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Lord's prayer

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS
AND
THE LORD'S PRAYER.

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THE
TEN COMMANDMENTS
AND
THE LORD'S PRAYER

A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY

BY ✓
FERDINAND S. SCHENCK, D.D.

*Professor of Practical Theology, Theological Seminary of the Reformed
(Dutch) Church in America, New Brunswick, New Jersey*



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PREFACE TO THE NEW EDITION.

A great philosopher has said that the mind must be filled with awe when one contemplates either the universe or the moral law. The psalmist saw the glory of God alike in the heavens and in the law. Given in the early dawn of civilization, this law of the Ten Commandments has not been left behind in the advance of the race, but still stands far ahead, beckoning on the centuries. Its perfection is a sufficient evidence of its Divine origin. Each commandment is an authoritative statement of a fundamental principle of human nature.

The Lord's Prayer voices forth the response of human nature as moved by the Divine Savior; it recognizes its deep need and lofty possibilities.

The Law and the Prayer together describe the individual man in God's sight, the grandeur and loneliness of personality. But they are not content with God and the individual man; there must be other men. And thus they provide for the ideal Society, when all men shall regard God as their Father and their fellow men as brothers.

I send forth this book with the great design of helping men to see the glory of God and our own nobility, as set forth in this Law and Prayer of our being.

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THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

THE LAW-GIVER.

“And God spake all these words, saying: I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.”—Ex. 20: 1,2.

There is a law by which the earth revolves, and light follows darkness. There is a law by which the earth sweeps round the sun, and the seasons follow each other in endless procession; spring with its flowers, summer with its harvests, autumn with its fruits, and winter with its snows. There is a law by which fishes swim in the sea, birds fly in the air, and the lion roams through the forest; by which man goes forth to his labor with the morning light and returns to his rest with the evening shades. Wherever we look, over our heads, beneath our feet, on every side, within our bodies, there is the working of law. Nature teaches us that her mysterious force is regulated and so manifests an established order of events; that she produces the harmony of the whole and the well-being of each part by obedience to law. We can imagine a particular thing casting off the law of its being, but only to its own ruin. A stone flies from the earth and is consumed; a plant refuses the rain and languishes; an animal resists the craving of appetite and starves. We can imagine a combined breaking of the law—an organized rebellion—and the earth throws off the power of the sun and rushes out into space, only to find the chill darkness of death. The only conceivable way of escape from the evils of such rebellion would be by a restoration to obedience.

The highest well-being of nature in whole or in any particular part can be attained only by operation of law. The law does not arise from this well-being, for it is its source. There can be only one source of law, the will of the Law-giver. All nature is as Mount Sinai, the throne of the Law-giver. All law being the expression of His will is the manifestation of His character, and with reference to the creature subject to it is the description of its highest possible well-being, the ideal of God for it. All the well-being we can see in nature comes through the operation of law whose source is God's good will.

Let us recognize at the beginning of our study of the Ten Commandments that this law has its source in God. It comes to us from His will whose authority is beyond question and our obligation to obey is complete.

We will be able to see with various degrees of clearness, according to the powers of soul which God has bestowed upon us and according to the attention we give to the subject, that the law prescribes a "general fitness of things," that it aims to promote the general happiness, and that it describes the nature of man according to the design of his Creator, so setting forth the unchanging principles of his being. But our obligation to obey could never be complete if it rested upon our seeing these things, for the most gifted of mankind are incompetent to judge of the "general fitness of things," have at best a limited view of the general good, and have not yet fully discovered all the unchanging principles of our being. Neither could these things in themselves, if fully seen, bind the conscience; to awaken the "I ought not" of conscience against an aroused

desire, there is needed further the voice of God. If we weigh the general good or even an acknowledged principle of our nature against an intense desire, the act is one of the judgment, and the desire will have a controlling influence upon it; but at the bar of conscience the voice of God saying, "Thou shalt not," concludes the case, and desire can have no standing.

When, however, we regard the unchanging principles of our nature as wrought into the constitution of the creature by the Creator, they become the expression of his will and so a law binding upon the conscience. A godless evolution can never devise a law binding on the conscience, but an evolution searching for the Creator finds in these principles of man's nature the voice of God. These principles and the Ten Commandments coming from the same source confirm and illustrate each other. The giving of the law at Sinai is not to be regarded therefore as the institution of a new law, only as the publication in a new way of the original law of our being. The terrible circumstances attending its issuing, and the fact that it is issued largely in a prohibitory form, indicate that it is issued to a race who have already broken, and whose strong tendency is to continue to break, the unchanging principles of their being—to fall from the ideal of God. Their fall gives the reason for the issuing of the law. God does not lower his ideal for the race, but since they have lost sight of it, He sets it before them in a new and striking form. He chooses a time in the history of the race for issuing his law which precludes all thought of its having a human origin. The world would never look for its highest code of religion and morals to the Egyptian

civilization, nor to a race of slaves. He stamps upon it the seal of His work, perfection.

We shall see as we pursue our study that each command states a great principle of our nature; that highest manliness can only be attained in recognizing and following this principle. The highest civilization the world has yet reached has not gone beyond, has not even attained to the carrying out of these principles. No reason has been discovered for setting aside a single command as unworthy of God or man. Neither is there any prospect that man will ever become conscious, during this earthly stage of his existence, of a principle of his being which is not covered by the law of God, nor of a "fitness of things" not provided for, nor of a way of securing happiness other than obedience to it.

The Ten Commandments are the authentic statements by the Creator of the great general principles of the constitution of man and of human society, since they are the statutes issued by the Supreme Law-giver. The voice teaching man of his own nature and relationships has the tone of rightful authority, is the voice of God.

Since "God spake all these words" we find in them the law of our being. The conscience hears his voice, acknowledges his rightful authority and bows before him.

There is great need of the "I ought" power being developed in our nature so that it controls our lives; a need at least as great in this advanced age and in rich America as it was in that early age and in the wilderness of Sinai. To be swayed not by impulse, nor by intense desire, nor by aroused willfulness, but by a sense of obligation to God, insures a manhood which is

a success in itself. What better start in life can the young have than a firm determination to obey God? Can there be a better guide in life, in the perplexities of society, of business or of politics, than this same principle of obedience to God? Will not the character of steadfast obedience to God be the only kind of character we will care to take with us when we pass beyond this life? We may well be very diligent in our study of the Ten Commandments, with the strong purpose to make them the rule of our lives.

While this law coming from God binds the conscience, it at the same time secures true liberty of conscience. Nothing can bind the conscience beyond or contrary to this law. It is the comprehensive and only law of the conscience. All moral and religious duties are covered by it; there can be none beyond or contrary to it. It provides for obedience to State and Church and regard for public opinion, and sets limits also to such regard and obedience. Our obligation to obey human enactments rests upon this law. They therefore must never be contrary to it. We are not called to obey but rather to resist the usurpations of men, in whatever position and however well meaning, who would make that to be sin which God does not forbid, and that obligatory which God does not command. The spirit of obeying God rather than man has led martyrs to the stake and patriots to the battle-field, and to it we are largely indebted for the civil and religious liberty we possess in this land of the free.

This law coming from God repels many of the assaults of infidelity upon the Bible. Infidelity finds it impossible to account for the existence of this law in the

Bible. It is too absurd to claim that this consummate moral and religious code arose from the religious and moral condition of the race at that time. The law, and the life of Jesus Christ, perfect according to the law, these are in the Bible—its exclusive possession—and all the criticisms and witticisms of infidels fall from them as arrows shot against a fortress, broken, and leaving no mark. Besides, infidelity is forced to honor the moral law in making it its standard of criticism. Much of its fault-finding of lives and measures is an unintended tribute to the law of God. They forget that the Bible, like any historical record, does not commend all it records; but it does contain the highest standard of judgment, the revealed will of God, before which they instinctively bow. Their criticism of the civil law, that it upheld polygamy, established slavery, inflicted the death-penalty for many offenses, is virtually a comparison of it with the moral law, and shows only their own lack of discrimination as to the different realms of these laws. The civil law was to be enforced by the nation itself, and was evidently designed for the development of the nation, and was the best possible that could be self-applied by a low condition to elevate to a higher. The result shows this. Only about a dozen offenses were punishable by death, a far less number than a few years ago were sanctioned by the laws of England, when she had left the barbarous stage already far behind. Slavery and polygamy were already existing institutions, and were so restricted by the civil law that at the time of Christ there were few if any polygamous or slaveholding Jews in Palestine. The civil law was the best possible law for that nation in

that day, and was wisely designed to lift up towards the moral law.

Infidelity has a great deal to say concerning the ceremonial law, and especially concerning the sacrificial element in it. They forget that they look upon it from a Christian condition where no bloody sacrifices are known, a condition that has grown out of that same ceremonial law, and is a fulfilment of it. If they would look at it from the stand-point of that day and of surrounding religions, they would see that God restricted sacrifices to one place, and prescribed such regulations as gave them deep meaning. The ceremonial law taught of the holiness of God and of a coming Savior, and was designed to provide for restored obedience to the moral law. In condemning some of the terrible events in the Bible as immoral, infidelity forgets that it is within the province of a Law-giver to define and provide for the infliction of the penalty for the disobedience of the law, and so these terrible events set forth the importance of the moral law as the law of man's being.

The fact that this law comes from God, carries with it another lesson and one of the utmost importance to us—*His authority runs through all the divisions of the law.* This one law is arranged in ten sections, and these sections are grouped into two classes. Whatever may be said of the relative importance of each table or of each commandment in itself, the truth should be kept in mind that the authority of God is the same in all.

There is a tendency to separate the two tables. Some men seem to rely upon observing the first table without much regard to the second, and others claim to

keep the second while they ignore the first. No such separation can be made. Both must be fully observed or the whole law is broken. We cannot be devoted to God, correct in matters of faith and zealous in his worship, while we neglect charity of feeling, word and act toward our neighbor. If God is our Father, man is our brother. Neither can we truly love our neighbor while we neglect God, for we cannot keep any part of the law without supreme reverence for Him who commands. Neither can we truly love our neighbor without recognizing that we are both and equally creatures of God. If man is our brother, it is because God is our Father. Duties to man flow from and are a part of duties to God. No worship of God will satisfy his law—not even the first table, which is lacking in love to our neighbor; and no love to our neighbor will satisfy God's law—not even the second table, which is lacking in love to Him. Much that goes under the names of piety and morality in our day is seen at a glance to be terribly defective in the light of this self-evident principle.

There is a tendency also to separate the commandments, and to claim virtue for keeping some while we make light of breaking others. One says: "I sometimes swear, when excited, but no man ever could charge me with dishonesty." Another says: "I do not make a practice of observing the Sabbath, but all men will tell you that my word can be relied upon." Now the violation of one precept is not an actual violation of another, but it is the breaking of the whole law in that it sets aside the authority of God. He who breaks one command disregards the authority of God. If he keeps other commandments, it must be from other considera-

tions. If it was the authority of God which kept him from stealing or lying, that same authority would restrain him from swearing or Sabbath-breaking. Thus by breaking one commandment he shows he has the spirit of breaking them all, for he does not submit to the authority of God. It is true, the more precepts we keep the more valuable men and women we are to the society in which we dwell. He who steals is an injury to society. He who is honest is so far a blessing. But a man may have a kind of honesty without the least regard to God, and hence cannot be said to obey even the commandment requiring honesty. Such an one, however, is not only a better citizen but he honors God to this extent, that he approves of that which God commands. Still he should recognize that he has at heart no respect for the authority of God.

In the preface to the law, God describes himself not only as the self-existing Creator, but as having entered into close personal relation with the Israelites through promises made to their fathers, some of which had just been faithfully fulfilled in conferring great blessings upon them. So he appeals not only to their respect for his authority, but to the relation to him which they had inherited and accepted, and to the gratitude they should have for such benefits received. This preface does not limit the following law to the Israelites, but makes a special appeal to them. The law is general, for all mankind, the original law of their being, since it appeals to and arouses the universal conscience; but a special revelation of God and rich favors bestowed form a strong appeal for the most hearty obedience. God describes himself to the full extent in which he

had at that time revealed himself. Whatever increase of revelation we have received strengthens the appeal. This shows the kind of obedience we should give; not reluctant, but eager; not forced, but spontaneous; not irksome, but with delight; not heartless, but with the enthusiasm of love. Created things obey the laws of their being joyously. Stars shine, flowers bloom, birds sing. Surely intelligent beings, recognizing the law of their being, should joyously obey it, especially when God reveals himself fully and confers richest blessings upon them.

As we enter upon the study of each separate command, let it be with a firm purpose to seek for the whole truth, and with an honest resolution to apply it to our own hearts and lives. A knowledge of the revelation of God made through Jesus Christ, and a reception of the blessings bestowed through him strengthen God's claim upon us. The newness of life in Christ is subject to this law. The love we bear him, is not an aimless rapture, but the spirit of new obedience, to manifest itself in keeping his commandments. If we shall find that we have in any respect broken this law of God, or are prone to break it, let us at once seek forgiveness and new life in Jesus Christ. He came to save sinners from their sins, to restore them to complete and hearty obedience.

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT.

“Thou shalt have no other gods before me.”—Ex. 20: 3.

There is a marked difference between the laws of man, though moral, and this law of God. Human laws govern outward conduct alone. Man can only take notice of the action of his fellow-man, and infer the intention from it. But God searches the heart of man. His law applies directly to the inner life, the feelings and purposes, the disposition and character. This feature of the whole law is particularly prominent in this first commandment, where no outward act whatever is commanded or prohibited, but the soul purely and simply is the subject of the law.

This commandment like many others has the prohibitory form. Wherever this is the case the opposite of the thing forbidden is commanded, being guarded by the prohibition. Hence we are here commanded to give supreme allegiance to and find our highest good in God alone. When we give supreme allegiance to and find our highest good in any person or thing other than God, we make that person or thing our god, and we do this of necessity in the presence of God, before his face. This idolatry is forbidden.

It is quite evident without further study that this commandment prescribes a general “fitness of things,” the proper relation of man to God; aims to promote the highest happiness, directing man to seek his good in the highest source—God himself; and describes the

nature of man, setting forth a great principle of his being, that he is capable of giving allegiance to God, has faculties and powers capable of knowing and loving God.

This commandment at once arouses the conscience with the claim that our first duty is not to ourselves, not even to our neighbors, but to our God. The awakened conscience says: "That is right. He made me and continues me in being. My chief duty is not to myself but to Him. He made and continues my fellowmen in being. He places us in these relations of life. My first duty is not to them, but to Him." It is not then a little thing to neglect God, as so many seem to think. It violates and degrades a foundation principle of our nature—it is failure in the principal duty of life.

The Egyptians and the neighboring nations, when this law was given, worshiped many diverse imaginary beings, the creations of their own fancy, as gods. This commandment was directly opposed to this prevailing practice, strictly prohibited it, and commanded the worship of the one true God. Wherever it has been generally received the worship of such imaginary beings has ceased, and with us is entirely unknown. To this extent the commandment seems to have accomplished its purpose. It is generally conceded now that there are not more gods than one, the true and living God. That He exists is the only explanation of our own existence. Conscious of the one, we are sure of the other.

Our power of knowing and loving Him is the distinguishing power of man, separating him from the brutes with whom he is in many other respects allied.

Not to exercise this power is to cast away the crown of our manhood. God dignified man in the highest degree when he gave him this commandment. He calls him to the highest realm of knowledge, the knowledge of Himself. Of course we cannot know God fully. Our weak, limited minds cannot comprehend the Infinite One. Shall we therefore claim He is unknowable, and refuse to affirm or deny anything concerning his existence and character? As well might the child, who fails to put the ocean into the hole he has dug in the sand, look wise and say, "Well then, there is no ocean." The truths above and beyond us, whose greatness may not be understood but can be acknowledged, sway and elevate us. Not that which we can comprehend, but that which comprehends us; not that which our little minds can hold, but that which fills them and holds them—the height of the mountain beyond where we can climb; the expanse of the ocean beyond our power of vision; the distance of the stars beyond the flight of our imagination—these fill the mind with awe; we are in the presence of the sublime. If we could comprehend God we would be greater than He. The unknowable in God leads us to worship the God we know. This command calls us to a constant advance in the knowledge of God, so securing the activity and development of our power of knowing, and making it our duty to carefully attend to the revelation He has made of Himself.

This certainly commends the study of Nature; not only the poetic listening to its subtile teachings, but the scientific research for its great truths. While it cannot be claimed that some scientific theories have any respect for this commandment, it is certainly to be

acknowledged that the earnest search of science for truth is to that extent a keeping of the law. To neglect this great realm where God has expressed so many of His great thoughts, where He has so clearly revealed "His eternal power and God-head," is condemned as indifference to the knowledge of Himself.

This certainly commends the study of the Scriptures. These claim to contain a special revelation of God. To give a fair investigation to this claim, and an earnest effort to understand this special revelation, is to that extent a keeping of the law. Every neglected Bible should thrill the conscience with the charge, "You have not yet taken the first step towards obeying this commandment."

God's revelation of Himself in the Holy Scriptures is progressive. It had reached a certain stage at the time the law was given at Sinai, sufficiently clear and full to make man's duty plain. But it did not stop there. It unfolded through succeeding ages until it culminated in the Lord Jesus Christ. So this first commandment makes it our duty to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. To reject Christ is not merely to reject an offer of mercy. It is to refuse to receive the complete revelation of God made in His Son. It is to say, "We will not have this God revealed in Christ as our God." But there is no other God. We are to know God as revealed in Nature, in His Law, in the Holy Scriptures, and in His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, the one living and true God.

Now, man is capable of closer relationship to God than mere knowledge of His existence and character. He has powers of loving God, of coming into the closest

personal fellowship with God. This will in its exercise make more intimate and full our knowledge of Him. You know of the existence of the president of the nation and something of his character by his acts and general reputation. The knowledge you have of the man you are well acquainted with is more full and accurate. But this knowledge is surpassed by that you have of your friend. Your love for him clearly discerns qualities which his love for you frankly reveals. You know his real worth and highly value your relationship to him. It is to such intimate knowledge of love, to such fellowship of love, that God calls us by the power He has given us, and by this commandment. He reveals Himself as a person, in personal relationship with man, as possessing in Himself qualities of character worthy of our love, and as being desirous of our love, a revelation shining in this commandment as it does in all nature and in Scripture, and especially in him "who is the image of the invisible God." Our highest duty and real nobility are to give Him supreme allegiance and find our highest good in Him alone, the love recognizing and responding to the loveliness of God, the love that completely trusts Him, and finds its highest delight in Him.

The prohibitory form of the commandment further shows that there are tendencies in our nature to break this law of our being. We are prone to give supreme allegiance to and find our highest good in some person or thing other than God. Humiliating as it may be, a little reflection will force us to confess that the commandment is right in taking this form, that these tendencies exist, and that they are so strong that they have

often led us and do still lead us to break the law. Wherever this written commandment is not known in the world to-day men are worshiping imaginary beings as their gods. The principle of our nature as God created it, the power of knowing and loving Him, has been overruled by these tendencies, which from some source or other, certainly not from God, have come upon us.

Neither are we free from these tendencies though we have the knowledge of His law. Are we not prone to ignore God, or to rest with an insufficient knowledge of Him, or to imagine Him other than he has revealed himself? Do not the fields of even religious controversy afford sad evidence of the tendency to magnify some one or more features of His character out of proportion with all the others, so making a caricature of Him? The superstition of worshiping imaginary gods has passed away, but that of attributing effects to things with which there is not the slightest evidence of their having any connection, still lingers. There is quite a prevalent opinion that Friday is an unlucky day, and that it is unlucky to see the new moon over the left shoulder, and many who speak light of it still are influenced by it. How a horse-shoe became a symbol of good luck, I do not know. Perhaps from the old belief that a hot horse-shoe would drive a witch out of a churn, and now this symbol is nailed to the masts of many vessels sailing our rivers, and over the doors of many of our houses, and many young people are very careful to stand directly under a floral horse-shoe as they enter the married life. Of course all fear of ill luck and all hope of good luck as dependent upon any

such things are the opposite of trusting in God, "our Sun and Shield."

Fortune-tellers still live, and live off their victims whom they torment with foolish hopes or causeless fears. What reason is there to believe that the devil knows anything about our future, or that God who hides it from us would reveal it to a fortune-teller? Those who are sick with complicated diseases or involved in perplexing troubles sometimes consult clairvoyants, whose astounding claim of possessing a sense other than the senses and reasoning power of ordinary men is sustained alone by a few happy conjectures and a great amount of clap-trap. Surely to consult them is a belief in their possessing supernatural power without a particle of evidence—to that extent a kindred superstition with the belief in imaginary gods. Spiritualism, too, in our day enchains many dupes, an attempt to learn of the spirit world by communication with departed spirits, brought about by the aid of mediums whose base tricks have been so often exposed. God gives us present duty and all the light we need about the future, about the nature of present trouble and the conditions of the spirit world. Obedience to Him and complete trust in His wisdom and love will free us from all fortune-telling, clairvoyance and spiritualism; they would have no more influence upon us than do the almost forgotten gods of high Olympus. That these superstitions still linger in our day, and are present to some extent in our minds, shows that the prohibitory form of this commandment is still needed by us.

But even if we had full and accurate knowledge of the one true God, and were free from all debasing

superstitions, we would still have tendencies drawing us away from entire consecration to Him. Alas! there are other idolatries besides trust in imaginary gods, or in false conceptions of the true God. Whatever we value more than God, and delight in more than we delight in Him, is our god. Wherever a man makes the gratification of himself his chief aim, he takes the crown belonging to God and crowns himself. He is his own god—a kind of idolatry to which, I fear, we will all have to confess a great proneness.

There is a strong tendency to make the gratification of even the lowest portion of our nature our chief aim and greatest delight. We are not yet free from the danger of belonging to the class the Apostle describes in such plain words, "whose god is their belly," which includes not only gluttons and drunkards, but all those who, however refined the way, make sensual enjoyment their highest good. It is obvious this not only dishonors God but degrades man, and deprives him of the highest happiness even in his lower nature. He only can have the highest animal enjoyment who remembers that he is more than an animal, and, honoring God, seeks to discover and obey His laws of healthful living.

One would think that the exercise of our reasoning powers would lead the soul to God, yet there is a very strong tendency to make this exercise end in itself. Many of the great thinkers of the world have been worshipers of their own powers of thinking, and we who can with difficulty follow their great thoughts are prone to worship our own intellectual culture and acquirements, and to claim a considerable amount of incense from our fellow men. Centering in itself—mak-

ing the intellectual life our highest good—debars the intellect from its highest attainment, which can only come from following the thoughts of God up to the knowledge of Himself.

How prone we are to make our loved ones idols! Now the idolatry of loved ones does not consist in loving them too much, but in not loving them enough. God gives us our home, “the dearest spot on earth,” he gives us our loved ones and us to them and continues us to each other, and he makes us spiritual beings having the power of loving and being worthy of the love of each other. Loving each other truly we are learning to love God. It is safe to say that the father who allows his child to so absorb his love that he has no thought of or love for God, does not love his child as an immortal spiritual being, nor does he regard himself as such. His idolatry degrades himself and his child as well as dishonors God.

Above the animal, the intellectual and the social nature in man, is the spiritual. To ignore this nature or dwarf it is to degrade man. To have this nature in healthful control and giving supreme allegiance to God, is to bring the whole man into obedience to this commandment; is to ennoble his social, inspire his intellectual, and elevate his animal natures; is to reach the noble manhood God designs for us. Lovers of personal display, of fine dress and jewels, lovers of money, little or much, the grasping to have or to hold, lovers of ourselves in whatever direction—how wide the contrast between all such and lovers of God! Alas, my brothers, to which of these contrasted classes are we most prone? See, too, the greatness of the sin. God, who

made us, and continues us in being, and constantly blesses us, and who has a right to our service—God, who is the best of beings, who is worthy of our service—God, who commands and so greatly desires our service, is neglected, and some object which has no right, is not worthy and cannot appreciate our service, is elevated to his throne. And although we may not fully recognize the greatness of our sin, God knows what unworthy object has taken His rightful place in our affections. It is obvious likewise that the only possible way of being freed from the degradation and misery of such sin is to have the proper relation of man to God fully re-established.

It is claimed by some that the Lord Jesus Christ has abolished the Ten Commandments. On the contrary Christ claims that he came not to destroy but to fulfill the law. The law can give no ability to keep it—that is not its province. It shows the rule of duty, awakens the conscience, holds before us God's lofty ideal, incites all the power within us to highest action; but here its mission ends. It evokes all the power within, but confers no power from without. The same thing is true of the teaching and example of Christ. However high and noble they are, even perfect, they are limited in their effect by the capacity of the disciple. They incite, they draw out all the power within, but they give no ability to attain, they confer no power from without. Now Christ brings to us power from without, the power we need. "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Christ reveals and brings to us the true nature of God, the grace we need, forgiving sin and conferring new life. The teaching and

example of Christ and the law they so clearly set forth should lead us to see our sinfulness and to seek forgiveness and new life in Christ; and this new life in Christ follows his teaching and example to the complete keeping of the law. That it obeys the law not reluctantly but heartily so much the more honors the law. The skilled carpenter loving his work does not have to be told how to hold his plane as does the obstinate apprentice, but nevertheless he holds it according to the rule, and the more thoroughly since he does not regard it a hardship but a pleasure. Christ abolish this commandment! and God no longer claim the highest place in man's thoughts and affections! No, never! Man may degrade himself, but God will never degrade him. Christ came bringing divine power to restore man from degradation to the high nobility of keeping this commandment. His glorious work is not to set it aside, but to reëstablish it as the rule of life to all his followers. Now we shall see that the remaining commandments of the first table not merely follow this first one, but so flow from it and are so vitally related with it, that what is so obviously true of it is true also of them, and that Christ instead of abolishing any of them has glorified them all. May we so believe in Christ and so regard the law that it shall become more and more our delight to do the will of God!

Now as we separate from one another, let us each one take with us the impressive truth that God speaks in this commandment not only to the race of men, but to each member of the race; that He selects each one us, and addresses us personally, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." It is as if each one of us stood alone before God.

THE SECOND COMMANDMENT.

“Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them nor serve them : for I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me : and showing mercy unto the thousandth generation of them that love me and keep my commandments.”—Ex. 20 : 4—6.

Inscriptions in hieroglyphics and pictures on the monuments and tombs of Egypt, recently discovered and deciphered, confirm the Bible history that the ancient Egyptians were idolaters. Surrounding nations were also idolaters. There was a strong tendency in the Israelites, by their own confession, to idolatry. This religious condition was not local and temporary, we may rather say it was constant and universal. History tells but one story, that in former times all the tribes and nations of men were idolaters, that they worshiped imaginary gods by means of images, and to a great extent the images themselves. This religious condition prevailing in former times prevails as well to-day. With the exception of three large classes our fellow men have been in all the past and are to-day idolaters.

How can this strong tendency to idolatry be explained? One class of thinkers, rejecting the Bible account, say that man's original condition was dense ignorance, and that the various systems of idolatry are his groping after the idea of God, until at length he reaches the idea of a supreme spiritual Being. Some

of these thinkers say there is such a Being, whom man has at length discovered : others hold that there is no such Being, that man has only obtained by all his feeble groping an idea. These evolution thinkers have evolved their theories out of their own brains without the slightest basis of fact. There is no evidence that such a process is going on among the heathen nations to-day. Some of these nations are highly gifted intellectually, and on this theory ought to have come to the worship of one God long before this. Neither is there any evidence of any people ever having lifted themselves out of idolatry. Nations have grafted other systems on to their own, their intellectual leaders have become skeptical with regard to the whole matter, here and there an individual has seemed to grasp the idea of one God, but no large class of men—certainly no nation—has ever cast aside idolatry for the worship of one God. The three large classes of men, some embracing nations, who in the past and now worship one God without the use of images, the Jews, the Christians, and the Mohammedans, all trace this distinguishing trait to these Ten Commandments. This commandment shows no trace of feeling its way to the true God and gradually casting off features of idolatry, but existing in that early age of dense idolatry it with the utmost precision prohibits the whole system. The worship of the one God is not therefore a growth from within, but a lifting up from without ; not an evolution from idolatry, but a revelation from heaven.

The only other conceivable explanation of the universal tendency of the race to idolatry is that of the Bible. It teaches that idolatry is the willful departure

of a sinful race from the worship and knowledge of the true God; that having the knowledge of the true God from nature they refused to honor him, but changed the glory of the incorruptible God for the likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds and four-footed beasts and creeping things; they refused to retain God in their knowledge and made this base exchange. The tendency reveals the effort of the sinful heart to get rid of the moral excellencies of a spiritual God. Men were held in restraint by the thought of a spiritual Being infinitely above the appetites and passions of a sensual life, so they put him out of their minds. They could not banish the thought of the divine power, nor was there much reason for such an effort, but they succeeded largely in banishing the thought of the divine holiness. The gods they worshiped had like appetites and passions with themselves. The fleshly nature in man could degrade the spiritual but one degree further, compel it to bow down to objects of sense, to images. The educated among idolaters claim that they do not worship the image or thing but the being or power dwelling in the thing or represented by the image, but the mass of the people worship the image itself. While idolatry thus expresses the moral condition of the people, and confirms it, the various systems also show the intellectual endowment of the different nations. In some of these systems there are distinct traces of the idea of a Supreme Being, though he is not perfect, nor is the highest worship given to him; but these traces grow faint in other systems, showing greater intellectual and moral degradation. But the spiritual in man still

exists. It is not destroyed by sin, only degraded. It cannot get rid of the truth inwrought in its nature, "There is a God whom I must worship." The fleshly nature may say, "Well, then worship through me, and in the way I dictate," but can go no further. Man is a spiritual being, he has gods of some kind, the most degraded people still have their idols: he is a moral being, the effort to throw off restraint shows it. The commingling voices of the tribes and nations of men in all ages speak the clear and distinct confession, "There is a God," though it can be heard only as an undertone to the tumultuous and sullen roar of the race, "We will not have the true God to reign over us."

That idolatry arises from the sinful nature of man, explains the fact also that those people who have had a revelation of the true God long continued to them have constantly manifested a tendency to fall back into it. The Israelites corrupted themselves with idolatry at the foot of Mount Sinai, and after they were settled in their own land they frequently fell into the worship of the idols of the neighboring nations. The Christian Church also showed the same tendency very early in her history. She brought images and pictures to ornament her church buildings, to instruct the ignorant, and to incite the devout spirit in the worship of the true God. The images of Christ and the Apostles, of the Virgin Mary and the Saints, are now so used in the Roman Catholic Church. But while this use of the images may be claimed by the intelligent and by the councils of the Church, and while the worship given to the Saints may in their view and practice be far inferior to that given to God, still this practice so explained is

a decided drift perilously near to the verge of idolatry, and it is to be feared that large numbers of the less intelligent and devout have gone over the verge and that the constant tendency is in that direction.

This commandment is expressed in the prohibitory form. We have seen the decided tendency in fallen human nature it is designed to check. Now turn to the positive command. We find it expressed clearly and concisely by our Savior: "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship in spirit and in truth." Prohibiting bodily prostration to a visible idol, it commands spiritual worship of the invisible God. Our old English word, "worship," brings out the idea of the spirit's attitude to God strongly and beautifully. It is a combination of the words "worth" and "ship" or "shape." Man, a spiritual being, is to be brought into a shape worthy of God, the Spirit. Two highly important truths are embraced in this statement. The first is that the spirit in man is to be in a shape worthy of God. This can only be when it is in full harmony with God, when it possesses moral likeness to him. The second is that the whole man is to be in a shape worthy of God, that his spirit possessing moral likeness to God is to be in full and constant command of the whole man. The man is not to be ruled by his animal nature, nor by his intellectual nature, nor even by his social and domestic nature, but by his spiritual nature: and this enthroned spiritual nature is to shine in the likeness to God.

Surely here is a great commandment. It describes the nature of man as coming pure from the Creator's hand, and as the Redeemer designs to restore it. It

shows the noble ideal God still holds before man and the high happiness he desires for him, when all his varied powers shall be in full and harmonious exercise in the worship of himself, a spirit possessing the highest moral excellence. We are commanded to ever hold aloft the thought of God in our minds; infinitely above all the things our senses behold, which are the creations of his power. He exists, a pure spirit, of absolutely perfect character. We are to so reverence, adore and love Him that we give Him the highest honor possible from created spirits, that of growing like Him in character. We are to give Him this worship so thoroughly that all our lower powers are enlisted in it and constantly under its control and so become spiritually ennobled. The man in shape worthy of God; this is the highest "fitness of things" among the powers within the man, his highest blessedness, his noblest being, and this God requires of us. It is obvious that the tendency to have the fleshly nature assume the ascendancy over the spiritual, is not confined to heathen lands. To be inconstant in the worship of God, confining our attempted adoration of Him to stated times, to be contented with the formal acts of his worship; and to neglect His worship altogether, are some of the ways in which it manifests itself.

The commandment is of such vital importance, and the tendency to transgress it is so strong, that God has added to it a most solemn appeal which demands our careful attention. God declares himself a jealous God. We are to leave out of consideration all low features frequently associated with human jealousy—there can be no envy, nor unjust suspicion, nor selfishness, nor

anything unworthy in the jealousy of God. A father has with great love and care trained his children in virtue, and a corrupt and fascinating youth seeks companionship with them. The father guards his children with jealousy against such influence. A husband loves his wife, and a corrupt and fascinating man seeks her society. The husband guards with jealous care the wife he loves. Not only, or even mainly does the father, or husband, think of his own honor, but mainly of the welfare of dear ones. Jealousy seeks to guard the children and the wife from degradation and ruin. So God, the great Father, the loving Husband of his people, guards not his own honor only, but therein and mainly the welfare of those he loves against a fascinating corruption which would degrade and ruin them. "I the Lord thy God am a jealous God."

This feature of his character is seen in his visiting punishment for disobedience and rewards for obedience through successive generations. The appeal is to one of the strongest and noblest emotions in man, his love for his children. Fathers, guard against the tendency to idolatry! It will degrade you not only, but your children. Fathers, bring yourselves into a shape worthy of God! Worship Him in spirit and in truth! It will ennoble you not only, but your children. Under the government of God the race of man exists in successive generations, and one generation receives from those that have passed not merely its being, but largely its character and conditions. The character is not received, however, to such a degree as to interfere with responsibility nor to preclude great changes, nor are the conditions fixed. Each generation may reject

the evil and retain the good of its inheritance, may advance to greater good, and may then transmit its improved character and conditions to its successor. Under this feature of the divine government the race of man is distinguished from animals and may make progress. The beaver builds his dam as at the first, so the bee builds the cell for honey; both are marvels of construction, but no progress, no improvement is ever made. While if our fathers of but two generations back should return and visit our harvest fields and barns, astonishment at new methods of gathering and storing harvests would fill their minds, an astonishment which would vastly increase as they learned of railroads and steamships, of telegraph and telephone. The generation to-day enjoys the inheritance of liberty and free government won by our fathers on the battle-fields of the Revolution. The generation just taking the lead in the nation's life rejoices in a united and prosperous country, the inheritance which the generation fast passing away secured by toil and heroic self-sacrifice. Should great dangers threaten us now, what would be a strong appeal to patriotism? Let us defend the inheritance we have received from heroic fathers and transmit it unimpaired and greatly improved to our children—an appeal against low and selfish ease to noble manhood in a virtuous cause. This is the appeal of this commandment on the highest plane of man's well-being.

