God. Every man upon earth is a debtor, a deep debtor to God. You owe Him the love of all the heart, all the soul, of all the strength, of every hour, in every place. And when you have done this, as no human being ever has done it, you have no merit ; you have only paid that which you owed. The idea of deserving of God when all is already mortgaged, or of paying God beyond what we owe, when we cannot pay one tithe of what we already owe, is monstrous and absurd. Debts in this world may be forgotten ; but debts to God are never forgotten until they are forgiven. In this world the creditor can seize the body only of the debtor ; in that other world soul and body are involved in a common wreck. Unless our

sins are forgiven now, they will rise in crashes and reverberations at the judgment-seat of Christ. Though every one we have injured should each from his grave cry, "I forgive," "I forgive," "I forgive," yet our debts are not cancelled, our sins are not forgiven. Nor can an eternity of suffering cancel them. It is a grievous mistake to suppose that man's sin, as a learned Professor dreams, and writes, and preaches,—can be exhausted hereafter; that the Protestant place of torment is merely a sort of Protestant Purgatory. If any sufferings that man can undergo for millions of years can atone for his sins, then it was not right, nor expedient, nor just, that God should become man, and hang upon a cross in infinite agony and sufferings for me. But the very fact that it needed the Atonement to cover, cancel, and forgive, is irrefragable proof that there was no power in man to exhaust sin. The idea of a sinner exhausting sin hereafter is absurd; because whilst he is paying the penalty he is always sinning, and always there-

fore incurring, by the very necessity of the case, a new penalty. If a person banished to a penal colony, for seven years, as punishment for some great crime, during the seven years commits the same crime again, he incurs seven years more of punishment; and if the same crime a third time, it is seven years more. But the lost in misery, by the very law and necessity of their fallen nature, are ever sinning, ever suffering; never, therefore, expiating and atoning. Far better would those that think so, be employed in showing how wide open are the gates of heaven, and how welcome is every human being to enter in, than in trying to dilute the miseries of the lost, and impress men with the idea that hell is not so terrible as it is. Not that I think preaching hell will ever win a single soul: that is not God's way; God's way is to win by a demonstration of love; by preaching Calvary, not Sinai; by attraction, not by coercion; by preaching Christ, not penalty.

God alone forgives sin. I wish especially to

notice this, there is a notion abroad that the priest—if there be such a person in the ministry—has power to forgive sin. If you look at sin in its just light, you will see at once, from its nature, the absurdity of this perversion. Sin has a twofold aspect; first, its offence to God, and second, its injury to a brother. If I were to steal from any one a sovereign, that act would have two aspects, and strike in two directions. First of all, it would be injury done to my brother: and secondly, it would be dishonesty in the sight of God, or the infraction of His moral law. The injury to my brother, that brother can forgive, and he is called upon to do so; but the sin that is in the act, which extends to God, God alone can forgive. Whatever offence, therefore, I commit against a priest, or a prelate, or a Pope, or a man, I would ask each to forgive; but that which underlies the act, which goes beyond what we see, and strikes at the throne of Deity, being sin against God, God alone can forgive. Therefore, I believe the

words of David are literally and strictly true, "Against thee, thee only have I sinned;" injury I have done to Uriah, but sin I have committed against Thee. He asks of God the forgiveness of the sin, because as sin it was committed against Him alone. God alone forgives sin, and, therefore, in this Prayer we ask of our Father the forgiveness of our trespasses, or the cancelling of our debts. And, blessed thought! when He does forgive, He does it entirely. "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities." "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." When Alexander gave rewards he gave them, as he said, like a king. When God forgives sins, He forgives them like a God. God our Father is the author, Christ's atonement the means, His mediation the channel, our own souls the subjects. And when He forgives He forgives without any equivalent. I am afraid that word "forgive" is sometimes misunderstood. We say, "*Give* us bread; *forgive* us our sin." It is understood as if it were, "Give us forgive-

ness for something." But the origin of the Saxon word "forgive" is not give in room of, or give in recompense, or in return; the origin of the word is, "forth give;" and therefore it is, "Give us our bread, and forth-give us our sins, as we forth-give them that sin against us;" that is, without equivalent, without compensation of any sort or any shape whatever.

Having seen how rich, how ample, how gracious is the forgiveness, let us turn to its action and effect upon us. "Even as we forgive them that trespass against us;" or, as it is in Matthew, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." In order to understand this, let us look at it in the light of a very remarkable Parable in Matt. xviii. 23, where we read, "Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants. And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him which owed him ten thousand talents. But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and

children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. The servant therefore fell down and worshipped him, saying, Lord have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him and forgave him the debt." "Forgive us our debts." "But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow-servants which owed him an hundred pence : and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest. And his fellow-servant fell down at his feet and besought him, saying, Have patience with me and I will pay thee all. And he would not ; but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. So when his fellow-servants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done. Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me ; shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee ?

And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses." This wicked servant wished God, with a selfishness that was perfectly monstrous, to deal with him according to one standard, while he claimed the right to go out and deal with his brother according to another standard. He wished God to deal with him according to the principles of grace, but he wanted to have the luxury of dealing with his fellow-servant according to the principles of law. He received freely, and he wanted still to receive freely, but he would not give freely; he would only give, if give at all, for what he could get. God will not suffer this. If you deal with a brother by the strict demands of law, you must be prepared to be so dealt with by God yourself. Unless the forgiveness that you have asked so earnestly operates in your heart a spirit of loving-kindness and forgiveness towards

all, you give evidence that you have never yet tasted the power of God's forgiveness, or appreciated what it is. "Pay me what thou owest" is the ceaseless demand and exaction of man; "who forgiveth all thine iniquities" is the magnificent portrait of God. None but a perfect man may insist upon all his rights. When you hear it said, "That is my right and I will have it;" you hear men saying what only a perfect being may dare to say. "The highest justice from man to man is often the greatest injury dealt to man." None but a perfect being can afford to insist upon all his rights. We sinners, imperfect, fallen creatures, must often let go our rights in the sight and in the presence of Him who has asked nothing, and given us, without money and without price, pardon of sin, and grace the earnest of glory. There are two great kingdoms struggling for supremacy in this fallen world,—the kingdom of exaction, or man ever demanding from his fellow; and the kingdom of forgiveness, or man ever forgiving, forgetting,

and letting go. In the first, man seizes his brother by the throat, and says, "Pay me that thou owest;" and if that brother cannot or does not, he casts him into prison till he has paid the last farthing. And if this were universal, if God did not interpose lightening restraints, mitigating and relieving elements, the kingdom of exaction would create a perfect Pandemonium upon earth; in which the right we assert against others being asserted by others against ourselves, nothing relaxed, nothing forgiven, all would be chaos, uproar, confusion, plunder. This kingdom began in Paradise. The first thing that man lost was the fatherhood of God; for he ran and hid himself, thinking God was a revengeful judge. The second thing that man lost was the brotherhood of mankind; for Cain rose up and slew his brother Abel. The first feeling that poor Adam and Eve exhibited after sin had infected their nature was peculiar to this kingdom—recrimination. "It was not my fault; it was yours. "It was not my fault; it was

yours." "The woman gave me"—Adam casting the blame most wickedly upon her; and she, not one whit better than her husband, casting the blame upon the serpent. "We ourselves are perfect innocence personified; we have done nothing." "I am innocent; it was my wife that did all." "I am innocent, it was the serpent that did all:" recrimination and self-righteousness commencing as soon as sin commenced in our world. But the other kingdom is the kingdom of forgiveness; man receiving forgiveness from above, then circulating that forgiveness around him below; till forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven us, becomes the currency of social life; and courtesy, so beautiful as an outward thing, appears the exponent of a real inward thing; thinking no evil, rejoicing not in iniquity, rejoicing in the truth; God ever forgiving, never exacting; and man forgiven, always forgiven and never exacting. What a happy world would it be were this universal! But this forgiveness that

we exercise towards others is not the reason why God forgives us, but the consequence and the authentication of it. For instance, when our Lord healed a man that was ill and bade him take up his bed and walk, his carrying his bed and walking was not the reason why Christ healed him, but the endorsement of it, the authentication and evidence of it. We have this very idea expressed by the apostle in his Epistle when he says, "And be ye kind one to another; tender hearted, forgiving one another." Why? "In order that you may be forgiven?" No; but "even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." By so doing we approximate to the character of Him who prayed, "Father, forgive them."

There is another very important lesson. What we feel God is to us becomes very much the determining tone of our character to others. That person who looks up to God as an angry and revengeful judge, ever exacting, will look forth upon his fellow-men in the same spirit, ever exact-

ing also and never giving. But he who is taught to look up to God as forgiving and giving, and that continually, will go forth the exponent of the same holy and beautiful spirit; forgiving one another even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven us. Let me explain, however, that this forgiveness of your brother, this forgiveness of injury, is not a mere stifling of temper. There are men, constitutionally of a proud, haughty spirit, who may have received a great injury; their spirit is chafed, they are irritated, vexed, but such is their pride that they do not show it. They dwell upon the offence—they cherish the revenge in their own hearts; and would not show that they were chafed or irritated, or let an expression escape their lips that they are so. This is not forgiving one another; forgiveness of one another is in the heart, it lies in the subduedness of the heart, the warming of the affections, the sanctifying of all the feelings. It is not silence without, but inner kindness. It is not management for the sake of appearance, but

it is love in the inmost recesses of the human heart. And this feeling is happiness. It is not, now, one of the striking incidental proofs of the divine origin of this blessed Book, that everything it recommends so far contributes to the present happiness of man, and everything it dissuades from so far discourages what would do man injury? Fallen as our nature is, it feels that all the malignant passions are springs of wretchedness. Revenge, envy, hatred, malice, all uncharitableness, are stings that enter to the very quick, intolerable and miserable. And, on the other hand, fallen as we are, difficult as it may be, love, charity, peace, forgiving one another, thinking the best of everybody, wishing well to every human being, are emotions so far fraught with happiness. And if there be one happy emotion upon earth, it is first the sense that we are forgiven, and only second, our spirit of forgiveness towards all our brethren of mankind. The great poet has reflected the same sentiment when he said,—

“The quality of mercy is not strain’d ;  
It droppeth, as the gentle rain from heaven  
Upon the place beneath : it is twice bless’d ;  
It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes :  
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest ; it becomes  
The throned monarch better than his crown.”

So true is it, “Blessed are, or happy are, the merciful.” We see in these truths the true extinction of war, national, social, universal. It is not a Peace Society, or Peace Society prescriptions, that will ever arrest the ravages of war. It is the sinner, not the soldier, that makes war. It is human passion, not gunpowder, that gives the cannon its dread mission. It is man’s evil heart, not the firebrand or the match, that ignites the gunpowder. And the reform that is to end in universal peace is the regeneration of every heart; and only when every heart is regenerated, and not till then, will war cease. Terrible as war is, terrible as it is in our present experience, yet it is, and will be, and will blaze more, until man personally becomes man forgiven, and through the force of that forgiveness learns to forgive as he is forgiven. I do not say that every

war is the result of passions upon our part. No doubt there are sinfulness and imperfection in it. The only war that this blessed Gospel admits is a defensive one; and even such war is exceptional, it provides for it as a thing that will be, it does not insist upon it as a thing that must be. When kings on their thrones, when cabinet ministers in their cabinets, when fathers in their families, when masters in their places of business, shall all pray from the very depths of the heart, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors," then and only then—then and only then, when Christ shall come, and the kingdom shall be His, and His glory shall lighten every land, the sword shall be beaten into the ploughshare and the spear into the pruning-hook, and the nations shall learn war no more.