This feature of the divine government embraces individuals as well as great classes of men, and should be very solemnly considered by each one of us. A man chooses a vicious life. He therein impairs his constitution,

ruins his reputation and squanders his property. The awful consequences of his sin do not end with himself. The wife and mother, while she shares them to some extent, may be of reverse character and so counteract largely the evil among the children. But she may be weak, or possibly of the same character. The strong tendency will be for the children to have the same vicious character, the impaired constitution, certainly the ruined reputation and the poverty. Certainly if there remains a spark of love in that man's heart for his wife and children, the appeal of this law is that he should reconsider his choice of a vicious life. There seem to be three great principles in steady action in the race and among individuals: the principle of *heredity*, of physical and mental and moral qualities of parents—the principle of *influence*, by the example and teaching according to the character of the parents—and the principle of *inheritance* of the conditions and surroundings made by the parents in the society where they dwell. Whether these great principles shall work disastrously or beneficially, is for us to choose. Consider the two classes described in the commandment: "Them that hate me." Sin is no light thing. In its essence it is hatred of God, and so has terrible consequences. "Them that love me and keep my commandments." Love him who has highest excellence. Keep his commandments which are good and lead to noble well-being. It is for us to choose, and we choose not only for ourselves, but largely for our children.

Look carefully now at a very important feature of the appeal which is not brought out clearly in our English translation. He visits iniquity "unto the third and

fourth" and shows mercy "unto the thousandth," the commandment reads. Our translators have supplied the word "generation" in italics to the first numeral, and evidently they were right in doing so, but they should have supplied for the same reasons the same word to the second numeral: "He visits iniquity unto the third and fourth *generation*," "He shows mercy unto the thousandth *generation*." The third and fourth show an indefinite number, the thousandth is also an indefinite number, but it is a much larger number. The principle of the divine government has a very decided leaning to the side of mercy.

Now perhaps you will say: "I see that this feature of the divine government works with absolute impartiality, with strict justice, but I can see no indication of its leaning to the side of mercy." Then look again and more closely at the race and the individual. Look at the individual first. A child inherits an impaired constitution. Two features of the divine government respond at once. First, the restorative forces within the child, the recuperative powers of man's nature; and second, the restorative forces without, the whole realm of remedies and skill awakened in others in their application. The child of ignorant parents is ignorant. Two features here also are on the side of mercy. The innate thirst of the mind for knowledge, present though weak in the child; and the intelligence of the community in which the child lives, the atmosphere of enlightenment which he must breathe while he lives. The child of irreligious parents is irreligious. Here, too, there are two principles on the side of mercy. However corrupt he may be there is something in the soul of the child

at unrest for God which may be touched into power ; and the surrounding Christianity—the Christ who has loved and died to save—lives in many believing hearts through whom he seeks to save the child.

Now, concerning the race it may be said that the limit of degradation seems to be fixed, but the limit of progress cannot be even imagined. How far man will advance in the control and use of the powers of nature, we who witness to-day the stupendous achievements of Christian civilization will not even dare to conjecture. And how far man will be lifted up, in the knowledge and fellowship of God, the Bible tells us that we cannot even imagine. In the whole race also the two principles we have seen working in individuals on the side of mercy exist. However corrupted in idolatry men may become, however great the ascendancy of the flesh over the spirit in man, the spirit still exists and in its very nature cannot be satisfied until it finds and lays hold upon the living God. There is something within men that cannot be satisfied with idolatry, or with sensual corruption, something that may be touched into strong and glorious life. And there is something to touch it. God makes the appeal of his infinite love in Jesus Christ, who has at infinite cost taken away sin and brought in new life to all who receive him. And we who receive him, as he lives in us, will touch all the dark souls we can reach with his light and life. Our fathers were idolators under the gloomy German forests and on the stormy shores of England. Their spirits were touched by the love of God in Christ and they turned from idols to the worship of the true God. We have received from them the elevation and happiness of our Christian land. Let

us cherish and transmit to our children the glorious inheritance, and let us send the light into the whole earth. Let us, receiving forgiveness and new life in our Savior, bring our whole being into a shape worthy of God in moral likeness. This will be for the highest welfare of our own souls, of our children, of our land, and of the world.

THE THIRD COMMANDMENT.

“Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.”—
Ex. 20 : 7

The law of God is designed to exercise control over the whole man. It would be very imperfect if it did not govern his speech. By speech man expresses the condition of his mind and heart, and such expression generally tends to strengthen that condition. By speech he influences his fellow man. The commandments not merely follow one the other, but are closely related with each other. One flows from the other and leads on to the next until we see the whole nature of man under the reign of one law. The first precept commands us to have the true God alone for our God. The second precept commands us to worship the true God who is a spirit in spirit and in truth. These two commands tell us how we ought to think and feel toward God. If there was but one individual man in existence, and he was speechless, these commands would describe his nature and make plain his duty. It would be right for him to hold God supreme, and to have his spirit in a shape worthy of God in moral likeness and in control of all his powers. Now the third command shows man at the head of the material creation with the crowning glory of intelligent speech, and as a social being possessing the power of speech as the highest instrument of his social nature. God reveals himself to

him by word, by name, as to a speaking being, making language a bond of union between Him and man. God commands him to use this great gift in his worship, in honoring Him.

The tongue is the glory of man, and the glory of the tongue is to voice the praises of God. All nature praises God as it obeys his laws. The sun and the stars in their courses praise Him in notes of light—music our dull ears may not hear. The earth with her myriad voices praises Him; the deep-toned ocean, the quiet music of the streams, the gentle notes of the winds, the storms with thunder peals, unite in a grand hymn of praise; but it is unintelligent. The birds with sweet songs greet the morning light, and all the creatures of God lift up their voices to Him; but this praise of animate creation lacks intelligence. Man stands at the head of creation to take up its many notes of praise and give them intelligent utterance. He stands thus not as a single individual, a great High Priest, but as a race whose myriad voices are to join and mingle in a vast chorus of intelligent and harmonious praise. We are to speak of Him and to Him with adoration. He is our Creator, Preserver, Governor and Judge. We are to speak of Him and to Him with love and praise. Our lips should quiver with emotion when we speak of Him who is our Father, and our Savior. We are to speak to Him in His worship, and of Him to each other only in such a way as shall promote His worship in our own hearts and in the hearts of others. These three commands show God's ideal of man unfolding as they advance. Man is to give his allegiance to God alone, is to be in character worthy of God, and this character is to ex-

press itself in such speech as shall praise God, confirm itself and foster the same character among one's fellows.

The command is in the prohibition form. Man has broken this law, and is prone to break it. His voice is silent often when it should be praising God. Alas! it is often used to speak lightly of God. All irreverent or vain use of God's name is forbidden.

A name is that word which calls to mind the thing or person named. The name "stone" sets apart a certain kind of thing from all other things. When we use it or hear it we do not think of a tree or of anything else but that single kind of thing. So the name "man" calls to mind a particular kind of being, and no other. So the name of an individual calls to mind a person separate from all others. The name of God therefore is that word or those descriptive words which call to mind the Being named. So I cannot speak the name of God without referring directly *to* the person who bears it; and if others hear me I bring before their thought that one person, and no other. Hence the Bible usage is that the name of God equals Himself—to call upon the name of the Lord is to call upon the Lord.

One vain use of God's name is calling Him to bear witness to a falsehood; and a reverent use of His name is calling Him to witness to the truth in an important matter. Oaths on proper occasions are commanded in the Scripture and sanctioned by the example of our Lord Jesus Christ, who when put under oath by the High Priest declared that he was the Son of God. Oaths are demanded in courts of law, that the witness will tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the

truth. He calls upon God who knows the truth and who hears what he says to judge him as he speaks. He declares that he testifies not merely before the human court, but before the great Judge of all. If he lies he lies not only to man but to God. It is an act therefore of the greatest solemnity. The oath should be administered reverently. I have often heard the clerk of the court run over the form hastily and slightly as if it was of no consequence, a meaningless ceremony. Such conduct is insulting to God and calculated to defeat the aims of justice. However administered when we are placed under oath we should feel all the solemnity of an act of worship of God. Oaths are often required by law in connection with a promise, as of an officer entering upon his office. The officer promises to faithfully discharge the duties of his office, and then calls upon God who will witness every act of his life to be the Judge of his faithfulness.

An appeal to God to bear witness to the truth of our declarations and to the faithful performance of our promises may be made not only when required by law but when justified by the importance of the case. But of this we should be very cautious. The matter should be of such great importance to the glory of God and to the welfare of man, that the appeal to God is made an act of solemn worship. Of course the promise must be for something lawful. A man making a promise confirmed by an oath to do something wrong, is in no way bound to do that thing, for the simple reason that no man can bring himself under an obligation to do wrong. The making of the promise was wrong and calls for repentance; the taking of an oath upon such a promise,

important as it may be, even if it extends to the half of Herod's kingdom, is wrong, and calls for repentance. It is taking God's name in vain to ask Him to witness our wrong doing. It is not likely that the importance of a private matter will ever make it our duty to appeal to God, but we are at any time liable to be called as witnesses in courts of law, or to serve on juries, or in some public office. We should have clear views of the oaths we may be required to take. They are solemn acts wherein we appeal to God to hold us to a strict account. We call upon Him to witness that we will be truthful and faithful, and to judge us according to our action in His sight.

While it is clear that the taking of the name of God in vain applies to false swearing in important matters, it is as clear that it applies to the whole awful field of *profanity*—the trivial, rash, and cursing use of the name of God in ordinary conversation, which is the reverse of honoring God in our speech. The minister probably hears less swearing than any man in the community. Profane persons seem to have more respect for him than they have for God, and if they venture on an oath it is with bated breath; and yet the minister hears enough of it to know that the sin is terribly prevalent even in this Christian community. A man uses the name of God as an exclamation of surprise at some trivial thing or assertion of another, or to sustain some unimportant statement of his own. Generally he is a frequenter of rum-shops; sometimes he is otherwise respectable. Sometimes a story is dull and the story-teller seasons it with a few oaths, or some joke is without point and so a curse is used to awaken a laugh. Man calls God to

make sport for him. A man has become accustomed to exaggerate or to speak falsely, and conscious that others hesitate to believe him he continually calls upon the truth-loving God to witness to his lies. Sometimes one becomes heated in argument or angry under contradiction or in a quarrel, and he calls upon God to curse him if he is not right, or in his anger he calls upon God to curse the one who irritates him. Sometimes he so loses control of himself that curses pour out of his lips as dense smoke out of a chimney.

But the swearer tries to excuse himself: "I did not mean it. I was only in fun." There are some things not the proper subjects of fun. Surely a man ought not to make fun of God, or of invoking the wrath of God upon himself or others. But the swearer says: "It is a relief for me to swear. It cools off my heated spirits." Often it is the reverse, added fuel to the flame, not only to himself but to others, especially those he curses. But if it is a relief, what is it a relief of? It is a relief to the storm-cloud to throw out its lightnings, because it is over-charged with electricity. So it is a relief for you to throw out your cursing because you are over-charged with cursing. Your heart is so full of hatred that when stirred in anger it overflows in curses. My brother, you had far better bring such a heart to God with a strong cry for mercy. Again the swearer says: "I know it is wrong, but it is a habit I have fallen into to such an extent that I often swear without knowing it." Do you not see that habit does not excuse but rather aggravates the offense? No one can become wicked at once. Your habit only shows how often you have sinned, how far you have gone down in this kind

of wickedness. Again the swearer says: "I may as well say it as to think it." You should not think an oath or curse. But it is worse to speak it. The letter of the law forbids the word, and so checks the evil in the heart, and at any rate prevents its injuring others. You gain inward control by outward control. Come toward the spirit of the law, checking the thought by obeying the letter. You keep yourself also from being a curse. The swearer is a moral blight in a community, his oath-speaking is a spreading infection, he is himself a curse to others. Few, if any, ever began swearing but from imitation. Profanity is a contagion in the sound waves of the air. By checking the oath at the lips you prevent the spread of the evil.

We should be on our guard against the insidious beginnings of this sin. There are by-words we are apt to use thoughtlessly, which are on the verge of swearing, are apt to lead us over it, and certainly influence others, especially the young, in that direction. The words "goodness," "gracious," "mercy," are often used as by-words. Now goodness, grace, and mercy, while attributes of God, are also qualities found in man. Neither the one using them nor the one hearing them may have the thought of God brought to mind, and so we cannot say that their careless use is taking the name of God in vain, and we certainly should not burden our consciences unnecessarily. Our reverence for God should so fill our souls that our lips should have but one message, that of reverence, and should instinctively avoid the slighting use of any word which might bring Him irreverently to mind.

Our Savior teaches us that we are not to swear at

all in our ordinary conversation, either by the name of God, or by any person or thing, for all are related to Him. He teaches us that our statements should be always in accordance with the exact truth, that each one of his disciples should have a character of such pure truthfulness that his word needed no affirmation. "But can I not use by-words at all?" you say. Your speech would have more strength and elegance without them, would be more acceptable in good society, and what is of far greater importance, would be more pleasing to God.

We should also have such reverence and love for our God that we could not bear to hear others take his name in vain. If any one should in your presence speak slightly or unkindly or insultingly of your father, mother, husband, wife or friend, you would feel hurt and your feeling would probably be so deep that you would show him in some way, without sharing his impoliteness, that you valued highly the one he dishonored. Our love for God should lead us to cherish his honor to the extent of our influence.

This commandment is distinguished from all the others by having a threat connected with it. The former command had an appeal. This has a menace. The Judge by whose laws and sentences our eternal state is to be fixed, from whose sentence there can be no appeal, says He will not hold guiltless—a strong way of declaring He will pronounce guilty—the one who takes his name in vain. The swearer is apt to think his offence a slight one. God says He regards it a grievous one. The swearer thinks God will not punish the use of a few trifling words. This is only another instance of the sinner

underestimating the enormity of his sin. God declares He will punish the guilty. My brother, my sister, if you ever swear you should take warning from this solemn threatening of God.

What is the reason that you swear? Answer this question faithfully and you may see some little of the greatness of your sin, may confess that God is right in His estimate of it. You gain nothing by it, but lose much. Swearing is not regarded by men as a mark of intellect, or learning, or truthfulness, or refinement, or honor, but very generally the reverse. Nor are you seeking future good. You are preparing yourself for some place and for some companionship in the future. But you are not preparing yourself for heaven, for that is the place of adoration of God. Swearing, so far as it can, is preparing you for hell, the place of blasphemy. There must be some strong reason which leads you to swear in spite of such loss, present and future. You know right well that swearing demoralizes the community. It directly opposes religion, which is honoring God, for it dishonors him. It directly opposes respect for law, faithfulness in office, the administration of justice, undermining respect for God and the sanctity of an oath. And though it is so demoralizing to the best interests of the community, you still swear. There must be some strong reason controlling you. There is nothing noble about it. On the contrary, it is mean and cowardly to say behind one's back what we dare not say to his face. Would you swear if you were conscious of God's presence and holiness, swear to his face? You know also that it is a vulgar practice. A gentleman is always considerate of the feelings of others. But you

despise the feelings of those who honor God when you use His name in vain. There must be some strong reason leading you to this vulgar, cowardly practice. You know also that the wickedness of an act depends largely upon the character of the person against whom it is committed. You contemn God's authority and insult his person. The name which all heaven adores, which all the universe praises, which all hell fears, you despise. Now, my dear friend, faithfully bring forth and examine the cause of this wicked act. Is it any other than this, "The wickedness of my heart is so great that it flows over my lips." God, the Holy One—your Creator, Preserver and Judge—you hold in contempt, and out of the fulness of the heart the mouth speaketh. Jesus Christ, the loving Savior, suffered and died for sinners, and offers you forgiveness and his gracious help and love. You reject him not only—that were bad enough—but you despise him so much that your lips tell the feeling of your heart. We cannot sufficiently estimate the extreme wickedness of profanity. Let me solemnly charge all profane persons to consider this guilt in God's sight according to this commandment, and to repent and seek forgiveness in Christ, the forgiveness you so greatly need, and without which you must be forever lost.

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT.

“Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work. But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.”—Ex. 20: 8—11.

Three things at once arouse our attention. The opening word, “Remember,” suggests that we are specially liable to forget this commandment. The descending into particulars intimates the possibility of some trying to keep the law themselves, while they allow their work in the hands of others to go on. The giving a reason for the law, found in this instance alone, foretells a tendency to set aside this commandment and provides against it. Modern times were evidently within the vision of the Law-giver on Sinai.

We can easily see what this commandment, if obeyed, would do for our busy lives. It would give us needed rest and spiritual uplift. The world is toiling for daily bread, on farm and in factory, in shop and store and office, day after day, from early morn until the shades of night close over the scene. Then comes the dawn of the Sabbath. Rest and quiet cover the country and the town. Soon the church bells fill the air with their solemn tones. Parents and children go together to the house of God for praise and meditation and prayer. The home is filled with hallowed joy as the hours roll

on, and the still evening crowns the day with peace. Look! the outstretched hands of Christ are bestowing a benediction on the nations. Listen! through the blessed stillness come his words: "The Sabbath was made for man."

That man in our day and land is in danger of losing the Sabbath which God made for him, has already lost much of the spiritual uplift and is fast losing much of the needed rest of the day, is due entirely to his disobedience of this commandment. Very important it is for him to return to first principles and base his observance of the day upon the right foundation, the authority of God. Some confusion of mind exists regarding this commandment, since there were also enactments in the civil and ceremonial laws of the Jews concerning the observance of the Sabbath, and from this condition also arose many traditional laws which made the day a burden. These civil and ceremonial laws have no binding power upon us, and the traditional laws never had any rightful power upon any one. Our Savior swept the traditional away by his word and the others by his life and death, only to bring into greater clearness the commandment of the moral law by his saying, "The Sabbath was made for man."

This we see in the commandment itself as we reflect upon the reason God gives for the law. This shows that the commandment is not local and temporary, is not ceremonial, but is universal and perpetual; that the holy rest day is God's gift to man. It manifests the nature of the Giver. It meets the needs of the nature of man and defines his nature. God rested—therefore man should rest. The Sabbath is a

memorial of creation, and of much more. It is a memorial of God's resting from the work of creation, and it in that fact shows a principle which is in God's nature not only, but also in man's. Whether we regard the days of creation as of twenty-four hours each, or rather as vast periods of time—the rest day of God as extending over the present reign of life upon the earth—the reason is the same. God rested and therein blessed and hallowed the Sabbath day for man.

Meditate as we may, we will not be able to exhaust the grand truth carried in the bosom of this commandment—God is a Spirit. He manifested his character, his wisdom, power and goodness in the work of creation. These attributes belong to him before, during, and after his work. As He rests from His work the truth is made prominent—God the spirit is separate from and above His work. So with man. Work is not sinful, but noble. The commandment calls him to labor. Man's character should manifest itself in his work, his truthfulness and goodness. His spiritual nature should be noble and enter into his work. He, too, is a spirit, separate from and above his work.

This is a truth man greatly needs to keep in mind. We have to work so much for our daily bread, and sometimes our work becomes so fascinating and profitable, and sometimes so burdensome and discouraging, that it absorbs us. Then God's voice comes to us with authority. We are beings capable of hearing and understanding His commands. He addresses us as spirits separate from and above our work, calls us to lay our work aside and hold communion with Him. The Hebrew sitting with crossed hands in the door of his

tent, looking over the camp at rest and the desert beyond, was forced to think of his relation to the Holy One who had freed him from Egypt and was leading him through the desert to the promised land. In the rush of our modern life the need is not less that man should at times stop his work lest he come to think that the work is part, even the whole of himself. He strains every nerve to improve his farm, to pay off the mortgage, to increase his income, to accumulate wealth. God calls him to stop and think, "What am I? Where am I going? What am I to be when this is all over?" What mole hills are mortgage, and farm, and wealth! You are a spirit, separate from and above your work. Rest awhile and commune with me and you will be ennobled for the work that remains for you on the earth. This reason for the law takes hold of the nature of God and of the nature of man and binds them together with the golden clasp of the Sabbath.

We see also that this commandment not merely follows but carries on the requirement of the Third Commandment. Man is to reverence God with his speech, as a social being, among his fellows. The highest reverence to be given in this way must be in the public worship of God. In order to this men must agree to assemble at certain times, which should occur with suitable frequency. Without such an arrangement the public worship of God must necessarily cease in any community, and upon the whole earth. God meets this need of man and sets apart a suitable portion of time both for individual spiritual culture, and for the social public worship of Himself. If we ask why He should have set apart one seventh rather than

one tenth or any other portion, it is a sufficient answer that some portion is necessary, and God is the best and rightful judge of what portion is best. Those who observe it do not fall behind in the world's work, rather are more efficient in it. In heathen lands toil is uninterrupted: the rest day prevails among the most enlightened, energetic and wealthy nations.

Our Savior, whom we recognize as Lord of the Sabbath, leaving the commandment in full force, changed the day to be observed from the last day of the week to the first, which we delight to call the Lord's Day. This he did by rising from the dead on that day, by appearing to His disciples on that day specially, and through his Apostles in their usage of that day. When the Apostle Paul speaks slightly of the Sabbath he speaks of the Seventh day which the Jewish disciples thought they ought to keep in addition to the Lord's Day, and to keep it with all the restrictions of the ceremonial law. The day comes to us therefore on the authority of God, his gift to us, with the added value as a memorial of the victory of our Savior over sin and death.

The observance of the day is to be based therefore upon the authority of God in this commandment. To the further question, How shall we observe the day? the commandment gives clear general directions, while it allows great liberty of judgment and conscience in particular applications.

We are very plainly directed to observe it as a rest day. The word "Sabbath" is simply the Hebrew word meaning "rest" transferred to our language. We are to remember the Rest Day. We are to do all our work

in six days. We are not to do any work in the Rest Day. Whatever more the day may be grows out of the primal element of rest. Natural science stands by Revelation in bearing witness to the beneficence of this provision. It affirms from the observation of facts that man needs one day's rest in seven, that physical deterioration, and mental as well, and shortening of life, result from the disobedience of this law. The employers of labor are specially commanded not only to rest themselves, but to have those they employ rest also. It is quite obvious that this applies not only to individuals but also to companies and corporations. It is quite obvious also that it not only gives the employed the right to rest if they choose, a priceless right, but it commands them to exercise it—to rest.

We all recognize that State laws have neither right nor power to force men to be religious—a truth men have been slow to learn—but clearly taught by God in his word, and in the experience of the race. For other reasons it is clearly within the province of State laws to command the observance of the Rest Day. For in the first place, a wide observation proves that such a day is necessary for the welfare of all the people. The God-given right of the Rest Day is written in the nature of man as well as in the commandments, and the State should recognize and secure it. In the next place, a large proportion of the citizens of the State, and the larger the better for the State, deem it wrong to work on the Rest Day. Their right of conscience should be protected. In the last place, those devoting the day to a religious use should not be hindered therefrom, nor disturbed therein. The State should to that extent

encourage the religious observance of the day. But whatever the State laws may enact or fail to enact our obligation to God is not affected by them, they cannot excuse us from our duty to Him. The State allows railroad corporations to force their large companies of men to work on the Rest Day, but that does not make it right for us to begin or continue our journey on that day, and the directors of these railways are not excused by the State laws from their responsibility to God.

But we are not only directed to remember the Rest Day, but to remember to keep it holy. God not only rested, but he hallowed the day, and commands us to keep it holy, a day set apart for his worship. Here also is a very clear general direction, while great liberty is allowed in particular application. For observe, God does not say in the commandment how we shall keep the day holy. He leaves that to the judgment and conscience of each one. Each one is to have the design to keep the day holy, and to make such rules for himself as seem best adapted to that end. But he is to be careful that he does not try to force these rules upon others or to judge them thereby. That was the spirit of the Pharisee in the traditions which Christ rebuked and set aside, and we should guard against cherishing the same spirit.

There are several questions prominent with us which should be solved by this principle. What shall I read on the Holy Day and commend to my children? That which tends to keep the day holy, to lift up your spirit and the spirits of your children into fellowship with God, and only that. The question of Sunday newspapers as it concerns us is not the question of printing

and distributing the papers, (it is easy to condemn others,) but of our reading them. Our sin is not in the supply but in the demand, and in the fact that the demand is the cause of the supply and regulates it. Shall I visit my friends on the Holy Day and invite them to visit me? Will such visiting tend to keep the day holy in your family, and in theirs, and in the community as your example has influence? Will it tend to lift up your spirit and the spirits of others into fellowship with God? The observance of the Holy Day in private and in the family is the difficult part of the duty, but a very important part. Whatever freedom there may be from strict rules, however large the appeal to the individual conscience, even of young children, if the design of the day is kept clearly in view with earnest purpose of attaining it, the spirit of obedience to the commandment will fill heart and home with the deep and purifying joy of the Lord's Day.

We have already seen that the day is set apart and hallowed to the social public worship of God. The maintaining of such worship by our personal attendance upon it is obviously required in the commandment to keep the day holy. The public prayer and praise and meditation upon the noblest truths will bring our spirits into fellowship with God. The Sabbath was made for man, and the highest possible benefit we can receive from it is to have our spirits brought into a shape worthy of God.

There are many perplexing features of the observance of the Lord's Day in our modern civilization which God's people who lived before the age of steam and iron never dreamed of. Our Savior's teaching that

works of necessity and of mercy are not violations of the holy rest day should be applied to these perplexities; and should be applied in the spirit he inculcated of judging ourselves rather than others. Keeping up the fires of an ocean steamship and of an iron furnace are plain cases of necessity. Perhaps there are other cases in your homes which are not so plain, of which you must be the judges. The running of a milk train to New York and your shipping milk by that train comes under the head of works of mercy if you do it to minister to the well-being of men, women and little children in the crowded city; but it is a violation of the law if done simply to make money. What is your intention, a holy or a sordid one? Judge yourselves faithfully, but do not judge your neighbor.

There is a growing tendency to make the day one of mere amusement, and a strong plea is made for those who toil through the week on such poor wages that their only home is a crowded room or two in a tenement house, to give them a chance to see the ocean and the green fields. Perhaps a more Christian solution of the grave problem would be better wages and better homes, rather than facilities for pleasures which diminish already scant earnings and give but a poor return—obedience to the eighth commandment rather than violation of the fourth. The amusement of pleasure resorts does not give the rest from labor nor does it yield the spiritual uplift which God designs. It is generally accompanied by fatigue and in many cases by dissipation. It is safe to say that God is a truer and wiser friend of laboring men than are the proprietors of railways and pleasure resorts, and his gift of a holy

rest day they will find a rich blessing if they use it as he directs. But surely if the pleasure-seeking of the poor on God's holy day cannot be justified, the pleasure-seeking of the rich must be utterly condemned.

In order that we may have clear views on this commandment let us not fail to call things by their right names. This commandment is more than the setting forth of a need of our nature, more than advice for our own good. It is a command of God. Breaking the Sabbath is therefore more than an error, more than a mistake. It is a sin. It is a sin because it contemns the authority of God, and that is the essence of all sin. God commands us to remember his rest day, to keep it holy. If we have no design to keep it holy, or make no effort to do so, we set aside the authority of God as of no account to us. It is a sin further against the love of God shining in this commandment. As a father invites his children home to a family gathering because he loves to have them in his presence, so God would have us, His children, come to Him on the Sabbath day because He loves us. If we have no desire to come or make no effort to do so we set aside the love of God as of no account to us. It is a sin further against our higher nature. God calls us to remember our spiritual nature and to guard against degrading ourselves to mere sensual beings. He places the Sabbath as a fence upon the edge of a precipice. We deliberately break down the fence in order that we may throw ourselves down into the sensualism of constant work or unhallowed pleasure. Call Sabbath-breaking by the right name—it is a sin.

We are to keep the rest day holy because God com-

mands it, out of our deep regard for the authority of God. Our design is to keep it holy and we are to make every earnest effort our judgment and conscience commend to the accomplishment of that design. Here, as everywhere, in keeping God's commandments there is great reward. There is great blessedness that comes from keeping the rest day holy to the one keeping it so, and to his fellow men.

Consider the blessings to our fellow men. The holy or religious observance of the day bestows the rest day upon mankind. The civil rest day is but the shadow of God's holy day, a grateful shadow, as of a tree in a sultry land. Take the tree away and the shadow departs. The cupidity of employers, if unrestrained by the law of God, would soon grasp the rest day. The license of pleasure, if unrestrained by the law of God, would soon yield the rest day to cupidity, is fast doing so now. Multitudes have to work on the rest day that other multitudes may have pleasure; and further, such unrestrained pleasure-seeking one day in seven would become such a nuisance that society in self defense would be compelled to abolish the day. The unbelieving world may rail against God and His Church, but while it does so it is receiving from Him through the Church the rich gift of the only rest day it has from grinding labor.

The religious observance of the day also preaches a powerful though silent sermon to the non-church-goer, telling him he is a man, not a beast of burden; that there is a God whom he should worship; that there is an eternal life beyond this fleeting one for which he should prepare. The assembling of God's people for His wor-

ship on His Holy Day preaches the Gospel to those who never enter the church doors.

The religious observance of the day does much also to educate the conscience of a community. Only two kinds of government are possible, the strong arm of a king or the moral power of a people governing themselves. The cultivation of this moral power is needed for the maintenance of our free institutions. It is safe to say that no existing agency can compare in efficiency in this direction with the public worship of God, and we may well call His Holy Day the bulwark of our liberties.

The religious observance of the day further secures the continuance and progress of Christianity in the world. The day is a memorial of creation and redemption. Its memories, its hallowed associations, its influences, its teachings, its worship, all speak eloquently of God, his love for us and our relation to him, and strongly bind our sinful world to His Holy Throne. It is difficult to conceive how Christianity would remain after His Holy Day had departed. The procession of secular days bears rich material gifts to man. The Holy Day spreads heaven's glories over the earth.

The religious observance of the day brings also rich blessing to the one so observing it. However crushing may be the burden of toil and care we carry during all the week, when the Holy Day dawns God himself takes it from our spirits that we may have free and full communion with him. In such communion our spirits are refreshed and strengthened. As the river Nile flows over Egypt at certain times bringing therein the blessing of fruitful seasons, so this river from the Throne of

God flows regularly over our parched lives, bringing therein to our souls fruitfulness in heavenly graces. Our week is like the school-boy's writing page. On the first day our Savior sets before us his holy example. We try to copy it in our busy lives, but how imperfect is our work! Too often the page is straggling and blotted. We have cause to weep bitter tears of disappointment and sorrow. Then comes the Lord's Day, and our Savior gently cheering us to new courage turns over the leaf and gives us again his clear example. One day for teaching, six days for practice, and our patient loving teacher always with us helping and inspiring. Surely as the weeks roll on we should constantly improve until at length when the book of life is finished He may say to each one of us: "Well done."

The Holy Day also gives us a clear view of our heavenly home, the eternal holy rest from all this world's toil and care. A nobleman in England showing a friend through his palace, when they reached the highest window in the tower, said: "From this window on a Sunday we can see the cathedral spires of Durham." "Why on Sunday?" the friend asked. "Because on that day the factories do not pour forth their smoke, and through the clear air the spires are seen." So the fumes and smoke of earth often cloud our vision of heaven. Then comes the Holy Day with its rest from worldly toil and its heavenly breeze, and as the smoke clears away we see the far off spires of our eternal home. How the sight thrills our hearts with bright hopes and firm courage for the remaining journey till we shall reach the Rest at last!

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT.

“Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.”—Ex. 20 : 12.

A human law-giver, in enacting an important code, might consider it beneath his dignity to take notice of children, but God manifests his divine wisdom and love in directly addressing them in this commandment. We recognize at once that the early training of children is considered by God of the greatest importance to their own welfare, to the welfare of the race, and to the honor of Himself. We see also that the command is expressed in such a way that the duty remains long after the childhood stage of our existence is passed, as long as the parental relation exists; even longer, for some of us can only honor father and mother now in our memory. We may well notice also that however low an estimate may have been placed upon woman in the far east and in that ancient day, or may be placed upon her now anywhere, God commands that the mother shall be held in equal honor with the father. He who learns truly to honor his mother at home learns to honor womanhood everywhere.

The position of this commandment among the others has important teachings. It is the center, the heart of the whole law. Our Savior gives us this summary of the law: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the

second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Not only has God given us the power to love, but he has placed us in relationships which call this power into exercise and give it right direction, especially the relationship of parents and children. The deep, strong, pure parental love—Others may hear about it, may have the power to love, but cannot experience it. Only parents feel it, and only a child, *their* child, can awaken it into powerful life. Not only do they love their child, they soon find a yearning for the child's love. They rejoice in the first signs of intelligence. How unspeakably precious are the first signs of recognition and responsive love—the brightening of the eye as father enters the room, the crowing laugh as mother takes the child in her arms! Growing from this is the parent's desire for the child's obedience, an obedience not of fear but of love. How much the parents will sacrifice, not regarding it as sacrifice, to secure the child from evil! How great is their love and their yearning for the child's love! These are beyond estimate. This continues not for a few days or months only, but for years, even for life; for although man is the most finely organized of the animal creation his offspring is the most helpless, requiring the most tender and constant care for years, and his love for his children never dies. God surely in this relationship cultivates love. In the child's heart also a deep true love for the parents is implanted by the Creator, to grow and strengthen as the years roll on. The commandments we have seen reveal both the nature of God and the nature of man, and this commandment in the center of the law enters the relationship God has established

among men and gives the natural affection He there cultivates its noblest possible exercise and meaning. God says in it to parents, "As you love your children, so I love you. As you yearn for their responsive love, so I yearn for yours. I am your Father." God says in it to children, "Love your parents, and therein learn to love me, your Father." The supreme love for God required in the first and great commandment is to find in this relationship its cultivation. So also the love for our neighbor required in the second command of our Savior is like the love of children for each other. God, my Father; man, my brother.