It is an awful thought that any should perish because they will not ask forgiveness of God. It is a glorious thought that should throb in every heart, "there is forgiveness with thee,"—a forgiveness free, perfect, and irrevocable as the

sacrifice that secures it. Not the least precious thing is this in the inventory of Christianity.

Whatever else we need, we all need this. Seek it from the heart. Seek it in the name of Jesus. Seek it from our Father. Refusal is impossible.

## VIII.

*THE CRY OF THE TEMPTED.*

“And lead us not into temptation.”—MATT. vi. 13.

WE begin all our prayers, just as we begin the repetition of our creed, by recognising God as the Father. “I believe in God the Father,” and we begin our prayer, “Our Father.” Herein is the difference between the Christian and the man of the world. The latter says, “I suffer, I am afflicted, I am unsuccessful, therefore God hates me.” The former begins at the opposite end, “God is my Father, therefore what I suffer, and I endure, are the chastisements of a loving parent, not the penal inflictions of an angry judge.” I noticed that when we pray we do not say, “*My* Father,” that would be selfish; but as if God inseparably connected our prayers as petitioners with our intercessions as Chris-

tian priests, he has so linked the interests of all with benedictions upon each, that we are taught to pray, not "My Father," which might be the solitary cry of a selfish heart, but "Our Father," the common and comprehensive cry of the whole Catholic Church. "Father" is God's fatherhood, "Our Father" is the believer's brotherhood,—"In heaven" is the home to which we are all journeying as expectants of glory, and honor, and eternal rest. The first half of the prayer is our imploring God to glorify himself. "Hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done." The last half of the prayer is seeking satisfaction for our own wants, as if to teach us that a Christian will not even pray for a blessing on himself till he has prayed that God may have glory in giving it. How truly does this form and model of prayer fall in with Christ's prescription for practice,—"Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness." "Hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done," then all the other things shall be added;

therefore we pray, "Give us daily bread, forgive us our debts, lead us not into temptation." The first half contains the riches of God, "Thy kingdom, thy name, thy will;" the last half exposes the poverty and the emptiness of man, "Give us bread, forgive us sin, deliver us from all evil."

A child can pray it; an experienced, aged Christian, ripe for glory, ever finds new meaning in it. I do not wonder that in some churches they repeat it in the same service; it is so precious, so expressive, so comprehensive, that the wonder is it is not repeated oftener, not as words, but in spirit and in truth;—I say in spirit and in truth—for one may say a thousand Pater Nosters in a thousand hours, and yet may not have prayed one single "Our Father, which art in heaven." In the first petition, "Give us daily bread," we hear the cry of man as the dependent creature; in the other, "Forgive us our sins, we see man the penitent sinner. In the third, on which I now enter, "Lead us not into tempta-

tion," we have man conscious of danger and weakness, and seeking strength and preservation. "Give us daily bread" is the cry of the humble mendicant, dependent upon God for a crumb of bread, as well as for a crown of glory. The second is the petition of man, the poor sin-stricken criminal, conscious of his sins, and seeking absolution from our Father. "We are weak, we cannot stand unless Thou uphold us; we are erring, we do not know the way unless Thou wilt be pleased to guide us. Perfect Thy strength in our weakness; sustain us in the hour and power of trial. Our Father, lead us not into temptation." The Christian who has obtained the forgiveness of his sins does not rest satisfied, much less, as the world misconstrues him, give license to every evil appetite; but the instant he has obtained forgiveness through the blood of sprinkling, he applies for sanctification,—“Lead us not into temptation,”—by the power and presence of the Holy Spirit of God. In other words, a Christian is not satisfied to have his sins expiated only;

he longs to have them extirpated also. Justified by faith, he has peace ; pardoned, he desires to be sanctified. And, blessed thought ! whom God justifies, them He always glorifies, and therefore sanctifies. What is the meaning of this prayer, "Lead us not into temptation ?" We read in another place, "God tempteth no man." Then in what sense can we pray to God, "Lead us not into temptation ?" We are quite sure that none are seduced or led into into sin by any active agency and influence from God. There is a guiding truth that always keeps one right on this subject,—that all that is evil is from the creature ; all that is holy, beneficent, and good, is exclusively from God. God originates the good ; the creature is responsible for the evil. And therefore every inspiration that is holy is from above ; every inclination that is corrupt is in some shape or in some way from the creature ; and not in any way or in any sense or shape from the Creator. In what sense do we ask God not to lead us into temptation ? A great many have tried to escape

difficulties that seem latent in this clause. Some say it should mean, "Leave us not in temptation." But then the Greek word is quite plain, and can bear no such meaning. Others again regard it as meaning merely, "Lead us not into so great a temptation that we shall sink under it; but that is a paraphrase which I doubt if the words will admit of. It does seem to me that temptation is literally evil in itself; and that the prayer is not, "Lead me into a certain degree of it;" but "Lead me into no degree of temptation whatever:" this seems the literal and fair interpretation of the words. It marks the margin to which God may lead us; beyond which we pray we may never be led at all. We may, for instance, be led, in the providential arrangements of God, into sickness, sorrow, bereavement, poverty, distress, famine, plague, pestilence, hunger, nakedness, the sword; perils by land, and perils by sea; and yet we may not be led in any one of them into temptation. We may not be led, and our prayer is that we may

not be led, to that point when trial becomes temptation. There is a trial which is not temptation; there is temptation which is the result of a trial too strong for us to endure. God places us therefore in outward circumstances of trial; we place ourselves in inward conditions of temptation. Temptation arises not necessarily from what we have, but solely from what we are. There would be no temptation in any of God's providential gifts, if it were not that they come into contact with an evil heart, which elaborates evil out of all that betides us, and, like the tarantula spider, sucks poison from the sweetest and the most fragrant flower. What therefore we pray here is that we may have that sanctification of heart, that elevation of nature, that sustaining strength and energy, which in all time of our tribulation, in all time of our wealth, will carry us over the trial, through the trial, but not lead us into or leave us in temptation. The generation and force of sin is not in external circumstances at all. Place a perfectly holy man in

the height or in the depth; and all things will be holy still. Our Blessed Lord walked in the market-place, sat at the Pharisee's table, spake and conversed in the Publican's home, unscathed by the least taint of sin, triumphant infinitely over all that approached to any sin. On the other hand, thousands in order to escape temptation have rushed from the outer world, from social life, from the possession of wealth, and from official life; and have taken shelter in convents, in monasteries, in cells, and in caves; and they have found that they have carried their sins in them and with them; and have aggravated, not diluted, them by the change. Here then was the Son of God in contact with the wide world, yet spotless; here is the monk running from the world, yet becoming a worse sinner than before. What does that show us? That the secret of the mischief is not in anything that is outside, but wholly in a heart that needs to be regenerated; and till it is regenerated, sanctified, and inspired, man will still fall into temptation. Therefore I

should suppose this prayer to mean, "Lord, lead me in Thy providence into prosperity or into adversity; into sickness, or sorrow, or bereavement, or life, or any phasis of providential dealings that to Thee seemeth best; but lead me not into temptation." It is therefore the words of our Lord, "I pray not that thou wouldest take them out of the world; but that thou wouldest keep them from the evil of the world." It is not our circumstances that give tone, shape, and determination to the inward man; but it is the inward man that gives coloring, and tone, and shape, and direction to all the circumstances of life. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." It is the thinking heart that elaborates evil out of that which in itself may be good; turns the feast into a poison; and trial that may purify into temptation that may destroy. To illustrate this, God gives us in His providence as a blessing upon our honest labor, increase of wealth. There is no sin in being rich; just as there is no merit in being poor. We find ourselves, then,

possessed of riches. But the instant that our carnal heart comes into contact with great wealth, temptation is generated; and we are proud, and forget God; we think this world is to be our lasting and therefore our blessed home. Our prayer therefore would be, not, "Lead us not into riches;" but, "Lead us not into that which our carnal heart may extract from riches; the temptation that is destructive and evil." But, on the other hand, does God send us poverty? There is no merit in poverty; and there is no sin in poverty. But will the carnal heart now be still? Will temptation now be banished? Just the reverse; for the poor have their temptations to be dishonest just as the rich have their temptations to be proud. And the carnal heart, struggling and wrestling with poverty around it, like a sea that threatens to overwhelm and to destroy it, will be tempted to have recourse to dishonest means of escape, and to do that which is sinful in the sight of God. Or, to take a still more striking instance, have we neither the wealth

that tempts us to be proud, nor the poverty that tempts us to be dishonest? Have we what Agur prayed for, neither poverty nor riches, but food convenient for us? Surely now there will be no temptation in that? Instantly a wicked heart, sustained and inspired by the wicked spirit, will even there elaborate poison; for it will begin to congratulate itself,—“I am not like that rich man, proud; and I am not like that poor man, dishonest. I have neither poverty nor riches; and therefore I am all that I should be in the sight of God and man.” Or again, have you great talent, intellectual power, pre-eminence, and force? How often do we find that showing itself in insubordination to the word of God; and trying not to ascertain what is the mind of Him that wrote it, but how it may be twisted, turned, and directed, to our previous prepossessions and prejudices! Have we great health? How often does this make us feel a sort of semi-defiance of God, as if we could ourselves determine how long the pulse shall beat, and how long life shall

last. The fact is, place a man in the height of prosperity, in the depth of poverty; or in what is supposed to be that happy and balmy equator where there is neither the torrid heat of the one, nor the frozen rigors of the other; you find that still temptation comes. In short, it is the fallen heart that is wrong; and until it be righted, and inspired and sustained by the Spirit of God, man will be tempted evermore, and as often as he is tried.

Let us try to ascertain now, which is a practical lesson for us, how does God not lead us into temptation; in what shape does He fulfil to us this prayer, or answer it? You must give no quarter to the evil one, you must not deprecate Satan's doing so. You must treat him as the fallen fiend, as the ruthless adversary; and seek not that he will cease to tempt, but that God will lead you not into temptation. In the first place, He does so, by awakening in your heart thoughts, recollections, sentiments, feelings, that neutralize the temptation. And secondly, He

does so by giving you to dwell in your hearts the Sanctifier, the Comforter, who takes of the things of Christ and shows them unto you ; and when the temptation comes nearest gives you those deep, lofty, and victorious impressions that make you more than conqueror through Him that loved you. Let me illustrate this. You are tempted to distrust God ; all seems the rising darkness of a moral night around you ; all seems the thickening cloud in the dark canopy above you. In these circumstances you are tempted to distrust God ; not to say, for you dare not, but to think, " God has forgotten me ; my God has forsaken me, or He has retired from the world, and left it to all the disasters of ungovernable chance." The Holy Spirit, just as your trial is about to issue in temptation, interposes as the ceaseless Comforter, and whispers in the silent cells of the heart, the conscience, and the memory, " The mountains shall depart, and the hills shall be removed ; but my loving-kindness shall not depart, neither shall the covenant of

my peace be removed." Again, that same Spirit whispers to you, "Cast all your care upon him; for he"—not once cared or will care—but "he careth for you." And you yourselves know that a thought from the fountain of truth, God's Holy Word, many a day breathed into your heart, has risen upon the darkness within, like a bright star upon the brow of night, or has awakened within you the music of heaven itself; and you have felt, what is so true, that in God's Word, applied by God's Spirit, there is comfort, there is the element of glorious victory. You are placed perhaps in circumstances of very great affliction; not depression, but of great affliction. You have lost your property, or your estate, or the profits you had fairly and lawfully earned; perhaps your home, your friends; and your present trial seems to you from its aggravation and its accumulation worse than anything you have experienced before; and you are constrained to say, like the prophet of old,—“Thou hast cast me into the deep, in the midst of the

sea. The floods compass me about; all thy billows and thy waves pass over me; and I say, I am cast out of thy sight." Yet some mysterious power whispers to your heart, "Be still, trust in the Lord;" and you say, like Jona: when he was brought to his better recollections, "I will look again towards Thy temple, O God." And thus you find God delivering and helping you. Not, God will not lead you into trial; not, He will not lead you into sorrows; but He will not, if you ever look, learn, and watch, and pray, lead you into temptation. God, for instance, does not say he will not lead you into pestilence, or into plague, or into famine; but He does say, that you may not distrust Him, and so may be kept from temptation, "A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee." God does not say that He will never lead you into trouble; but in order that you may be never tempted to doubt, He tells you, "When thou passest through the rivers, they

shall not overflow thee; and through the waters, I will be with thee." And thus through the truth which is the medium of sanctification applied by the Spirit, who is the author of it, you are delivered, not from trial, but from temptation; not from difficulties, but from distrust; not from affliction, but from suspicion of the faithfulness and the loving-kindness of our God. In other circumstances, when the eye is opened to the full extent of all our trials, and when the Christian discovers that our greatest trials are not earthly ones, but supernatural ones;—when he discovers that we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places; when we hear that Satan goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour; when we read, "Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat;"—there is our peril. And if there be any one tempted, tried with evil thoughts, appetites, desires, passions; or infidelity, scepticism, and atheism; what does it prove?

That Satan is sifting you, and, blessed thought! that you are wheat, and worth sifting. Satan does not sift the chaff. The very temptation to which you are exposed is evidence of what you are; for it is the wheat that he has desired to have that he may sift it. And your strength, your safety, your victory, lies here; not in wheat, not in your faith; "but I," says the Saviour "have prayed for you, that your faith fail not."

There are times in the experience of every Christian when many hostile elements seem to combine, and try and test him to the very uttermost; and his trial seems to him so severe that never has he felt, and he thinks no one else ever feels, anything like it. But it is no comfort to him, "there hath no temptation overtaken you but such as is common to man." That is one comfort. But God is faithful, "who will not suffer you to be tried," to be tested, "above that ye are able; but will with the trial also make a way of escape, so that ye may be able to bear it." Take the worst instance you recollect.—

the person most tried, most shattered; one who is drifting without a star in his sky, without a taper on earth, without a particle of present peace, without a ray of future hope. It can be said of that most storm-tossed voyager to an everlasting haven, "There hath no temptation overtaken him but such as is common to man." And that God who has permitted it, or who has sent it, is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tried above that ye are able to bear. Take that text to your bosom; commit it to memory; think of it often. It is not the quantity of Scripture that we read, but it is the amount of hold that a little Scripture gets of our heart and conscience, that is power and life, and peace, and joy.

You are tempted perhaps, what is still worse, to suspect or to distrust your title to acceptance. You begin to think, Well, I can see what the Gospel is; I know what the Saviour is; but I sometimes think that I have not a right hold of him, or that he has not a right hold of me;" and you doubt the foundation of a Christian's hope and trust in the sight of God.

You may suspect the strength of your confidence, but you may not suspect the strength of the foundation on which you lean. You must never forget that your safety—and this is a very important distinction—for an everlasting world is not contingent upon the force of your faith, but upon the stability of Christ, the great foundation. When the poor Hebrew was in his home on that memorable night when the angel of death rushed with unflagging wing through every street and lane and alley of broad Egypt, and wherever the sprinkled blood was not upon the lintel and door-posts entered, and struck dead the firstborn, the mother, with her babe, her first born and her only one,—knowing, however, as a Hebrew mother, that the blood was sprinkled on the lintel,—when she heard the rush of the angel's wing, and the wild wail that rose from Egypt, as every inhabitant ran seeking sympathy from a neighbor, and met that neighbor seeking sympathy from her; when the mother heard the wail of those that mourned

over their first-born struck dead, and the rush of the angel as he swept through her own street and struck down the first-born of the very house that was next to her own ; that her heart trembled, and that she gave up all for lost, and thought that her own would next be struck down. But her safety was not therefore the least diminished ; because her protection was not the strength of her faith, but the blood that was sprinkled on the lintels and the door-posts of her home. So, our safety is not the strength of our faith, for it is feeble, flickering, faltering, changeable ; but the sure foundation, leaning upon which the least faith and the greatest faith has an equal title to heaven ; because the title is not the faith within, but the ground of faith, the righteousness of Christ without.

You may be tempted often, as I dare say you are, to suspect the love of God to you ; and you cannot begin the prayer as usual, " Our Father ; " for you think he has ceased to be so. Your love ranges from the loftiest mark down below zero

itself; but His love does not weary in the least, nor change nor falter in the very worst of circumstances. He loved you in spite of your sin; and now that He has made you what you should be, He will surely no cease to love you. He loved you from the first, and He will love you to the last. You may lament the coldness of your love, the faltering of your trust, the suspicion of your heart, but never doubt that if He has loved you from the first, He will love you onward even to the last.

You are tempted sometimes to doubt your perseverance to the end. I believe most thoroughly in the perseverance of saints. I do not believe that a person can be a Christian to-day and not a Christian to-morrow. And yet I believe that the Christian who is so has his eyes and his ears open, and his heart ready to receive every truth, precept, and direction, from God's Holy Word. But many a Christian thinks, "I feel that God has changed my heart; that He has given me trust in that precious provision

that is made in Zion. But I fear, when I look around at all the perplexities of the times; at the gathering clouds; at the electric state of the social atmosphere about us; when I see such difficulties in not simply living well, but in living at all, I could often wish that the sun would go back some twenty degrees upon the dial; and that former days would return, when one had not to struggle so much for bare existence, but had a little time to take thought about a better existence." You are looking too much at the difficulties, too little to our Father in heaven, who is throned above the floods, and rules and reigns in the midst of all. You are assuming that our Father is God upon the plains, but that he is not God upon the mountains,—that He can keep you in fair weather, but that He cannot sustain you in the storm. He is equally able to keep you in the one as He is to preserve you in the other. And just when your heart is upon the very verge and margin of temptation, look up; lift up your head to Him who has taught

you to pray, and therefore promised to grant what He has taught you to ask, "Lead me not into temptation." God, who has placed you in His providence where you are, is able and faithful to keep you by His grace just what you should be. If He has placed you on the loftiest pinnacle of the temple, He is able to beat Satan off, or keep you from falling. Never forget that wherever God in His providence has sent you, there God in His grace will preserve and sustain you. He never places you in what is actually and positively sinful; but He often places you in what is exceedingly trying. I have met with young men who have said they meet with such difficulties in their situation that they really fear they cannot serve God in it. I have always asked them to reflect whether what they feel may not be the incipient cowardice that would flee from the post of peril or toil, under the cover of a desire to serve God in a more convenient and suitable situation. If God has placed us in His providence just where we are, there we are war-

ranted to ask Him to lead us not into temptation, and to keep us from falling.

Let me notice here what is so very interesting, and what we have alluded to in almost every petition. It is not, "Lead *me* not into temptation," but "Lead *us* not into temptation." The missionary spirit runs through the whole of this Prayer. Not one petition is addressed from the individual that does not also combine all that believe in Jesus, and desire to reach that rest that remaineth for the people of God. And hence it is a very beautiful thought, that ever as you pray this Prayer, you may conceive the whole company of God's people gathered round you, and praying with you. The queen prays in her closet, "Our Father, lead us not into temptation," and the dews of blessing descend upon the most sequestered hamlets of the land over which she rules. The parent cries in his home, "Our Father, lead us not into temptation," and his prayer is answered in blessings wider than the limits of the home that he rules. The min-

ister prays, and the most suffering, sequestered, and meanest members of his flock share in the dews of the blessing that he imprecates. This Prayer breathed by the Christian now, like seed sown in his life-time, grows up upon his grave after he has been gathered like a shock in season to everlasting garners; and those that are behind him are blessed. Some poor, aged woman, bedridden, with scarce a visit of sympathy or comfort from Monday to Saturday, cries on that suffering sick-bed, "Our Father, lead us not into temptation;" and the statesman at the helm in the midst of the storm is better for her prayer, and the minister in the pulpit is stronger that she has prayed so, and cabinets at their wits' end are refreshed by her humble and lowly litany. And no one can pray, however mean, for himself, without the joyous assurance that that prayer, lifted like a tone whisper from a lowly home, is descending in echoes of cheering music upon thousands of the homes and the inhabitants of the land. In

answer to this prayer God may not remove us from trial, but he will always give us what is better. A striking illustration of this is the case of the Apostle Paul. He prayed that that thorn, the word that he uses to denote some great affliction, whatever it was, might be taken from him. What was the answer? Not, "I will take away the trial," but, "I will do what is far better, My grace is sufficient for you." God does not answer our prayers always in the way that we prescribe, or always in the way in which we expect the answer, but he always and everywhere answers them substantially. If a man pay you ten pounds, you expect that he will pay you ten sovereigns, but if he choose to pay in a £10 bank note, or in shillings, or in pence, it is of no consequence; it is equally the same. You ask of God to give you a blessing, you anticipate that that blessing will come in one shape and at one time. God will not submit to you, you are prescribing to Him, yet He will answer. No prayer is ever breathed to

heaven from a lowly, trusting heart, that is not answered; but the time of the answer, the shape of the answer, the weight and magnificence of the answer, His love, His wisdom, will determine, as may be most expedient. Now if one can just go away with that thought, that whatever we have asked we are sure to get, and if not deliverance from the trial, we shall have what is far better, strength to be victorious over it, then be still, be patient, trust in the Lord; wait patiently for Him, and he will bring it to pass. It is some comfort to us that there is not a saint in glory that does not look like a brand that has been plucked from the burning; there is not a Christian beside the throne at this moment that is an original native there. All the saved in heaven are immigrants. And whence did they come? They came out of great tribulation, out of heavy trials; but they have washed their robes, and made them clean in the blood of the Lamb. And what was the element of their victory? "They overcame through the

blood of the Lamb." How magnificent is that thought! They overcame not by the strength of their faith, not by their being spared the trial; but they overcame through the blood of the Lamb. And that others are tempted as we are, we find in God's word plain enough. Jesus was tempted by Mary at the marriage feast of Cana of Galilee. He was tempted by the disciples, when they tried to prevent Him suffering. He was tempted by the lawyer and the Pharisee in respect to the Sabbath. He speaks of all His pathway from the manger to the cross as His temptation. And at the first communion table that He instituted, He saw the traitor, He read his thoughts; He scanned his malignant passions, his wicked designs, his impure motives, purposes, and ends. Yet mark the patience, the quiet, the bearing and forbearing; the tenderness with which He indicated to the rest the terrible evil that was then and there in the midst of them. Jesus was in all points tempted like as we are; and yet He was not led into temptation.