The position of this commandment among the others has a further teaching of great importance. The place of division into the two Tables of the Law is somewhat indistinct. It is in this commandment: but whether it belongs to the First Table, or to the Second, is not quite clear. It certainly treats of duties to man, and so must belong to the Second Table. But hold! May not the parents be regarded as the representatives of God? Then it belongs to the First Table. There is certainly a strong analogy in the relationships. The parents are the nearest cause to the child of its being, its continued existence and its welfare, and this through that wonderful thing God has given them, parental love, which allies them so closely to Himself. We need not try to determine what God seems to have purposely left indistinct. In the indistinctness is the lesson. We are apt to consider duties to man separately, but God joins them indissolubly with duties to Himself. The two tables are not parts of the same law, separate and distinct from each other, but parts God has so joined together that no

man can tell where the one ends and the other begins. The morality required in this law must have religion in it, and the religion required is indissolubly joined with morality.

The position of the commandment in this indistinctness also shows its great importance. Considering it as the last of the First Table, we see that in order that children shall become men and women worshiping God in spirit and in truth, they are to be taught and trained by honoring their parents. Considering it as the first of the Second Table, we see that in order that children shall become men and women fulfilling their duties in the various relations of life, they are to be taught and trained by honoring their parents. Both religion and morality have their foundations laid in the home life of children.

The charge of cruelty to and neglect of children may be brought against the religion and morality of pagan Rome. Christianity has taught the world the interest God has in children. She can never forget that her Lord was once a babe, that He commended to his disciples the childlike spirit, and that He took little children in His arms and blessed them, welcoming them into the kingdom of heaven. In this Christian land and age great attention is being paid to children, in our homes and in our schools. Great advance has been made in this direction within less than a century, and is still being made. We are beginning to follow the divine wisdom and love of the Supreme Law-giver who in joining the two Tables of His Law speaks especially to the children.

In this interest of God in them there is a strong

appeal to children. As soon as this commandment comes to their attention they should respond to this love of God for them and at once strive to keep His law. Here as in the first commandment no outward act is commanded, but our inward spirit or disposition, from which will flow acts of its own character. We are not to allow the natural affection in our hearts for our parents to become cooled or displaced, but we are to cultivate it in obedience to God. We are also to have in our love for our parents a large element of reverence due to them to whom we owe so much and whom God has placed in authority over us.

There are some plain duties embraced in this commandment which we, children of all ages, may profitably consider. We are to honor our parents in our thoughts. Boys and girls, when they begin to go to school and to find associates beyond the home circle and to catch their first view of the great world, are quite apt to indulge the conclusion that they know more and have rather better judgment than their fathers and mothers. It is because you know so little that you think you know so much. When you have passed through this stage of your being, when you have lived a little longer and learned a little more, you will conclude that your parents' views of your studies and the conduct proper for you were much better than your own. To adopt their views now, cheerfully and firmly, will be more modest and wise and certainly more in harmony with this commandment.

We are to honor our parents in our speech. When we speak to them we are to cultivate the respectful tone of voice and use such words as shall give them honor.

The sullen tone and the cross word are absolutely forbidden. When we speak of them, in their presence or in their absence, we are to use terms of honor and love. It is certainly far from right for a young man to speak of his father as "the old man," or "the governor." The bad taste is, here as generally, bad morals. We are to honor our parents in our conduct. A young man will tip his hat to a young lady, and to an aged honorable man, and on the street and in company will be very attentive to their wants. Excellent conduct, provided the young man gives at least equal attention and honor to his father and his mother.

Of course children are to obey their parents. Disobedience breaks the command of God at the same time it breaks the command of the parents. Obedience should flow from the honor in which the parents are held. It should be prompt, cheerful and loving; not full of excuses, not coaxing off, not delaying until a stern command is required, not seeing how little honor it can give—which is giving no honor at all—but loyally consulting the slightest wish of the parents and promptly and lovingly fulfilling it. Obedience should also be faithful, just as complete in the absence of the parents as in their presence. The boy has taken a dangerous position who will do in his father's absence what he knows his father would not approve, and the girl is not safe who has anything to hide from her mother. We are to honor our parents also in working for them, and in need supporting them. Not only is this the prompting of natural affection, not only is it our honor and privilege often to care for those who have so greatly

cared for us, but it is a part of the duty we owe to God in obedience to His commandment.

Much of this, some may say, implies that our parents are perfect. It is easier to fulfill these duties when the parents are worthy, still when we cannot help seeing great defects in them the duties remain. The honor we should give them will lead us to bear with their infirmities, and to conceal their defects as far as possible from others, while we place a high estimate upon their virtues. There is one case which may possibly arise—the parent commands what God forbids. We are then to obey God. He is above all. All the authority the parent possesses is from God, and therefore can never be used against Him.

We may now consider a few reasons why we should honor our parents. The first and greatest is because God commands. His command is written in our own natures and in this holy law. This reason is above all others and embraces all.

Such conduct gives the greatest pleasure to our parents, as the reverse conduct brings to their hearts the keenest suffering. We can never fully appreciate all the care and love father and mother have bestowed upon us in infancy and youth, in sickness and in health, and the yearning of their hearts for our love. Surely we should respond to their love—we should seek their happiness.

Such conduct is itself excellent. There is something within us that approves it, and condemns the reverse. When we see children honoring their parents we can not help feeling, “that is good.” When we see them disobedient and disrespectful we can not help feeling,

“that is wrong.” Many noble examples appeal to this feeling and incite us to a like excellency. When you, boys and girls, go to High School and College you will read Latin and Greek. The greatest poet in each of these languages, each in his greatest poem, gives a glowing account of a man who was a hero. One of the noblest things written of this hero is this: He was one of the warriors of Troy, and when the Greeks captured and destroyed that city he made his escape from the ruins. He fled through the burning streets bearing a heavy burden upon his bended back which greatly hindered his flight, but he never offered to lay it down, it was so valuable to him. It was not money or jewels or any valuable property. He would not have endangered his life for that. The heavy load he carried was his aged and infirm father, and he bore him safely through. His name is and ever will be held in highest honor, and the noblest thing that can be said of him is this: “Æneas saved his father from burning Troy.” You remember a decisive point in the life of Washington. He wanted to be a sailor, and his mother gave a reluctant consent. All things were ready. The ship lay off in the river. His trunk was in the little boat which waited to take him to the ship, and he went to bid good-bye to his mother. He found her in tears. He at once ordered his trunk to be returned to the house and sent word to the ship that he would not go. “I will not break my mother’s heart to gratify myself,” he said, and his mother replied: “George, God has promised to bless those who honor their parents. He will bless you.” We all remember that one of the recent presidents of the United States, when he had

taken the oath of office in the presence of the assembled multitude, in that proud and solemn moment, the supreme moment of his life, turned from the people and kissed his aged mother. But why mention lesser examples? The greatest of all beings, the glorious Son of God, our Savior, when he was on earth, honored his parents. It is said "he was subject to them." For many years he labored for them, and when he endured the shame and agony of the cross he honored his mother and made provision for her welfare. When you find it difficult to obey your parents it will help you to remember that our Lord Jesus Christ obeyed his. When you find it hard to labor for and support them it will nerve you with new courage to think that He even on the cross provided for His mother. Copy the great example here as always, and honor your father and mother.

The commandment itself contains a reason for obedience in that it gives a promise, an assurance that in the providence of God obedience to this commandment will result in long life and prosperity. This sets forth a general rule in the divine government of the race, promoting stability in social welfare. The child honoring his parents learns self control, obedience to law, submission hearty and prompt to rightly constituted authority as a principle of action. Such a child will in all probability become a man of like character. He will obey the laws of health. Entering business he will obey the laws of success, industry, perseverance, economy, enterprise. His powers under full control, he will be also a law-abiding citizen in society. Such character tends to long life and the enjoyment of the

gifts of God. A good citizen enjoys the protection of the State not only, but helps to form a condition of social well-being. The child on the other hand who is disobedient and disrespectful to his parents, who sets aside their authority and God's authority, is cultivating a law-breaking character. He will in all probability become a self-willed man, setting at defiance the laws of God and man. Such a life tends to the undermining of health by excesses, to the waste of property by abuse, to the running into dangers recklessly, and to the overthrow of social well-being. Such a character tends to shorten life and to forfeit the gifts of God. A bad citizen throws away the protection of the State and is an element threatening the stability of social welfare. Honoring parents tends to long life and prosperity in the individual, and as this becomes general, it tends to the long life and prosperity of the nation. There is a wide and rich blessing visibly bestowed in this life on obedience to this commandment.

Of course parents have correspondingly great duties resting upon them, since God places them in such an honorable position and clothes them with such great authority. They are to remember whence the authority comes and why it is given to them. They are to use it in the fear of God and for the welfare of their children and of the community. They should neither lay it aside nor abuse it. They are to govern their children if they would have their children learn to govern themselves. They should also endeavor to be worthy of the honor God commands their children to give them. The influence of their teaching and example upon their children will of necessity be great. It is within their power that it

should also be good. If they are worthy of the honor their children give them, if they rightly estimate and are faithful to the great trust God places in them, their children honoring them and together with them will give God the worship which is His due and will faithfully discharge their duties to men as they arise in the varied relations of life. Blessed indeed are those homes where family worship is established and cherished. Their practice has caught the spirit of this commandment. Parents and children may well meditate together upon the word of God, their rule of living; may well praise Him for the blessed relationship He has established, for that sweetest, dearest place on earth, a Christian home; and may well seek from Him the guidance and grace they need in their duties that the home may be the center and source of pure religion and true morality.

It is quite evident that this commandment covers all those relationships which naturally grow out of the relationship of parents and children. Children are to honor their teachers who stand in the place of their parents to them for certain well defined purposes. The young are to honor the aged. The advancing generation is to honor the departing one, inheriting its achievements, with due appreciation of its worth. The family naturally widens into the tribe and the nation. In the on-flowing stream of human life governments arise and become established. God is the author, in the social nature of man and in the course of his providence, of order, not of confusion; of government, not of anarchy. "The powers that be are ordained of God." Men are born into national inheritances. Few

generations are called upon to create a government: it is generally a growth according to the condition and needs of society, a slow growth extending through ages, changes being wrought gradually by the developing of principles and forces beyond the plan or life of any single man or generation of men. The form of government and its character will be the outgrowth of the intellectual and moral development of the people. Christianity does not propose to make the people better by revolutionizing the government, but to make the government better by revolutionizing the people. With this design she entered the Roman Empire. It was far from being a perfect government, but it was the expression of the moral condition of the existing social life. It was far better than anarchy, and it was her noble and fruitful mission to maintain order in society while she lifted society to a higher moral plane, which would gradually secure a better order of government.

Our noble form of self government is our rich inheritance from the generations past who have lived in this land and in the father-lands, as Christianity has fostered the love of liberty and the power of self control and the principles of righteousness in their social life. Whatever of fruitful struggle there has been, has been for a better government within the reach of the better social condition. To confess that our government today is not perfect is simply to confess that the moral condition of society is not perfect. Christianity does not therefore call up the red flames of anarchy and bid them hasten to destroy, but she sets up her school houses and her churches and conserves the present order while she prepares for all needed advance.

We may regard government therefore as a human institution, but of divine appointment. Since the authority of government is from God, rulers should have a high sense of the dignity of their position as His representatives, and should rule in His fear for the welfare of the people. "Public office is a public trust," is not a new truth or even a whole truth. Though prominent now, it is part of a higher truth. Public office is a divine trust. Rulers should excel in the likeness of Him they represent in true righteousness and in unselfish devotion to the highest interest of man.

Hence also citizens should give their rulers the honor due their high office, and due obedience to the laws of the land. This is a religious duty. The authority of God gives stability to the nation. None but a law-abiding people can be free.

Hence also it is evident that since the authority of the State comes from God it can never be used against Him, can never make it our duty to disobey God. True freedom is obedience to God. Honoring rulers and submission to human laws are enjoined in this commandment. These duties and their limitation by our obligation to God are the foundation of social stability and of all civil and religious liberty.

Citizens in this self-governing nation should give great attention to the affairs of government, from the smallest town office up through the several grades to the highest office in the land. We should elect only such rulers as we will be able to honor, and who will enact only righteous laws. It is certainly very difficult often to respect all the officers of city, state and nation. It is our own fault that it is so. We should

be more careful to elect men worthy of respect. But, whoever is elected, we should give him the respect due the office. It is our right and duty to freely and fully investigate the private character and record of a candidate for office. But the truth should alone be sought. To slander one is base always, specially base when done for political effect. When the election is over the duty of investigating gives place to the duty of honoring the elected ruler, and this rests upon those who have opposed his election as well as upon those who have favored it. He is no longer a private citizen but elevated to office. The honor due the office belongs to him.

Children, honor your parents—citizens, honor your rulers—all men, honor God.

THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT.

“Thou shalt not kill.”—Ex. 20:13.

The most mysterious and valuable of all God's creations is life. Man cannot imitate even its lowest forms. He may paint the rose, showing its form and color, but cannot imitate its life. God seems to have carefully guarded this creation so that it may always be recognized that He is its direct source, the Life-giver. Scientific research and discussion seem to have reached the firm conclusion that life never springs of itself from dead matter, that it only comes into being from the touch of pre-existing life. It is also one of God's most bountiful creations. The earth teems with myriad forms, rising grade upon grade until the highest life on earth, that of man, is reached. These myriad forms are closely related, the great variety being produced by slight deviations from a few general plans. Through this whole realm of life we see the working of a strange law. Life is sustained by death. In its ceaseless round it largely lives upon itself. Vegetable lives upon vegetable. The trees of the forest enrich the soil they grow in by falling leaves and decaying branches. Vegetables give food to animals, the cattle browse upon the grass of the meadows and man lives upon the wheat of the field, animals feed upon animals, fishes upon fishes, birds upon insects, while the lion roams the forest for its prey. All vegetable and animal life alike minister to the higher life of man. If this commandment applied

to all killing, man would soon starve, for his life is sustained by the death of vegetable and animal.

But we are not therefore to conclude that man has an unlimited right to destroy the lower grades of life. God has written in the constitution of man and in his revealed word that man may kill the lower animals when necessary to defend or sustain his higher life. Beyond these exceptions which God himself makes He guards in this commandment his great creation, life, from the hand of man. The prohibition is expressed in the most absolute and general way possible, and should be so considered. God commands us to have a high regard for life, even in its lower forms. Hunting, while it develops manhood, strength, quickness, courage, cannot be justified by the mere pleasure of the hunt, only by seeking food. So with fishing. We have no right to take the life of bird or fish merely for our own sport. We should give our domestic animals kind treatment, sufficient food and but moderate labor. We are to take good care of the life God entrusts to us, and are not to abuse or waste it. All cruelty to animals is forbidden. Children should not be permitted to torment pet animals, certainly not to torture and kill flies. What right have we to take away the life even of a worm? or to cause it the slightest suffering? Man's abuse of his power over lower forms of life in this earth is cruel. Let us recognize that all cruelty is in violation of this commandment, and call it sin.

While the commandment in its absoluteness includes all life, it evidently specially applies to human life. Man is not only the highest of the animals, allied with them in his creation from "the dust of the ground,"

but he is distinct from them in that he was created in the image of God, so possessing a spiritual nature, and as such God places him in dominion over the earth. We are to hold all life in high regard, and hence this human life, higher than all other with which it is related, and differing from all other in possessing the likeness of God, and also clothed with His delegated authority over the earth, is to be held by us as sacred.

Our Savior in his exposition of this commandment teaches us that it forbids not only the act of killing, but as well all those feelings which have a tendency to lead to that act. He also teaches us in his summary of the Second Table of the law, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," that this commandment directs us to cherish the lives both of our neighbors and of ourselves. It is certainly an intimation of the deep depravity into which man has fallen that God finds it necessary to command us not to kill ourselves or our fellow men. The prohibitory form here as elsewhere indicates tendencies that need restraint.

The commandment is addressed to each man and applies to his own life and to the life of his neighbor.

To his own life. He is forbidden to take it. He is commanded to care for it. Man does not own himself, has no title in his own life as before God, has no right to destroy it, but should take good care of it, for it belongs to God. However great troubles may come upon us we are to bear them, not fly from them; however great the consequences of our mistakes and sins we are to endure them, not rebel against them. Man is never to come before God, the Judge of his life, uncalled of him and with the guilt of his own blood on his

soul. We are in this commandment forbidden to brood over our troubles. It is wrong to cultivate a melancholy spirit, or a rebellious one. We should strive against these natural tendencies which threaten life and dishonor God.

God requires us further to have that high regard for our lives which shall lead us to guard and maintain them in the best possible condition. We are to become familiar with the laws of health and obedient to them. All practices shortening life are forbidden, and practices tending to good health and long life are commanded. This commandment enters our homes with the pure air of heaven, with plenty of sunlight, and with all healthful surroundings. The law of God sits down with us at our tables. Appetites are means to an end, not ends in themselves. They are to sustain the system, not to seek simply their own gratification. When a food is unwholesome it is to be refused, no matter how the appetite craves it; nor must appetite ever lead us to eat too much of wholesome food; and the law of God should govern our drinking as well as our eating. It applies also to the manners of the table, to eating fast or slow, in sullen mood or cheerful.

The commandment tells us how we shall dress. Clothing has two purposes, adornment and comfort. These need never conflict. Certainly, adornment should be subordinate to comfort. Fashion often says: "Thin slippers and a small waist." The law of God says: "Follow nature and care for good health." Students of the subject say that in an average well dressed audience not one lady in ten can take a full breath. The lungs, the heart and other vital organs are compressed

in unhealthy ways by tight dressing, often leading to debility and suffering in themselves and in their children. It is to be presumed that our ladies who excel in piety have not seriously considered the subject of their dress as being covered by this commandment. Thin shoes and bare arms venture out to a late party on a winter's night, a severe cold sometimes follows and a speedy death. We say, What a mysterious providence to take one so young! Do we not know that the laws of providence are in favor of good health and long life, and that sickness and death often come directly from our disobedience of these laws.

This commandment directs us in the conduct of our business. In gaining our living we are not needlessly to risk our lives. We are to be masters of our business, not mastered by it. There is a reckless pursuit of business as well as of pleasure. Both are forbidden. Many a business man breaks down under the strain he had no right to assume. The feverish excitement and dangerous rush of our American life may build up fortunes and advance the general material prosperity, but do not have the highest regard for human life. "Better wear out than rust out," is probably true, but neither is good. God commands us to cherish our lives.

The question of health and life is not one of mere expediency and choice but of duty. We are not to make light of this life, but to value it properly. We are not to take care of it for mere enjoyment, but for the earnest service of God to whom it belongs, and of our fellow men who also belong to God. We are to keep the life in good condition by use and for use. The time may come when the life God calls us to guard so care-

fully he will call us to give as freely, to lay it down upon the altar of our country, or in the care of other lives committed to our charge, or as His witnesses at the martyr's stake. Such calls make heroes. The three hundred who defended Greece were heroes. He was a hero as well who a few days ago on Long Island Sound stood in the pilot house, with the flames around him blistering his hands and face and endangering his life, and firmly guided the vessel till it struck the shore. Such calls may never come to us. But the call of duty is now upon us to take the best care of the life God has given us and use it in His service.

God requires further in this commandment that each one shall hold the life of others sacred as well as his own. He is forbidden to take it. He is commanded to care for it. In our law-abiding land where the State enforces this commandment, the need of self-defense seldom arises, though the right clearly remains. In enforcing this commandment the State inflicts the death-penalty for murder not because she has any inherent right over the lives of her citizens, but since God has made this her duty in the law given to Noah, which confirms the instinct of justice in our natures. The growing sentiment in Christian lands that nations should live together peacefully, that they have no more right to fight and kill than individuals have, and consequently that war generally is a stupendous crime, is in clear harmony with this commandment. The right to defend the national existence clearly exists, as does the right of individual self-defense, but international law in our Christian civilization should prevent all call for the exercise of this right.

We are to have such high regard for human life, our own and our neighbors', as belonging to God that we will neither neglect, injure nor destroy it, nor harbor any feelings leading that way, but will guard and cherish it and will cultivate those views and feelings which recognize its sacredness. All malice and hatred are clearly forbidden. We are to guard our hearts against their entrance. If they are already there they must be expelled at once, they must not be harbored or in any way gratified. Not only by blow or weapon is it possible to mar or shorten life. Hateful treatment and malicious words may give sensitive spirits deep and deadly wounds. While we are not to cherish malicious feelings in any degree, we are to carefully guard against awakening such feelings in others. The contentious spirit is to be checked in its small beginnings, for its natural tendency is to hard feelings and deadly hatred. Our pride is not to be cultivated, for an over-estimate of our own importance is sure to be cut to the quick by the slights of others, and arousing into anger will cherish the desire for revenge. High temper quickly flies into anger when provoked and often acts and speaks in the heat of passion, adding fuel to its own flame and striking fire into other hearts. It is said that Julius Cæsar won many victories over his own spirit by the simple rule never to speak or act when provoked until he had repeated slowly the Roman alphabet. As we have that alphabet in use now-a-days we can all be like great Cæsar in that respect, and the more fiery our temper the greater our need to follow his example. It is a question which is worse, "Quick to anger and quick

to cool," or "Slow to anger and slow to cool." Cherished enmity and quick hatred are alike forbidden.

Not all anger is wrong. When a sense of justice exists with any strength anger will be aroused by the sight of wrong. Our Lord Jesus Christ was angry with the Pharisees who murmured against his cures on the Sabbath day, and was filled with moral indignation when he drove the money-changers from the Temple. But our anger must be of a judicial nature to be justified. Selfishness, which blinds a judge, should not enter into it, and it should never be immoderate in degree or continuance, taking on the hue of hatred. Neither is it possible that we should be insulted and not feel it. Christian manhood may feel the insult and keenly make known its feeling without flaming into resentment. So our Savior felt the insult when smitten on the face and made known his feelings in the keen rebuke, "If I have spoken evil bear witness of the evil; but if well why smitest thou me?"

We are to beware of having any prejudice against our neighbor. We are to think of him kindly and speak of him and to him kindly, no matter what he thinks of us, or how he speaks of us or to us, or even if he will not speak to us at all. We are to cherish no enmity in our hearts though he may have enmity in his, but are to cultivate a loving and forgiving spirit, and to seek in wise and loving ways to win his respect and good will. All private grudges and neighborhood feuds if they stand at all must stand under the frowning face of this commandment. Neither can cool indifference to our neighbors' welfare find any place in our hearts under this law of God. The rich, the learned and the

socially distinguished, while they must have special enjoyment with their own class, are never to forget that man is man wherever found, that human life is sacred, however unadorned it may be, and that they are to cherish the lives of their neighbors as their own, seeking their highest well-being, since all alike belong to God.

In the social arrangements of the day lives are often placed in the charge of others. Those having this charge should pay special attention to this commandment. Those who have the management of the great forces of civilization, steam power and electricity, are responsible to God for the use of the power with which He has clothed them. Lives are under their care in crowded factory, stately vessel or rushing train. If in caring for and serving these lives they can earn a fair money reward, who can question their right to enjoy it? But if, seeking simply money, they are carelessly indifferent to their charge, and lives are lost, the largest dividends will be powerless to cleanse their souls from the guilt of blood. The owner of a tenement house, if he regards this commandment at all, will seek the health, comfort and welfare of his tenants. Builders of roads, bridges and houses, if they regard this commandment at all, will seek not only good wages but mainly to do good work, that men's lives may be safe. Employers of labor, if they regard this commandment at all, will not mar and shorten the lives under their care by excessive work and insufficient wages. They will remember that they are employing men, and they are to cherish the lives of all men, especially of those under their care.

Our personal responsibility to God is not lost in our

being members of a community. This commandment directs us to be good citizens and to seek the health and welfare of all the members of the community where we dwell. The sanitary arrangements of city, town and village are commended to our attention. We may not neglect them without guilt. One is not to be so absorbed in his own comforts and the guards he has placed about his own life, and his family's, that he neglects the general health and welfare. The commandment enjoins upon us that public spirit which seeks the best drainage, the purest water supply, and all those arrangements which tend to make the community-life both pleasant and safe. The sanitary condition of a country home is also to be considered by the owner, not only for its inmates but for its neighbors also.

We have lived together in this community for now nearly a dozen years, and you and I can think on the instant of several men who have beyond question died from the effects of intoxicating drinks during that time. It was their own fault, you say. True, but not the whole truth. The liquor seller is to blame, you say. He ought not to have sold to drunkards, or to those intoxicated. True. I have not one word to say in his excuse; but again, not the whole truth. These men who died, when they were boys saw respectable men go into bar-rooms and drink. When they became young men they began to drink, treated often by these respectable men, and treating one another; and so they continued drinking. The sale of liquor was open, almost free, and patronized by men they respected. Evidently the system in which they lived had something to do with their deaths. Now the laws of the State in which

we live give us in this community full power to stop this system, if we so choose, and will take the trouble to do it. It exists to-day, and has existed all these years because we do not choose and will not take the trouble to stop it. And these ten or a dozen men who have died are to blame for their deaths. Yes. The liquor seller is also to blame. Yes—and something more. *We are to blame!* Our garments are not free from their blood. That which has been will be. Within the next few years a few more men will come to untimely deaths. Some who are near and dear to us and who would in a different social system live noble and useful lives. You and I know it will be so, and that it will be so because we do not choose and will not take the trouble to stop the almost free and somewhat respectable and attractive sale of liquor on our streets. Our indifference to the matter is in direct violation of this commandment. We ought to face our responsibility now rather than put it off into eternity, for face it some time we must.

The sacredness of life enjoined in the commandment covers not merely the bodily life, it lies specially in our spiritual life, in the image of God. Is life worth living? asks the worldly philosopher, as if there was some doubt about it. Worth living? Surely it is, since our spiritual life though fallen may be brought into a shape worthy of God, our Father. Herein we see the highest realm of this commandment, the true sacredness of life. We are carefully to avoid in ourselves and in our influence all those things which would have any tendency to destroy the soul. We are to diligently cultivate in ourselves and in our influence all those things which have any tendency to ennoble the soul. The value of the

soul, the sacredness of life, who can estimate it aright! "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." He died upon the cross giving "His life a ransom for many." The mission of our Lord Jesus Christ, His life and death, show the estimate God places upon our lives, the love of God for us. The more clear and controlling our faith in the Savior, the more fully we live a Christian life and put forth a Christian influence over our fellowmen, the more in harmony we will be with the requirement of this commandment. Praise God, that he created us in his image! Praise God, for the glorious salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ!

THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt not commit adultery."—Ex. 20 : 14.

Morality is an essential part of religion. God cannot be truly honored without it. Neither can there be true morality without honoring God. This characteristic of the law elevates duty to man to the highest possible plane, makes it a part of duty to God—hence there is a sacredness in it. We found in the sixth commandment a sacredness of human life. We are forbidden to destroy it. We are commanded to cherish it. In the seventh commandment we see the sacredness of marriage. Now marriage is the crown of the relationship between the sexes, hence there is a sacredness in that whole relationship. We are forbidden to destroy it. We are commanded to cherish it.

We see at once that this precept, as in the former instances, is joined to and advances from the preceding one. The life guarded in the sixth commandment exists in sexes, and so exists for the purpose of perpetuating itself in successive generations. Hence the marriage relation has that main end in view. There are other important ends, but they are subordinate to this main one. That therefore is a healthful and holy way of looking at marriage, of entering it and of living in it, which desires and cherishes children as the gift of God, his rich blessing upon it. Any other view must fall far short of being either healthful or holy. It is said that American families are becoming very small, and

that many exist without a single child. Where this is the case from human desire and purpose, rejecting God's offered gifts, it must be clearly seen as contrary to the divine law of marriage. I can only touch upon the subject at this time and in this place, but I wish to make the point in such a way that it cannot be misunderstood.

This commandment, as it covers the whole relationship between men and women, brings before us a most important and delicate subject which beyond question ought to receive proper attention from the Christian pulpit. Happily our Savior has thrown the delicacy and sanctity of his teachings upon the subject, and we will now select two passages from these to direct our further study. The first directs how men and women should regard each other outside of the marriage relationship, and the second speaks of the marriage relation itself.

The first passage is found in Matt. 5: 27, 28. The tradition taught that the commandment forbade simply the act of adultery. More, says Christ, it forbids all impure thoughts and desires. Our Savior here teaches us very plainly that impure thoughts and desires are forbidden not merely as leading to sin, but as sin in themselves.

Let us be as practical as possible about guarding against the beginnings of this sin. We who are parents should guard against its beginning in our children. We are prone to neglect them at a particular point in their lives when they most need our guidance, the point when a boy becomes a man, when a girl becomes a woman. We all agree that ignorance is not the mother of devo-

tion, and yet act as if ignorance was the mother of purity. Knowledge is the basis of true religion and the safe-guard of virtue. Our children will learn concerning the new-born passions which fire their imagination, either from impure companions or from you, the pure teachers God appoints: and it is a matter of tremendous importance whether they learn purely or impurely. If a father will take his boy aside and give him full instruction concerning his new life, it may save the father many a heart-ache and the boy untold woe and wretchedness. If a mother will in like manner instruct her daughter, it will win her confidence and prove a safe-guard of purity of inestimable value. These new-born passions have a wise purpose in the will of God, and governed by his law they become the source of the purest and richest blessings. They are as God's gift of fire to us. Controlled, it makes our firesides places of comfort and cheer; uncontrolled, it consumes our homes and leaves us miserable wanderers over a wintry waste. They are, like fire, excellent servants but terrible masters. It is well to know their nature and God's law for their control.

We will all do well, and especially the young, to cultivate a taste for purity, so keen and sensitive that it will instinctively turn from the suggestion of impurity with loathing. We can do this in selecting our reading, and there is much need of it. We are in little danger from the boldly and openly impure, from vile pictures and books. Such are for the already vile, and plainly marked "poison" to all others. But men of great genius are not always men of pure morals, and their works often throw the fascinating glamour of

genius around impurity. There are many novels and poems of insinuating vice and suggestive impurity. It is wise to let our novel reading be a very small proportion of the whole, simply for needed recreation, and then only the very best, of noble characters and heroic deeds; and our poetry, of fair ideals and beautiful scenes. The nude in art, the immoral in the drama, the lewd in literature, however true to nature, though the highest specimens of the realistic school—the spirit looking out from these is the hideous spirit of lust. A bright imagination under the control of conscience is an ennobling possession. An impure imagination is an ever present curse. Soar among the stars, dwell among the flowers if you will, but when so many beautiful and grand subjects invite you, do not degrade your noble powers by diving into filthy pools. The selection of a newspaper is not always an easy matter from this point of view. However ably conducted, and however cheap, that paper is a dangerous visitor to our homes which slurs virtue and revels in vice. Let it go to its own company, while we welcome the one which tells of vice with shame and of virtue with delight.

We should cultivate the taste for purity in the choice of our companionship. Associate with those who tolerate sensual manners, undue familiarity, broad speech, unclean stories, and we will speedily lower our ideas of propriety, and dangerously wound our faith in the honor of woman and in the virtue of man. Let our acquaintanceship even, as far as it is a matter of our choice, be of those whose delight is in pure thinking and feeling, in clean speaking and living, and let our friendship, which is altogether a matter of choice, be only with the

pure. There are men, and, alas! some women, who deliberately prefer vice to virtue, the excitement of animal passions to the testimony of a good conscience and a pure heart, who sneer at chastity and modesty and purity, who have none of these in themselves, but the reverse, the devil's look in the eye, and the devil's lust in the heart. Such should awaken our thorough contempt, and oftentimes the most faithful and kindly treatment we can give them is to let them see very plainly how much we despise them. Christian public opinion should always seek to awaken repentance and restoration, but this it can never do by appearing to approve in the slightest degree of the bold and impenitent slayer of virtue.

Good books and pure friends delight the mind and cultivate the heart. We cannot over-estimate their importance. We strive to have in our gardens the most beautiful flowers and the finest flavored fruit, but we are careful to have no poison vine however brilliant its colors trail over the flowers, no poison berries however tempting to the sight hang side by side with the fruit. Let us take at least as good care of our minds and hearts as we do of our gardens.

Now we may approach the subject of marriage. A high ideal of marriage is a great incentive to purity of heart. If young people anticipate a pure marriage every step towards it must be in the way of virtue. If you wish to win a pure white soul for your life-long companion you will be unwilling to give less than you wish to receive. You will keep your own soul sweet and clean.

Supreme affection adequately tested, and an oppor-

tunity to marry, you may regard as the call of God to the pure state of marriage; not a passing fancy, but a well tried affection; not mere admiration for beauty of person, but deep regard for beauty of character. This may arise suddenly, "love at first sight," or it may be the growth of a long and intimate friendship, only be sure it is a supreme and worthy affection. Not marriage from heedless impulse without thought, not marriage from convenience without heart, not marriage simply to be married because one has a chance and it may be now or never. Such motives may seem angelic beings beckoning on to a happy life, but may prove to be demons leading to wretchedness. Better wait until God calls you to enter marriage by giving you a deep true love to lead the way. And the opportunity to marry should be not merely responsive love, but a clear intimation in His providence as seen in bodily health and surrounding conditions, that you will be able to form that sweetest of all places on earth, a Christian home. Now in your courtship and engagement cherish pure thoughts and noble purposes. Let no thought, word or action undermine your own high self-respect or the pure regard you should hold for the one you love. These you should have now, and when in after married life you look back in memory to your courtship days.

Let us now consider the second passage selected from the teachings of our Savior which sets forth the nature of the marriage relation. This is found in the 10th chapter of Mark, from the second to the twelfth verse. He clearly teaches that since God hath made them male and female a man will leave all other ties and cleave to

his wife, and that these twain are no more twain but one flesh, for God hath joined them together.

Marriage is therefore a divine institution founded in the nature of man as created by God. There is no higher mode of living for man and woman than to be husband and wife. It is the most intimate and sacred union that can exist on earth, to which all other relations are to give place. It is the union of one man and one woman for life, whose duties are not only to each other and to society, but to God. The legitimate power of the State is simply to enforce the law of God. If the State attempts to separate those whom God hath joined together, or to unite those whom God forbids to unite, her laws are nullities at the bar of conscience. The polygamy and divorce among the Jews did not arise from God's will, but from the hardness of men's hearts. They were contrary to God's law and were restrained and almost eradicated by it. Here as everywhere the teaching of nature is in harmony with the Ten Commandments. Men and women are existing to-day, and always have been, the wide world over, in nearly equal numbers, making provision for such marriages and for such alone. Besides, the supreme affection, which we have seen is the only natural basis of marriage, can exist only between two, and is life-long.

We have an organized system of polygamy within the bounds of our land, and the nation is not much disturbed in conscience by the corrupting abomination. Neither of the political parties in the present presidential campaign are demanding with any earnestness that the laws of God and of the United States against polygamy should be enforced in the Territories. They

evidently do not believe that the presentation of such a moral issue would secure many votes. The abomination goes on, and we, the people, do not much care.

But there is a worse feature still in our national life. The law of God recognizes but one ground of divorce, adultery. This is emphatically taught by our Savior. The divorce laws of many States are in open conflict with this law of God. Cruelty, desertion, drunkenness and lesser causes are grounds of divorce, and in a few States the power to grant divorce is left largely to the discretion of the courts who frequently can hear but one side of the case. So incompatibility of temper is deemed a sufficient cause for man to put asunder what God has joined together. Our own State keeps close to the Christian standard, but she is beginning to feel the corrupting influence of bad neighbors. These lax divorce laws lower the estimate of marriage: they cultivate heedlessness in entering marriage: they foster a spirit of restlessness in marriage, for many frivolous quarrels would be quenched by the permanency of the relation which are inflamed by the prospect of an easy separation: and they encourage and make light of infidelity in marriage. Their whole tendency is to disintegrate the home and degrade womanhood.

God's institution of marriage is the foundation of the family, and the family is the foundation of Society, the State, and the Church. Rome rose by the sanctity of her family life, and fell when it was undermined, as any fabric however stately will fall when the foundation is removed. Her rise was through the courage of her men and the virtue of her women. The perpetual fire on the altar of the Temple of Vesta tended by a chosen

band of white-robed virgins was a true symbol of her strength. But the days of degeneration came and the fire flickered and went out. There were no divorces in the early years of her history. There were many easily obtained divorces in the years of her luxury. Mutual consent was all that was needed to break the tie. Now the Roman laws in their later laxness are at the basis of much of our divorce legislation, and have displaced the law of God. We should be aroused from indifference by her experience. Like cause will produce like effect. Beyond love of our country Christian sentiment should arouse in its strength and impress God's law of marriage upon the statute books of our States.

It is enough to enshrine marriage in our regard that it is ordained by God and governed by his law. Now all God's laws are for the highest good of man, and hence we find many inestimable blessings flowing from marriage.

It confers happiness upon the married. True, there are unhappy marriages. Those who marry for property will be very apt to find the husband or wife an incumbrance. Those who marry heedlessly will find here as everywhere that heedlessness brings disaster. But the great majority of married people are happier for the marriage, as happy as their circumstances and character will allow. Poverty can never have the pleasures of wealth, but can have more pleasure in a loving marriage than in single loneliness. Love makes many a cottage happy. Covetousness can never have the pleasure of generosity, but in a loving marriage it finds dwarfing influences, and so becomes a smaller barrier to happiness. Selfishness in whatever form can never have real

happiness, but true love in marriage tends to destroy selfishness.

Marriage is God's grand institution for cultivating love in human hearts. What would this sin-stricken world be without the affections of the family circle, the love of husband and wife, parents and children, brothers and sisters? What refining influences come into this world with a little child! What delightful and elevating feelings are awakened by a babe! Oh, mothers! rocking the cradle, you may well look up to God with eyes filled with happy tears. He has bestowed upon you a most precious gift. You may well look down upon your babe with unspeakable love. You may well look out into the future picturing for your child a noble life on earth, and an eternal blessedness in heaven. Happiest of women! you have an immortal soul akin to yours in your loving care. How selfish and narrow and hard our hearts and lives would become were it not for God's gift of children, awakening gratitude to him, self-sacrificing love for them and all the sweet sympathies and tender patient ministries of the home! What more helpless than a babe? God in marriage secures the might of love for its helplessness. What more ignorant? God secures teachers whose patience is well nigh inexhaustible. Is there danger the child may become rough and selfish? In the required yielding to one another of brothers and sisters of different ages is found an antidote of selfishness and the cultivation of gentle manners. Certainly the child will need government. The family is God's place for cultivating obedience to law from the earliest hours of childhood.

Submission to right authority is the spirit of a good child, of a good citizen, of a good Christian.

Is there any wonder then that God guards this blessed institution of marriage against all that would pollute and destroy it? If the frequency and earnestness of the warnings of the Holy Scripture against any sin measure the tendency of man to commit that sin, then impurity is one of the most fearfully prevalent and dreadful sins of the race; and so the history of the past and of to-day plainly teaches. The lurking places of this sin exist in every large city. "Dead Seas," some one has called them, whose vapors even are deadly, and these seas have their bays and inlets in every town and village of our land. The Proverbs speak in warning of the strange woman. She uses all her charms to corrupt and destroy men, especially young men. As she passes along the streets she awakens the laugh of bad men, the pity of good men, and the horror of the pure. She sinks down into the hell of misery and despair. But she sinks not alone; she drags down with her many whom she has corrupted. Well may her house be called the gate-way of hell! Once she was a babe in her mother's arms. Once she was a beautiful maiden, the pride of her brother's heart. But thoughts of evil entered her heart, "she forsook the guide of her youth," her footsteps took the pathway to hell, and she soon became the tempter of others.

And surely there must be in hell a place still lower than hers which belongs to him who first instilled those thoughts of evil into her heart, and who led her by the hand when her footsteps were first directed in the pathway of vice. How will he quail when he stands before

the pure white throne of the Judge of all! And if there is a still lower place in hell it must belong to the viper, who, crawling into the family, fastens his glittering eyes upon the cherished wife and fascinates her to her ruin. The lightning of God's wrath will flash its hot cuttings of remorse through his heart, and through hers, forevermore. And surely there must be a still lower place in hell for the married man who leaves a confiding wife, betraying her trust and love, proves false to his most solemn vows, and in his sensual lust revels with the impure only to make them more impure, damning both himself and them.

Our laws are lax here too. They do not regard adultery and its hideous kindred as crimes. To steal ten dollars sends a man to prison. To steal happiness and honor only gives a right to sue for damages. And has Society, the State, no interest in such things? Surely adultery is a crime. It should be so pronounced by the State—a crime next in penalty to murder. Public opinion has some healthfulness in it, but is unjust in giving its severest condemnation to the woman. Even when she is the tempter, the man should be at least equally condemned; and it is too weak to demand laws making the offense criminal. The more of delicacy and sanctity there is thrown around the relation of the sexes, and the more of personal honor there is secured to woman, the more elevated and strong will be the character of the State; and her laws should be framed like to God's law, to secure these ends. If Tacitus is to be believed our forefathers, when they lived under the German forests, were comparatively free from the

common leprosy of barbarism. They considered there was something divine in woman. They revered a pure family life. They taught the young the spirit of purity. It was their custom to bury the adulterer alive in the mud. The Anglo-Saxons are the most powerful race on earth to-day. One secret of their power is that from the first they have revered virtue. Our hold on power depends largely upon our hold on purity. May it not be, with us, as it was with the ancient Romans, that our virtue becomes corrupted by the power and luxury it has gained. However silent our laws may be, let us never forget that God is not silent. The Bible does not whisper, it thunders peal on peal the hot denunciations of divine wrath against the adulterer.

Marriage is further ennobled in our thought since God has chosen this most intimate and sacred union to illustrate the union between Christ and His Church. The union illustrated throws its clear light back upon the illustration, and shows married people the spirit which should rule their lives. Whatever motives have led the way, and however well or poorly suited to each other they may be, they have entered the relationship, they have assumed its duties, and now let them cultivate that spirit which alone can secure blessing in marriage and honor God. "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord." Love and honor him. Cherish this spirit, for God hath made him head of the family. "He is the head of the wife even as Christ is head of the Church." "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church." Cherish

that self-sacrificing, peculiar, ever-faithful love for her which shall more and more resemble the love Christ bears His Church. Know you not that of you twain God hath made one flesh? that you are joined to each other by his holy and blessed institution of marriage? Whatever mistakes you may have made, do not try to correct them by making still others, but cultivate the spirit God directs and you will find the blessedness he gives.

Turn our thoughts now to the union between God and His people. On the plains of Northern Italy there stands an ancient and beautiful city. Near its center rises a building of pure white marble, wonderful for its grandeur and beauty, seeming more like a dream from heaven than a creation of the earth. As one stands upon the roof of this cathedral of Milan, surrounded by the multitude of its dazzling pinnacles and spires, he may look far off to the north, over the plains and hills, until his eye rests upon the snow-clad summits of the Alps, those other pinnacles and spires which God himself created, and clothed with the ever pure white garments of the skies. So, from this purest of earth's relationship we lift our thoughts to the mystical union of life and love, between the heaven and the earth, the marriage of the Church to her Divine Lord. Who shall speak of the love and faithfulness of this Divine Bridegroom, the love which knows no changing, which led Him to lay down His life for His Church? How steadily and warmly should her love go out to Him! Let her never listen to the whispers of the false world. Let coldness never chill her heart, but may she be

always heavenly minded and clothed in the spotless robe of His righteousness, adorned as a Bride for her Husband. Let us all remember we are living in the presence of God, under the pure eyes of our Savior. Let us have our thoughts consciously open to His inspection and our lives pure in His sight.

THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT.

“Thou shalt not steal.”—Ex. 20: 15.

This globe upon which we live belongs to God. He made it. His creative power brought it through various stages to its present condition. He clothed it with beauty over mountain and plain and sea, and He has endowed it with all its fruitfulness. It is His. He has given a life interest in it to man, made it his home during the first, the material stage of his existence. With regard to the earth itself and all it contains man is simply God's tenant. He owes homage and obedience to the owner. The money we give to sustain the public worship of God and to advance His cause is not charity in the usual sense of that word, but justice, His due. That we are left judges of the amount and the direction of our contributions, only increases our obligation; as if a landlord should say to his tenant, “Make all you can from the farm and give me what you think is a just rent.” And the appeal to our honor is greater than it could be in any such case, since all we are as well as all we have comes from God.

As with our general right in the earth, so with our particular property among each other. The right of individual property comes from God. This important truth should be clearly seen and firmly held, especially in our land and day. It does not arise from the usefulness of the arrangement to the well-being of society. The expediency of any arrangement is a matter of

opinion, and the opinion of even the great majority has no control over the conscience of those who think differently. But God has written on the conscience, "Thou shalt not steal," and reason as he may, man cannot entirely destroy the writing. It does not arise from any social agreement or compact, expressed or implied. Common consent does not create the right of property. It can neither give it, nor take it away. All it can do is simply to recognize the fact that man has a right to the results of his enterprise and labor. A man takes a cup of water from a flowing river. It is his. If all men should combine to take it away from him, they would have to disobey the still small voice of quiet authority speaking in their souls, "Thou shalt not steal." Neither does the right of individual property arise from the law of the State or Nation. It exists prior to such law and entirely independent of it. The law cannot ignore the right, cannot deprive a man of his right. Neither can an unjust law give a moral title to property. It cannot justify a conscientious man in entering upon its possession. The saying, "I will take all the law gives me," is either immoral or thoughtless. It amounts to saying, "I will make the law of the land rather than the law of God my rule of conduct in matters of property." The province of the State is simply to define and enforce the law of God, to guard the right, provide for its transfer and for its descent through the generations.

The only possible source of the individual right of property is the will of God, and he has written his will very clearly in the nature of property itself, and upon the conscience of man. This commandment guards a

God-given right. As we have seen a sacredness in human life, and in the relationship of the sexes, so here we see there is a sacredness in the right of individual property. We are commanded to cherish it. We are forbidden to destroy it.

What is property? Look again at the globe, and there are some things upon it now which did not exist when it was prepared for man's home. There are ships upon the sea, opulent cities upon the coasts and rivers, towns, villages and country homes widely scattered over many lands, cultivated farms where forests waved, great highways, crossing plains and piercing mountains, and waving over all the plume of factory smoke. Not a single one of these things or a single element of them has been brought to the earth from any other realm. All these things have come from the earth itself, and they have all come forth at the bidding of a single agency, the labor of man. Property is the creature of man's toil. It is the material of the earth changed in form or position by man's labor. The cup of water taken from the river, the apple picked or cultivated, the stone cut from the mountain, whether builded into a wall or carved into a statue, wherever the material of the earth is changed by human labor there is the right of property. A recent writer claims that he owns the pen with which he writes, for labor has brought the material of the earth into the shape of the pen, and he has purchased this result of labor with the result of his labors in other directions; and undoubtedly he is right. Then he denies man's right to individual property in land, says he has no more right to the land than he has to the air or the sky. But man cannot change the air

or sky by his labor, while he does change the land as radically as the material of the pen. The main thing in land values with us to-day is not the land, strange as it may seem, but the labor that has been expended upon the land and its surroundings, the nearness and highways to markets, the generous tillage of generations and the accumulation of improvements, and these are inseparable from the land.

God's will written upon the nature of property and upon the conscience of man is simply this—that every man has the individual right to the results of his own labor. Social compacts and State laws have but one legitimate province, to guard this divinely given right. They should protect every man in the production and holding of property, the result of his own labor. In proportion as they do this they cultivate in man high and noble qualities, industry, energy, enterprise, foresight, economy, integrity, honesty—qualities of great value to the individual and society—while they check qualities injurious to both, as idleness, prodigality, avarice and dishonesty. They foster comfort and true culture, while they check luxury and guard against the want of the necessities of life. That State laws have not always had this aim, is a matter of history. In some lands they have assuredly fostered an aristocracy of wealth. That State laws do not fully secure these results, is a matter of fact, seen in our own land and in all lands to-day. Even if they were perfect it would require complete and universal obedience to them to secure their full results; and that they are human laws, confesses their imperfection. Wherever intense selfishness exists, wedded in some cases to energy and enterprise,

and in other cases to idleness and prodigality, there immense fortunes will exist by the side of abject poverty. It is possible also that State laws and social conditions may give opportunities and approval to unscrupulous selfish energy, while they also encourage selfish idleness, and so help build the palace on the avenue where luxury revels, and the tenement house on the back street where men, women and children are crowded in misery and starvation.

But while social institutions may be unjust and in effect foster stealing, the law of God forbids stealing and is always just. This precept sends forth justice to solve the great problem of poverty. It gives every man a right to the results of his labor. Individual obedience and the uplift of social conditions and State laws to this standard will secure a just distribution of the accumulated property of the world. There are loud cries of grasping unrest in the world to-day. "Monopoly and Trusts," cries Wealth. "Combination and strikes," shouts Labor. Competition is the pass-word of political economy. Amid the warring sounds our Christian civilization is beginning to hear the quiet voice of this commandment commending just arbitration and hearty co-operation to solve her difficult problems.

Beneath these loud cries are the deep mutterings of social unrest. In Europe there have arisen societies whose common object is social revolution, and we do well to have more than a general far-off interest in the matter, since there is a large immigration of these societies into our nation, embracing many of their ablest and most radical leaders, who make this land their refuge when they dare no longer remain in their own.

There are many grades of Socialists and Communists, and comparatively few probably deserve the name of Anarchists, but certainly this name may be given to many of their most radical leaders. Their base demand is that marriage and private property shall be abolished. They cast off the authority of God. "There is no God," "There is no right nor wrong," "There is no future life," "Man is an animal, though of a high order—let him live as an animal." Shall we say that these are the hot outbreathings of a sinful nature? Yes, but the sin is not all on their side. It is sinful nature ground down into a mass of suffering and degradation by the heel of oppression, until, aroused by the consciousness of bitter wrong and rank injustice, it flames up in wrath and clamors to destroy and to enjoy. Shall we shut them out from our land? What! shut out the oppressed because they are not angels! Let them find a refuge, but let it be a refuge in a religion and an education which live justly, in obedience to this commandment. Their wild and angry opinions can never even touch the secure foundation upon which our Christian society is builded. Marriage and the right of private property are not civil institutions, to be changed or abolished by the caprice of the people, but divine institutions based upon the authority of God.

Let us now direct our attention to some particulars in which this commandment guards the right of private property. Of course outright robbery and theft are forbidden. These vices like all others are not fully formed at once. They grow from small beginnings. A boy may begin to steal at his mother's cake basket or sugar bowl when he takes what he knows is not his, what his

mother would not give him if he asked, and because his mother does not see him. That course of action carried out a little further may bring him to the state-prison. Sometimes a boy at school stronger than his fellow takes from him something he wants, and laughs in his face when he complains. Such a boy is called a bully, and there is hardly a more contemptible character on the face of the earth than a grown up bully. He uses his strength to *oppress* when he ought to *protect* the weak. He is a robber, and whether he gets there or not he ought to go to state-prison. Boys and girls, never take anything that does not belong to you, not even a pin. Be honest.

But this commandment, like all the others, in forbidding the greatest offense forbids all lesser ones of kindred character, and the spirit which prompts to such, and it commands the reverse spirit and action. A very little study will probably show that if we were to be judged simply by this commandment, leaving all the others out of view, the very best of us would have to plead "guilty" before the throne of God. There are many ways of breaking the law which are so common that even good people practice them without suspecting themselves of transgressing. They have not thought carefully of the matter. I have heard these expositions called "eye-openers." I intend that they shall deserve the name, for only in this way can they be of any profit to us. Let me speak plainly, since I am speaking to myself as well as to you, and since we are trying together simply to find out the important truth, how the law of God in all its precepts applies to our hearts and lives.

Where a transfer of property is made we are commanded to make an honest bargain, to see that an equivalent is given and received. Instead of each thinking and planning only for himself, he is to think and plan for the other man as well. Each is to secure the other in his rights. Yet there are several maxims familiar in a Christian community which indicate a prevailing opinion and practice opposed to this law. "It is better to cheat than to be cheated." "Let the buyer take care of himself." "The buyer is at the mercy of the seller." The seller generally has the weights and measures in his care, in store and on farm. If you have any suspicion your's are just a little short, rest not until they are known to be absolutely correct. Think not this is a little thing. God calls it by a very strong name, saying that a false balance is an abomination to him. The seller also has the best means of knowing of the quality of the article sold. A lady buys a piece of silk in the city and at home finds a flaw in the middle. We all condemn the merchant in New York. But if he comes to us to buy a horse, that is a different matter. Let him keep his eyes open. In selling horses as in selling silks all flaws should be revealed.

There is a large class of offenses committed against the general public which would not be committed between individuals, but it is evident that a large number on one side makes no difference in the rule of right. This applies to all adulterations. Probably there is great adulteration of liquors, there may be some adulteration of sugars, but we are not engaged in these lines and the matter though interesting does not concern our

honesty. But we are quite generally engaged in the milk business. There is a certain kind of feed used for cows which produces large quantities of milk. It is claimed also that the quality of this milk is good. Still the fact remains that those who raise milk for butter-making never use this kind of feed, only those who raise milk for sale. The only way the milk business can be defended from the charge of Sabbath desecration is that it affords a needed article of diet to multitudes, especially the children, in the great city. That this is so should lead a conscientious man to be very careful that this important article of diet is pure and wholesome. Feed the children of others as you would feed your own. A certain chemical preparation is sold in large quantities in this community whose sole use is to give butter a fine yellow appearance, increasing its value for sale. It is not the rich yellow butter it sells for, but poor white butter colored, and the increased price must be called the wages of fraud. It is frequently said and perhaps it is sometimes true, but it can never be honest, that the best apples and potatoes are in the top of the barrel.

The buyer too should regard the rights of the other man. The seller surely has a right to the value of the article and to a proper return for his enterprise in bringing it to the hand of the buyer, and also to be considered honest. What means then this almost universal custom of beating down the price? Is it to give the seller his just dues, to get the article at its just price; or is it to get it at its lowest possible price, taking advantage of the weaker will or ignorance or necessity of the seller?

The labor problem is one of the perplexing questions

of the day, made so largely by the vast corporations and combinations engaged in it. We have the simple elements of it in our experience in hiring labor on our farms, and the principles of this commandment easily applied to these would, if faithfully applied to the larger and more complex problem, fully solve it. Some of us sell our labor. We should be very careful to give what we sell in quality and in quantity. Whether the buyer is present or absent we should take care of his interest in our labor, and see that it is fully satisfied. To get all the wages we can and give as little labor as possible is not being in harmony with this law. On the other hand the buyer of labor has a very clear duty. It is often all a poor man has to sell. He is often so situated that he must have work or starve, and he is often almost entirely dependent upon us for work, and we need his labor. Now we are to give him a just price for his labor, that is of course what it is worth to us. We are not to take advantage of his situation and hire him at starvation wages. We are not to withhold his wages a moment after they are due. We are to so deal with others that they have no cause to complain of us to God. And if Labor and Capital, whether on a small or large scale, would each think of its obligation to the other under God's law, the problem would be solved. The supply and demand theory of political economy is not so wise as the "Thou shalt not steal" of God.

The commandment covers that large field of business where property is not transferred, but intrusted. Sometimes men are paid for caring for money or other property, and rules for its care are expressed or implied,

as in the case of a public officer or treasurer, the cashier of a bank, the trustee or executor of an estate. In all such cases the right is not to use, the duty is to care for and guard. When such a one uses the property in his own business or in speculation, he steals. He probably intends to return it, nevertheless the act is stealing. He takes that which does not belong to him without the consent of the owner and uses it for himself. If he returns it, he returns stolen property, and is not discovered. If he does not return it he is discovered. That is all the difference. He keeps that which he had no right to have. His having it in his own use was stealing. Keeping it is only continued stealing. Embezzlement, defalcation, breach of trust, are fine words we have invented to make light of a serious offense. Even with these words it needs to be said, that it is not the discovery that deserves them so much, as the thing that is discovered. It is not the failure to return that is the embezzlement. It is the taking, in the first stage of it.

The borrower of anything does not own it. He only has the right to use. He should be sure he has the power to keep before he borrows, should take the best possible care of it while he has it, and should be careful to return it at the proper time. This certainly applies to an umbrella, and it applies also to money. The borrower of money, while he has the right to use it for himself, has no right to unduly risk it. He should take extra care of it, that he may make a full return. It is not his. The lender of money has a right to seek security and a proper interest for the use of his money, but he has no right to take advantage of the necessity

of the borrower. The rule, "Think of the other man—do not steal from him," applies here too, and to the lender as much as to the borrower. Fair Credit is the inspiring spirit of much of the business activity in Christian lands. She can only remain fair as she stands radiant in the light of this commandment. The payment of a debt is a religious obligation.

There are cases where a transfer of property is made but nothing is returned. This is a very clear case, you will say at once. It is stealing. By some standard or other the parties may be in agreement, yet it is stealing. Then all betting is stealing, whether it be about a horse race or a presidential election, whether for a pair of gloves or for a thousand dollars. The subject and amount have no effect upon the nature of the transaction. So also with lottery and gambling—the place and object do not change the nature of the act. It is just as much stealing at a church-fair for some trifling thing as it is in a low bar-room for drinks, or in a gambling palace for large amounts of money. True, all are agreed who bet or gamble; each would win if he could, and feels in honor bound to give when the other wins. But that only puts this color on it: One steals from those who would steal from him, if they could, that is, one is not only a thief, but is associating with thieves.

There are certain transactions in the Stock and Produce Exchanges of our great cities which it would be hard to find more proper names for than betting and gambling. The advance in material prosperity so marvelous in our civilization is largely due to those energetic and courageous men who risk their fortunes in great enterprises. These exchanges give a wide field

of legitimate business to such men in whom often splendid honesty is combined with great business ability. Large fortunes are frequently and quickly and honorably made by giving a just equivalent in management and enterprise.

But, on the other hand, that is a very significant word heard sometimes in exchanges, "a corner." One man or set of men quietly buys nearly all the stock of a certain railroad that is in the market. Intimations are now thrown out and offers to sell made in such a way that the stock is depressed, and other dealers and their clients, thinking it is going still lower, sell stock they do not possess, promising to deliver it at a certain time, believing that they will be able to buy before that time at a still lower figure, and so make money. Those who already hold nearly all the stock purchase these promises to deliver stock, well knowing that such stock cannot be obtained except from themselves. They have the sellers now in a corner and begin to squeeze them to deliver the promised stock. This they can only do by buying it of the men who have them in the corner, at their own prices, and this they must do, or fail in business. So they pay double or thruple the price for which they promised to sell, and the holder of the stock both keeps it and pockets the money. In the recent wheat "corner" in Chicago in the last two days of September the price of wheat rose from less than a dollar to over two dollars a bushel, because one man held nearly all the wheat in the city and also many promises to deliver wheat on those days, which the promisors could only fulfill by buying of him on his own terms. Thus he made a large fortune in a few days, while others lost a

like amount, and he made it without giving an equivalent.

Suppose now the "corner" was one of force instead of deceit, and one man had a dozen men in a corner of a room and at the point of a revolver threatened their lives unless they bought their way out at his price. That would be robbery, and it would make no difference in principle if all those men had just been engaged in a desperate struggle each to get all the others in the corner. One man has succeeded, that is all, but it is success in robbery. Yet our sympathies do not go out very warmly to the robbed, since they were trying to rob, though their families perhaps are brought down from luxury to need in an instant. But our sympathies must go out to the poor who must feel sooner or later the effects of the growth of immense fortunes by speculative robbery. The following week in Chicago the bakers put up the price of bread one cent a loaf. That means suffering to many poor. This was done, not because wheat was scarce in the country—there is plenty; not because there are no facilities to bring it to the centers of population—there are the best; but because a fictitious value is given to it by "cornering" it. Now, it is quite evident that not only are the men engaged in such robbery at fault, but the laws are at fault that provide for and permit it, and the social condition is at fault that applauds and welcomes such a robber to its highest ranks. Large "corners" occur but seldom, but much of the buying and selling stocks and produce is not dealing in the articles themselves, in either present or future values, but simply amounts to betting on the rise or fall of prices. Some system

ought to be devised to prevent this, and at the same time provide for the legitimate trade on a large scale and the fostering of large and daring enterprises. Until this is devised and carried out some of the best places in the land on which to write this commandment of God, "Thou shalt not steal," are the doors of the Stock and Produce Exchanges.

This commandment applies of course to corporations and communities and to individual relations to these, in membership or in dealings. It is quite obvious that when individuals combine in companies, they neither lose their rights nor lay aside their duties. Corporations have no right to take advantage of the necessity of men, no right to crush the poor, no right to make slaves of their employees. Each member, though he tries to shield himself in the crowd, is seen by the Great Judge. Churches should be examples of honorable dealing. On the other hand, the prevalent opinion that one may take advantage of a *corporation* without sin, is wrong. A jury sometimes gives a heavy verdict against a corporation, not so much from the justice of the case as because it is a corporation. They in effect steal from the corporation, for, though they do not put the money in their own pockets, giving stolen property away does not lessen guilt. There are some who do not seem to think it wrong to steal from the nation or the community. They try to evade their taxes, or seek not a just assessment but the lowest possible assessment of their property. So men working for a corporation or community often fail to give the full time and labor they would give if their employer was looking on. Many are conscientious, but some are not. It is hardly

worth while to go to Albany or Washington for instances. Working out the road tax is a sufficient example.

Our consciences should be sensitive on this whole subject. Honesty to one another is a duty we owe to God.

There is one feature of this commandment which does not belong to the others so fully and clearly, that is the possibility and duty of restitution. If any are conscious that you have wronged others in this matter there is but one thing for you to do, if it is in your power. *Make full restitution.* No matter how much it may be to your shame, no matter how much it may cost you. There can be no true repentance while you remain in possession of the fruits of wrong doing. That is not leaving sin, but continuing in it. You cannot hope to have forgiveness in Christ or any interest in him until full restitution is made.

The heart of honesty to our fellowmen is honesty to God. It is because we have withheld from Him his due, the consecration of our hearts and lives; because we have been dishonest to Him, that we are prone to be dishonest with each other. God in Christ is providing for and calling for the restitution of our hearts and lives to him.

THE NINTH COMMANDMENT.

“Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.”—Ex. 20: 16.

We at once think of a court of justice and of bearing witness there. The great Law-giver and Judge comes by this commandment into these courts, His representatives on earth, and directs that all their rules and practices shall be administered in the interest of truth, and that judges and lawyers shall devote all their energies to this end. Lawyers, in managing the causes of their clients and in the examination and cross examination of witnesses, are here commanded to seek only the truth and to seek the whole truth, and judges on the bench are to see that the truth is discovered and prevails.

To bear false witness before such courts, to take away the property, reputation, liberty or life of our neighbor, is the highest offense against this commandment. As the less is included in the greater, all lesser offenses of kindred nature and all feelings and dispositions naturally leading to them are included in the prohibition, and the reverse feelings and acts are commanded.

Among the dispositions forbidden, a very important and controlling one is want of loyalty to truth. The commandment therefore checks all propensities to lying, and commands truthfulness of speech to and about our neighbor. It is very difficult to over-estimate the value of truth or the importance of being truthful in char-

acter and speech. There is a reality to the things and the laws which surround us and are within us which we call *truth*. When our thoughts exactly correspond with this reality we have apprehended truth. When we conform ourselves to this we are true. The knowledge of truth is of great value to us if it leads us to be true, to be in harmony with nature and to obey her laws. If our thought does not exactly correspond with this reality we are in error, and error is a mischief to us. We disobey the laws, we abuse the things about us, we are like blind men striking against obstacles, falling into pits. The nature of things remains unchanged, the laws are immutable, but we are false to them. Truth is not merely to be known, it is to be transmuted into life. Man is to be so hearty in his allegiance to the truth he knows that he lives it and speaks it. The man who knows the truth and disobeys it is false in his nature. He may not deceive his neighbors as to himself. Every one may know he is a false man, but his whole life is bearing false witness as to the truth, and as to it may deceive many. The greater part of the truth we possess we have derived from others. A man deprived of all communication with his fellows would gain but little knowledge by his own unaided observation. There is an exchange of truth. Men who search in one realm give the truth they find to their fellows who are searching in other realms, and receive truth from them in return, and each generation leaves its rich legacy of inherited and acquired truth to the following, and thus the race advances in the knowledge of truth.

Wide is the realm of truth, in earth and sky, in matter

and spirit, in time and eternity. Man should not shut himself or his fellow out from any portion of it. Upon the truth in nature and her laws our existence depends. We reap what we sow. Bread is food. Effect follows cause. We know upon what to depend. Truth is just as essential to man's intellectual, moral and spiritual well-being. We are to search for it, we are to yield ourselves to it in loyal obedience, and we are to faithfully communicate it. If any one bears false witness to any part of the wide realm of truth it is always against his neighbor, depriving him wrongfully of that which is of the greatest importance to his well-being.

Great is the difference between truth and falsehood. Infinity and eternity cannot measure it. Of God it is said: "He is light. He is the truth." Of the Devil it is said: "There is no truth in him. He is a liar and the father of it." Hell is the home of universal falsehood and distrust. Each one there is alone in the midst of others, deceiving and being deceived, distrusting and being distrusted. Heaven is the home of universal truth and confidence. Each one there is a member of a blessed society, trusting and being trusted, a society of clear eyes and bright faces, of true tongues and loving hearts. Oh, radiant Truth! we yield thee our allegiance. Lead thou us on to ever higher and more shining heights, even up to heaven and God! The more worthy we become of confidence and the more confidence we have in each other the more will the society on earth resemble that of heaven. The whole influence of falsehood is to disorganize society. It brings suspicion and distrust into the community, even into the family, and, alas! makes one deserving only of distrust.

False witness is always against our neighbor, against society.

The more we follow truth the nearer we advance to God. The truths in nature are His thoughts, written on the heavens in light, on the earth in beauty, on our souls in virtue. As we express truth we help others advance to him, by small steps or large, according to the importance of the truths we speak. But false witness is always against our neighbor, since it leads him to wander away from God.

Other commandments have taught us the sacredness of human life, of the relation between the sexes, of property. This teaches us the sacredness of truth. The world itself is a great court. God is the ever-present Judge. Whenever we speak we speak as witnesses about some person or thing. The third commandment directs that speech, the crowning glory of man, shall be used in the praise of God. This commandment further directs us to use this noble gift of intelligent speech in conveying truth to our fellow man. We are to speak truth to our neighbor in all matters of common concern; and we are to speak truth of our neighbor whenever we speak of him.

The commandment requires truth in ordinary conversation. Loyalty to truth will put us on our guard against certain tendencies in describing things or narrating events which would leave a false impression. Conjecture and partial information will be spoken of as such, not made to pass for complete knowledge. We will strive to know fully that we may speak clearly. Vividness, sprightliness and color will be employed to interest in and set forth the truth, not to gain applause,

and all exaggeration will be avoided. Our aim will not be selfish, to be considered as having had a wonderful experience, or as having fine descriptive powers, or as being well informed, but will be simply to convey truth to our neighbor. Some subjects are pleasant, others are unpleasant. Christian courtesy and gentleness will always have due consideration for the tastes and feelings of others. This commandment commends the choice of pleasing and wholesome subjects of conversation, and also the truthful expression of personal approval and commendation, but it frowns upon flattery, insincerity and deceit.

In all those cases in which we speak to our neighbor with intent to lead him to a desired line of conduct, our self-interest may be aroused against our loyalty to truth. It is in such cases that much of the casuistry upon this subject has arisen. The mind of man has been active in devising ways of avoiding this rule of truth-telling when it stood in the way of his selfish interests, and has often succeeded in deceiving his own conscience. The subtleties of casuistry, instead of clearing, are apt to cloud our views of right and wrong. When a man allows himself to consider whether it is ever right for him to do wrong, he has already become so confused in mind and conscience that he is quite apt to decide that his self-interest is more important than God's eternal laws, or at least that he may exercise his ingenuity in evading them. Mental reservation, double meaning, significant silence, the end justifies the means, and all kindred evasions, may quiet a confused conscience, but will never do to plead before a truth-loving God.

But, says the business man, must I reveal the defects

in the property I am trying to sell? Must I reveal the fact I have skillfully acquired, that prices in the market will be much lower to-morrow? Certainly you must, or you will both lie and steal in one act. But, says the Jesuit, is not a lie justified if thereby I greatly advance the cause of the Church? Ask the business man what he thinks about it. His conscience will probably have clear and strong views where his interests are not so strong. The plea of the detective is that he may lie to the criminal since he has no right to the truth. But the criminal's right is not the only right involved. That advance of justice which causes justice herself to blush, and at the same time undermines the truthful character of the people, is an advance in the wrong direction. Political managers, speakers and papers are not exempt from this commandment, though many of them seem to act as if they were. The conscience of some politicians must be a very queer kind of thing, or else they have never heard of this commandment. The fair discussion of great issues, and a deliberate and careful decision upon them, afford a training of national intellect and character of great value. But in proportion as pretense and sophistry, false declarations and false promises, deceit and fraud enter political campaigns, they destroy the truthfulness of the national character. In the whole realm of influencing the conduct of others we will do better to go directly to the commandment for our rule of life than to the teachings of the Jesuits. Truth is sacred. A lie is abominable in God's sight. Better far be defeated by adherence to the right than triumph by the practice of wrong. There is a success that is not worth what it costs.

In the training of children both at home and in school we should constantly recognize that truthfulness is absolutely essential to their intellectual and moral well-being. It is an honor to have it said of man or child, "He always speaks the truth. You can depend upon him. There is no deceit in him." Truthfulness of character enables a man to pass with uplifted head among his fellows, frankly looking them in the face. A false character has either a downcast, sneaking look, or a brazen boldness which repels. A true man walks uprightly before God, having His approval. A false man skulks away from God, conscious of His condemnation.