Martin Luther has well said, "Prayer and temptation make a true minister of Christ."

God knows our frame ; He will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able to bear. We should always inaugurate a change of circumstances with prayer and watchfulness, lighting the camp-fires of the one, and planting the sentinels of the other. Nero, as the pupil of Seneca, was mild and amiable, but, as Emperor of Rome, was an execrable monster. Mary, Queen of England, in her youth was a gentle and affectionate princess. Her history on the throne is written in blood. Robespierre, in his early days, was humane and tender, and sensitive. His latter days were stained with terrible atrocities and murders.

Circumstances have much to do with character. If you could command the place you wish, you would be ruined. In the future rest we shall have to thank God for many an unanswered prayer.

## VI.

*THE GREAT DELIVERER.*

“But deliver us from evil.”—*MATT. vi. 11.*

I RECAPITULATE because I want to impress the many precious truths we have gathered from each clause of this most comprehensive and instructive Prayer, a prayer I stated which had these remarkable features, that in one Gospel it is, “After this manner pray ye,” to show that the spirit and the thought, not the words, are the main thing. In another Gospel it is, “When ye pray say,” to denote that the words are so precious as vehicles of thought that we cannot select more appropriate, we therefore do well to employ the very words that Christ Himself has provided, so simple that a child may understand them, so significant that the ripest saint is never weary in employing them.

In the first half of it we have the fullness and the riches of God, "Thy kingdom, Thy name, Thy will;" in the last half of it the destitution and despondency of man, "Give us bread, forgive us sin, deliver us from evil, lead us into no temptation." In the first half of it you have God in the beautiful and endearing aspect of a Father. The distinctive revelation of Christianity is God a father. In nature God is throned as the unapproachable King; in the law He is opposed to us as the offended Judge and Legislatoꝛ; in Christ He is revealed as the Father. I noticed that lest selfishness should creep into our prayers; we are taught to say not "*My* Father," but "*Our* Father." In order that our hearts may be lifted above the footstool where we kneel to that throne before which we cry, we say, "Our Father in heaven." "Father," the Fatherhood of God; "Our Father," the brotherhood of all believers; "Our Father in heaven," that is our eternal home and our happy rest. I noticed next, "Hallowed be thy name,

thy kingdom come, thy will be done," as involving the great doctrine of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The first clause is the manifestation of what may be called a filial spirit, "Our Father, which art in heaven." The second clause may be regarded as the exhibition of an adoring spirit; "Hallowed be thy name." The third clause may be regarded as the expression of a missionary spirit; "Thy kingdom come." The next clause is the evidence of a dependent spirit, "Give us daily bread." The next the evidence of a penitent spirit, "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors." The next of a cautious spirit, "Lead us not into temptation;" and the last is the crowning cry that embosoms all the rest, "Deliver us from all the evils that we dread; introduce us into all the joys and the blessings that we need; and that thou art able to do so is evident, for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory." The child's first cry is, the Christian's earnest appeal, "Our Father." The kingdom of grace flows into the infant heart,

then the infant learns and loves the will of the Father ; then to eat bread, and to seek a blessing on it, and to look up and give thanks for it. Then there grows as it gets older a deep sense of sin, that cries for pardon ; then there is perceived a sense of weakness, that prays, " Lead us not into temptation." There is finally the last cry of grey hairs, whitening with the sunshine of the approaching glory, and ready to bid farewell to time, to enter upon a new and joyous progression in eternity, " Now deliver us from evil, taking from death its sting ; from the grave its victory." There is also a parallelism in this prayer with the benedictions in the Gospel according to St. Matthew. The name of the Father is hallowed when the poor in spirit feel that they are so, and as little children receive the kingdom of God. The kingdom of Christ comes when the mourner is comforted. The divine will is done when the meek feel that they are the heirs of God. Bread is given when we hunger and thirst after righteousness. Trespasses are

forgiven when we find ourselves among the merciful that obtain mercy. Temptations are avoided by the pure in heart, because they see God ; and evil is done away when the children of God are ranked among the peace-makers, and all disturbing and disruptive elements are removed and put to a distance for ever.

In the last three clauses of this Prayer we first feel sin within us, a load, a burden, a curse ; and we cry, after the knowledge of a Saviour in whose blood we have redemption, "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors." We then see, after we are forgiven, temptations around us pressing upon us from every point, seeking to seduce us from the way, the truth, and the life ; and we cry, "Lead us not into temptation." And lastly, we see evil infecting the wide world, tainting its air, tarnishing our faith, destroying our peace, everywhere, around, above, beneath, we see and feel the pressure of evil ; and we cry with one heart, "Deliver us from evil."

I know nothing so magnificent as this Prayer.

The longer one studies it, like a rich and inexhaustible mine, the more precious and pure the ore that one brings up. He that can, not *say* this, but *pray* this, is and must be a Christian indeed.

The clause before us in this lecture is, "Deliver us from evil." Then evil is in the world. Who doubts it? All languages have a word for "evil;" all laws, police, army, navy, prisons, precautions, indicate there is in the world what is here called "evil." It has penetrated every recess; it has infected every spot; it is the plague-spot upon all that is in this world. God once made it so fair. Sin has so deeply infected it by its poison. It seems to me that every section of living creatures cry, what the Christian is taught by God's Holy Spirit to pray, "Deliver us from evil." The new-born babe, as if it felt the evil of the world into which it is come, indicates its very life by crying, as if it prayed, "Deliver us from evil." The old man, sinking under the weight of years, amid his

struggles to be rid of their pressure ; the prisoner in his cell, the maniac in his chains, the patient in his ward ; the sweat of toil upon the brow and the tear of sorrow in the eye ; the broken and the bruised in heart ; all join, whatever be their distinctions of rank, of place, pre-eminence, talent, or character, and all cry at once in the words of this universal litany, "Deliver us from evil." What is medicine ? Man trying to answer the cry of the sick, "Deliver me from evil." What is legislation ? The ruler striving by the inventions of his genius to introduce good, and to emancipate the subject from evil. What are the soldier, the sailor, war, battle, but the organs through which humanity, weak and weary, strives and struggles to emancipate and deliver itself from evil. What is laborious industry ? Man perceiving the approach of famine, and trying to deliver himself from it. What is the discontent of the poor, the restlessness of the rich, the ostentatious schemes of the clever, the prescriptions of the empiric, and the reason of

their popularity too; but man's yearning cry, "Deliver us from evil;" and his either attempting, or professing, or promising to accomplish what he wants. What are colleges, and schools, and academies, but our efforts to deliver ourselves from evil; and the expressions of our inmost heart that we are wrestling and struggling with it. The prayer is breathed in every sigh, it rises from every color and complexion of human life. From the snows of Lapland, from the burning sands of Senegal, from Moslem, Buddhist, Hindoo, and Christian; from palace and hut, from castle and subterranean mine, from the soldier in the camp, from the besieged in the citadel, from the sailor on the deck, from the merchant on the Exchange, there is felt or uttered one loud cry, "Deliver us from evil." What explains the card-table, the theatre, the ball-room, the romance, and the intense and absorbing devotedness to each or to all? Man trying to deaden his sense of the evil, and applying in his ignorance to broken cisterns in order to be

delivered from it. The miser prays to his gold, the student to his books, the heathen to his idols, the Christian to his Father, "Deliver us from evil." All creation too, says the apostle, feels itself bound by the presence and the pressure of an irresistible evil; for he says, "The creature itself was made subject to vanity; for the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God; because creation itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we all know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now; waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body." What are storms, volcanoes, earthquakes, but the throes of nature in her agony to be freed from evil? The evidence of an all-present evil is palpable. The cry of all, "Deliver us from evil," is the evidence of a fact, that evil is not the natural, or the normal, or the original condition of things. If evil was originally made by God; if evil be part and parcel

of the original terrestrial or celestial economy ; then to pray to be delivered from it is to pray to be disentangled from the very laws and necessities of our existence. But the very fact that even the creature in his blindness sees evil is something external to God's once beautiful and blessed world, is proof that evil was not originally made by God. Man refuses to settle down into the wretched Pantheistic notion of the German Rationalist, that evil is unripe good ; and that if you leave sin long enough in the sweet sunshine, it will ripen into virtue ; or if you leave it long enough and alone in the human heart, it will develope itself into love ; if you leave murder long enough in the world it will develope itself into brotherly kindness. German Rationalism must be surely in the very dregs of its folly when it can entertain such nonsense ; and still more, propagate and publish it. This world was made fair, beautiful, and happy. Man's heart was meant to bound for ever, never to be broken ; the eye was not made for tears,

nor had the heart originally a recess for sorrow. We were made to be happy ; to live for ever ; to be immortal, young ; growing in joy, in approximation to God, in happiness, for ever and ever. Every grey hair that steals amid the dark is evidence that sin has entered ; every wrinkle that comes on the face, every sense of feebleness in the limb, every tear that starts into the eye, every pang of which the frame, the sensitive frame, is conscious, are irresistible witnesses that something has gone wrong. I repeat what I have often said, if I believed that God made the world just as it is, and me just as I am, I should infer that the God that made it was a monster, a cruel and an unpropitiated tyrant. But God made all that is happy in it ; and the creature is the source of all that is wrong in it. And it is on this ground therefore that we conclude that this earth of ours is not to be destroyed ; and only what the devil and man have introduced into it are to be removed. Why should God destroy it ? He hates nothing that He has made. This

earth has in it lingering traces of its aboriginal beauty, so many, so varied, so charming, that one would regret the destruction of such a fair and beautiful orb. All that it seems to me to need is the banishment of sin, and the blessing of the great sin Forgiver; in order that its deserts may rejoice, and its solitary places blossom as the rose; and that this long lost, prodigal daughter, restored to the sisterhood of orbs, may be the most welcome, the fairest, the loveliest, and the most instructive of all the worlds that fill infinite space. We have spoken of this cry, "Deliver us from evil," as the cry of all intelligent, animate, and inanimate beings; evidencing their consciousness of an alien element, and their desire to be emancipated from it. But does not the cry, as expressed by all created, animate, and inanimate beings, suggest the idea and hope of a deliverer? If we cry for deliverance, it is on the ground that we have some hope or some lingering traditional recollection of a promise that there will be a deliver