We are to speak truth not only *to* our neighbor but *about* him. This commandment guards a man's reputation.

"Good name in man or woman
Is the immediate jewel of their souls."

Reputation is one of our most valuable possessions, but it is unlike all the others in a striking respect. Man has his other precious possessions largely in his own keeping, his life, his wife, his property, his character, but his reputation is entirely in the keeping of his neighbors. A man's character no one can touch but himself. A man's reputation any one can touch except himself. To wound a reputation is to betray a sacred trust God has placed in our hands. We are our brother's keeper in all respects to some extent. We are the keeper of his reputation to the full extent. We should guard it as we have a right to desire him to guard ours.

This commandment gives each man a right to have his reputation the exact expression of his character. It is evident it does not guard hypocrisy. It upholds truth, not falsehood. It is for the interest of all to have hypocrisy unmasked, even of the hypocrite himself, and it may become our solemn duty to unmask it. In detecting a hypocrite we should be very sure of the detection. We should not allow the confidence a life should win to be undermined by a single action, or even by several separate actions, but be sure that the whole course of life is wilfully in the opposite direction from the appearance. Having made the detection we should reveal it only from a sense of duty, for the interest of our neighbors when concealing it would be false to them, never from revenge or any evil feeling to the hypocrite, but trying to win him to a true life. Christ unmasked the Pharisees, but it was to awaken them to a sense of their sin and especially to defend the multitude against their false influence.

The invention of evil reports about our neighbor is of course the highest offense against his reputation, but it is of infrequent occurrence. Such a slanderer is a foul compound of falsehood and malice, and is odious in God's sight and contemptible in man's. Some men's minds are quickened in controversy to remember all the evil things they have ever heard about their neighbors, even years ago, and without any restraint or regard for truth their angry tongues pour forth the bitter tale. But such offenses also are rare—the culmination of anger and malice with reckless indifference to truth. It is for us to guard against the small beginnings of propensities whose culmination is so hideous.

It is certainly not wrong to speak about our neighbors. Ordinary conversation may and should be about persons as well as things. Men and women, their lives, their affairs, their characters, are the most interesting and often the most profitable subjects of conversation. But we should be so true to them and to ourselves that we only speak of them in their absence as we would in their presence, and as we have a right to desire them to speak of us. It may often be our duty to warn against the evil propensities of others, but the duty should be clear and the warning truthful and kindly, and should be accompanied with a full acknowledgment of good qualities when possible. We should guard against secret prejudice against our neighbor, or envy of him, and should cultivate such love for him that we will rejoice in his good qualities and in his good name, that we will sorrow over the faults in him we cannot help seeing, and throw over them the garment of Christian charity, rather than exulting to proclaim them to the world. We should have the "charity that thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity but rejoiceth in the truth." If we cannot speak truthfully in favor of our neighbor, and no need of warning others exists, it is generally our duty not to speak at all.

Some try to ease their conscience in repeating a bad story by saying they "do not believe it." This is abominable. Refute it, then, when it comes to your ears, but do not let your tongue spread it. To say that "they are sorry for it," is very little better. We can not justify our speaking of another's fall by our allegiance to the particular virtue from which he fell. Our hearty love for honesty and purity will lead us to be pure and

honest, not to talk about it, certainly not to speak of the impurity and dishonesty of others. We will cherish the virtue in the holy of holies of our hearts and not gloat over the one who has fallen—telling it with smooth tongue as good news—but look upon him with tear-dimmed eyes, and speak of him only when needed to warn the purity and honesty of others.

This commandment should govern not only our tongues but our hearts and ears as well. It forbids an appetite for gossip, a desire to hear detraction and a tendency to form unfavorable opinions of others. By holding our peace when we have it in our power to defend, by failing to mention the good when the evil is spoken of, by encouraging the telling of evil by eager listening, we assault the reputation of our neighbor by the assent of our silence.

There is a modern statue of Truth, instinct with the fire of genius, which strongly incites an opposite spirit and action. A stately woman in pure white marble, with beautiful and firm face, wears on her head a helmet and carries a sword in her hand. At her feet lies a mask touched by the point of her sword. She has just smitten it from the face of Slander, and now she proudly draws her robe away from its polluting touch.

It is wonderful but true that some men seem to place their whole religion in detraction. They strive to discover the evil in professing Christians and are blind to the good. They think and say the worst possible of the evil they find. They judge the whole class by the few they have so unjustly treated, and they place great value upon their own comparative goodness. The religious hope that is based upon the failure of others,

and the holiness that is keen eyed to see only it, can neither of them be regarded as of the very finest quality, nor can a practice in direct violation of this commandment be regarded as commending one to God.

In Spencer's Fairy Queen the Red Cross hero, Holiness, defends fair Una, Truth, against all the assaults of the evil knights, Error and Falsehood. So the Christian knight should be devoted in his allegiance to Truth and should chivalrously defend it against all assailants however mighty, and only in this way can he ever hope to merit the name of Holiness. Our Lord Jesus Christ is himself the Truth. In His teaching and life and death he fulfills the law and the promises of God, and fully reveals the Father to us. Yielding ourselves to Him in loyal devotion, He will lead us in the true and living way to heaven and God, and as we pass along our lives and lips will speak the truth of greatest value to our neighbor.

THE TENTH COMMANDMENT.

“Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor’s.”—Ex. 20: 17.

The first commandment directs the spirit in its relation to God, without mentioning a single outward act. In the following commands the spirit is directed in its outward acts, of worship of God, reverence for His name, observance of His Sabbath, and honoring His representatives. With the fifth command duty to man begins. The spirit is still the subject of the law and is directed in its outward manifestations of honoring superiors, giving due regard to the sacredness of human life, of the right of property, of the relationship between man and woman, of truth to and about our neighbor, until in this last commandment the spirit emerges from all outward actions and, as in the first commandment, is itself purely and simply the subject of the law, only now specially in its duty to its neighbor. “Thou shalt not covet!” The positive command under the prohibitory form of the first precept, as our Savior teaches, is, “Love God supremely.” This love is required by all the commandments of outward duty to God and man until in this last precept, as Christ again teaches, its positive form is like unto the first, “Love thy neighbor as thyself.” Thus the whole law is seen to be spiritual. If any have thought that I have made too much of some of these commandments, if they will reflect carefully upon

the spiritual nature of the law they will soon share with me the conviction that I have not made and cannot make one half enough of a single one of them. There is a depth and comprehensiveness about the law that cannot be fully measured. There is no virtue within the range of human duty but is comprehended here. There is no vice within the reach of human action but is directly forbidden here.

This commandment, "Thou shalt not covet," is followed by several specifications, closing with an all-embracing one. This striking feature indicates a tendency in our nature needing restraint which is so strong that it would evade a general prohibition, and so the Law-giver specifies objects in such a way that it is absolutely impossible for the most ingenious man to discover anything belonging to his neighbor that he is permitted to covet.

While the emphasis is upon the coveting, not upon the objects, the nature of the objects specified further indicates that the domestic mode of life of man is pleasing to God and is specially guarded by him. The house as the seat of the home-life, the wife—the soul of that life—and all the surroundings of that life are specially mentioned. What protects our homes? The bolts and bars as we lock them up at night, the precautions we take against intrusion? Certainly these have their proper effect. More than this, the State lifts its shield over every home, places the invisible watchman of its law before each door. In this the State is simply endeavoring to enforce the outward observance of God's law. Back of all these agencies the real protection of our

homes is the voice of supreme authority speaking to the conscience of every man—"Thou shalt not covet."

In the fact that the property of our neighbor is guarded from our coveting, we are further instructed that those qualities of character which are needed to the acquisition of property are not forbidden but are commended in this commandment. How can one have a home at all or any thing rightfully unless it be by the exercise of industry, economy, good management, thrift and perseverance, of carefulness and energy? The results of these economic virtues in their proper exercise are guarded in the commandment; but we are to be watchful against making the virtues vicious in their action by degrading them into the slaves of covetousness. A fair exchange of property is also needed to a proper enjoyment of it, and is therefore commended, not prohibited, in this precept. When our neighbor desires us to have what he has a right to convey upon one giving him a fair equivalent for it, our desire to have what he desires to give does not injure but benefits him. But if our desire to have what he is willing to give is such that it will take advantage of his ignorance or necessity, or make such use of our superior skill that we fail to give a just equivalent, such desire is clearly forbidden. Many a good bargain, as we call it, and many a fine fortune, have been made by the exercise of such desires, by failure to give just equivalents, and what we call good and fine are pronounced by this precept covetousness, abhorred by God. Our desire to have must respect our neighbor's interests as much as our own, must recognize his equal right and

the equal right of all men to have and to hold their own. All other desire is forbidden.

If we consider the commandment as simply forbidding the coveting of a particular thing belonging to a particular neighbor, each one of us will probably plead "not guilty." We consider it mean to entice a man's servant from him by the offer of better wages or easier work, and a man's claim upon his servant is less now-a-days than of old, and we do not cast covetous eyes upon any of his possessions. But even here we may possibly deceive ourselves. This is an insidious vice and it has many degrees and related emotions. We sometimes hear the expression, "I wish I had that," spoken of some particular thing belonging to our neighbor, often corrected at once by, "I mean I wish I had something just like it." The first expression shows often the nature of the desire, and gives us reason to fear that the incipient vice forbidden may be lurking in our hearts, while the second is the rebuke of conscience which such desire deserves.

Besides, coveting is closely related to envy, a regret that others have what we do not; and akin to this is secret satisfaction at the misfortunes of others. Perhaps there may be more of these feelings in our hearts than we are willing to acknowledge. It sometimes happens that when we are in trouble we find ourselves taking a kind of comfort from the thought that others are in such trouble too, and perhaps worse off than we are, when this reflection should rather increase our discomfort. Besides, pride is generally a satisfaction that we are better than our neighbors, or have something they have not; and anger is often awakened by our

neighbor's rights standing in the way opposing our desires, and discontentment with God's dealings is frequently a matter of comparison, a feeling against God because He made our neighbor's lot better than ours. All these, and many others, are vices closely related to covetousness—the tie seems to be that of parentage, and if the children are in our hearts we may infer that the hideous mother is not far off.

Turning now to the positive feature of this commandment, we are to delight in our neighbor's good, to rejoice in his prosperity, and we are to strive to promote it. In advancing our own interests we are not to neglect his, but are to seek them as we seek our own. We are to love our neighbor as ourselves. It is the direct opposite of seeking the whole world for ourselves and letting our neighbor take care of himself as best he can, forcing him to spend a large amount of his energy in guarding against our encroachments.

The commandment is generally regarded as inculcating a spirit of contentment with our lot in God's providence. We are to remember that not all contentment is commended to us. There is a contentment which is the most miserable selfishness, a satisfaction with our good fortune wedded with careless indifference to the lot of others. There is a contentment which is unmanly, arising from laziness. Alas! also a contentment that is akin to despair, a listless spirit crushed by adversity. "Godliness with contentment is great gain." This commandment commends this kind of contentment, that which arises from godliness, from obeying His commandments, loving God supremely and our neighbor as ourselves. The servants of Mammon are

ever filled with a restless discontent, ever striving to grasp each for himself the greatest possible amount of earthly goods. The servants of God have all their powers in highest exercise in honoring Him and in promoting the general welfare, and are filled with cheerful contentment in the powers God has given them, in the field of their exercise, the lot in life He has assigned them, and in the result of their labors, the care the Father takes of them. This kind of contentment the commandment enjoins upon us.

But you may say, "Is not the spirit of discontent, the restless seeking to acquire, the moving power of our high civilization, of the material advancement of the nation and the world? To make money moves the rushing train, flashes its commands over the electric wire, drives the machinery of the factory, fills the storehouses of the busy city, and spreads the sails of ships on every sea. Would not the world settle down into stagnation, would not man's fine powers rust in idleness, if it were not for selfish ambition?" There may be lurking in our minds the thought that the spirit of love is very fine in theory but is impracticable, that our plan of life is better than God's plan, at any rate that striving to acquire for one's self has produced the present material prosperity in our nation and in the world.

Human activity may be aroused by wrong motives and conducted by wrong rules; the activity itself, of brain and hand, will produce much good, but so aroused and conducted will likewise produce much evil. Look again at the world's great prosperity. There are dark places in it as well as bright. Here are palaces in the fair and noble city, filled with luxury and happiness.

Alas! here also are tenement houses filled with squalor and misery. There is the great factory turning out beautiful goods in rich profusion, and, alas! also turning out stunted manhood, men, women and children, who have slaved themselves to death through long hours on small pay. Here is a great railroad corporation stretching its lines in all directions and bringing inestimable blessings wherever it goes. Alas! also, it is gorging itself with the hard earnings of those who are dependent upon it to carry their goods to market and with the ill requited service of those who endanger their lives in its employ in order that it may pay large dividends upon watered stock. There is a tendency in the world's activity to place immense wealth in the hands of a few to the detriment of the many, a tendency upon which we may well look with apprehension for the welfare of our free institutions. The civilization of the age brings material prosperity to the race, great blessings to all classes of society, even to the very poor. Far better is it than the stagnation of barbarism. But is it the highest conceivable civilization? Is it God's ideal of man's welfare on earth? Are we dwelling in the millennium? Is there no possible advance, no good to aspire to, no evil to destroy?

Man's great powers may be aroused to a fuller activity than any yet reached. Material prosperity may be gained in richer amounts than any yet dreamed of, and better still, may be made the hand-maid of spiritual welfare; and evils now raging may be checked and destroyed by bringing a new motive to bear on man's activities, love of God and man, by guiding them by a new rule, the law of God. Which is nobler—to have a

great factory governed by the principle, "Make all the money I can," or by the reverse principle, "The welfare of my employees and the good of my customers"? Which is nobler—the Statesman whose motto is, "The nation must honor and serve my great abilities," or one whose rule is to devote all his energies to the welfare of the nation? Which is nobler—Napoleon or Washington? There is much already in our high civilization of enthusiastic love for humanity, and of supreme love for God, and it is the very best part of it. And a far higher and richer civilization will be brought about when the spirit of love shall hold universal sway. The more our lives are taken from the selfish grasping principle and become ruled by the spirit of love, the nobler they will be and the more useful in hastening on the higher civilization.

It is evident, therefore, that the commandment not merely forbids the coveting of a particular thing from a particular neighbor, but that general coveting of material things which ignores our neighbor's interests, and which leads one to be absorbed in grasping little or much for himself. No wonder God pronounces such a covetous man an idolater and declares that he cannot enter heaven. His heart is empty of God, is empty of his brother man, and is filled with self. As well try to satisfy a fire with dry wood as a covetous man with gold. The more you pile on the fiercer will burn the flaming passion. We look with condescending amusement upon our children intently engaged with their toys, real to them they are so young and ignorant, and our amusement changes to reproof when they begin to quarrel over them and fight for them. How must a

higher order of beings look upon us intensely interested in the things of time and sense, so foolish are we and ignorant with our toys, even struggling and fighting for them, while as spiritual beings we are capable of serving God and loving one another! There is a fable of a covetous man who found his way one moonlight night into a fairy's palace. There was a rich profusion of rare beauty on every side, and many bars of solid gold were scattered freely about. The beauty he did not see, so intent was he in gathering up the bars of gold, and he took away a heavy load, all he could carry. In the morning he found the golden bars were only worthless sticks, and the air was filled with the scornful laughter of the invisible fairies. When we awake upon the realities of eternity we will find much we value highly now as golden bars worthless as useless sticks, and the angels will be too sorrowful to laugh at us.

This commandment, as the first and all the others, is addressed to the race of man by being addressed to each member of the race. It singles each one of us out from the multitude and speaks to us personally, "Thou shalt not covet." When we examine our hearts alone with God, does not conscience compel each one to say, "I think more of myself than I do of my neighbor"? Or even force us to say, with bowed head, "I think more of myself than I do of my God"?

This commandment seeks to control the nature back of the thought and desire—that which thinks and desires. It seeks to control the involuntary movement of this nature, when an object presents itself and desire is awakened without the consent of the will. Though

these desires never result in action, though they are not only held in check but are driven back, they are sin. They are not forbidden lest they may result in action, but because they are in themselves sinful in God's sight. They do not injure our neighbor, but they show our own corrupt nature. The Apostle Paul knew that cherished desire was sin, but thought he was free from sin when he held desire in check. But this commandment taught him that lust itself was sin, that involuntary coveting could spring only from a corrupt nature, sinful in God's sight.

Meditation upon the spiritual nature of the commandments and a faithful application of them to our hearts and lives will convince us that we can never be justified under the law. No man can believe that God, the just Judge, will ever say of him, "The law has nothing against him. He is entitled to all the rewards of obedience." No man's conscience can say this of himself now, but must say of his record, "I am guilty," and of his nature, "I am sinful." We recognize that the law is right, but are compelled to confess that we have not kept it, that we do not keep it, and that we are so corrupt that we are unable to keep it perfectly.

This must be said of every man who has ever lived, of whom we have any knowledge, with a single exception. Judged by this law we cannot find a single defect in the life of Jesus Christ. He kept it in its letter and in its spirit, in its First Table and in its Second; kept it perfectly from the beginning of his life until its close. The perfectness of this law, among all other laws, shows that it is divine. The perfectness of this life, among all other lives, shows that He is divine. This is also the

claim of the perfect man, Jesus Christ, that he is the Son of God. He claims there is no sin in him, the Bible states there is no sin in him, we can find no trace of sin in him; yet this sinless one dies upon the cross, an accursed death under the law. This glorious Son of God, the perfect man, who has kept the law and has borne its curse, promises that whosoever believes in Him shall be saved from sin. All the promises of God, promises of grace and glory, are in the Son of God, Jesus Christ, accomplished and proclaimed.

Now the Christian differs from all other men in three respects. All are alike guilty under the law, but the Christian acknowledges his guilt, and seeks forgiveness from God through Jesus Christ. All are alike sinful, but the Christian acknowledges his sinfulness and seeks the complete renewal of his nature from God, through Jesus Christ. All are alike unable to keep the law of God perfectly, but the Christian acknowledges his weakness and relies upon God through Jesus Christ for needed daily grace. So relying, his earnest purpose and constant endeavor are to keep all the commandments of God. The law is the rule of his life. Thus he serves the Savior whom he loves. Thus he constantly advances toward perfection. His present attainment is the measure of his Christ-likeness. It should constantly become more clear and full, until he shall see Him as He is and be like Him.

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

FROM LAW TO PRAYER.

It is God's law for the human race—the authoritative statement of the fundamental principles in the constitution of man and human society—the law of man's being.

It is the Lord's Prayer, the prayer in which the Divine wisdom, descending upon us in perfect love, has condensed and enshrined for us all that can possibly ascend from human hearts to the Divine heart.

As the law, so the prayer is for humanity, the single prayer the human race, if enlightened by the Divine law and renewed in nature according to it, would utter, being sure it would be fulfilled.

It is the prayer for the lonely closet, where the single soul renewed in the nature of his Savior meets God face to face. It is the prayer for the Church, the body of Christ, beyond which nothing can be expressed even in her most sublime moods, her loftiest and holiest assemblies. But it is also the prayer not peculiar to any man or set of men, or tribe or race, but for humanity. Christ taught it to the multitudes when He was proclaiming the principles of His kingdom, just after He had brought out the spiritual nature of the law of God; and He taught the same prayer to His disciples when they asked Him to teach them a prayer peculiar to them, as John had taught

His disciples—the universal prayer is the peculiar prayer. It is the prayer, however, not of universal human wants but of human needs. Sinful human wants; what a prayer that would be, and how its fulfilling would curse mankind! But human needs as revealed by the law of our being and as voiced for us by the longing, loving heart of our Savior—this is the Lord's Prayer; its fulfilling reestablishes the law and makes it a delight—fills the heart and life of mankind with blessing. Wherever there is a human heart the wide world over, there the law describes its nature and the prayer voices forth its need; whenever such a soul recognizes its nature and becomes conscious of its need, there the need becomes a hopeful, prayerful desire in the spirit and name of Christ, and prays as the Lord has taught him. If under the teaching of the Holy Spirit we learn to make it our prayer, it will bear us up as on angel wings into the presence of the Eternal God. Very important is it that we should know its meaning and have its spirit, lest we should use the words alone, which is mere formality—lest we should use the prayer and contradict it in our lives, which is hypocrisy; both are displeasing to God and destructive to us. The longing of the Savior's heart for mankind must become the longing of our hearts if we would be sincere in our prayers. Very brief is the prayer; the youngest memory will not find it a burden. Very distinct is each petition, as if issuing forth from a reverent, thoughtful silence, the preparation of the heart in the presence of God. Very full is the prayer. It is comprehensive; in its six petitions the whole world wide round of human need is gathered up and clearly presented to the heavenly Father.

Very suggestive is the order of the petitions. The succession is that of the commandments. As the law has two tables, so the prayer has two clearly marked divisions. The law shows us the first place in our duty belongs to God. The prayer gives the first place in our desire to God. Looking now more intently, we can see that the order in which the fundamental principles of human nature are stated in the commandments is the order in which these awakened into desires express themselves in the petitions.

The address of the prayer, "Our Father which art in Heaven," covers the first commandment, the oneness of God, and the second as well—His spirituality. The Hallowed Name of the prayer is the Holy Name of the third commandment. The "Thy Kingdom come" covers the fourth commandment, in which we are taught to regard ourselves as of heavenly spirit and relationship while we labor upon the earth. Some one has said "the Sabbath is the banner of the Kingdom." "Thy will be done" covers the source of authority as set forth in the fifth commandment. Then in the second division of the prayer the petitions follow the order of the commandments. The life and property guarded by the sixth, seventh, and eighth commandments voice themselves in the "daily bread," the property needed to sustain life. The daily forgiveness of ourselves by God and of our neighbors by us, speaks of the truth in relation to God's judgment and human judgment. The covetousness forbidden in the tenth commandment finds its antidote in the last petition.

Reverently and thoughtfully we have studied the law; in like spirit we now turn to the prayer.

“OUR FATHER WHICH ART IN HEAVEN.”

Matt. vi : 9.

This is the simple though grand beginning of a grand though simple prayer. The prayer is so simple that the child at the mother's knee may lisp the words and understand much of their meaning. It is so grand that the noblest man of the whole race, of strongest intellect and purest heart, his whole nature breathed upon by the spirit of God, cannot fathom its meaning. However much we may enter upon the spirit of this simple address, it is so grand that there will still be room for the “groanings of the Spirit which cannot be uttered.”

In it we find that Jesus Christ reveals God as our Father, and awakens in human hearts the child spirit. Fatherhood, as denoting origin and government, was vaguely attributed to the Supreme God by some of the heathen nations of antiquity, as seen in the names of their gods—as Jupiter, the Jove-father of gods and men; but the idea of affectionate fatherhood seems never to have entered their thought. So the thought of God as a loving Father is entirely absent from the heathen religions prevailing in the world to-day. It is confessed that the Jews had clearer ideas of God than other nations. There was but one God to them; He was a Person, supreme over all His works, the Lord of Hosts, their God Jehovah; but the thought of Him as their loving Father was not familiar to them. There are many prayers recorded in the Old Testament in which holy men call upon God by the names they best knew Him by, but

there is not one in which they address Him as their Father. Among the many references to the Supreme Being crowding the various books of the Old Testament the name Father is applied to God only seven times—five times as father of the Hebrew people, and twice as father of individuals. One of these is a prediction that men will one day pray to God, calling Him Father. That which was dim in the Old Testament becomes bright in the New. Jesus Christ calls God by the name of Father quite generally, and this not only as the Son of God, but as the Son of Man—the ideal man—and He not only gives His disciples permission, he bids them “when ye pray, say Our Father.” He takes us into the presence of the Great Jehovah, and says to us: “He who is my Father is your Father too. When you come with me into His presence, say ‘Our Father.’” This was a striking innovation, and must have startled the most pious souls—those most familiar with the Scriptures.

But it is more than a teaching Christ gives; it is a revelation He makes. He is the manifestation of the Father. Christ's self-sacrifice, in His atoning life and death, is the Father's declaration of Himself by the Son. Jehovah, the Holy One of Israel, the Law-giver, the Judge, the King, is the Father, and the infinite love of His fatherly heart makes provision in greatest self-sacrifice for the salvation of men from the guilt and power of sin. He who came forth from God has revealed the Divine heart to us, and, lo! it is a father's heart; the darkened, blood-stained cross shines with the glory of infinite love over the sin-cursed world.

This is the grandest, tenderest, most inspiring thought of God that has ever come to man—the Father revealed

in Christ. We are so familiar with it that we can hardly realize the wondrous change it has wrought in the religious thought and life of the race. The heathen world stands before the thought of God as we sometimes stand before a summer thunder-storm—black, flashing with lightning, terrible—and with fear and awe they bow in the dust. With us the glorious sun has broken through and driven away the cloud, the heart of nature rejoices, the grass is jeweled with rain-drops, the flowers are bright with beautiful colors, there is a burst of melody from singing birds, and with trust and love we look up into the face of our Father revealed in Jesus Christ. God is not the cloud, but the sun.

In order to have the child spirit awakened in our hearts we must believe this revelation of God, we must receive the Lord Jesus Christ. Before we can truthfully call God our Father we must receive the Gospel of His Son into our minds and hearts. He is still a father, but we are wayward, ignorant, and rebellious children, until we can with penitence and faith in the Savior call Him our Father. This is clear the moment it is stated, and the Bible emphasizes it. Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by Me." John says, "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God." Paul says, "If any man has not the spirit of Christ he is none of His; as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God—they have received the spirit of adoption, whereby they cry, Abba Father." When we turn to Him in trust and love we can truthfully call Him our Father.

Along all our coasts to-day the tides of the ocean are

rising, filling bay and inlet and river, because the revolving earth is turning them to the heavenly bodies, whose unseen but powerful influence is silently drawing them. So when we turn to our Father, all the channels of our nature are filled with the inflowing tide of childlike affection and confidence, aspiration and devotion, drawn by His unseen, silent, but all-prevailing power.

These two companion thoughts may well be impressed upon us: Jesus Christ reveals God as our Father. We, receiving Jesus Christ, can say "Our Father."

Our Lord seems to have anticipated many of our modern perplexities and the objections to prayer, and gives them a sufficient answer when He bids us call God our Father. Among the earliest lessons a mother teaches the dear child God has given her is to lisp His name in prayer. This teaching of childhood lasts often through life, but as we advance in age and thought it is no longer simply an instinct of childhood, fostered by a mother's teaching; it becomes a confirmed faith. To reach this it often passes through a stage of questioning and doubt; no longer can one rely upon the instinct, though a true one, but must see that it is in harmony with reason. In our day many facts and theories assail the instinct of prayer, so if one remains prayerful it must be on account of reasons superior to these assailing ones. As many of these facts and theories were but little known, if at all, to patriarchs and even apostles, one readily sees that faith in prayer may be a more intelligent and better established virtue in a modern saint than in Abraham or even in Paul, since it meets and overcomes difficulties they never even dreamed of.

One of these difficulties is that aroused by science.

Science declares the laws and forces of nature are fixed, that there is nothing corresponding to the acts and changing moods of a person, that even the clouds and storms and lightning flash are governed by law.

There are three ways of looking at the course of nature, the regular sequence of cause and effect, with regard to prayer. The first is that of the godless scientists, and there are few such; they regard nature somewhat as an iron barrier. God may be on the other side of it, they cannot tell, but if He is He cannot change it. Prayers directed to Him strike against the barrier and fall—they cannot reach Him; and if they did, He could not work any change. How this barrier came to exist, and how the prayerful being this side of it, they cannot tell.

The second view is that of superstitious faith in prayer which regards the fixed form of nature as a background and counts as answer to prayer only the extraordinary and unusual, something in the nature of a miracle. The miracle has evidential value as out of the usual course, so must be rare, and also there must be some message and messenger that need this evidence. So the prophets and leaders of the Old Testament, and so Christ and His apostles worked miracles. The need no longer exists, and such answers to prayer are not to be expected. Besides, answers to prayer are not rare.

The third view is that of reasonable faith in prayer. We see and recognize the regular course of nature, and do not expect any answer to prayer outside or beyond it. Still we do not regard God as shut out by that course of nature but as revealed by it, showing us His character therein and teaching us upon what to depend and how to

obey Him. We are not to expect to be exempt from obedience to law by prayer or from the consequences of disobedience; else prayer would counteract one of the chief lessons taught both in nature and revelation, that of obedience to law.

But God is not less than man, but greater. Our knowledge of the laws and forces of nature does not shut us behind an iron barrier, but gives us some little control over these flexible forces. Now if our three-year-old child prays to us the fixed course of nature is not a barrier against our answering the child's prayer, but gives us all the power we have of answering it. We know a desired effect will be produced by a certain cause; the cause is within our reach, we start it, the effect surely follows, and the prayer is answered.

But our knowledge is small; we know only a few things and those imperfectly. We can lay hold of only a few forces and those isolated ones, and we can lay hold of them only from without, as we take the hand of our brother and lift it up. God knows all things, all laws and forces, and knows them perfectly. God can lay hold not only upon a few forces, but upon the whole vast and complicated system at once, or upon any portion of it. And God has closer relationship with nature than we have. He works not from without but from within, as we lift not our brother's hand but our own hand. God's power of answering prayer, therefore, must be greater than ours—not contrary to nature but through it. The most learned scientists hold to the Christian belief in prayer, that God is master of nature, not mastered by it. Only a few are conceited enough to believe that they know more and have more power than God, for it

amounts to that. This little man who has lived some fifty years, perhaps, and has studied one or two departments of nature, and has gained a little control over them, stands up in the great universe of God and tells us that the Eternal, Almighty, All-wise, and All-loving Creator and Upholder of it has after all less power over it than he has—rather a ridiculous position for him to assume.

The only question now is, not can God answer prayer, but will He. This Christ answers in revealing Him as our Father. The father nature always answers the prayer of his child if it is in his power, and for the child's good. Here also we see the deep meaning of the instinct of prayer; it is the child spirit casting itself upon the wisdom and love of a father.

Nature is a fine organization, and among men the finer the organization the more completely is it under the control of the governing mind. Close observers at a certain place on the Pennsylvania Railroad recently saw a strange sight. The fastest express train, the Chicago Limited, took the freight track, and then a special passed it—both running at great speed—a swift engine with two cars, and in one of these a young girl and her attendants the only passengers; then all went as usual on the finely organized road. It was in answer to prayer. Up in the Allegheny Mountains, in a summer cottage, a woman lay sick, and supposed to be dying. A man bended over her bed to catch her faint whisper. She said, "I want to see Mary before I die." He stepped to the telegraph instrument and flashed the command to the proper officer—"Bring Mary at utmost speed to see her dying mother," and the flying special brought Mary from New York

City to the cottage bed, for the sick woman had whispered her prayer in her husband's ear, the father of her daughter Mary, and he was the President of the Pennsylvania Railroad. What great power he possessed and how quickly he used it; but what little power compared with God's power in His finely organized universe. And shall not the far more loving Father use it for the good of His child?

Your child is taken sick, and you send for the wise physician; you virtually pray to him to use his superior knowledge of nature for your child's good—and you do well. Is it not also well to pray to God for your child, that He will bless the physician in his work, and beyond this in ways we may not know but in ways well known to God, to restore the child to health. But still the child may die. His superior wisdom and love may see that it is the greatest good for the child and for you. And in all our prayers we must say to God, as we teach our children to say to us, "If you please," in submission to His infinitely wise and good will. The third petition of this wonderful prayer throws some light upon this and a great many more of this life's mysteries. We know so little of the mystery of life and its issues that we can hardly tell what is a calamity or a blessing while we are passing through it.

Another great thought demands attention in this simple address of prayer. How many do we take with us when we say "Our Father?" Surely the walls of this church recede and we take in all the churches. Do not all church walls recede, and we take in all this city, and all the world? The brotherhood of the race is in the word "our," for all men are the children of the Father;

and though as wayward and rebellious they do not pray for themselves, we who pray may not therefore leave them out of our prayers. More deeply the brotherhood of all those having the child spirit is in the word "our." We send our money to carry the Gospel to heathen lands, and the moment a heathen is converted and prays "Our Father," we have an interest in his prayers, another agency is enlisted in our behalf—yes, in behalf of all mankind at the throne of God. Here, then, all race distinctions vanish, all ranks and titles fade, the rich and the poor, the learned and the unlearned are brothers. A poor man kneeled by the side of the Prime Minister of England, and when he recognized him was moving away, when Gladstone detained him and said, "We are all equal here." The fatherhood of God, the child spirit in Christlikeness, the brotherhood of the race, are some of the great truths in these simple words.

Some light is thrown by this word "our" upon the perplexing subject of conflicting prayers. Two Christian nations are to-day at war in South Africa, and both are earnestly praying for success. There is obviously something the matter with the word "our," for they are not praying for each other but against each other, not as brothers but as enemies. The proper spirit in the word "our" would settle the difficulty in some other way than by war. So in our Christian land to-day a great labor strike is raging. Through the cabin door of the coal-miner grim famine walks while the family are on bended knee saying "Our Father." In the splendid mansion on the Avenue, supported by coal dividends, another family is beginning the day with prayer—"Our Father." Here, too, there is obviously something the matter with the

word "our"—the real brotherly spirit which should thrill through that word would quickly settle the labor dispute without a strike.

When the glad time comes, as come it will, when wars and strikes shall cease, it will be when all men possess the child spirit and dwell together as brothers, and can say in all truthfulness, "Our Father," praying for each other and with each other.

Our Savior, when He bids us call God our Father, tells us to add, "which art in Heaven," or, as the American revisers suggest, "who art in Heaven," for there is no good reason to have bad English in the Lord's Prayer, however ancient the usage.

Where Heaven is we are not taught. Some have fancied a central sun around which the universe revolves—the throne of the Almighty; but the stars, the myriad suns of space, seem to be moving in straight or wavering lines. The common thought of Heaven, though vague, is even more inspiring. We lift up our eyes and see beyond the sun and stars that in which they float, the unchanging, clear blue sky, the boundless firmament of Heaven. Clouds and storms roll across it but change it not; the bustle of this noisy world rises up into it and is lost in its solemn stillness, the sky is pure and calm as ever.

In that bright, pure, boundless, unchanging Heaven, of which the countless orbs of night are but the sentinel fires upon its borders, there is the throne of God, the Eternal—"Our Father who art in Heaven." And, glorious truth, this boundless Heaven comes down to and enrapt our little earth! Our Father in Heaven is lifted up beyond comparison with earthly fathers, and still is

nearer to us than any earthly father. The telescope tells of His vast works and power. Just as truly, the microscope tells the wonders of His skill in insect wing and growing flower, as if God had nothing else to do in this wide universe than paint the rose leaf. So it is not beyond our thought that the hand that holds creation up should wipe the tear from our weeping eyes, since He is our Father in Heaven.

Another thought dawns upon our waiting souls. If our Father is in Heaven, then we, through Him, are children of Heaven. This is not our home; Heaven, the Father's house, Heaven, is our home. We are children being educated and trained by our wise and loving Father, under His teaching on this earth. We cannot tell from anything we are now what we shall be when His glorious purpose is fully accomplished, when the redemption is completed, when with glorified body and spirits we are acknowledged before the assembled universe as His children, and with outbursts of praise are brought by our Father to His heavenly home; we only know we children of the earth shall be meet for Heaven, for we shall be like Christ, our elder brother.

It is possible, of course, to turn away from this prayer, as from all prayer, to turn away from this revelation of God as our Father, in a cold and disdainful spirit. You fathers know something of God, since all that is good in your nature is enlarged and freed from all infirmities in Him. Now the better a father is the more he will long for the responsive love of his child—unspeakable is his yearning for his child's trust and affection. Surely this too must exist in enlarged measure in the heart of our heavenly Father. So we are sure of His welcoming the

child spirit in prayer, and also that turning away from prayer, in indifference or dislike, grieves His father heart. Shakespeare, in one of his greatest tragedies, depicts an aged king giving his kingdom to his children. As soon as the power was in their hands rivalry took possession of their hearts; they thrust their aged father from one to the other, coldly slighting and scorning him in their selfish pride, until their cruel disdain forced from King Lear's heart the cry of anguish, "How worse than serpent's tooth it is to have a thankless child." "A thankless child!" Is that my nature as God looks upon my open soul? To have such a Father, to be constantly receiving blessings from His love and yet never pray—a thankless child. Rather we should constantly cultivate the child spirit; that spirit that makes childhood so happy—trust, obedience, love—that brings children so confidently to us fathers, with their delights and desires. The more of this spirit we can cultivate toward "Our Father who art in Heaven," the more noble and blessed our lives will be, and the more pleased our Father will be with us.

Having this spirit, we may truthfully say, "Our Father"; for He, looking upon our souls, will say, "It is true, they are my children."

“HALLOWED BE THY NAME.”

Matt. vi : 9.

The more civilization advances the more complicated are the relations and duties of our lives. Many of our most perplexing problems would be solved if we knew what was of first importance, the most pressing duty, and at once had a strong desire to do it.

In astronomy it used to be thought that the earth was the center of the universe, and that the sun, moon, and stars revolved around it. So man often regards himself of supreme importance in false religion, in no religion, and often in the true religion. Selfishness often usurps the first place even in a Christian's prayers. Our Lord, in this first petition, deals a most effective blow at this conceit of man—He teaches him plainly that his little personality is not the center around which the universe revolves. But not only does our Lord teach us what is our first duty, as in the Commandments, He inspires us with the desire to do it—a longing which makes the first petition of the prayer.

Very remarkable, in another respect, is this first petition: not only does the first place in a child's desire belong to God, but the first desire of a child with reference to God is that His name may be held as holy. “Holy” is the first word the Lord teaches us to pray—“Holy be Thy name among men.”

Holiness is something more than a mere negative character, free from defilement; it is positive, the very opposite of defilement. An innocent being is pure, but

may be very weak. A holy being is strong in the quality opposite of impurity. Man the sinner has often worshiped the idols of his impure imagination, and so has confirmed himself in his own impurity. When God taught the Israelites concerning Himself it was most difficult, from the nature of the scholars, to teach them concerning His moral purity, His holiness. The idea of purity pervaded all the ceremonial worship of the tabernacle and temple; each ordinance was designed to reflect purity upon the rest until the idea, rendered intense by so many rays, was referred to God. Take, for instance, the single line of sacrifices. The animals of the land were divided into clean and unclean; from the pure class the purest was selected, one without spot or blemish; this was to be offered in sacrifice by a class of men set apart as purified—the priests; this pure class must wash the pure sacrifice in clean water. Even this highest possible degree of earthly purity could not be brought into God's presence; the sacrifice was offered in the court of the temple, outside the holy place, still further removed from the Holy of Holies, and was to be offered on an altar by purifying fire, while the worshipers stood afar off.

By giving the Commandments, by the worship He instituted, by all His dealings with them, by His prophets, God taught His people that He was the Holy One of Israel. The evangelic prophet describes his most enraptured vision of the seraphim, who cried one to another, "Holy! holy! holy! is the Lord of Hosts!"

Travelers in Eastern Switzerland tell us that Mount Blanc dominates the scene. One bids a lingering farewell to the grand mountain, thinks he will never see it again; but a turn is made in the road, a hill is reached, a break

in a ridge is passed, and, lo! there is the monarch of mountains lifting high its diadem of snow. So the reverent reader of the Bible, passing through its many scenes, can never lose sight of the holiness of God; it recedes, it comes near, it frowns, it smiles, but it is everywhere present.

Missionaries often find great difficulty in conveying to the heathen mind the idea of holiness; in many languages there is no word expressing the thought. Even our English thought grows from the Scripture revelation, and is forced to adapt a word of wholeness to express it. God is a Being whose nature is not only free from, but the strong opposite of, moral defilement.

God was known by several names in the Old Testament, and there are indications of a progressive revelation of God by His names, the words bringing to our thought the person to whom they belong. A name expressive of power, "the Almighty," seems to have prevailed in the earlier times, as seen in the names of places and general usage; this is usually translated in our English Old Testament by the word "God." The name expressive of self-existence, "Jehovah," usually translated by our word "LORD," in small capitals, prevailed afterwards, when the chosen people became a nation. In the late years of the nation's life the name "Jehovah" was regarded as so holy that it was never pronounced even in the synagogue readings on the Sabbath day, but another name of God expressive of majesty was pronounced in its stead; so the correct pronunciation of "Jehovah" is now unknown. With these names, words descriptive of His character and works were frequently joined: "the Creator," "King," "Law-giver," "Judge," "Lord of Hosts," "the Holy

One of Israel." But whatever stage of the revelation of God was reached His holiness was ever more brightly displayed.

At length the crowning revelation is made. The Son of God reveals God to us by the name "Father"—a name dimly seen in the Old Testament, for it is doubtful if Abraham, Moses, David, or Isaiah ever ventured to call God by the name of Father, even in prayer—a name of inexpressible nearness, tenderness, and love; and, lo! in that name shines forth with still brighter rays the holiness of God. "Our Father who art in Heaven, holy be Thy name."

In the teachings and in the life of the Son of God in the flesh shines forth holiness—the opposite of moral defilement, free from the slightest touch of sin, and strong in purity—a holiness filled with infinite love, living among sinners that He might save them from their sins, yet unsullied by their sin. In the atoning death of the Savior the infinite love of our Father in self-sacrifice provides for our coming to Him freed from the guilt and power of sin and possessing a new life of holiness in Christ. The holy love of the infinite God shines from the cross; the fire of love burns away the guilt, the chains and the dross of sin, and kindles in the penitent disciple a new holiness of life. The earlier revelation of God is not set aside or in any way corrected; it advances, as the dawn to a noonday brightness. The name "Father" is not opposed to His other names, doing away with them, but combines them all, with added wealth of revelation; and the holiness which adhered to them shines with full splendor in this last, best name of God.

How prone, on the contrary, is the sinful heart to

attribute to God the lowest idea of fatherhood; to think of Him as a good-natured, weakly indulgent father, who does not really care whether His children do right or wrong, but whose sole anxiety is to preserve them from the sufferings they court by their misdeeds. But if we are taught by Christ, if we receive the revelation He makes, and truly believe in Him, we are constantly reminded that our Father is holy, and that the great longing of His infinite love is to save His children from their sins.

With this view of the meaning of the petition we begin to see why our Lord gave it the first place in the prayer He taught us.

The man who lives in a narrow valley, hemmed in by high mountains, may think himself and his home of greatest importance; even the sky, the small patch of blue between the mountain tops, is but the covering of his head. But as he climbs the mountain side his views expand, and when he reaches the highest mountain peak the whole world lies at his feet, and his valley home is but a little speck hardly to be seen and the blue sky is boundless. So when we are lifted up by the great Teacher into the lofty realm of clear truth and pure religious emotion, when as children we stand in the presence of our holy Father, recognize His glorious character, and come into sympathy with His glorious designs, our lower wants, which before were so important, take their proper subordinate place, and the one supreme and all-embracing desire is that everywhere among men the loving, holy Father may be regarded as holy, with reverence and love. The first utterance of the child's voice takes the keynote from the praises of the heavens.

“Holy! holy! holy!” cry the seraphim before His throne. “Holy be Thy name,” prays the child upon his footstool.

Thus our Savior teaches us that the matter of supreme importance is to have right feelings toward God.

As we reflect we see that it must be of supreme importance to God Himself, and that this first longing of the child heart meets the first desire of the Father’s.

There is, of course, a sense in which it is perfectly clear that what we think of God can make no difference to Him. Our opinion of Him can in no way affect His position; that is assured. He is the Supreme Ruler of the wide universe.

“God doth not need either man’s work or His own gifts—His state is kingly; thousands at His bidding speed and post on land and ocean without rest.” Our opinion of Him can in no way affect His character. That is infinite in all perfections and absolutely unchangeable. Our opinion can in no way affect His reputation. The opinion others beside our race hold of Him will not be changed at all by what man thinks or says. We cannot diminish a single note of the praises of the angels; whatever man may say, the seraphim will still cry, “Holy! holy! holy!”

But there is also a sense in which what man thinks of God is of the greatest importance to Him. We may imagine a case that will make this clear. The Emperor of Germany is the great ruler of a strong nation and highly honored by the world. He is riding with his escort through the streets of Berlin, amid the acclamations of his loyal people. Here are three little boys in the crowd who have no word of acclaim for him, who even frown upon him and speak harshly of him. What

does he care what the little boys think and speak of him? I can conceive that he cares more for the good opinion of those little boys than he does for all the plaudits of the nation and of the world. Under the uniform of the Emperor is the heart of a father, and those boys are his own sons. We also see that while the opinion of the boys cannot affect the Emperor's position, character, and reputation, it must have a very large effect upon their own. Not honoring their father indicates a bad character, insures them a poor reputation among all right-thinking men, and they will find, though a king's sons, that reputation and character will have a great deal to do with their own position in life, with their destiny. It is also clear that while the Emperor father knows all this, and desires the good opinion of the boys for the boys' sake, to insure their well-being, the deeper reason, after all, is the heart hunger of the father. Nothing can satisfy this but the esteem and love of his sons. If we ask how great this hunger is in the heart of our heavenly Father, we shall have to understand all the life and death of our Lord Jesus Christ before we can fathom it. All the revelation of Himself God has made, culminating in His sending His Son, is the expression of His desire that we should have worthy thoughts and right feelings toward Him. All His dealings with us, culminating in the Savior's grace, prompt this first petition. The greatest honor and pleasure a father can have is to be rightly appreciated and loved by his child, and the greatest desire of a true child is to please and honor his father. However His child may have misunderstood and disliked the heavenly Father up till this time, the Lord Jesus Christ has so taught and renewed him that now he turns to the

Father with love and longing. The child has now the true child spirit, and this first petition shows his recognition of his Father's worthiness and his desire to please and honor Him. We recognize also in this teaching of our Savior that however the Father may have been grieved by the former misunderstanding and dislike, He is now pleased and honored by His child's prayer.

Here, then, in this petition is a complete answer to one of the most terrible objections unbelief can ever bring against prayer. All your reasons for the prayer of children, it may say, are strong, provided you are good children; but when you are confessedly rebellious and disobedient, how dare you pray to the holy God? It is true, faith answers, that the prayers of the wicked must be an abomination to the Lord. For a wicked man, continuing in his wickedness, to ask God to favor him in any way is virtually to ask God to approve of his wickedness, and must be revolting to the holy One. But prayer is an entirely different thing; it is the desire awakened in one who turns from sin to the holy God, and it embraces an appreciation of the beauty of holiness in God. The revelation of the holy Father through Jesus Christ has driven away the misunderstanding and waywardness from the heart, and the child now looks up with loving gaze into the face of God and prays.

As we reflect still further, we see that this first petition is intensely practical—that it craves the greatest good mankind can receive. Should the question be asked, "What is the deepest need of mankind to-day?" the first blush answer of any one of us would hardly be "To hold God's name as holy." But we are not to give a hasty answer; we are standing on the mountain top of

clear truth and pure religious feeling, where our Savior has led us; we have been looking off into the heavens to the throne of eternal holiness, and now, as we look down upon the earth, upon our fellow men, deep sympathy with our Savior takes possession of us, we look with His eyes upon the deepest need of mankind, and He inspires this first petition. May all mankind regard God as holy!

As we look upon the race of man we see that while there is much happiness, there is also much misery. If all men knew of the heavenly Father, with His yearning love and His guidance to a better life, what addition to their happiness, what comfort in their misery, that would bring! As we look more intently we see that underneath the misery there often lies sinfulness, that smoldering passions in the heart often send forth fumes of misery in the life; and that our lives are so linked together, that the present generation has inherited so much from former generations that one cannot find the limit of the persistency and spreading power of both sin and misery. Still, the case is plain that if the smoldering passions could be removed from the human heart; if lust, jealousy, anger, injustice could be expelled, and holiness in thought and feeling take their place, that the fumes of misery now enveloping human life so heavily would become less poisonous and might fade away. It is also plain that the adoration of the holy Father, the admiring His character with intense longing and the spirit of loving obedience, the worshiping of the holy God would, by the laws of our nature, have a strong tendency to expel evil from the heart, and to make the worshiper grow holy, like the God he worships.

He who has sympathy with the Lord Jesus Christ will do all in his power to relieve the suffering of his fellow men, as his Savior did while dwelling upon earth, and also will recognize the deep meaning of the Savior's mission here, and that the greatest good he can bring to his fellow men is to lead them to worship the holy God.

Man is lost in sin, and Jesus Christ came to seek and save the lost. The holy God is the Savior; He renews man in His own likeness. This is the greatest good, and includes all lesser good, and this is the petition of the renewed heart for his fellow man, for the greatest blessing he can receive. We may and should strive to better the condition of our fellow men; we may and should strive to enforce laws just to all; we may and should strive to educate and elevate all men; but all this and far more is included in this prayer, that sinful men may be brought back to the holy God.

On a cold winter's night you find a child sobbing on the street. You ask, "What is the matter?" and she can only sob, "I am lost! I am lost!" At once you wrap your greatcoat around her; you take her to a store and buy something for her to eat; you, to quiet her, tell her stories, and you are doing a great kindness to her. If her father in the mansion on the Avenue knew it, he would be thankful for your goodness to his lost child.

But you can do more and better. You are doing all this in order that you may confer the one all-including blessing. As soon as the child is quieted from her panic you ask her, "Where do you live?" She gives you her name and the number on the Avenue where she lives. You carry her with all haste, you ring the door-bell

eagerly, and you place the lost child in the father's arms. Now you have done the all-embracing good, brought the lost child home—the highest good for child and parents, too; warmth, food, and all home good follows. So this petition is that all men may be brought from the darkness and misery of sin to the loving adoration of the heavenly Father—the lost brought home.

To-day the world stands aghast at the uprising of the great Chinese people to expel the hated foreigners, at the massacre of women and children, and at the fierceness of the cruelty and treachery of which the human heart is capable. Has all this rage of a great nation been aroused against missionaries? Is this something to be expected at the introduction of our religion into a foreign land? So some would have us believe, and so would discredit the missionary work. We should remember that three classes of Christians have had marked dealings with China, and she judges them together, as one.

First, there has been the Christian with the scales and machinery. It is to be feared that the scales have not always been justly balanced, and that may have awakened some hard feelings in the heathen mind. It is also evident that the introduction of machinery, while in the long run a great blessing, at first awakens opposition, as it disturbs existing conditions, and creates an industrial revolution in which many lose their former means of gaining a living. Among an ignorant people, whose conditions from time immemorial are thus disturbed, a great hard feeling would arise against those bringing in and setting up the hated machines.

Secondly, there has been the Christian with the sword. Some of the missionaries may have appealed too quickly

for the protection of themselves and their converts to the great nations in treaty with China. In protecting the converts against persecution, and in claiming privileges for them, the missionaries may have been abused by their own converts, and have awakened prejudice against themselves and the religion they sought to commend.

While the missionaries may have appealed too easily to the sword for protection and compensation for damages done, that after all has been a very small part of the impression "the Christian with the sword" has made upon the heathen mind. This Christian with the sword has too often seemed like a robber with a sword. The great nations, in rivalry with each other to extend their commerce and their "spheres of influence," have quite naturally awakened in the Chinese nation the fear that they would take all they could get, even to the extent of dividing up the whole nation between them. Now that the Christian nations have been brought to face this heathen view of their conduct, we believe they will disavow such intention, and will treat that great heathen nation with Christian justice and generosity. Surely such should be the attitude of our own country. But it is not to be wondered at that China, holding the fear that she was in danger of being dismembered, should have risen in her might against the foreigner, and the intensity of her cruel rage is due to her heathen character.

Thirdly, there has been the Christian with the Bible. It is quite evident that, being human, he may have erred in some of his methods, but as evident that the message he bears is for the highest good of the Chinese nation. Higher and purer than the morals taught by Confucius

are those of the Bible ; but this is only saying that they are of the same kind, differing only in degree.

The Bible has a message of an entirely different kind from any Confucius gave his people. He taught them about their relations with each other, but was silent about God. He gave them a system of morals, but brought to them no power to keep even the morals he taught. The Bible brings better morals and also a power to lead men to keep them, for its distinctive message is the revelation of God as our holy Father. The system of morals shows us how the holy Father would have us live among each other, and then He assures us that He is with us always to inspire and help us. To bring this message to that ancient people is to bring the greatest blessing to their lives. Surely we should not suffer hatred of the Chinese to be awakened in our hearts by the present outbreak of their patriotism, though it fails to discriminate between provocation and blessing. Rather there should be a yearning love for that misguided and cruel people, and a desire to bless them with the enlightenment and love of the Gospel. Thus we shall more fully enter into the spirit of this first petition. May the whole world learn of the holy Name, so as to recognize its own sinfulness and turn in penitence to the worship and service of our holy Father in Heaven!

The darkness of sin and misery will alike be driven away when all men worship the holy God. If you should reach Zermatt, at the foot of the Matterhorn, in the evening, you would probably, after tea, stroll out to see the great mountain. How forbidding and terrible it appears in the growing darkness! what terrors it awakens! what awful tragedies it recalls! In the morning, called

early, you stand again at the same spot and look off at the same mountain. Your eye follows the dim outline upward until you gaze upon a wonderful transformation being wrought in its loftiest heights. A great angel from the heavens seems standing on the mountain top, clothed in white samite—mystic, wonderful. What is working the marvelous change? The mountain peak, with open face, is looking upon the rising sun, no cloud or mist between, and soon the whole mountain will be one glittering mass of white light—like another sun upon the earth. So may the whole race of man look with open face, with no cloud between, upon the holy God, and become holy, like Him.

We may now consider a third element of great desire entering into this petition; it comes last, since we are being taught by Christ, but it is no less strong. Standing upon the mountain top with our Savior, we have looked up into the heavens and prayed “for the Father’s sake;” we have looked down upon the inhabitants of the earth and prayed “for our brothers’ sake.” Now we look into our own hearts and pray, for our own sake, “Hallowed be Thy name.” The child, even in the presence of the Father, is conscious that there are still some misconceptions of his sinful mind that dim and distort his views of the holiness of God. He is also conscious that selfishness and sinful passions remaining in his heart chill his love for the holy God. He is further conscious that though he has turned to God in true penitence and faith, he is still far from being holy as God is holy. All this consciousness of glaring defects awakens in his heart a growing desire to be free from them: “May I constantly have clearer views of the

holiness of God; may I ever have a warmer love for the holy God; may I continually become more like the holy God. 'Hallowed be Thy name' in my mind and heart and life."

Whatever plans the Christian may devise to grow in holiness, whatever efforts he may make to remove evil from his nature and cultivate the good, he will find his Savior has given him in this petition the secret of success. If he looks up to God the Holy One with adoring gaze, if he opens his heart with earnest longing for the indwelling of the holy Spirit, he will be "changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord." Astronomy has made great discoveries recently by means of sidereal photography. What is called a slow-process plate is so arranged by a clockwork contrivance that it does not feel the motion of the earth, but remains exposed to a particular part of the heavens for several hours. On a clear night, when there is not a film of cloud in the sky, this plate steadily gazes at a single part of the heavens, and thus a wondrous change is wrought upon it; for when it is now examined it is found crowded with specks of light. It has photographed the stars!—not only the stars that could be seen through the telescope, but many others beyond the vision of the best instruments man has been able to devise—its long and steady gaze has caught the flashings of the most distant suns in the universe of God! There is a kind of spiritual photography more wonderful than this sidereal photography. When the enraptured, sensitive soul, not carried away by the earth motion, the spirit of worldliness, looks long and steadily off to the holy God, when there is no earth mist or cloud that comes between the adoring soul

and the heavenly Father, then there is wrought upon the soul, through the laws of its being, the likeness of the Father in the child nature, and the child becomes holy, even as God Himself is holy.

“THY KINGDOM COME.”

Matt. vi . 10.

This gospel, by St. Matthew, is called by some the Gospel of the Kingdom, as distinguishing it from the other gospels. It is linked with the Old Testament by its many quotations applying to the King and the Kingdom. In the opening chapters the lineage of the King is given, the wise men from the East inquire for the One born King of the Jews, and His herald announces the Kingdom of Heaven at hand. In the Sermon on the Mount the King proclaims the principles of His Kingdom. In the earlier grouping of the parables, Christ describes His Kingdom; in the later group, He describes Himself as King. Coming near to the end of His life, the King gives the principles of self-government to his subjects, proclaims the honors and rewards of His Kingdom, and enters the Capital City as King. There he denounces usurpers, suffers and dies for His people; then, triumphing over death, He directs the conquest of the world. In this single short gospel there are at least fifty references to the Kingdom. But when we turn to the other gospels we find the same prominence given to the Kingdom, though in somewhat different form. There are almost as many references to the Kingdom in Luke as in Matthew, while Mark may be called the gospel of the great deeds of the King, and John, though having few direct references to the Kingdom, teaches concerning it in the great allegories of the Shepherd and His flock, the vine and its branches, the bread and water of life, and Christ, the light of the

world. In all His life and teachings we find Christ gives great prominence to the Kingdom of God. He came to establish it; He is the King of it; He calls the glad tidings "the Gospel of the Kingdom." The great Teacher would have His disciples give the same prominence to the Kingdom in their thought, desire, and effort, and so instructs them to pray daily "Thy Kingdom come." So the disciple, renewed in the spirit of a child of God, recognizes that the government of His holy Father is the best conceivable for himself and his fellow men, and voices the conviction and desire of his soul in this petition.

We can never overestimate the value of a single soul. Our Lord shows us this in many striking teachings and in His treatment of individuals. Neither can we overestimate the importance of the life after death. As Christ turns from His apostles to the cross, He bids them think of Him as preparing mansions for them and waiting to bring them again to Himself. Our tendency, rather, is to underestimate the value of the present life upon the earth and the importance of the social relations; but this tendency runs directly counter to the life and teachings of our Lord. The salvation of an individual, as Christ holds the glorious ideal before us, does not consist in his living a detached life, separate from others, either in this world or the world to come. The perfection which is at all Christlike is not isolation, but the ideal relationship with God and man begun here and now, and reaching out into eternity. Man, as he left the hand of his Creator, was in his nature a social being. Sin has not destroyed his nature, though it has fearfully marred it, leading him often to war against his father and his brother. The

Savior restores and ennobles man as a social being. His Kingdom is the reverse of the disintegration into insulated and conflicting lives wrought by sin; it is the combining together of helpful and loving lives under the rule of his righteous law. The eternal life is begun now on earth. Christ is a present Savior of individuals not only, but, through these, of Society. His conception of what Society may become, and of the means and processes of attaining it, forms a large part of His teaching. He shows us His plan; He stirs us with His spirit; He awakens in us confidence in His power and grace; He calls us to be coworkers with Him; He bids us pray "Thy Kingdom come."

The two characteristic terms in the teaching of our Lord seem the "Son of Man," with reference to Himself, and the "Kingdom of God," with reference to His work. The underlying thought unites them. He was the ideal, the complete man, in all the relations of life. His followers are to become like Him. The Kingdom of God is the social order where men live out their complete lives, their relations to God being those of sons, their relations to one another being those of brothers. Anything that brings in this, that progresses toward this, is the coming of the Kingdom.

In Christ's teaching, this Kingdom is the highest good for mankind, the goal of effort, the reward of consecration, the abode of blessedness. In the Gospels, we have the life of Christ giving us the example and impulses of the Kingdom, and His teachings setting forth fully and clearly its principles and laws. In the Acts and the Epistles we have, by the apostles and immediate followers of our Lord, the application of these impulses and prin-

ciples to the then existing conditions of human life. In our day the great duty and vast privilege rests upon us, His followers, to apply His impulses and principles to the conditions of Society prevailing now in the whole earth. The subject grows upon us when we begin thoughtfully to pray "Thy Kingdom come."

What low views man may take of a lofty subject finds an instance in the ideas of the Kingdom prevailing in the time of Christ and lingering in some forms even to our day. The Jews thought of a visible material kingdom, like that of David; righteousness was to characterize it, but it was to be enthroned in power and ruled by force, attended with great prosperity and extended over all the earth. Some of the views of the second coming of Christ to establish his Kingdom in person on the earth partake largely of this view. This view voiced itself in the eager question to Christ: "When will the Kingdom come?" He answered clearly: "It cometh not with observation; it does not come with the tread of armies, with the pomp of courts, with the retinue of a king; it is not such a Kingdom as you suppose; it is within you—a spiritual Kingdom already begun in the heart, and to spread from heart to heart among mankind."

This inner spiritual Kingdom has, however, its appropriate outward form, and through this will exert its influence for good upon the race of man. The petition, "Thy Kingdom come," includes, therefore, its establishment in individual souls; its moulding the society of such souls; its extending through such society until it revolutionizes all Society into itself.

The entrance into this Kingdom can only be by the new birth. Christ taught Nicodemus, a good man and

an earnest seeker of truth, that one must be born again before he could enter the Kingdom of God. It is possible to take two views of the universal sinfulness of man, which is generally acknowledged. The one is that this sinfulness is a defect incident to development, like the tottering steps of a child learning to walk; that it co-exists in the best men, with many virtues so shining that they make a large balance to the credit of such men, and that men generally possess such inherent strength that they can save themselves from sinfulness; that their only need is a reformation which they can institute and complete whenever they arouse to the effort; that good counsel and influence, education and culture, are all they need to become good. The other view is that sin vitiates the whole nature of man; that it clouds even the virtues of comparatively good men, and that all men are absolutely unable to free themselves from it. True, any man may reform from some particular sin, but no man can reform from all sinfulness, just as a man may keep out the tide of the ocean from some particular inlet by building a dam across it, but all men combined cannot stop the rising of the tide along the coast. Man needs more than a reformation he can accomplish himself; he needs a change of nature he is utterly powerless to work. Without much meditation we can see at the first glance that Christ's words to Nicodemus favor this latter view of man's sinfulness.

It is possible also to take two views of the religion of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one is that He was a mere man, richly gifted, and especially having a keen insight in religious and moral themes, also deep love for his fellow men and a pure soul and life. He was like other

religious teachers, only far better, having richer gifts and purer love. Taking this view of Christ, there are many things about His life, teaching, and claims which seem to require a great deal of impossible explanation.

The other view is that He is Divine; that He came to the earth to teach the things man could not otherwise learn, and to do the work man could not do—to bring the help man needed, even the Divine power to save man from sin, and his religion to-day still brings the present Savior, the Divine power to save. We can see here also at a glance that Christ's words to Nicodemus favor this latter view of His mission. Combine these two views of man's sinfulness and the religion of Christ, and the one fits the other. If sin is but a slight defect a human devised religion will answer our purpose; all we need is culture. If sin is an awful deflection of the whole man, bringing guilt and pollution to the whole nature, then a human devised religion is of no avail—we need a Divine power to save. This great need of man for renewal is met by the present Savior having power to renew. The great Teacher not only shows Nicodemus the need, but freely offers him the supply, in His own saving power. This new life issues into the Kingdom of God—the believer in Christ becomes at once the loyal subject of the King, having the new life of obedience and love.

The petition, "Thy Kingdom come," includes, then, first of all, that men may be converted to God; that, renewed by the Spirit of God, they may enter the Kingdom of God; that the Kingdom may be constantly enlarged by an ever-increasing number of willing subjects.

These willing subjects are not withdrawn from Society, from the relationships of life, but by the rule of the King

are now to become such citizens of the State, such members of the family and of the whole social order as He directs. For this and other high purposes our Lord made provision for the formation of His followers into a Society which should acknowledge Him as the Christ and be governed by His spirit. He is the Christ, the Anointed One, predicted in the Old Testament, and foreshadowed by the Old Testament lines of anointed prophets, priests, and kings. As Prophet, He teaches heavenly truth, the reality worth living for; as Priest, He reveals the infinite love and righteousness of God, bearing the burden of man's sin; as King, He rules His people. Believers in Him learn of Him, are His disciples, trust Him for forgiveness and the title to life, the results of His sacrifice; but all this that, enjoying the new life, they may obey Him as their King. The Kingdom is the ultimate aim of all His saving work. He is Jesus Christ, the Anointed Savior; He saves to rule in the lives of His subjects. The Kingdom of God is the salvation He brings us, and men are made willing, even enthusiastic, subjects of the glorious King.

The Society Christ establishes is of His followers, and in it they are to be trained in the development of the new life of love to God and love to man. It is the coming kingdom of God, growing in numbers and growing in the sway of the King over His willing subjects.

But this is a Society within a society; the followers of Christ are not removed from the family, or the State, or industrial conditions, or any form of the social order. The Society of Christ is, therefore, to live in the society of nature, to enter all its relations with its new spirit, to influence the old social order, not by destroying any of

its essential forms, but by renovating them, to give to the social order a new example of life as it should be, a new force of life as it shall be. The self-centered life led to separation and conflict. The Christ-centered life leads to union and to love. As men come nearer to Christ, they are nearer to each other; as they yield to His teaching and influence, they begin to trust and love God as sons should a father, and to help each other as brothers should. The coming Kingdom of the petition is, therefore, the growing of Christ's society not only, but the growing of its influence in the social order, the lifting up of man, the social being, toward itself. This does not do away with the new birth, but prepares for it, even for the glad time when "A nation shall be born in a day."

The petition includes the Church—the Society whose distinct avowal is "Christ is our King." She may be slow sometimes in seeing and obeying His laws, still her avowed purpose is to be loyal to Him.

The petition also includes Christian civilization, the institutions and customs of Society gradually coming into greater harmony with the commands of the King. In Christian lands those who do not acknowledge Christ as their King are still somewhat influenced by Him, live better lives, even bad men, than they would without the elevating and restraining power of the King, and men generally are better citizens, purer and truer men and women, than they would be without Christ. Thus the Kingdom comes in the uplift of generation after generation, in the deepening and spreading of Christ's power among men, in the enlarging number of those acknowledging Him as King, giving promise of the time, or when human Society shall be the Kingdom of God. In the order of development

the salvation of individuals precedes the salvation of Society and is in order to it.

Christ's immediate aim is the conversion of the individual; His ultimate aim is the conversion of Society. The salvation is not separation from man, but union with him, and love is the law. The ideal manhood of Christ is the ideal individual in the ideal Society. The law of love is not an individual sentiment, but the law of relationship; it enters the relation of employee and employer, the business transaction, the production and distribution of wealth, the family, and all the conditions of social life. The Kingdom of God is a Society knit together in all its relations by righteousness and love, but these ties, binding together in mutual service the highest and the lowest, the strongest and the weakest, bind all in enthusiastic loyalty to the King whose infinite greatness is ever engaged in the lowest service of true love. Christ's teaching of the value of the individual makes the lowest man a brother of the King, and makes the service done to the lowest a service done to the King, and makes the King's spirit the ruling power in all His subjects.

This petition gives the social side of religion a very prominent place in the thought and purpose of the Church, as it has in her Lord. Social interest rather than self-interest should rule in the Church among the members in their relations to each other, and in all their relations in the world; they are not only saved to serve, their salvation is the new spirit of service. With this prayer in her heart the Church must lift up her voice of persuasive love in pleading that the teachings of Christ shall govern the internal laws and social conditions of Christian states and their relations with each other.

With this prayer on her lips and shining in her loving life, the Christian Church must seek to bind together labor and capital in mutual justice and love, the rich and the poor in respecting and helping each other; must lift up the ignorant and downtrodden and fallen; must minister to the sick and the prisoner, and must give each child a chance and a training to be a good man or woman. With this prayer on her lips, the Church shows in her life, as well as in her teachings, that the first need of Society is the right relation of man to God; the very act of establishing this brings men into right relations with one another; loyalty to her King is loyalty to One who is at the same time Son of God and Son of Man. Her worship of God and her service of man interblend and strengthen each other.

But this great petition sweeps beyond the bounds of Christian civilization and takes in all the pagan lands. The world is now very small. The power of steam and the electric current have made nations on the opposite side of the earth near neighbors; they know each other's needs and influence each other's lives. So, by the influence of Christian civilization, there has come a marvelous turning to the light in heathen lands. The spring comes even to our cellars, and roots stored there begin to sprout; so we bring them out and plant them in the warm sunlight, and they feel the full springtide of life. Besides, the Christian Church, loyal to her Lord, sends the light of His Gospel into the darkest parts of heathendom, where the unaided glimmer of civilization has not penetrated. On the map of the world we mark Christian lands in bright colors and heathen lands in dark, both of various shadings. Much still remains very dark, but here and

there are spots of light, where missionaries have established the Kingdom of God, and all along the borders and coasts and spreading inward there is a lessening of the darkness, a dawning of the light of the Kingdom. Prophecy speaks of a coming day when the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth, when all men shall serve Him, when His Kingdom shall be over all. This petition is for this coming Kingdom, that missionaries of the cross may establish the Kingdom over the whole earth, and that Christian nations shall be so Christian in all their acts and influence that human Society in all lands shall be swayed by the spirit of the King.

The Christian Church has not yet put forth all her strength in the missionary work, and, alas! Christian nations do not yet put forth a purely Christian influence. Not only in the heat of warfare, as recently in China, have cruelty, lust, and greed been occasionally thrust into prominence, but in the pursuits of peaceful commerce greed and thoughtless cruelty have sent opium and rum and firearms steadily wherever profit could be gained for the merchant, without a thought of the welfare of nations having little self-control.

But there is a growing public opinion in the Church and in the State in line with the petition of the prayer—an enlightened Christian sentiment gathering force to restrain and expel the vices remaining in Christian civilization, and to fill the Church with the spirit of her Lord, yearning to save.