ance. And most true it is, wherever man has believed in a God, he has believed in some shape in a coming deliverer. The very cry that rises from nature, and the very provisions so variously made to emancipate from evil, are evidences that in the depths of the creature's heart there are heard sounding the echoes, however mixed or diluted, of an ancient promise, "The woman's seed shall bruise the serpent's head;" and lingering in that heart too the fitful sunshine of a future fact, "The desire of all nations shall come to his temple;" and its latter glory shall be greater than its first in Paradise. But the people of God, as distinguished from all to whom we have alluded, lift up this prayer intelligently, in the name of Him that taught it, and addressed as it is to Him in whose fatherhood they have planted their faith, their affections, and their hopes; "Our Father, deliver us from evil." What the nations have addressed to gods many; what some have addressed to mammon; others to philosophy; the Christian feels, and

accepts as the adopted litany of all the children of God, and therefore he prays in hope, in love, and in faith, "Deliver us from evil." He is not, like the pantheist, regarding sin as unripe good; he will not be a Stoic, trying to be insensible to its presence; nor the Epicurean, determined to luxuriate in the practice of it; but the Christian; "Our Father, deliver us from evil," and not by evil; "and introduce us into everlasting good." And the Christian feels, what nature seems to indicate, that God is not the author of evil, because he asks him to be the deliverer from it. If God were the author of evil, to ask Him to deliver from it would be like asking Satan to cast out Satan. The very prayer implies that evil is the thing God hates, the element that God did not introduce; the pain that the Christian feels, and from which he prays to that Father to deliver him. In the Christian's prayer, "Our Father, deliver us," God is regarded as a personal Being; not as fate, or destiny, but as "Our Father;" not the crea

ture, but the Creator ; not law, but the Legislator ; and reinstated first in his relationship to him as our Father, he proceeds to ask of Him, for His Son's sake, deliverance from evil. But literally translated the word is, " Deliver us from the evil ;" the definite article is used. And this has made some suppose that the allusion here is to Satan, the Wicked One ; and that it means strictly and properly, " Deliver us from the Wicked One." But this is surely to limit the word, and to give it a restricted sense it ought not to have. Satan is not the great parent source of evil ; he is but the agent, the powerful and the restless agent only, in that which is evil. It seems rather to indicate that evil is the root, that much we call in our ignorance veil may not be evil at all, but the fruits and penalties of the evil into which we have fallen. It is, Deliver us, not from plague, from pestilence, from famine ; not from battle, murder, and sudden death ; but deliver us from that which is the root of them all, the teeming and prolific parent of whom these

are but the offspring ; the terrible sin of which these are the penalties and the punishments and the avengers. Sin is the monster evil ; these are but the spreading branches that result from it. If we are delivered from the evil, then these things which we call evils cease to be penalties inflicted by a Judge upon criminals, and become chastisements inflicted by a Father upon loving and beloved and redeemed children. And when we are thus delivered from the evil, we are delivered from that which gives to everything its bitterness. Pain, sickness, sorrow, grief, are all felt by every human being ; but Christians see in them, not the penalties of sin inflicted by an offended Judge, but the chastisements of a Parent, sent with the skill of a physician and the affection of a father, to sanctify, to subdue, to wean from the world, and win for immortality and glory. Sorrow, and sickness, and pain, are altered in their aspect to him altogether ; and the cup that seemed so bitter when first placed in our hand, we feel so sweet, because so sancti

fying, in the light of a Father's countenance. Thus delivered from the evil, we find the sting is taken from death. We die like the rest of mankind ; but the death of a Christian is as distinct and separate from the death of an unbeliever as light is from darkness, as holiness is from sin. In the case of the Christian it is the valley of the shadow of death through which he marches ; and the shadow that death casts upon the valley indicates that even death himself stands in the sunshine of an unsetting sun, or there would be no shadow there. But the unbeliever walks through a strange and untrodden desert, without sunshine to cheer him, or a shadow that He can construe as an evidence of hope. Death has a sting in his case ; it has no sting in ours. And therefore you pray to be delivered not from sickness nor from sorrow, but from that which is the root and the spring of both ; that is, sin. It is the fever of nature ; the explosive element throughout creation ; the root of war ; the teeming parent of plague, and pestilence, and

famine. Let us not, like Pharaoh, pray to be delivered from the affliction ; but, like the Christian, pray to be delivered from the evil that brings the affliction on the world.

In this prayer we pray as brethren. We do not say, "Deliver *me* from evil," but as it is indeed in every clause of this most beautiful and comprehensive prayer, "Deliver *us* from evil." We pray in the sequestered closet, or in the little sanctuary, but it is as members of a countless brotherhood. We pray, but our hearts are in unison with the hearts of all that believe ; and the note of each mingles with the universal symphony, and out of every sanctuary throughout the wide world met and assembled together there rises this cry, "Deliver us from evil." Successive ages from Abel onward to now have cried, "Deliver us from evil ;" contemporaneous generations, churches, and Christian communities, like concentric zones around the globe, lift up their eyes and hearts to Him who is the only Deliverer, and cry, "Deliver us from evil." And,

oh precious thought! the dead dust beneath the green sods of every church-yard, sleeping, not dead, sleeping in Christ, waiting for the day when His breath will quicken it and His hand will mould it into more than its pristine glory, magnificence, and beauty; cries also from the grave, "Deliver us from evil." And the saints that are before the altar, asking, "How long?" join the cry of heaven with the litany of earth, "Deliver, our Father, them from evil." And when we offer this prayer, we have the assured conviction in the fact that Christ taught it, that the same will also answer it. A time draws near, with greater speed than we fancy, when earth shall be emancipated from all its evil, when truth shall be the universal creed, when might shall be synonymous with right, when the grave shall yield up its every tenant, when death, denuded of his sting, shall disappear from the world itself, and the company of the redeemed shall come down like the new Jerusalem, or like a bride adorned for the bridegroom; and there

shall be a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. This prayer shall cease to be offered, when earth with all its tenantry has tasted the joyous answer to every clause; or rather this prayer will be translated into praise, and instead of being presented from broken hearts as a piercing and ceaseless litany, it will be lifted up from bounding hearts as a ceaseless and a joyous anthem; and they will say, "Our Father which art in heaven, thy name is hallowed in every heart, in every land, in every tongue. The kingdom is come into us, and we are now introduced into it, the universal kingdom, for the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdom of our God and of His Christ. Now Thy will is done in the height and in the depth, above, below, around, everywhere. Now our bread and our water are Amen; that is, made sure. Our sins are forgiven, we are now beyond the reach of temptation, we are delivered from all evil," and the *Thy* with which the prayer began, sweeping into the emptiness of

man, emerges again from the *us*, and is translated into the *Thine*: "for thine is the kingdom and the power, and the glory, for ever." It begins at the throne, it comes down to earth; it fills earth with its fulness, it returns to the throne again. It begins with "Thy kingdom, thy will, thy name;" the *Thy* empties itself into the *us*, "Give us, and forgive us, and lead us not, and deliver us," and then it ascends and is transformed again into the "*Thine* the kingdom, thine the power, thine the glory." Like the rainbow inverted, not as it is, it begins in the heaven, descends and sweeps in its beauty, transforming as it touches, the earth; returns to the heaven again, and is lost in the presence of Him in whom is fulness of joy, and pleasures for ever and for ever.

Track if you can the footprints of sin, trace if you can its misery to its primal root, watch and remember the hopes that sin has blasted, the fires it has kindled for the martyr, the dungeons it has built for the prisoner, the hearths it has

made desolate, the ties it has snapped, the homes it has embittered, the souls it has ruined, and when you have comprehended all its havoc, and witnessed all its trail from Paradise until now, I am sure you will cry with intenser feeling than ever you breathed the prayer before, "Deliver us from evil." Go, in the next place, and estimate the price paid for your deliverance, not gold, nor silver, nor any such corruptible thing, but the precious blood of a Lamb, without spot and without blemish. Go back and take a retrospect of the love from whose bosom a Saviour came, judge that agony and estimate that bloody sweat, follow Him to that garden where human nature in its terrible struggle gave utterance to that awful cry, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me," or to that cross, where it broke forth in still more terrible and overwhelming words, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Or follow him to the garden of Arimathæa, look into that grave and see where the Lord lay. And when you have learnt at what a price, at

what a sacrifice, by what tears and agonies, and sorrows, the more tremendous because associated with Deity, and the more awful because no human plumb-line can fathom them; when you see at what a price your souls are ransomed, pray, gazing upon that cross as you never gazed on it before, deliver us from evil." Go and see the beauty, and blessedness, and glory, from which sin or evil would drag you down; look into the depth and horrors of the hell, which God never made, but which evil only has prepared for them that are its victims; and let fools make a mock of sin, let German Rationalists call it unripe good, let empiricism prescribe its nostrums, let evil hearts of unbelief cry, "Peace, peace," but let your heart, inspired by another feeling, and your intellect illuminated by another light, pray as you never prayed it before, "O Lord, purge me as with hyssop, and I shall be clean; yea, wash thou me, and then I shall be whiter than snow." "Our Father, by the blood of sprinkling deliver me from the

curse of sin, by thy Holy Spirit deliver me from the power of sin; and hasten that blessed day when not one footprint of sin, either grave of the young or grave of the aged, shall be left visible below, and not one taint of sin shall be felt in a single heart; but this world, disinfected, purified, emancipated, restored, shall burst into a glory before which the glory of Eden shall look pale, and end with a Paradise grander, more magnificent and lasting, than the Paradise with which it dawned."

We pray that our hearts may be delivered from the curse of sin. This remedy lies in the cross of Christ, not in tears of ours or sufferings of others. We cannot pardon our own iniquities, but we can cry to Him who is able, and willing, and waiting to do so.

We implore deliverance also from the power of sin over us,—sin in our nature, not like loose stones on a road that may be easily swept away, but like the gnarled roots of a primæval forest, struck deep down.

There is evil in our thoughts. If you covet, you steal; if you hate, you murder. It is mercy to the sinner that his sins are sometimes suffered to break out, for then, as the lava that rushes down red-hot from the mountain cone indicates what is within the volcano, these incidental outbreaks show us what we are. There is evil in the world. Every conversation we hear, every newspaper we read, every breath we draw, are charged with infecting elements.

There is in each of us a besetting sin; against it we are specially to pray. Do you ever cry, "I am proud; humble me. I am greedy; relax my grasp, and open my heart. I am rich and proud; take away the wealth, or take away the swelling heart?"

What we need is confidence in our Father, and we shall be delivered from evil, even before that day when the everlasting rest shall overflow the weary world, and the Sabbath of a thousand years usher in the Sabbath that has no end.