Thus when we pray “Thy Kingdom come,” as instructed by our Lord, we have something of His vision of the coming Society over all the earth when all men shall regard God as their Father and themselves as brothers.

The vision of our Lord has ever been larger than that of His praying people, since He sees farther and loves wider than they. The prayer has ascended to the throne from the heart of every child of God, and from the whole Church in all ages, and the answer has been in the line of the Savior's vision.

The early disciples prayed "Thy Kingdom come" as they preached the Gospel in the heathenism of Greece and Rome, but they could not have seen the conditions prevailing to-day, which must have been open to our Savior's vision, the results of generation after generation of gradual but blessed change, in lifting up womanhood and childhood, in caring for the poor and unfortunate, in destroying slavery, in mitigating the horrors of war, and frowning upon war itself, in promoting peace among nations, and righteousness and a growing generosity among all classes of men.

"Thy Kingdom come" prayed Augustin as he carried the Gospel to England, Willebord in Holland, Boniface in Germany; and their lives of self-sacrificing labors were in the line of their prayer, but they could never have foreseen, what must have been clear to the Savior's vision, the results of generation after generation of gradual but blessed change, as those nations, having many strong native qualities, have emerged from cruel barbarism until they now stand in the van of the world's Christian civilization.

With the experience of nineteen centuries to illumine the meaning of Christ's teachings of His Kingdom, we now take up this petition, "Thy Kingdom come," and our vision widens as we pray.

May Thy Kingdom come to the individuals, to my

heart and life, and my neighbors'. May its principles rule in our homes, displacing selfishness; in our business, making it a service of our fellow men; in our social life, making it the culture of general well-being.

May Thy Kingdom come to the Church, making it pure in worshiping God, the ideal brotherhood among men, and having an enthusiastic love for humanity.

May Thy Kingdom come to our Nation. May she entertain no policy that will not bear the light of the Kingdom. May she give herself up not to self-aggrandizement, but to the service of the world.

May Thy Kingdom come to the world. May the Church send out her missionaries into all lands, and may Christian nations lift up the weak nations into the obedience to Christ, until "righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" shall prevail in all the earth.

“THY WILL BE DONE ON EARTH AS IT IS
IN HEAVEN.”

Matt. vi : 10

The province of the will is to choose the good, as the province of the intellect is to discern the true. Man has made so many mistakes in both respects, has found that false which he thought was true, and that evil which he chose as good, that the conclusion arises, some disorder has possession of his faculties. The worst feature of this disorder of the will is that man often persists in choosing as good that which he has found to be evil; this we call wilfulness. When a wise father finds this in his child he endeavors to correct it; when he finds it in his own nature he may well bring it to his heavenly Father for His correction. Though limited in our powers, we have the conception of a being of unlimited excellencies. Our Father in Heaven never makes mistakes. He always discerns the true, He always chooses the good. The will of God, as revealed to us, makes known what infinite wisdom and goodness choose for us. It is proper that He who made the world should govern it; His interest in His creatures is the greatest conceivable; His choice for them is the best possible law of their existence.

The child of the heavenly Father, the reverent worshiper of the holy God, the loyal subject of the great King, may well pray, “Thy will be done.”

The will of God, as we contemplate it, has at least

three distinct manifestations, expressed by the phrases, "It must be," "It can be," and "It ought to be." These distinctions are in our own minds rather than in the will of God itself, in our finite way of looking at an infinite subject. The burden of this petition has reference to the "It ought to be," though it fully acquiesces in the "It must be," and seeks to follow the "It can be," confident that in all respects the will of the holy heavenly Father is always good, and that its great design is the establishment of the Kingdom of God, the Kingdom of Righteousness, Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost.

The "It must be" is revealed to us in the material universe. The will of God is the force working in natural laws. Material elements, wherever we find them, act in their mutual relations according to well-defined and fixed laws. Science, by its faithful reading of the Book of Nature, is ever widening its knowledge of law, and has detected its presence where the unlearned saw only caprice, and where the pious unlearned saw God acting independently. God is still acting more majestically through law, determining every fitful breeze and every forming cloud. God is the author of law; His will endows matter with force and ordains the mode of its operation. He says "It must be" to every atom that exists, whether in the farthest fixed star or in the ground under our feet. It is a remarkable fact, however, that these forces and laws become more complicated in their relations and operations the closer they come to man. His power of foreseeing events is smallest where he has most interest and control, where the "It can be" meets and blends with "It must be." He can tell in what constellation of the heavens the sun will be a thousand years

hence to the hour, but he cannot tell in what condition the human being dearest to Him will be to-morrow, or what will be His own health an hour hence.

The "It must be" is also manifest in the history of the human race. The atom in the material universe has no power to disobey the will of God. God has willed that man, His creature, should be a free moral agent, that he should have the power of will in his own nature; but He has not willed that man, by antagonizing his will to God's will, should thereby pass beyond God's control. Herein lies a mystery to our limited powers. God overrules man's sinful will to carry out His own good will. In the history of mankind, within the horizon of our view, we see much wrong and misery with many signs of growing righteousness and happiness. Good has a tendency to overcome evil; there is an evolution from the low to a higher condition; there are throes and struggles, but a general passing on and up. There is a general advance toward the good, gradual it often is, subject frequently to decline, but all the more wonderful that the current is ever forward. One is glad he lives to-day rather than in any past age. One is confident the future will be still better. There are bright foregleams of the coming Kingdom. Wicked nations drink the cup of retribution, while nations learning righteousness prosper according to their virtues. The nation that lives for luxury and power, dies. The nation that lives to minister to the weaker nations, flourishes. There is a philosophy of history. Through war and peace, famine and plenty, pestilence and health, order and confusion, in the preservation and advance of the race, there is abundant evidence of a presiding will. There is a hand upon the

helm of this world's affairs. There is an "It must be" in the life of mankind.

The hand that rules is all powerful. If all men should combine to resist His purpose it would be in vain. He makes rebellion itself an instrument to accomplish His will. While we cannot hopefully resist, there is no need that we should fear. It is not blind, relentless fate, but the hand of infinite wisdom and love that is upon the helm. Our heavenly Father, our holy God, our great King wills, and we may trustingly say, "Thy will be done."

Now the subject comes very close to each one of us, for it is quite evident there is a very large "It must be" in each individual life. We see it in our heredity; not only our parentage for several generations back, but our race parentage, determines very largely our physical form, mental qualities, moral dispositions, and general welfare. We see it in our environment. It makes a great difference in the life whether one was born in Peking or in New York; in the dying civilization of pagan Rome or in the growing light of our present Christian civilization; in the country or in the city; on the Avenue or in the slums. But here, too, the individual will is to be considered; for God has blended for the race and the individual the "It can be" with the "It must be" when He gave man a will in the constitution of his nature. Heredity and environment, while powerful, are not controlling factors when man's will, acting with God's will, chooses the "It can be."

Here, too, our petition has reverent submission blended with glad aspiration. The nature and circumstances of our lives are accepted as the will of our heavenly Father,

while we strive to catch His plan for us and to attain to what He would have us become, cheerfully and faithfully fulfilling the conditions in life, and allying ourselves heartily with the good in the advance of mankind, and praying that all men may take this course.

Within the limits marked out by the "It must be" of God there is a very large sphere of the "It can be," in which He gives to the human will the opportunity and incentive of enlarging its powers and improving its conditions. Four hundred years ago the Indians possessed this land. The "It must be" seemed to limit their lives to hunting and fishing, giving them much happiness and developing many noble traits, but still affording only a low and narrow life. But the land and the climate were the same then as now—the same fertile prairies and hillsides, the same mountains, rich with coal and iron and gold, the same broad streams and great lakes. The "It must be" was not so narrow as it seemed to the Indian mind; it contained all the "It can be" which has led on the white man through three centuries of progress to the present richness and fulness of life.

We find it impossible to take in all the details of God's plans in our dim vision, but we see enough to know that both in our limitations and in our opportunities, both in the "It must be" and in the "It can be," there is the wisdom and goodness of our heavenly Father seeking our welfare. Sometimes it is true great hardships fall upon a few, and the will of God seems heartless; but looking out and afar off, taking in the greatest scope our thoughts can compass, we see that the will of God is good, and beyond our horizon, we believe, is the

infinity of His wisdom and love. In a still night of fog the great steamship *City of Paris* crashed upon a sharp ledge of rock on the coast of England. The captain thought he was out in the deep channel; he had not made sufficient allowance for the drifting of a current toward the rock. Fog, currents, rocks, and the loss of a great steamship, and many precious lives endangered. How hard is nature! But, hold! See the seamanship, the noble British and American manhood, that has been developed by battling with the dangers of the deep. Hold, again! There is but a little fog in a great world of sunshine, but a small current toward the rocks in a wide ocean. Hold, again! This little fog and small current are themselves slight incidents in the great current of the Gulf Stream, which brings the warmth of the tropics to make pleasant and fruitful the north of Europe. Take away the cause of the fog and the current, and you take away the summer from England and leave only a frozen, barren isle. God's will is not so much the wreck of the *City of Paris* as the fruitfulness of England and its strong manhood.

The spirit of this petition includes both a patient submission to our limitations and a cheerful facing of our opportunities. We are often called to suffer with resignation, we are more often called to discover the cause of our sufferings and to remove it. We bow to the "It must be," we listen intently to hear the "It can be," as we pray "Thy will be done."

A few years ago, at the close of the summer, several fair Southern cities suffered from the scourge of the yellow fever; it had been brought to them from Cuba, and it threatened to spread over the land. There was a great

wave of charity awakened among all the people, and physicians and nurses, with all the help that poured-out wealth could give, were drawn to the stricken cities. Christian charity not only ministered freely, but Christian faith prayed that God would send the frost to check the fever. Some ridiculed the prayer; a godless scientist said, "One might as well pray to God to build a saw-mill." Of course the small schoolboy could answer that scoff: "God never builds sawmills, but He does send frosts." And at length the frost came and checked the fever. Then Christian wisdom sought to learn the cause of the scourge and to destroy it, and now the fair Southern cities have a better sewer system; and during our occupation of Cuba the sanitary sewer system has been applied to Havana, and now, with a quickened intelligence and watchfulness among the people, we expect to be exempt from yellow fever. We have tried to adapt ourselves to the "It can be" of God's will, and we know that His will is for health, not for sickness.

The scourge in the city was not God's first choice; His first choice is health, conditioned on obedience to the laws of nature—His will. The petition, therefore, is that God will help us to do His will rather than make us suffer it. The traveler in the Alps hears a noise above him, and, looking up, sees the rush of the avalanche. Shall he say, "It is the will of God," and stand still in its path? No; the noise is His warning—the will of God telling him to seek safety in the cleft of the rock. God's will in the laws of health is evidently the well-being of obedience. If dyspepsia threatens we are not languidly to submit, but to correct our diet and habits, and so come into harmony with God's will. To find the "It can be"

is in the spirit of this petition as well as to submit to the "It must be," to cultivate more grit and less resignation, to honor God by striving to learn and do, as much as by bearing, His holy will.

While we should never substitute a submissive spirit for an obedient one, it is still a blessed truth that in our lot of limitation, disease, and death we may honor God as much by bearing as by doing His holy will. The blind Milton could sing "They also serve who only stand and wait." From many a bed of suffering, by many an open grave, with tear-filled eyes and choking voice, we pray, "Thy will be done." Our hopes and plans are broken, the fair castles we have builded along the avenue of our future come down with a crash, and from the ruins we pray, "Thy will be done." Our plans are broken, but not our spirits. We are the children of God, and His plans are better than ours; let us find them and rejoice in them. The sharpest sting in many a "disappointment" is taken away by the change of a single letter in the word, making it "His appointment."

The will of God is one. The distinctions in our thought, as we have already seen, interblend, and we have now reached the stage where we can see that the "It must be" and the "It can be" are but parts of the "It ought to be," that the limitations and possibilities of our lot are conditioned upon our moral character. Man, the being with a will, has a tendency to ignore and resist God's will; the evils of his lot come largely from this tendency, and the remedy for sin and misery is the complete establishment of God's will. The petition, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven," means the banishment of sin and misery from this earthly existence,

and the complete enthronement of the "It ought to be" in the willing hearts of mankind.

There is this quality about the "It ought to be": it demands a hearing of the soul, it is the voice of God, and is recognized as such. This shows the dignity and worth of man; there is that in him that hears the "It ought to be" of God, the soul that recognizes the voice of God. Material atoms respond to the "It must be," even to the "It can be," and come out from chaos through successive stages of order, until the fair earth, teeming with many forms of life, comes into existence; but it is only the being created in His own likeness that can respond to the "It ought to be" of God's voice. Order is Heaven's first law, and man looks out from the little dark ball of the earth upon the constellations of countless blazing suns in the immensity of space, seeing everywhere the "It must be" pulsating from the throne of the Eternal, and bows in awe, feeling his littleness. Then he hears a voice in his soul which all the world cannot hear, the "It ought to be" of God, and man, who walks the earth, is lifted at once into a dignity and worth greater than all earths and all stars.

He recognizes, also, that he only walks worthy of his being when he follows that voice, when his will agrees with God's will; then he walks with God. The highest possible for him is to choose the choice of God. In the scales of choice, in the supreme hours of his soul, only one thing should have any weight. Not place, or power, or pleasure, or riches, or learning—only the "It ought to be." If this sways him, he is kingly; aught else, or all else, makes him mean. The great command, "Love God supremely and your fellow as yourself;" the great

call, "Repent;" the great invitation, "Trust in Christ, love Him and grow like Him"—these have the force of the "It ought to be" to the listening soul. One may answer, "It is too exacting and difficult," or "I am as good as others," or "I do not want to;" but no one can ever say, "I ought not to be a Christian."

There is this further quality about the "It ought to be": when it is disobeyed by the free choice of the soul, it at once calls the "It must be" to deal with that soul. The first feature of its dealing is that by the nature of the case the soul is at once separated from God. By its own free act it goes away from Him—the choice is not to walk with God, but in its own way; the will of man separates itself from the will of God. The "It ought *not* to be," chosen by man, separates him from God, who always chooses the "It ought to be."

The second result of disobedience enforced by the "It must be," in the nature of the case, is wilfulness; the man's heart is hardened. There are two striking cases of hardening of the heart in the Scriptures. It is said of Pharaoh, God hardened his heart. Pharaoh hardened his heart, and the fact is simply stated—his heart was hardened. When we read the account we find God's action fully described. He gave him just commands, He threatened punishment; upon his repentance He extended mercy. We find Pharaoh's action fully described. He disobeyed the commands; when punished, he repented and promised obedience; when mercy was extended, he abused that mercy by renewed disobedience. By the laws of his nature, by such action, abusing the goodness of God, Pharaoh hardened his heart. But these laws were the "It must be" of God. By

their action God hardened his heart—his heart was hardened.

The second case fully described in the Scriptures is that of the Jews. Here, too, we find God's action fully described. He gave righteous commands; He threatened and inflicted punishment. Upon repentance He extended mercy; this was continued through ages. He sent prophets; He sent His own Son. We find the action of the Jews fully described. They disobeyed the commands, abused the mercy, rejected the prophets, at length crucified the Son of God. By such action, according to the laws of human nature, abusing the goodness of God, they hardened their hearts. But these laws are the "It must be" of God. It is inevitable; by the laws of our nature, by the "It must be" of God, disobedience to the "It ought to be" hardens the heart.

The third result of disobedience to the "It ought to be" is that man thereby opposes himself to the whole framework and constitution of things. He is in God's universe and out of harmony with it, since he is out of harmony with God. The "It ought to be" being broken, the "It must be" in his own nature and in all nature weighs heavily upon man. This punishment of sin exists in time, and must exist while the laws of man's being and the universe continue to exist. A man may break the law of a college, even be expelled from it, and still recover himself in life. He may break the law of a nation, and, flying beyond its borders, still have much of the world to live in, with many avenues of life open to him. He may even break a law of humanity, the will of mankind, and, flying to some lone isle of the sea, still have much of life left to him. But he who breaks the

law of his being, the will of God, cannot fly, either in time or space, beyond the "It must be" of God.

It at once becomes plain that the only rescue of man from the "It must be" bearing heavily upon his disobedience is the reestablishment of the "It ought to be" in his heart and life. The Christian religion is not seeking to be saved from the consequences of disobedience merely or even mainly; it aims at the true salvation from sin, it seeks to understand and obey the will of God. He who trusts the Savior and lovingly follows Him has more and more of His spirit, which delights in the will of God; he grows in harmony with his lot in life and his opportunities. His soul becomes more sensitive and responsive to the indications of God's will, and thus he comes into fellowship with God—walks with Him. That which is the hope of the individual believer in Christ is the only hope of the race of mankind. We may not clearly understand many things about the "It must be" and the "It can be," but there is no need to disagree or fail to understand the "It ought to be;" the line of our duty lies plainly open to our feet.

A very high standard of obedience is lifted up by our Savior in this petition: "Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven." "How do the angels obey?" asked a mother of her child. "Without asking questions," was the wise answer. The strong angels and the glorified saints have such confidence in God's good-will that they obey without question or fear of consequence—promptly, heartily, constantly, universally. Introduce this spirit on the earth, and you have the heroism of godly contentment. We are in God's hands, and have utmost confidence in Him. We will obey Him, as they obey in Heaven. If

God's will is done by us we may cheerfully consent that it shall be done in us and upon us. Paul, Luther, and many a heroic sufferer on a sick-bed, as well as leader in the world's activities, have thus prayed and lived. What are our positions in life and our tasks compared with the spirit of doing God's will? If God were to send two angels to earth, one to occupy a throne, the other to clean a road, the will of God would be the sole thought in each heart.

Browning makes the Archangel Gabriel take the poor boy's place, and we instinctively feel the truth of his description :

“Then to his poor trade he turned
By which the daily bread was earned,
And ever o'er the trade he bent,
And ever lived on earth content.
He did God's will: to him all one
If on the earth or in the sun.”

Not only this, but the mysteries and hardships of our lot are taken up and made a part of God's great plan for the world, and we are praying the best possible prayer for our race of mankind when we say “Thy will be done” unchecked, unburdened—as it is done in Heaven.

At night, in a great storm on the ocean, the passenger lies in his narrow berth, sleepless, sick, and fearful, hearing the surge of the water, the roar of the wind, the creaking of the vessel. Then he hears the watchman on deck shout out “All's well!” There is a higher realm than his pain and fear. The captain is in command; all is in good order; the ship is triumphing over wind and wave, and is making good progress homeward. So this earth, with its race of mankind, is surging through storm

and stress; but be of good cheer, there is a hand upon the helm. "All's well!" It is the hand of God. The ideal of doing God's will is in Heaven. This reveals the nature of the heavenly life to us; it is not passive enjoyment, but active blessedness—the doing of God's will. The design of our Savior in His blessed Gospel is to give new life, the life of obedience, to write the law upon our heart. Thus He introduces the heavenly spirit into our earthly life, and thus He prepares us for Heaven. They only can hope to reach Heaven who are learning to do God's will here, and they only would be happy there where that spirit prevails; for Heaven is only a possible and a desirable place for those who are learning to do God's will, who sincerely make this prayer.

“GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD.”

Matt. vi : 11.

Whence come the harvests of golden grain? From the rain and the sunshine, from the soil and the air, and from that mysterious thing we call “life” in the seed of wheat. Yes; and through these from some One back of them. Back of the days of sunlight and the nights of darkness, beyond the rain and the dew, the storm and the calm, the soil beneath, the air around, and the overhanging heavens, beyond the life treasured up in the seed, is the great God of the harvests; these second causes are the first emergence into sight of His unseen power and purpose. The rich and the poor are alike dependent upon the harvest for daily bread. The rich man in his palace on the Avenue, the owner of lands and stocks and ships, surrounded by all that is beautiful and rare, is as dependent for daily bread upon the harvests of the earth as the poorest man that tills the soil. His money itself cannot feed him; like the Oriental story of the man searching for mines and meeting the Goddess of the Mountains. She offered him whatever he wished. The rash man said, “Let everything I touch turn to gold.” He was rich in an instant beyond compare, but soon died of starvation, for the food he touched turned to gold. So the rich man in his palace and the poor man in his cottage are brothers at the table God spreads. The care of poverty and the anxiety of riches may alike dissolve in this daily prayer.

We have thus far found great depth of meaning in

each petition. We shall find a surprising depth in this; each short word is charged with thought and feeling as we breathe it forth in prayer.

Consider the place of the petition in the Lord's Prayer. It has a place, and a prominent one. Proper regard is paid to bodily wants in the prayer the Son of Man taught His brother man. We are not to ignore the bodily life. The highest spiritual life, even in prayer, does not neglect the body. But while it has a prominent place, it has but one place. It is the only petition of its kind among several petitions; it follows important spiritual wants, and leads to such again. We are not to idolize the body. The materialism and sensualism to which we are prone are silently rebuked. The spirit that makes the one object of life to secure temporal good is quietly ignored by the True Man.

The first place in a child's desire belongs to God Himself, and now as the child brings his personal wants to the Divine heart in this second part of the prayer his love for and confidence in God voice themselves in the first word, "Give," and in the following petitions in the kindred words, "Forgive" and "Deliver." The holy God, the great King, the ruling Will, our Father in Heaven, may be confidently asked to give, to forgive, and to deliver.

The Savior teaches us to regard God as the giver; this is His nature and His relation to us. Man would never have supposed this to be the nature of God; he is ever prone to imagine Him as altogether such an one as himself. The greatest being will be the most exacting. He will require the service of all inferior beings, the mere creatures of his hand. Wherever nations have imagined

gods for themselves, such has been their character: selfish gods, like unto the selfish men who worshiped them. Jesus Christ shows us that God is just the reverse of this. True, our God, revealed in Jesus Christ, demands the supreme love of man, that we would bring all our powers into His service, that we should live in His glory. But the glory of the Lord is not grasping to Himself—the glory of the whirlpool, drawing in and swallowing down all within its reach; rather it is the glory of the sun, ever pouring forth light and warmth and blessing. The glory of God is giving. All our powers are gifts from the great Giver; His enactments simply require us to use His gifts in the best way. As He uses all His powers in blessing others, living to His glory, we become givers, as He is the great Giver. Even His restrictive laws are rich gifts to us, restraining us from falling into the depths of selfishness, like the railing along the edge of a precipice. Even the adoration and worship we give Him, our prayers ascending to Him, return in rich blessings upon waiting souls, as the vapors of the earth drawn up by the sun are soon poured back again in refreshing dews and fruitful showers.

The few simple words in this petition teach that God is not only the great Giver, but that He gives in such a way that He develops manly qualities in His children, and cultivates also in them the spirit of ministering to the needs of their fellow men.

The child spirit voiced and cultivated in this petition is that of cheerful and trustful dependence upon God. Man is an animal among animals. He may eat his food, as they do, without a thought of its source. But man is more than an animal; he may be consciously dependent

upon the great God for the food that sustains him in living. This is his true nobility, this lifts him above the animals. All are dependent upon God for food, he alone can be conscious of it; and, more, he can be cheerfully and trustfully dependent upon God the heavenly Father, and in this he recognizes his obligation to use his gifts in serving, and feels the uplift of gratitude to the great Giver.

We pray for "daily bread," such food as we need for the sustaining of our lives from day to day, for the maintenance of our bodily powers in their highest condition for the service of God. In the simple terms of the petition there is the cultivation of the child spirit, of careful attention and faithful obedience to the laws of health, of temperance in the use of the fruits of the earth, of the practice of a simple and wholesome diet. We are to eat to live, not live to eat. We are to use the appetites in the spirit of the prayer, for the welfare of our bodily life in the service of God in its highest efficiency. The epicure who eats to give pleasure to his palate that which he knows will injure his health cannot use this petition—it is not a prayer for poison, but for bread. The glutton who eats so much that his body is sluggish—fit for sleep, but not for work—cannot use this prayer, which is for daily—that is, for sustaining—bread. On the other hand, the ascetic who starves his body to the verge of life, thinking to please God by keeping down his appetites and passions thereby, is out of harmony with the prayer, which is for the food to sustain the full life in the service of God.

The time this bread is asked for is to-day. In the "this day" there is a hint of the uncertainty of life.

To-day may be the limit of our earthly life ; we may not need bread to-morrow. There is more than a hint here of the need of daily prayer. We are taught we might as well go a day without food as a day without prayer, and surely our souls are in as great and as constant need as our bodies. If "daily bread" taught us moderation in use, "this day" teaches us moderation in desire, the godly contentment, which is the true riches of the child of God. The lust for things of sense, for the wealth of the world, leads a man to enlist all his thoughts and time in their eager pursuit. Translate such a life into prayer, and its only petition would be "Give me a fortune." Christ says to him, "Go into your closet and pray to your heavenly Father for the sustaining bread you need for this day, that your time and energy may be spent in the service of God for the well-being of man."

Forethought and thrift are not forbidden but commended in the prayer for bread, and nature confirms the commendation. We gather the golden grain in the harvest time or we starve in the winter. The harvests of wheat the wide earth over are each year only sufficient to feed the population of the whole earth for about one year, and a third, the "daily bread," and the seed for the next harvest, with a small provision for variation of fruitfulness, and time and energy must be given for transportation from harvest-fields to hungry centers of population. But even these virtues of forethought and thrift are liable to degenerate into the vices of anxious and selfish hoarding, and so we are reminded that man's life consisteth, not in the abundance of his possessions, but in the cheerful and trustful service of his God. Christ's warning against anxiety for the morrow is here

expressed in the constant trust of the child in the great Giver, the heavenly Father.

Two very important words remain for us to consider, but even thus far this concise and comprehensive petition makes provision for a rich and full life of man upon earth from day to day. Bread is the main part put for the whole of the food he needs for the sustenance of his life in highest efficiency. Fruits and flowers, as well as grain, are the gifts of God. This beautiful and fruitful earth is God's way of sustaining and ministering to the life of His children; the table He spreads is bountiful with food and adorned with beauty, is wholesome and charming. The children at the table know it is spread for them by their Father in Heaven; that it speaks of His constant care and boundless love; they look up to Him with answering love, with gratitude and cheerful trust. Thus they come into fellowship with Him, and every daily meal becomes a table of companionship of children with each other and their Father. Thus, also, receiving strength from the provision of His bounty, they strive to use it in a way which shall honor the great Giver, and in this spirit become themselves givers, ministering to the welfare of their fellow men. "Life abundantly" is here, the fulness of the earthly bodily life, and the highest culture of this life in trust toward God and in service of man.

There is one word in this petition some of us may have passed over without much meditation, still it has a most important meaning—the word "our." Why did not Christ say, "Give us this day daily bread?" Why did He insert "our?" In what sense can God's gifts be ours? It can only be in the way He gives it. God gives

us bread in a different way from that in which He bestows His other general gifts—air, light, and water.

He requires us to labor for our bread. Wheat does not grow as weeds do; it must be cultivated. Fruits respond to man's culture with finer quality and flavor. Labor for bread is the ordinance of God from Adam down, and the Apostle Paul states it boldly, "If a man will not work, neither should he eat," and he exhorts men to work, that they may eat "their own bread." Bread, then, becomes "ours," with reference to our fellow men and to God, only when we earn it. Unless we labor for it in some way or other, we eat not our own but our neighbor's bread.

In this single word of the petition, then, we ask God to bless us in earning our daily bread. But it is "our," not "my;" so each one prays, not only for himself, but for all other men—not only "Give me the opportunity to earn my daily bread, but give all other men the same." This single word, sincerely and devoutly used by all men daily, would soon work the most wonderful change in our manner of living in this the highest age of the world's civilization, making it far more worthy the name of Christian. Idlers by choice would be stimulated to labor, and idlers by force would find abundant opportunity to labor, and the earth would respond in fruitfulness as never dreamed of, except by the prophets inspired of God.

The word "our" cultivates the sentiment of self-support. The young, the aged, and the sick may thankfully take the food the love of others provides. All others should earn theirs by some useful labor of muscle, brain, or soul. The tendency of the children of the wealthy to

look upon all kinds of work as ignoble and to live in idleness is rebuked by this petition. Many wealthy people are captains of industry, or almoners of God's bounty, or ministering angels of mercy, and have the satisfaction of eating "their own bread;" but those living in idle luxury eat the bread of others.

The word "our" encourages us to live within our means. If to emulate our neighbors or gratify our tastes we incur debts for luxurious living we have little prospect of paying, we virtually pray, "Give me the bread of the butcher, and the storekeeper, and of all others where I can run up bills." The whole spirit of getting something for nothing debars one from using this petition. Gambling, whether in fun or in earnest, cannot well be imagined as being frequently in the closet on its knees. To bring bread from the harvest-field to the consumer is a useful calling; but to use these avenues to control the market and force the price of bread above all reasonable profit for raising and transporting, to corner wheat, which people must have at any price, or the means of transporting wheat, is not earning one's daily bread, but stealing it. Much of what is known as speculation in stocks and breadstuffs may be sanctioned in Society and legalized by the State, but is rather an awkward subject to bring into our prayers.

In this petition we ask God to bless our ordinary calling and our method of conducting it; the calling itself must, then, be such that God can bless it—one of benefit to our fellow men. All preying upon the vices of our fellow men is utterly inconsistent with the prayer. To take breadstuff and make from it a drink which fosters the vices of men and destroys the well-being, or in any

way to make money by its sale, seems to be hardly a proper subject to bring before God for his blessing. It is suspected that some Christians live upon rents from saloons, or, worse still, from brothels. They may have been deceived by their agents, or have hesitated to inquire concerning their tenants, but the suspicion is inconsistent with Christian praying.

To-day there are strikes raging in our Christian land; labor and capital are in conflict, in some cases, on a stupendous scale. Our minds can easily see the principles at issue if we reduce the scale to one we are familiar with—hired labor in house or store, in factory or farm. The one who works for hire sometimes thinks more of his wages than of his work, and when the eye of the master is away he shirks and slights it. He evidently does not consider the interest of his employer, only is intent on drawing his pay. If his life voiced itself in prayer it would be "Give me the daily bread of my employer."

On the other hand, the employer is sometimes a hard taskmaster; he takes advantage of the necessity of the laboring man to hire him at the lowest possible wages, and then stands over him, to drive to the utmost through the longest possible day. He does not consider the interest of his employee, only his interest in getting as much out of him as possible for as little pay as possible. If his life voiced itself in prayer it would be "Give me the daily bread of my hired man." So it is in the kitchen, in the small factory, or in the great steel industry. On the large scale the land over, labor demands few hours and large pay. "Wages! wages!" is its cry. On the other hand, capital tries to build itself up with

little thought of the interests of labor it employs. "Dividends! dividends!" is its cry. When labor seeks to give a fair day's work, and capital seeks to give a fair day's wages, the question will be solved, and solved in God's way; for then both labor and capital may consistently use this prayer, praying for each other, "Give us this day our daily bread."

The whole question of wealth production and wealth distribution comes within the province of this petition. Political economy has too often made man revolve around wealth—wealth the main thing; man the mere producer of wealth. This prayer—God's political economy—makes wealth revolve around the man; manhood is the main thing—the manhood, too, that can pray about his wealth.

The nineteenth century was a great wealth-producer, producing, it is claimed, more wealth that can be handed down to the next generation than all the centuries that have gone before. The century also, in its closing years, has witnessed the accumulation of stupendous fortunes in the hands of individuals and stupendous combinations of wealth in the hands of corporations. Another vast change in wealth-producing conditions has been evoked during the century. Man is distinguished from the animals in many ways—markedly in this: that he is the being who uses tools. Very largely by the use of tools he has changed his environment and accumulated wealth. But in this country a great change has come in the use of tools. They used to be comparatively simple, now by modern invention they are wonderfully complex; they used to be driven almost altogether by manual labor, now they are driven by steam and electrical power; they used

to belong almost entirely to the laborer, now they belong almost entirely to the capitalist. The laws used to protect the laborer in the possession of his tools; they could not be taken away from him; they were his means of earning his daily bread. Now the capitalist may shut up his factory whenever he chooses, and the laborer loses his means of earning his daily bread. It is a terrible power to be in the hands of a small class of men, to deprive a multitude of the means of earning daily bread; but this is one of the marked features of our modern civilization. On the other hand, it is a wonderful privilege to give a multitude the means of earning their daily bread; if exercised rightly, it brings one very near to the great Giver. Surely this should be a Christian civilization, demanding the exercise of this power, not in the old heathen, selfish spirit, but in the modern Christian spirit of brotherly love.

There are evidently three elements entering into wealth production and wealth distribution. The first is labor; it must change the things of the earth into things of beauty and use. The second is capital, giving labor the material and the tools to work with. The third is business management; the skill to work the combination of labor and capital to the greatest advantage in the factory, in transportation, and in the markets of the world. The distribution of the results must largely be in the hands of this third element. The accumulation of the vast fortunes seems to indicate that the managers have taken to themselves rather more than their just proportion of these results. How the results shall be justly distributed between the three elements—what is just wages for laborers, what is just interest for capital, what

is just reward for business enterprise and skill—it must be confessed is a difficult problem. But this petition of the Lord's Prayer solves it. When the three pray together and for each other, "Give us this day our daily bread," the equitable portion will fall into the hands of each.

There is one more small word of vast meaning in this petition—the word "us." You cannot make it contain less than the race of mankind. If I wish to pray for myself alone, or for my family, or for my friends alone, I shall have to make my own prayer. It is impossible to make the Lord's Prayer in any way favor selfishness. We cannot ask even for our daily bread, but, as interceding priests, for the wants of all men; many may not pray for themselves, but that does not hinder us from praying for them. Before the Father's throne we are brothers; the rich pray for the poor, and the poor pray for the rich, that all may have rich and full life for the worship of God and the service of mankind. We cannot hold anything we receive exclusively for ourselves alone, nor are we to allow position and wealth to remove our brother from our loving interest.

The great Giver of the harvests has made this a bountiful earth, producing grain and fruits in abundance for all the needs of the children of men, and capable of producing still greater abundance. The New World alone, our own continent, if all thoroughly cultivated, could feed three times the present population of the world. New varieties of grain and fruits are being brought into existence by careful culture, so that the wheat production to the acre may be largely increased.

But something is wrong, for there are multitudes in

Christian lands and vast multitudes in heathen lands who do not know what it is to have a full meal of healthy food. The spirit of this petition looks upon these with charity, longing to feed them, and, more than this, seeks to discover the cause of this sad condition, with eager desire to correct it. This cause is certainly not in the great Giver of the harvests, but in the way men treat one another in the matter of earning their daily bread. As we pray and meditate together upon the word "us," we see the squalid poor in the great cities, the famine-stricken in foreign lands, the sick and needy at our doors, and, behold! we are all kneeling together with the prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread." Then, if we are sincere, we will do the best we can to answer our prayer; with liberal hand we will help the poor, with earnest thought seek to help them to earn their own living, with loving and equitable spirit seek to bring about such conditions that each member of the whole race, our brother man, shall have as fair an opportunity to earn his daily bread as we desire for ourselves.