## X.

## ADORATION.

“For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever.  
Amen.”—*MATT. vi. 13.*

THE more I have studied this Prayer, the more I have been struck with it as indirectly a creed containing all that a Christian believes, as directly the litany, or liturgy, of all that a Christian can offer of prayer and adoration. What is not the least beautiful feature is the filial spirit that pervades it. The defect that runs through the best and the most unexceptionable liturgies that have come down from the Nicene age, or from the age of the Reformation, or since (and there is nothing human that is perfect), is too much deprecatory pleading, too much seemingly of the aspect of a criminal deprecating the thunderbolt in the hand of the avenging Judge. In

this there is nothing of that sort. The child is in the presence of our Father; a sinful child, a guilty child, but still a child, seeking from a Father,—it may be an angry Father, but still his Father,—pardon and peace. The Christian is not a criminal in the dock deprecating the wrath of a judge, ready and rejoicing to consume him; but a Christian son in the presence of a Father seeking that blessing which the Father is more willing to give than the son is to ask. I like therefore that chord of filial love that runs through this liturgy, welds clause to clause, and gives beauty, force, and cohesion to all.

The last part of it is, "Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory." This is often regarded as a mere close to the prayer, destitute of any special meaning; just as many Christians add, "For Christ's sake," by way of a musical ending to their petitions, instead of urging it as the ground, the reason, the why and the wherefore, every petition should be heard, and answered exceeding abundantly above all we can

ask or think. This prayer begins with *Thy*; "Thy kingdom, thy will, thy name;" then it empties the fullness of thy into the emptiness of us, "Give us, forgive us, lead us not, deliver us." And after the full *Thy* has replenished the empty *us*, it ascends to the place whence it came, and ends in Thy again. "Thine the kingdom, thine the power, thine the glory." This prayer has its birth in heaven, its blessed effects upon earth, and its consummation in the place whence it came,—the presence of God. There seems almost a coincidence between this prayer which was taught us by David's Son, and that prayer which was breathed of old by David, when he said, "Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honor come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all. Now

therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name."

When all have prayed for and seen realized the blessings contained in this Prayer, there will be no more prayer: when the kingdom is come; when that name is hallowed; when that will is done; when all are forgiven, and all are fed, and all are safe from temptation, and all are delivered from evil; then the prayer that has been breathed from broken hearts and expressed with stammering lips in every century and part of Christendom, will rise into the jubilant swell of the everlasting anthem of praise and honor: "Thine, O Lord, is the kingdom; thine the power and glory; for ever and ever." It will rise and roll in waves of harmony among the numbers of the saved, out of many tongues, and nations, and kindreds; as the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, "Hallelujah! the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Thine is the kingdom, and Thou

reignest: Thine the power and Thine the glory of all." David says at the close of the 72nd Psalm, what is often not noticed when the Psalm is read or sang; "The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended." When were they ended? In the verse before he tells us: "And blessed be his glorious name for ever; let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen and Amen." Then, "the prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended." That is, now that the whole earth is filled with glory, and a loud Amen swells from every lip as it is felt in every heart. David's prayers are finished; and the mediatorial and intercessory prayers of David's Son will be finished also; for earth will be reunited to heaven, and this broken-off island earth, knit once more to the grand continent of glory, shall constitute one great home, one native land; the meeting place of all that have gone before, of all that remain, and of all that will be gathered home to the one flock and the one fold.

This concluding clause is preceded by "*For*;" "*For* thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen." What does this imply? It is a reason. Does not this suggest that a Christian's prayer is a reasonable prayer; and that he is warranted in assigning in the course of that prayer a reason, provided it be scriptural, why God should answer? If it be urged, this seems somewhat bold; it does so; but it is the very boldness that an apostle presses when he says, "Let us come with boldness to the throne of grace;" and in another place, "Having boldness of access." The word we have translated *boldness* means literally "freedom of speech and utterance." If one goes into the presence of a very great or eminent man one often feels a want of freedom of utterance; you do not feel at home, to use a common expression; you cannot speak out as you think, or as you would. But the apostle says, you need not have any such feeling when you go into God's presence. He is indeed the Holy, Holy, Holy One of Israel; but

He is also our Father; and we have a Great High Priest, an Elder Brother, in His presence. "Therefore," he says, "let us come boldly to the throne of grace: you may reason with God, when you ask these blessings, thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory?" The deepest reason why God should answer the petitions of His people is in Himself; not in us. We plead not our wants, our sins, our sufferings; but His might, His greatness, His glory. And when we take this idea with us, "*Thine* is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory," we learn this precious truth, that these blessings are indeed too great, too weighty, too many, for us to ask; but they are neither too great, nor too weighty, nor too many, for God to give. "For thine, O Lord, is the kingdom, thine the power, and thine the glory." Abraham of old pleaded this when he hung over doomed and devoted Sodom, and asked, "Wilt thou destroy the righteous with the wicked?" Moses pleaded for the safety of Israel on this very ground; "For thine own

name's sake." And the Christian, when he begins this Prayer, first refers to God's glory before he ventures to lay bare his own wants. The prayer does not begin, "Give us daily bread; forgive us our sins;" and then, "Thy name be hallowed; thy kingdom come." The Christian feels that he can wait till to-morrow before his wants are supplied; but that God must not wait a second before glory and honor, and the kingdom, and the power, be ascribed and given to Him. In other words, we seek first God's kingdom and His righteousness; and all other things are added unto us.

In my remarks on the first clause I intimated that there was at least the shadow of a Trinity in the three first petitions. "Hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done in earth as it is done in heaven." Here there seems the same recurring thought. "Thine is the kingdom." "Thy kingdom, O Lord, ruleth over all." "We will speak of the majesty of thy kingdom." Then, secondly, "Thine is the power;"

the power of the Son. "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth; go ye therefore, and preach the gospel to every creature." "And thine is the glory;" the glory of the Holy Spirit, who reveals what God is; God being glorified just in proportion as He is revealed. And therefore it is, "unto Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be the glory and the honor, the kingdom and the power; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end." But it has been asked by some, where and in what part of the Prayer do we find the intercession, the atoning and meritorious death, the name of Jesus Christ, the only Mediator? It is true—perfectly, literally, strictly true—that the greatest prayer, the most earnestly uttered, will not reach heaven except through Christ; and on the other hand, the least prayer that is uttered from the heart will reach heaven if presented in His name, and in the golden censer of His all-prevailing intercession. But, you ask, where is His name here? First, He framed it; every clause

is His utterance. His word is the key-note ; His thoughts are in it ; every clause is perfumed by the incense of His presence ; every petition is written in His precious blood. When it was offered upon earth, He was the speaker ; His presence, His name, His intercession, were all in it, and continue in it still. It looks like the mysterious ladder that Jacob saw in his dream stretching from heaven and resting on the earth. We first come down from the bosom of God, "Our Father ;" praying upon earth, "Give us bread ; forgive us our sins." We then rise again to the bosom of God, our Father, ending, "Thine is the kingdom ; thine the power ; thine the glory ;" and prayers and answers, like the angels that the Patriarch saw, descending and ascending, from "Our Father" to "Amen," upon Jesus, the Son of man. Therefore Christ is in every clause ; Christ in the cry, "Our Father ;" Christ in the petition, "Forgive us ;" Christ in the anthem-*peal*, "Thine the kingdom ; the power and the glory is thine."

Let us now weigh well the three elements that are here ascribed to God ; “ the kingdom, the power and the glory.” Each is a reason why prayer should be answered. “Thine is the kingdom.” All the resources of the kingdom are at Thy disposal ; all the contents of sovereignty, wider than sceptre can sway, are before Thee. Thine is royal abundance, Thine is royal munificence. Satan is a usurper ; Thine is the kingdom,—cast him out. Sin is an intrusion, an interpolation ; not made by God, thrust in by Satan ; Thine is the kingdom,—disinfect the world of it. Thine, not Satan’s is the kingdom. His it is, to a great extent in present possession ; but it is the possession of the usurper, not the right of the lawful king and monarch. And therefore let the Roman, listening to Jesus as He uttered these words, “Thine is the kingdom,” thinking of his victorious eagles, and saying in his heart, “Cæsar’s is the kingdom,” learn he is wrong ; “For thine, O Lord, is the kingdom.” Let the Herodian who stood by,

and believed that Herod's was the kingdom, and gave the Idumæan all the praise, the glory, and the honor, while God smote him, learn, not Herod's, but thine is the kingdom." These were puppets of a day; "thine is the kingdom for ever." Let the modern Romanist ascribe the kingdom to him he calls in his ignorance the Vicar of Christ; let him paint him with his tiara as king of heaven, and king of earth, and king of hell. He is a usurper; for God's is the kingdom. Let the materialist parcel earth into kingdoms, and assign the material laws by which they are governed; not theirs but God's is the kingdom. Let avarice and ambition give the kingdom to their respective idols; they are doomed to be destroyed. And all eternity will attest, what all Christians have proclaimed, "Thine, O Lord, is the kingdom." And louder than all, rising above all, from countless holy hearts and from countless happy homes, will be this ascription, "Thou art the blessed and the only Potentate; Thine is the greatness, Thine the

power, and Thine the glory ; all things are of Thee and all things come of Thee ; and we will cast our crowns before Thee ; and view the earth as Thy footstool and heaven as Thy throne ; and hail and crown Thee as King and Lord of all."

"Thine," also, it is added, "is the power." How expressive is that. Power equal to the width of His royal possessions. To have property, but not have the power to make use of it, is a very painful state. But to have property wide as infinitude, lasting as eternity ; and to have the power that can give it and distribute it when, where, and how one pleases ; that indeed is power. "Thine is the power to give the largest blessing we have asked ; Thine is the power to make a few barley loaves to be a festal entertainment ; Thine is the power to forgive sins ; Thine is the power to lead not into temptation ; Thine is the power to deliver us from evil ; Thine is the power to give us daily bread. Let Satan intrench himself as he may ; Thine is the power to dislodge him. Let sin spread its poison as it

may ; Thine is the power to neutralize and to cast it out. Let sorrow wring the heart, and give birth to tears ; Thine is the power to heal, to stanch, and to remove it." We speak of the powers that be : these are but reflections of His. We speak of the powers of nature : these are but evidences of His presence. We speak of the power of statesmen, of the power of money, of the power of influence : these are but the crochets of a day ; for power belongeth unto God. "Unto thee, O Lord, also belongeth mercy ; Thine is the power to raise the dead, Thine the power to change the living ; Thine the power to cast out death ; Thine the power to bind Satan for a thousand years ; Thine the power to bring down from heaven the new Jerusalem like a bride adorned for the bridegroom, and to bring in the reign of everlasting and uninterrupted peace."

"And thine" also, it is added, "is the glory." The kingdom is Thine : all within its infinite and boundless domain are the riches on which Thou

art enthroned. The power is Thine ; Thou hast jurisdiction over all ; power to wield, to work, to employ, to give, to make use of all. But of this kingdom, wide as space, of these trophies that Thy power achieves, great as omnipotence, the glory is not man's ; the glory is entirely Thine : the glory of being what Thou art, as " I am," the First and the Last ; the glory of giving where there is no claim ; the glory of forgiving where there is no merit ; the glory of delivering where there is no strength ; the glory of preserving where there is ceaseless liability to fall. Thine is the glory of creation. Once it was the very mirror of God ; it is now broken into fragments, and each fragment dimmed and stained by the breath of sin. And yet there remain, in this fallen and dismantled earth, traces enough of its aboriginal grandeur to let us feel it was a God that made it ; havoc and wreck enough of man's sin to let us feel what a terrible thing sin is. But whatever beauty lingers in its sequestered nooks ; whatever fragrance is exhaled from

its loveliest flowers ; whatever brilliancy is in the stars, the flowers of the sky ; whatever beauty is in the flowers, the stars of the earth ; these set forth Thy glory : Thy smiles gave to every blossom its tints : Thy breath gave to every flower its fragrance. All that is in the earth, and all that is in the sea, and all that is in the heaven, and all that lingers and remains of beauty, glory, and excellence, reflects Thyself ! for “ the heavens declare Thy glory ; the firmament showeth forth thy handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge.” That 19th Psalm is often very much mistaken. It is in our version, “ There is no speech nor language ; the voice of the stars and of the firmament, giving God the glory, is not heard.” But this is not the translation. These words are no doubt true, “ There is no speech nor language in which their voice is not heard.” But in the original it is far more eloquent : “ The heavens declare the glory of God ; and the firmament showeth his handiwork. Day

unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night teacheth knowledge." But as if correcting himself, he says, "No, there is no speech, there is no language; their voice is not heard; yet their line is gone out through all the ends of the earth;" their silence is their expressive eloquence.

And if his be the glory of creation, His, in the next place, is the glory of providence. He restrains what He does not approve, He overrules what he must condemn. We sometimes thought when the boom of the cannon sounded in many a sorrowing heart, borne on the eastern gale from Sebastopol, and we heard of the brave that found there a gory grave; we sometimes thought, "Surely God has forgotten the earth; and given up men to destroy one another." But we judged rashly; God was in the Crimea and in India as He is in any Christian congregation; He was watching all that was there with an eye as omniscient, with a heart as rich in sympathy, as in the midst of this great

metropolis and in the holy flocks that assemble in it. And out of all that transpired in the distant East you may see emerging the fulfilment of ancient prophecies, salvation to countless thousands, glory to His name, and a benefit and a blessing to mankind. It was through a cross that salvation came ; it is still by a baptism of tears that the world's progress is promoted and secured. It is true of Christians, it is true of all in one sense, "Through much tribulation we must pass on to a better, a holier, and a happier state." His then is the glory of providence ; and where glory is not given Him as a free offering, it is exacted as a reluctant sacrifice. Pharaoh glorifies God just as the Apostle Paul does. Pharaoh gives it as a reluctant sacrifice ; Paul gives it up as a joyous and a free-will offering. But above all, Thine, O Lord, is the glory of redeeming love. Creation sets forth His glory ; creation as it will be, will reflect it in yet brighter rays. Providence sets forth His glory ; for what is history ? Prophecy fulfilled. What is

prophecy? History stretching into the future. What are both? God in the world. But in a higher sense still redemption reflects His glory. There He is seen to be just while He justifies the sinner that believes. Whatever good is experienced in your life, whatever sense of pardon is tasted in your heart, whatever hope you are free to cherish for the future, whatever communion you have with God, whatever affection you feel as a child to Him you recognise as a Father; whatever has been done for you in the past, whatever is promised to you in the future; all, all, all give the undivided glory to God; the good, the joy, the blessing, only to you. And a day comes when this earth, like a precious gem, shall be engraven with the name and reflect only the glory of God; when all its redeemed ones, a mighty company, shall cast their crowns before the Lamb, and say, "Not unto us, but unto thy name, O Lord, be the glory." A day comes when all prayers shall cease, for there shall be no wants; and all praise shall increase, for there

shall be nothing but joys to thank God for ; and a mighty multitude, whom no man can number, saying, "Salvation unto our God and to the Lamb for ever and ever." And then from angels in heaven, witnessing that glorious phenomenon, a redeemed church ; and from earth below, delivered from its groans, its travail, and its agony, shall be heard the loud and the jubilant "Amen ;" "So be it." "The faithful and the true Witness, Christ Jesus, has commenced and closed the wondrous story ;" and angels that sang at His birth, "Glory to God in the highest ; on earth peace, and good will towards man ;" shall sing when He is crowned Lord of all, "Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever."

Have we learned to pray the Lord's Prayer ? A poor monk can repeat his hundred Paternosters a day ; but without offering one single prayer. A true Christian can repeat a single clause, "Deliver us from evil," in the true spirit, and solemnity, and fervour of prayer. Have you felt your wants, your sins, your temptations, your

perils? and have you learned that Christ alone is able to deliver from them all? He, blessed thought! has satisfied to the uttermost; therefore He can save sinners to the uttermost also. His blood upon a sinner's head is the heaviest judgment; His blood upon a sinner's heart is the greatest mercy, the richest blessing. And oh surely, surely that precious blood that satisfied the justice of God may well satisfy and appease all the accusations of your conscience, and give you peace, even the peace that passeth understanding. It matters not who are our accusers if Christ be our Advocate. He knows not himself as he ought who does not see his need of Christ; and he does not value Christ as he ought who does not see the sufficiency of Christ. There is nothing in this prayer that He will give for our sakes; there is nothing in it that He will withhold for Christ's sake. Have you thus prayed? Have you thus presented it? And if we cannot yet pray it as we would, we can at least preface

it with the petition of the disciples, "Lord, teach us to pray."

Thine, not Cæsar's, not Herod's, not chance's, is the kingdom. God reigns, and all on earth are His servants, or His subjects, or His sons.

Thine is the power, equal to the forgiveness of the greatest sin, the fulfilment of the largest promise, the accomplishment of the richest good.

Thine, not man's, not the priest's, not the creature's, is the glory.

*THE END.*





A LIST OF  
BOOKS

ISSUED BY

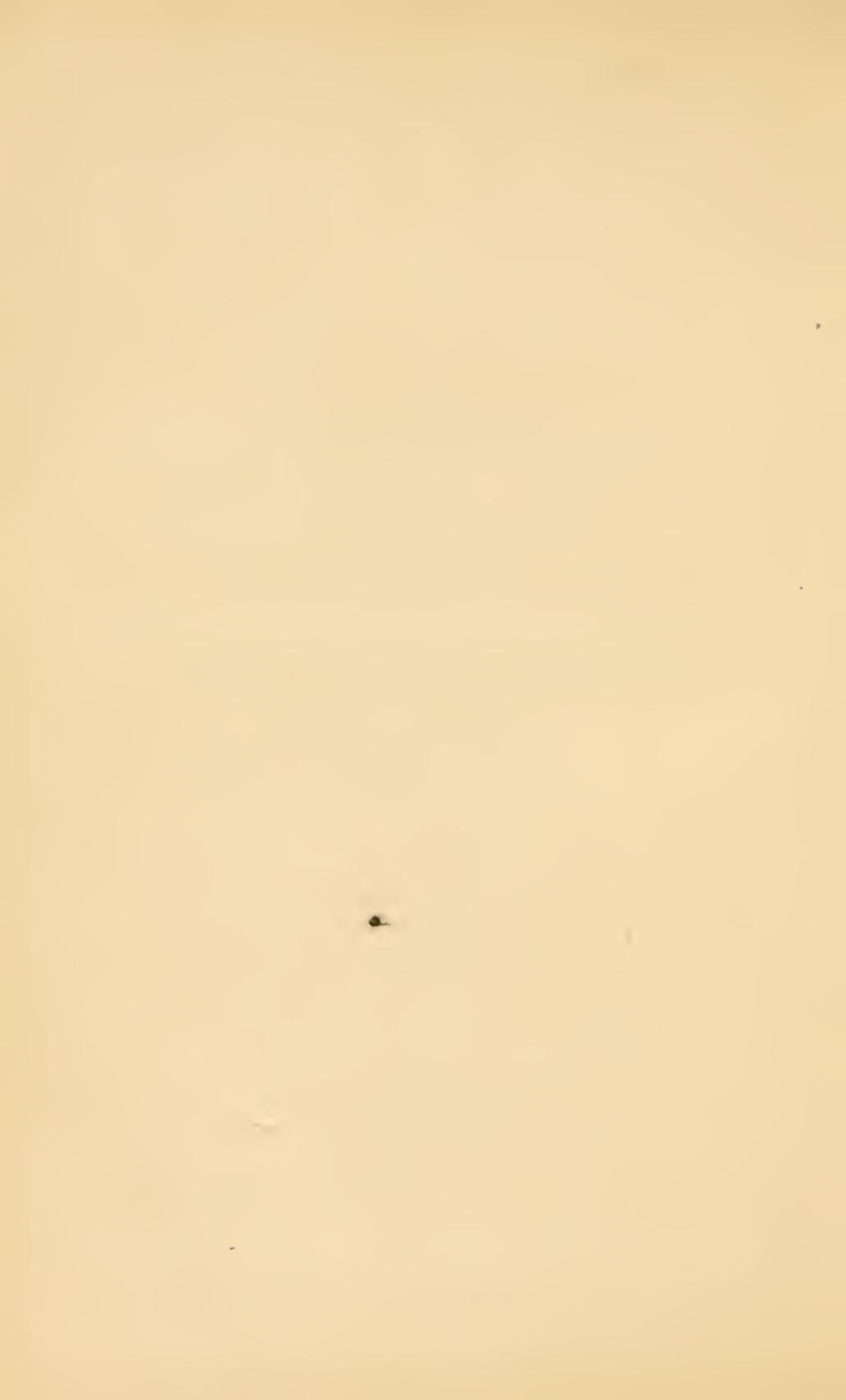
**CARLETON, PUBLISHER,**

(LATE RUDD & CARLETON,)

413 Broadway,

NEW YORK.







## NEW BOOKS

And New Editions Recently Issued by

**CARLETON, PUBLISHER,**

(LATE RUDD & CARLETON.)

418 BROADWAY, NEW YORK.



N.B.—THE PUBLISHER, upon receipt of the price in advance, will send any of the following Books, by mail, POSTAGE FREE, to any part of the United States. This convenient and very safe mode may be adopted when the neighboring Book-sellers are not supplied with the desired work. State name and address in full.



### **The Cloister and the Hearth.**

A magnificent new historical novel, by Charles Reade, author of "Peg Woffington," "Christie Johnstone," etc., etc., \$1.25.

### **A Book about Doctors.**

An amusing, entertaining, and gossipy volume about the medical profession—with many anecdotes. From English ed., \$1.50.

### **Rutledge.**

A powerful new American novel, by an unknown author, \$1.25.

### **The Sutherlands.**

The new novel by the popular author of "Rutledge," \$1.25.

### **The Habits of Good Society.**

A hand-book for ladies and gentlemen. Best, wittiest, most entertaining work on taste and good manners ever printed, \$1.25.

### **The Great Tribulation.**

Or, Things coming on the earth, by Rev. John Cumming, D.D., author "Apocalyptic Sketches," etc., two series, each \$1.00.

### **The Great Preparation.**

Or, Redemption draweth nigh, by Rev. John Cumming, D.D., author "The Great Tribulation," etc., two series, each \$1.00.

### **Teach us to Pray.**

A new devotional work on The Lord's Prayer, by Rev. John Cumming, D.D., author "The Great Tribulation," etc., \$1.00.

**Love (L'Amour).**

A remarkable and celebrated volume on Love, translated from the French of M. J. Michelet, by Dr. J. W. Palmer, \$1.00.

**Woman (La Femme).**

A continuation of "Love (L'Amour)," by same author, \$1.00.

**The Sea (La Mer).**

New work by Michelet, author "Love" and "Woman," \$1.00.

**The Moral History of Women.**

Companion to Michelet's "L'Amour," from the French, \$1.00.

**Mother Goose for Grown Folks.**

A *brochure* of humorous and satirical rhymes for old folks, based upon the famous "Mother Goose Melodies," illustrated, 75 cts.

**The Adventures of Verdant Green.**

A rollicking humorous novel of English College life and experiences at Oxford University, with nearly 200 illus., \$1.00.

**The Old Merchants of New York.**

Being entertaining reminiscences and recollections of ancient mercantile New York City, by "Walter Barrett, clerk," \$1.50.

**The Culprit Fay.**

Joseph Rodman Drake's faery poem, elegantly printed, 50 cts.

**Doctor Antonio.**

One of the very best love-tales of Italian life ever published, by G. Ruffini, author of "Lorenzo Benoni," etc., etc., \$1.25.

**Lavinia.**

A new love-story, by the author of "Doctor Antonio," \$1.25.

**Dear Experience.**

An amusing Parisian novel, by author "Doctor Antonio," \$1.00.

**The Life of Alexander Von Humboldt.**

A new and popular biography of this *savant*, including his travels and labors, with an introduction by Bayard Taylor, \$1.25.

**The Private Correspondence of Von Humboldt**

With Varnhagen Von Ense and other European celebrities, \$1.25.

**Artemus Ward.**

The best writings of this humorous author—illustrations, \$1.00.

**Beatrice Cenci.**

An historical novel by F. D. Guerrazzi, from the Italian, \$1.25.

**Isabella Orsini.**

An historical novel by the author of "Beatrice Cenci," \$1.25.

**The Spirit of Hebrew Poetry.**

A new theological work by Isaac Taylor, author "History of Enthusiasm," etc.—introduction by Wm. Adams D.D., \$2.00.

**Cesar Birotteau.**

The first of a series of selections from the best French novels of Honore de Balzac. Translated from the latest Paris editions by O. W. Wight and Frank B. Goodrich ("Dick Tinto"), \$1.00.

**Petty Annoyances of Married Life.**

The second of the series of Balzac's best French novels, \$1.00.

**The Alchemist.**

The third of the series of Balzac's best French novels, \$1.00.

**Eugenie Grandet.**

The fourth of the series of Balzac's best French novels, \$1.00.

**The National School for the Soldier.**

An elementary work for the soldier; teaching by questions and answers, thorough military tactics, by Capt. Van Ness, 50 cts.

**The Partisan Leader.**

The notorious Disunion novel, published at the South many years ago—then suppressed—now reprinted, 2 vols. in 1, \$1.00.

**A Woman's thoughts about Women.**

A new and one of her best works, by Miss Mulock, author of "John Halifax, Gentleman," "A Life for a Life," etc., \$1.00.

**Ballad of Babie Bell.**

Together with other poems by Thomas Bailey Aldrich, 75 cts.

**The Course of True Love**

Never did run smooth, a poem by Thomas B. Aldrich, 50 cts.

**Poems of a Year.**

By Thomas B. Aldrich, author of "Babie Bell," &c., 75 cts.

**Curiosities of Natural History.**

An entertaining and gossiping volume on beasts, birds, and fishes, by F. T. Buckland; two series, ea. sold separately, \$1.25.

**The Diamond Wedding.**

And other miscellaneous poems, by Edmund C. Stedman, 75 cts.

**The Prince's Ball.**

A satirical poem by E. C. Stedman, with illustrations, 50 cts.

**A Life of Hugh Miller.**

Author of "Testimony of the Rocks," &c., new edition, \$1.25.

**Erie; or, Little by Little.**

A capital tale of English school-life, by F. W. Farrar, \$1.00.

**Lola Montez.**

Her lectures and autobiography, steel portrait, new ed., \$1.25.

**Spots on the Sun.**

Or; The Plumb-Line papers, by Rev. T. M. Hopkins, \$1.00

**Tom Tiddler's Ground.**

Charles Dickens's Christmas Story for 1861, paper cover, 25 cts.

**National Hymns.**

An essay by Richard Grant White. 8vo. embellished, \$1.00.

**George Brimley.**

Literary essays reprinted from the British Quarterlies, \$1.25.

**The Kelly's and the O'Kelly's.**

Novel by Anthony Trollope, author of "Doctor Thorne," \$1.25.

**General Nathaniel Lyon.**

The life and political writings of this patriot soldier, \$1.00.

**Twenty Years Around the World.**

A volume of travel by John G. Vassar, Poughkeepsie, \$2.50.

**Philip Thaxter.**

A new American novel, one vol. 12mo., cloth bound, \$1.00.

**Nothing to Wear.**

A satirical poem by Wm. A. Butler, with illustrations, 50 cts.

**Political History of New York.**

By Jabez B. Hammond, LL.D., 3 vols. steel portraits, \$6.00.

**Vernon Grove.**

A novel by Mrs. Caroline H. Glover, Charleston, S. C., \$1.00.

**The Book of Chess Literature.**

A complete Encyclopædia of this subject, by D. W. Fiske, \$1.50.

**From Hayt me to Hopping.**

A novel by the author of "Our Farm of Four Acres," \$1.00.

**Miles Standish, Illustrated.**

Longfellow's poem with illustrations by J. W. Ehninger, \$6.00.

**The Afternoon of Unmarried Life.**

An interesting theme admirably treated, new edition, \$1.25.

**Fast Day Sermons**

Of 1861, the best Sermons by the prominent Divines, \$1.25.

**A Guide to Washington.**

A complete hand-book for the National Capitol, illus., \$1.00.

**Doesticks' Letters.**

The original letters of this great humorist, illustrated, \$1.25.

**Plu-ri-bus-tah.**

A comic history of America, by "Doesticks," illus., \$1.25.

**The Elephant Club.**

A humorous view of club-life, by "Doesticks," illus., \$1.25.

**The Witches of New York.**

Comic adventures among fortune tellers, by "Doesticks," \$1.25.

- Fort Lafayette.**
- A novel by the Hon. Benjamin Wood of New York, \$1.00.
- The Mexican Papers.**
- In five separate parts; by Edward E. Dunbar, per set, \$1.00.
- Debt and Grace.**
- The Doctrine of a Future Life by Rev. C. F. Hudson, \$1.25.
- Thessalonica.**
- Or; the model church, by H. L. Hastings, 12mo., 75 cts.
- Poems by E. G. Holland.**
- Niagara, and other poems; in blue and gold binding, 75 cts.
- Wild Southern Scenes.**
- A tale, by the author of "Wild Western Scenes," \$1.25.
- Sybelle**
- And other poems by L——, blue and gold binding, 75 cts.
- The Spuytenduyvil Chronicle.**
- A novel of fashionable life and society in New York, 75 cts.
- Ballads of the War.**
- A collection of poems for 1861, by George W. Hewes, 75 cts.
- Hartley Norman.**
- A new and striking American novel; one large 12mo., \$1.25.
- The Vagabond.**
- Sketches on literature, art, and society, by Adam Badeau, \$1.00.
- Emeline Sherman Smith.**
- A collection of selected poems, large octavo, elegant, \$2.00.
- Edgar Poe and his Critics.**
- A literary critique by Mrs. Sarah Helen Whitman, 75 cts.
- The New and the Old.**
- Sketches in California and India, by Dr. J. W. Palmer, \$1.25.
- Up and Down the Irrawaddi.**
- Adventures in the Burman Empire, by J. W. Palmer, \$1.00.
- Sarah Gould.**
- A volume of miscellaneous poems, in blue and gold, 75 cts.
- Cosmogony;**
- Or, the mysteries of creation, by Thomas A. Davies, \$1.50.
- An Answer to Hugh Miller**
- And other kindred geologists, by Thomas A. Davies, \$1.25.
- Walter Ashwood.**
- A novel by "Palu Siogvolk," author of "Schediasms," \$1.00.
- Southwold.**
- A new society novel by Mrs. Lillie Devereux Umsted, \$1.00.

- Brown's Carpenter's Assistant.**  
A practical work on architecture, with plans, large 4to., \$5.00.
- Two Ways to Wedlock.**  
A novelette reprinted from the N. Y. Home Journal, \$1.00.
- A Tribute to Kane,**  
And other poems, by Geo. W. Chapman, Milwaukee, 75 cts.
- Ethel's Love Life.**  
A love-story by Mrs. Margaret J. M. Sweat, Portland, \$1.00.
- Recollections of the Revolution.**  
A private journal and diary of 1776, by Sidney Barclay, \$1.00.
- Poems by Flash.**  
A collection of poems by Henry L. Flash, Mobile, 75 cts.
- Romance of a Poor Young Man.**  
A capital novel from the French of Octave Feuillet, \$1.00.
- A New Monetary System.**  
Or; rights of labor and property, by Edward Kellogg, \$1.00.
- Wa-Wa-Wanda.**  
A legend of old Orange County, New York, in verse, 75 cts.
- Flirtation**  
And what comes of it. A play, by Frank B. Goodrich, 25 cts.
- Blanche.**  
A legend in verse, by Sarah W. Brooks, Providence, 50 cts.
- Husband vs. Wife.**  
A satirical poem, by Henry Clapp, Jr., illus. by Hoppin, 60 cts.
- Roumania.**  
Travels in Eastern Europe by J. O. Noyes, illustrated, \$1.50.
- The Christmas Tree.**  
A volume of miscellany for the young, with illustrations, 75 cts.
- The Captive Nightingale.**  
A charming little book for children, many illustrations, 75 cts.
- Sunshine through the Clouds.**  
Comprising stories for juveniles, beautifully illustrated, 75 cts.
- Abraham Lincoln.**  
A popular life of Lincoln and Hamlin, pamphlet, 25 cts.
- John C. Fremont.**  
A popular life of Fremont and Dayton, pamphlet, 25 cts.
- James Buchanan.**  
A popular life of Buchanan and Breckenridge, pamphlet, 25 cts.
- John Bell.**  
A popular life of Bell and Everett, pamphlet covers, 25 cts.











Princeton Theological Seminary-Speer Library



1 1012 01021 5699