This petition, while simply for the needed food for the body, is intensely spiritual. Bodily need has its highest significance to the thoughtful as a figure of the spiritual. So Christ speaks of the blessedness of those who hunger and thirst after righteousness. So our daily bread, as the gift of God, has its teaching of the true bread which came down from heaven—the bread of life, the supreme gift of God to the children of men. The child spirit awakened by our Savior and sustained by Him prays in this petition. The wants of the soul are hinted at rather than expressed. We pray that all men may be sustained in this earthly life. But we have already prayed for

the hallowed Name, the coming Kingdom, and the regnant Will. Linking this petition with these, and seeing the full significance of the bodily life, and having the child spirit, we pray that all men may have the bread of life.

“AND FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS, AS WE
FORGIVE OUR DEBTORS.”

Matt. vi : 12.

When our Savior inserted this petition in the prayer He taught His disciples He debarred Himself from ever using it. No one ever found sin in Him. He never confessed sin, never seemed conscious of it. He was sinless, and never could pray for forgiveness. It is the Lord's Prayer not because He used it, but because He taught His disciples to use it. Still, He could not have taught them a prayer suitable to their needs and left this clause out. The petition differs from the others in that it alone has a qualifying clause, and, further, that Christ commented upon this petition alone of all the prayer.

This second part of the prayer connects the petition with the word “and,” thus distinguishing it from the first part. Each of the petitions concerning God is complete and comprehensive. One great subject is considered from different points of view. If the name of God is hallowed, then the Kingdom of God is come and the will of God is done. The realization of each petition realizes the others. In the second part each petition covers only a part of man's complex needs. If the first petition is realized, and we have our daily bread, only a part of our need is filled. The “and” here very strongly impresses upon us the important truth that as much as the child of God needs daily bread, so much he needs daily forgiveness. The sentimentalist may tell us that we ought not to mention our sins so frequently to God,

that any earthly father does not wish such confession from his child, that it is not a high ideal of the child character. Very true; but we are far from ideal children. To speak to God as if we were, would be false to our real condition. Christ teaches us to pray for daily forgiveness. It is very important that we clearly understand this petition, in order that we may sincerely use it.

There is a great difference between pardon and forgiveness. Pardon is a matter of law, of legal conditions; it frees one from penalty, with some restoration of standing. Forgiveness is a matter of heart, of personal relations; it frees from estrangement, and restores to confidence and affection. The governor of a State may, for reasons of State, pardon a man he has no interest in; he does not even know him, or he may know him and thoroughly detest him. He frees him from prison and restores him to citizenship. The man pardoned may not know the governor, have no interest in him, or may hate him; besides, he may be the same kind of man after his pardon as before—as bad a character, or even a worse one. Some of the popular thinking on forgiveness of sin has almost exclusive reference to pardon. There is a popular theory that God will not punish sin in the life to come. This is poor reasoning in itself, for in all the spheres of being of which we have any knowledge, physical, mental, or spiritual, there is penalty of violated law, and it seems probable this will last while being lasts. But the theory has reference only to release from penalty, to pardon. It does not take into account the real nature of sin and the need of forgiveness. So with the other popular theory. God will not punish those who do the best they can. This, too, is poor reasoning in itself. God

does not require us to fly, but to love Him supremely. We certainly have the power of loving. Now if God said to the drunkard, "Love Me as much as you can," He would leave him forever a drunkard, requiring only the little love left after he had loved liquor supremely. God never lowers his law to the condition of the creature who has become unable to keep that law, else there would be no possibility of restoration. The laws of flight rest upon all birds alike, though some have weak or broken wings, and in this is the only hope for such wings. But this theory also has reference only to release from penalty, to pardon, which, we have seen, might be a bad thing; it does not take into consideration the nature of sin and the need of forgiveness.

We can easily see the distinction between pardon and forgiveness among ourselves, if we take an instance in the family. A mother gives her boy a dog, tells him to treat it kindly, and threatens a particular punishment if he torments the pet. All goes well for a time, but one day the boy cruelly torments the pet; he is found out, and brought to an account. He pleads with the mother not to inflict the punishment (it is all he cares about), he pleads for pardon. The mother may weakly pardon him, and he probably will become a worse boy—more cruel, more disobedient—for such treatment. On the other hand, the mother may wisely and lovingly show him his wrong; that he has inflicted pain upon the pet; that he has hardened his own nature by cruelty; that the mother has sympathy for the pet and love for her boy, and so he has hurt her; that he has wronged the pet, himself, and his mother in disobeying her commands, and so deserves the punishment. The sensitive boy now

feels sorry for the pet, for himself, for his mother, and with tears he asks her to forgive him. You who are mothers know the result. The two hearts are brought together again, the mother freely forgives her repentant boy. What becomes of the punishment? The mother now exercises her wisdom; she may inflict it in whole or in part, or she may remit it altogether, as she thinks will be best for the boy. In this case forgiveness may include or be independent of pardon; the forgiveness is the main thing, the pardon is a comparatively small affair.

So when man breaks a law of God he incurs the penalty, but that is not all or even the main thing in sin. There is a Person back of the law who has deep love for us, and the law is the expression of that love seeking our good. On our side, to break the law is not an impersonal thing; there is feeling in it. We go through the law to the Person back of the law, and wrong Him in our disrespect for or dislike of Him. A little creature, dependent absolutely upon God, arrays himself against Him, and, through the broken law, strikes a blow upon the infinite, loving heart of God. He may not realize this fully, as the child did not realize that he hurt his mother when he hurt the pet; but he did—that was in the nature of his disobedience. This, then, is the essence of sin: it is a personal wrong against God. The sinner wrongs God. An instance which we may not consider much of a sin may make this plain. I entertain a harsh, uncharitable judgment of my neighbor, putting a bad construction upon his character and conduct when a better was supposable. I have sinned against myself—been unkind; against him—been unjust; against the neighborhood—been unfair; against the Church—I have wronged

one of its members; and this though I have not allowed my uncharitable judgment to express itself in word or deed. But this is not all, or even the main part of my sin. We are both redeemed children of God. He made and loves us both. I have wronged God in my uncharitable thought, have cherished that which one child of God should never have of another. It is so with the greatest sins; the kind is one, the difference is only in degree; the smallest fragment of ice has all the essential properties of the iceberg. David, when he awoke to the nature of his sin, thought doubtless of his wrong to Uriah, to Bathsheba, to his family, to his kingdom; but these were all lesser parts of the great wrong to God, so He said, "Against Thee, Thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight." The essence of sin is the wrong done to God. Pardon from penalty does not go to the depth of the case; it is only a matter of law, does not touch the personal element in the sin.

I would not have you think I make light of law and penalty. I magnify them. By breaking law one loses standing as an obedient subject of God. It is often a terrible thing to lose one's standing. A business man loses his standing on the Stock Exchange. A lawyer loses his standing at the Bar. A man or woman loses standing in Society. Penalty is the frown of the law; it overrides all questions but justice. A judge is on the bench, and his personal friend is brought before him convicted of crime; the friendship must give way or the foundations of Society are destroyed, and the stern sentence to the state prison issues. So in the last day of the general judgment the sentence of the just Judge will be a terrible thing. But there is one thing more terrible still:

the sin is still there. You can think of pardon, freedom from penalty, a restoration of standing, and the more terrible thing, the wrong done to God, still existing!

The soul needs forgiveness, the remission of sin, the taking away of the sin itself. How is this brought about? Let us think again of the mother and her boy; he sought forgiveness when he saw his real offense, and she at once took him back to her heart. When did the mother forgive her boy? When he asked forgiveness? Was that the time? You who are mothers know better than that. She had forgiven him from the beginning, from the first knowledge she had of the offense. It is the nature of the mother's heart, though wronged, to forgive. It was because she had this forgiving love that she tried to bring him to see and learn his offense; without this deep love it would have been easy for her to inflict the punishment at once. When was the boy forgiven? This, though it seems the same, is a far different question. When he hurt the pet? No. When he sought to be relieved from the penalty? No. He was forgiven only when he felt his sin and sought forgiveness. The mother's forgiving love brought him to see his need, and then supplied that need. How plain it is in the case of the mother. Is it not as plain in the case of God?

There are many hints in nature of God's readiness to forgive. The whole sphere of remedies, of restorative agencies waiting to heal the moment one ceases to break the laws of health, affords such a suggestion. Besides, a still clearer hint is in the nature of a mother's heart. We instinctively feel the mother's wealth of forgiving love is but a faint reflection of God's infinite heart of forgiving

love. Still, we need something clearer than many hints in such a vitally important matter. Here the Bible meets our need in one of its most important proclamations: "Through Jesus Christ is proclaimed to you the forgiveness of sins."

When does God forgive sins? Consider that question first. Is it when we repent? Is He less rich in forgiveness than the mother? No! no! richer, far richer! He forgives from the first, He forgives from all eternity, it is His nature to forgive. Oh! the hardness of our sinful hearts that can strike the forgiving heart of God blow after blow! From this forgiving heart of God comes forth the Divine Son to reveal God to us. The gift of Forgiving Love is Forgiving Love Himself. He takes all the barriers out of the way to the full exercise of forgiveness. By breaking the law of our being we had lost standing. He takes His place with us—the sinless one standing with sinners, in the sinner's place. By breaking law we are under its penalty. The sentence of death fills all our future. How can God be just and save the guilty? Just! He cannot be otherwise; His nature is perfectly just and absolutely unchangeable. Just! He must be just; the welfare of the whole intelligent, moral universe is based upon the justice of God. But the infinite, forgiving love of God provides a way in infinite self-sacrifice by which he may remain just, and still forgive. He bears in His own person all the just claims of violated law; He not only stands in the sinner's place, He dies in the sinner's stead. It is God's nature to forgive; the whole mission of our Lord Jesus Christ, His atoning death upon the cross and all His witness bearing among men, is a revelation of the forgiving love of God.

When is a man forgiven? Is it when he seeks pardon only? No; for his heart may still cherish the wrong done to God and shed off the rich, forgiving love of God as a stone sheds off the abundance of rain. It is when he recognizes his sin, that he has wronged God, when he penitently seeks God's forgiveness, then, that forgiveness with all its wealth of life enters his heart; this saves him from the penalty not only, but from his sin—brings back his heart to God. There can be no help for the sinful soul from mere pardon, pardon from penalty; the heart is unchanged, the hard, cruel sin is still there. But if that shall be removed, if the hard heart shall be melted and receive into it the forgiving love of God, the greatest sinner may be made a saint. The warmth of summer melts the iceberg as well as the fragment of ice. The forgiveness in Christ, the forgiveness that costs so much, the love that leads the son of God to come to the sinner and show him his wrong, this awakens in the soul the desire to be forgiven, the desire that voices itself in this petition of the Lord's Prayer.

I have somewhere read this story. A father did much for his son, sent him to college, and started him in business. But the son was untrue, wronged his father terribly, wasted time and money, gambled, and at last forged a note on his father's friend. He was discovered, tried, convicted, and sent to the state prison. After awhile he escaped from prison, and became lost from the knowledge of all his friends. But his father still loved him. He paid the forged note, and got a receipt in full; he appealed to the governor and secured his pardon; he hired a detective to find his son and bring him back home, giving the detective the receipted note, the governor's

pardon, and a personal letter. The detective at length found the son in a gambling den in a large city. He gave him the receipted note. "What care I for that?" he said, and threw it away. He gave him the pardon. "I care not for it," and he tore it in pieces; "go, and leave me to my course." "But I have a letter to you from your father." The young man looked upon the familiar writing and read this letter :

"DEAR BOY,—The miserable debt is paid. The governor has pardoned you. Your father has never ceased to love you, and to long for you, and freely forgives you. Come home to me."

That broke the boy's hard heart, and he returned home to his father. Forgiven, it meant a new life of love to him. So God comes to us with His forgiveness. Shall we reject it, remain under the penalty—worse, far worse, remain hard in sin, wronging still more the yearning, infinite love of God? Shall we not rather drink in forgiveness, as a parched land drinks in the rain, that a new life of loving obedience may bloom and bear fruitage to the praise of God's forgiving love? Thus the Savior teaches us to pray for daily forgiveness, thus He awakens in all hearts yielding to Him the child's spirit of penitence, leaving sin and seeking forgiveness.

The two things follow, as found in this petition. Whenever this child spirit exists there is a sensitiveness to the nature of sin that prays for the forgiveness of debts. In using the word "debts" Christ gives us an important teaching concerning sin. So in His representation of the last judgment the duties left undone rather than offenses committed indicate the character of the person and furnish the ground for his condemnation.

We are prone to think only of trespasses as sins. These are included in seeking forgiveness, as Christ has taught us elsewhere; but not only trespasses against duty but omissions of duty are in the nature of debt—perhaps the greater part of our sin. In a Christian society the circumstances and tenor of our lives are away from overt acts of sin; there are few open violations of the law of God, few trespasses. We are to be true, we are not to confess to a sinfulness of which we are not conscious. God meant us to be sincere in our prayers. Have I defrauded my neighbor to-day in deed, or even in desire? Have I hated him at all? No. Have I profaned God's holy Name to-day, in speech or even in thought? No. Do not think you ought to say you have when you have not. Do not think you ought to say, "I have sinned in these respects," because you are sinful by nature. You are also renewed in your nature. You are a child of God, having the child spirit. You ought to be true in God's sight. But have you, then, no sin, or very little, if you have not trespassed against God's law? If your heart has been free from hatred of your neighbor, has it been full of love, or only with cold indifference, to him? If you have not defrauded him, have you served him? Have you sought his interests as your own? If you have not profaned God's name, has His love filled all your powers with adoration? Have you been entirely consecrated to Him? Have you been fully, heartily, constantly engaged in His service? They would be very poor soldiers who, after a day's battle, could only say, "We did not desert to the enemy. We did not fight against our country." Were you full of courage? Did you strike blows for your country? Did you risk

your lives? Did you do your full duty? So asks the nation of its soldiers. So, at the close of the day, God asks of His children, "Have you done your whole duty?" We may not find many trespasses, but we are amazed at our omissions, and we pray, "Father, forgive us our debts." The more impressed we are with the forgiving love of God, revealed in the life and death of our Savior, the more the spirit of Christ rules in our hearts, the more we shall see the trespasses we presume to commit in their real nature; and, beyond this, how far short we come of loving God and our fellow men as we should! The sensitiveness to the nature of sin that prays for the forgiveness of debts is the spirit of true penitence and aspiration, the spirit that constantly seeks God's help in coming out of the low condition of weak faith and lukewarm love into complete devotion to God. So Christ's teaching His disciples to pray for daily forgiveness is His method of bringing them out of their sins.

The second thing following from the awakened child spirit seeking forgiveness is the forgiving spirit. So important is this that Christ makes it the standard of the forgiveness we seek, and afterward assures us that its presence in our hearts is absolutely necessary before we can receive the forgiveness of God. One seeking forgiveness of God as His child reflects God's forgiving love upon his brother. The self-righteous spirit not conscious of its need of forgiveness is a most exacting spirit in its claims upon others. But the penitent spirit, conscious of the wrong done to God and of the freeness and fulness of His forgiving love, will see how small in proportion is his brother's wrong to him, like the hundred pence in the

parable to the ten thousand talents, and will cheerfully forgive. The one not having this forgiving spirit shows thereby that he is not praying this prayer at all, that whatever else he may be seeking he is not seeking forgiveness.

We are, therefore, to possess and cultivate a forgiving spirit according to the forgiveness we seek—as we hope to be forgiven. This is opposed to the old sinful nature, very difficult in practice, and often neglected by professing Christians; but it is a characteristic feature of the new nature of one turning from sin to the forgiving love of God. It finds a ready answer to many of the popular objections to this great claim of our Lord. One says, “There is a just resentment, a righteous indignation; one of the noblest feelings of the soul, God implanted, is to frown upon a wrong deed. And does it make any difference because the wrong deed happens to be against me? Why should I forgive?” The answer is ready. We are to be very sure, in the pure exercise of this righteous anger, that our skirts are entirely free from blame. This is the case with our offenses against God, you know; absolutely no provocation on his part. But it is seldom the case with our brother’s offense against us. But even if this is the case, should this pure, righteous indignation rule or forgiving love? Which do you want to rule with God in your case of unprovoked offense? Who are you that you want to stand on a better footing before God than you will have your brother stand before you? This, supposing the offenses are the same in degree; but his is a hundred pence, yours ten thousand talents.

Another says, “I will forgive, but I cannot forget.”

Of course we have nothing to do with the involuntary hold of memory. But concerning the voluntary memory; that calls up and turns over the subject again and again; that keeps on fire the sense of injury, and leads to the cold though courteous treatment of our brother; we all know that this is no forgiveness at all. It may satisfy cold hearts to give this to others, but it can never satisfy the penitent heart either to receive this from God or to give it to a brother. We want God to blot out our debts from the book of His remembrance, to cast them into the sea of forgetfulness, to love us freely. So we are to forgive our brother.

Another says, "I will forgive him when he repents—when he acknowledges his fault and asks my forgiveness. This God requires of me. This I require of him." The answer is ready from the child spirit of forgiving love. Toward what have you repented, my friend—toward stern, exacting justice? What brought you to repentance? If it has been with you as it has been with the rest of us, it was the forgiving love of God that showed you your sin and lovingly constrained you to repent—a forgiving love manifested in the utmost patience with you; more than this, manifested in the costliest self-sacrifice the universe has ever known—the cross of Christ. True, your brother cannot be reconciled to you, cannot receive your forgiveness until he repents; but your forgiving love should go before to bring your brother to a better mind and heart, for so God forgives you. It is beyond our powers to estimate the refining, civilizing influence that has been exerted upon human life by the teaching and spirit of Christ in this single petition. The old Latin maxim is true: "We

hate those whom we have injured." It ought to be the reverse ; but injuring another feeds itself upon its wrong deeds. It is just as true that we resent injuries ; the spirit of hard feeling and of retaliation is awakened by receiving injuries, and so our sin goes on increasing by exercise.

Then Christ teaches us to pray for forgiveness, to pray for each other, and to forgive one another, and retaliation and resentment give place to brotherly, forgiving love. There is no selfishness in the Lord's Prayer, even in such a personal matter as the forgiveness of sins. The "us" and the "our" include all men. We cannot pray for ourselves but we pray for our debtors too—for their debts to God, which include their small debts to us ; and we pray also for the same kind of forgiveness for ourselves as we give to them. The story of the middle ages illustrates how this petition has civilized life. A baron had received an injury from a neighboring baron, and, inflamed with wrath, determined to avenge it, and called his retainers to his castle to go out with him in deadly warfare. His chaplain had vainly endeavored to dissuade him from revenge, and so, as a last resort, persuaded him to go with him into the chapel and pray. There, kneeling before the altar, he and the baron repeated, sentence by sentence, the Lord's Prayer, and when this petition was reached the baron, with cruel revenge in his heart, could not repeat it. It was a question whether he should pray or fight. He saw he could not do both, and at length the prayer conquered. Wars between nations, as well as feuds between men, would generally cease if both parties would thoughtfully and penitently pray with and for one another.

“AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION,
BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL.”

Matt. vi : 13.

The child of God has prayed to his heavenly Father to be sustained in his life and to be forgiven of his sins. What more can he need? He needs to be saved from sinning again; he needs to be delivered from the evil, the whole domain and sphere of the evil, from all the power and influence of the evil one. How shall this be accomplished? We can conceive of his being at once taken out of this world; this would be deliverance, but of a low kind; he would be freed from the evil, but not made strong against the evil. He has fallen into sin, has become penitent, has turned from sin and been forgiven, and at once he is taken out of the sphere of the evil; we cannot conceive of his being other than very weak. On the other hand, if he is left in this world he can only become strong by bearing its trials and facing its temptations successfully. There is very poor prospect of his being successful if he ignorantly and rashly and in his own strength faces the evil. The child of God has learned enough of himself to be sure of this; he has also learned so much of his heavenly Father that with the utmost confidence he prays: “So govern me in this life of trial and temptation that I may daily be delivered from the evil.” The salvation he seeks is to-day—a present deliverance; but it is, of course, a deliverance that grows in strength by exercise, and culminates in the complete deliverance, the final redemption of the sons of

God. The Divine insight of human sinfulness and frailty teaches us to voice our need in this the greatest and best of the personal petitions. In His last prayer for His disciples our Savior makes this His own petition for them: "I pray not that Thou shouldst take them from the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from the evil."

When we look carefully at the form of the petition we find present that which we are already familiar with in the other petitions: the child spirit is also the brother spirit in the "us," the word "and" joins this need with the other needs of man, making the whole need of mankind covered by the three petitions, and besides these we find the peculiar and striking word "but." In the nature of the case this word brings out the burden of the petition. Temptations are incident to this life. They give an opportunity for the culture of moral strength, for choosing the right, for decision and persistence in decision, for firmly adhering to the choice of the right through all snares and hardships. Temptations in our thought include trials or tests, and in these there may be excellent training, but they generally mean solicitations to sin. While God never solicits man to sin, He leaves him in a world where such solicitations are common, and one grows strong by the conflict with them, quick to detect and prompt to resist the evil. Now, with reference to both meanings of temptation, we have inherent weakness and a history of failure; we may not rush into either; neither as children of God, renewed in His likeness, may we shrink from either. Our main desire is: "Deliver us from the evil. We are weak and sinful; it is difficult for us to bear trial, to resist temptation, but

Thou knowest us altogether, and we Thy children have utmost confidence in Thy wisdom and love, so we follow Thy lead—only deliver us from the evil. Lead us not into trials; ‘but’ if trial is Thy way of delivering from the evil, we follow Thy lead. Lead us not into temptation. We know Thou dost never solicit to sin—that is always the work of the evil one; still, we would not be led where we would meet him; ‘but’ if facing Satan himself is Thy way of delivering from the evil, we follow Thy lead.”

The “and” also has its cheering suggestion. The petition follows that for the forgiveness of sins, already granted to the believing child, whatever then may be the fierceness of the trials or the temptations awaiting him, he faces them not burdened by the guilt of his sins, but with the loyal and thankful heart of the forgiven and accepted child.

Let us confine our thought, at first, to the trials of life. These seem to stand in the way of our getting good, to hinder us. James, in his epistle, startles us by a widely different view: “My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations, knowing that the trial of your faith worketh patience.” God tries his people now as of old, the humblest and weakest, as he tried Abraham and Job; some with little trials, the many annoyances of life; some with great trials, the heavy troubles of life. He puts their faith and patience to the test, not to discover to Himself, for He knows, but to exercise and strengthen these graces, and to discover them to others, to rebuke the evil and to encourage the good. So a wise and loving father brings out the latent powers of his child and strengthens them by giving him difficult tasks

to do—by calling him to labor and to conquer obstacles. The trials are in their nature hard to bear; they render the performance of our duties more difficult; they even have a tendency to awaken hard feelings toward our fellows or discontent with our lot. We are not called to make light of them, either singly or as a whole; still, we can see they have their gracious design, their blessed use.

Some Christian virtues are natives only of this earth; they may adorn Heaven when transplanted there, but they can never be born or cultivated in that land where darkness and storm never enter. "Patience." The very name is of the earth; here we are called to wait, to hold fast, to endure, where wind and tide and darkness and storm are all against us. "A forgiving spirit." How can it ever be awakened in Heaven, or even on the earth, unless by the trial of cruel wrong or careless indifference? Then, too, there is an element of faith, a kind of trust which is not of the light but of the darkness, which feels God's presence, takes hold of His hand, and clings to Him when one is sinking in the wide sea and there is none else to cling to—"Lord, save, or I perish."

Not only are many virtues natives of the earth, but here also there is particular call for their exercise for the good of mankind. Christ said of His disciples, as He said of Himself, "Ye are the light of the world." He called men to believe in Him, that they might be "children of light," shining ones in this dark earth. Doing the difficult duties, bearing the many trials of life in a loving, trustful spirit, showing confidence in and obedience to the heavenly Father, growing more like the noble Savior, facing and pressing on steadily to the heavenly life—this is a kind of living this dark earth particularly needs.

When we reach Heaven we may look back with great interest upon the scenes of this earth—at least, we may conjecture this; but no one can even imagine that he will be able to send back a single ray of light into its darkness. Whatever shining on earth we are to do, we are to do now. When God tests us here it is not only for our good, but for the good of the world.

Beyond ourselves and the circle of human witnesses is the intelligent universe. God shows them that His saved ones are indeed saved from sin, are delivered from the evil, as they emerge from the trials He appoints them. There is no one in Heaven, earth, or hell that will ever dare question the integrity of Job. Paul will stand unchallenged in the wide universe throughout eternity as having loved and served the Savior through all trials to the end. No one will question the justice of the Redeemer when in the day of His revelation He gives the crown of life to those who have endured temptation.

Trials thus have their great uses. But what shall be our attitude toward them? Shall we rush headlong into them? Shall we pray, and act as we pray, "Lead us into trials"? We cannot have this self-confident spirit when we remember our past with its weakness, its neglect, and its transgressions. Shall we, then, rush to the other extreme, and pray, "Lead us not into temptation," and stop there? That is cowardly, that looks only at one's own weakness, and closes our eyes to our heavenly Father's love and wisdom and abundant grace. Now especially, as we stand facing the heavy, black, mysterious cloud of earth's trials, we need to consult not our fears alone, but mainly our faith in God. We need to use the whole petition our Savior taught us. We need

to look at the presence of God with us in the trial, and at the design of God for us through the trial. "Our Father, remember our weakness, but we want to be strong; we, Thy children, take hold of Thy hand. Lead us not into trials, 'but' deliver us from the evil."

Now when trials come, as come they will in this world of trial, the child of God has two great elements of strength. He has not sought them recklessly, he has not brought them upon himself by disobedience, but in serving God he has entered trials. God is leading him, God is with him, and God will bring him through; let him call up all his strength to bear and to do God's will. At the battle of Wagram, Napoleon ordered McDonald and his division to charge and break the center of the enemy. As the division marched on, the enemy closed in on all sides upon it, pouring shot and shell into the ranks; they were enveloped in the smoke of battle, they were in the midst of blazing cannon, many fell by the way, the ranks became thin—still they marched on. At length McDonald halted an instant; he looked back upon his brave and almost shattered division, and a dreadful thought came into his mind: "Napoleon is not sustaining us, we are deserted." Just at that moment the wind lifted the smoke from the battle-field, and he saw Napoleon on a near hilltop watching them; behind him the ranks of the Old Guard were advancing, and that instant he heard the cannon in the rear of the enemy. He saw it all now. Napoleon had given them the honor of striking the decisive blow; he was watching them, he was sustaining them. With the wild cry, "Long live the emperor!" he again led the charge, and the victory was won. Oh, man! in the smoke and din of your life

battle, never let the thought that your Father has forsaken you fill your soul with weakness! It is impossible. He has given you your work to do, it is part of His great plan of deliverance for yourself and your fellow men. He is watching you, He will sustain you. Be brave, be strong, for victory is sure!

The second element of strength is the assurance that the presence of the trial is an indication of God's faithfulness and love. Infinite love, we know, designs the highest possible development and blessedness of the trusting soul. The severity of the trial, the special trouble impending and dreaded, or already come and almost crushing in its weight, is not an indication of God's displeasure, but of His glorious design, and of the faithful love that holds steadfast this design to its glorious accomplishment. The Emperor Moth has a painful struggle to break forth from the cocoon. If in pity one tries to help it and cuts the strong threads holding it, the moth comes forth undeveloped, with small wings of dull color. **The** severe pressure and struggle are needed to cause the flow of the fluids which create the marvelous hues. If it passes through the struggle fully it spreads wide wings of brilliant colors. God is with us, and God is faithful in His love; He will make the very best possible of us. Let us not shrink or murmur; the glorious design of God is far better than relief from present trial. A great writer has said of the rainbow that which is true also of the skies of the soul: "The brightest scarf that Heaven weaves is thrown across the shoulders of the storm."

Let us now confine our thought to those temptations which are solicitations to sin. There is often much of

this nature in trials, though perhaps it may be more in the way of pressing one into sin rather than drawing him; but our thoughts now turn to the allurements of sin. A good father, while he may often train his child with hard tasks, never strives to lead him into wrong-doing. So here God never tempts any one to sin. In no sense, in no way, at no time, does He solicit or allure any one to sin. There is no evil in Him, and none can come from Him. This is a conviction, clearly and firmly held by the trusting, praying child. All our prayers are based upon our knowledge of God's character. The revelation of Himself and His promises are our incentives to prayer. Our Father in Heaven is better than any earthly father; He is holy, the absolute reverse of sin in infinite strength. We have no need to pray that He will not solicit us to sin; we could not pray to Him at all if we thought there was the slightest danger of His ever doing that. Such a petition could not be in a prayer to our Father, whose name is holy. "Hallowed be Thy name" and "Allure us not to sin" could not be in the same prayer.

As we look more intently, we see that while a good father never strives to lead his child into wrong-doing, he also wisely recognizes that in this sinful world his child will never be made strong by being entirely shielded from temptation—that seclusion from all allurements to sin is not only impossible, but would be disastrous to all manly growth in virtue. He does not now recklessly leave his child alone; he simply recognizes the conditions of life, and tries by his teaching, example, and his whole influence to warn his child; to cultivate a love of the good, and an instinctive recognition and hatred of the

wrong; to develop the strength and self-control in his child to say "No" instantly and firmly to all the besetting allurements of sin. Now, an earthly father, however wise and good, is not infallible; and still that is a wise child who admires his father's noble character, his standard of manly virtue, and who follows his lead with reference to all the allurements of sin. Our heavenly Father is infinitely wise as well as good; while we know that He will never allure us to sin, we have equal confidence that He will bring us into the allurements to sin only as the best possible way to deliver us from the evil. This confidence of the child voices itself in this petition.

We have now two important truths upon which we may base our conduct. When facing temptation we know its source; it always comes from the devil. A solicitation to sin has only one source—it comes from a sinful being. Satan may clothe himself as an angel of light, but whatever his disguise we know from the nature of his act that back of it is the malignant being, hideous in every feature and aim, our deadly foe. But we not only know its source, we know also our weakness. Satan, whatever his allurements, could not tempt a being confirmed in virtue; there are sinful propensities within our hearts, and we are tempted when we are "drawn away by our own lust and enticed."

Warned, therefore, and on our guard, we pray, "Deliver us from the evil," and act accordingly. The skilful captain does not see how close he can sail to the breakers, his skill gives them a wide berth. A good warrior throws out his pickets before he pitches his camp on the borders of the enemy's country. One stands on the edge of a dangerous precipice when he looks over at a wrong

thing; his fancied security may end in a dizzy head and a lost balance. Contact with evil is not to be sought but shunned. We are to shun the company of the corrupt, no matter how brilliant it may seem—corrupt books as well as corrupt persons. There is one ignorance of which we may be proud—ignorance of sinful ways. The time to nip sin is in the bud, and we are not to take the first look lest it awaken desire, and desire ends in choice. We are not to allow ourselves to be drawn away and caught in Satan's net. We have the utmost trust in God. He never in the least solicits to sin; He would make us strong and on our guard against sin. So we know that every solicitation to sin is from Satan, and we will not follow his lead in the smallest particular.

The second important truth is that virtue is acquired by meeting and conquering solicitations to sin. Innocence is a beautiful thing. We should keep our minds and hearts free from every contact with sin as far as possible, instinctively turning away from the presence of sin. But virtue is a strong and noble thing, and can only come from battling bravely against the assaults of sin. Blessed is he who has both as his lifelong companions—Innocence, the fair, clear eyed, white-robed maiden, whose thoughts are heavenly, and Virtue, the brave and fully armed warrior, the victor in many a hard battle with sin! The annals of chivalry tell us of the Prince of Navarre, whose white plume led the brave and true in the thickest of every battle. How can he keep it white amid the carnage of the battle? He wears it on his helmet, lifts it out of reach of his foes, and guards it with his own good sword. So Virtue should guard Innocence in the battles of life. Now, in order that we may be

delivered from evil, our heavenly Father may lead us into the presence of temptation, though the temptation itself is always from Satan. So in the beginning of our Savior's mission it is said, "He was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil." It is quite clear the leading was by the Spirit, but the temptation was only from the devil, and in this great battle the Captain of our salvation came off victorious.

The further truth becomes clear to us that we can be strong to resist temptation only when our Father leads us. If we rush recklessly or carelessly wander into temptation, if we are attracted by its charms or think we are beyond its reach, we may incur shame or even become shameful. But if walking in the clear path of duty, or if filled with love and longing to save the sinful, thus following the lead of God and in the spirit of our Savior, we meet the solicitations of Satan, we will come off as Christ did—victorious. The courage of Christ's soldiers comes from fear of temptation and confidence in their leader. The brave soldier sees the danger and does not rush into it, but at the command of his Captain he defies it. William of Orange, in a battle, said to a friend who stood near him: "Sir, do you know that every moment you stand here is at the risk of your life?" "I run no more risk than your highness," was the reply. "Yes," said the prince, "but my duty brings me here and your's does not." "There goes a brave man," said the general to his staff. "When I gave him the order he saw the danger and turned pale, but instantly obeyed." When one faces Satan at the command of his Lord, though he knows Satan's malignant power, he can defy him, for he is in the path of duty. The careless pleasure-seeker and

the ardent follower of Christ may be in the same immoral surroundings, the one to watch and enjoy them, the other to save others from sinful living, and they will very probably come out with very different records and characters and destinies. By the association of the good with the evil the evil are to be saved, the having this motive effectual guards the good from being enslaved. Bad characters, associations, and influences will not be congenial to the one led by the path of duty among them or by the desire to save from them; this duty, this love, is the leading of his heavenly Father, and at the same time his safeguard against temptation. One may be in the world, but this heavenly Spirit keeps him from being worldly, and he grows brighter as he passes through the world, and he wins others to follow him.

This last petition, "Deliver us from the evil," as taught by our Savior, shows us not only our great need, but His gracious design. Deliverance the most complete, from evil the most comprehensive, is not only the summary of the prayer, but of our Lord's purpose. Evil! How broad a mark it has made upon the earth and its history, and how strong a hold it has upon man to-day! We are under its power, and yet we are separate from it; there is an "us" to be delivered from the evil. Man is ever struggling with outward evil. Every stroke of hammer and pick, every school, every hospital, is man's endeavor to deliver himself from the evil of poverty, ignorance, and disease. The simple words of the petition in their lowest meaning translate the longing of restless humanity for freedom from the many-shaped and hideous evil. But man's struggle is more with outward evil than with inward—with the evil of conditions more than with

the evil of character. Christ our Lord awakens the desire to be freed from the inward evil; He holds before us no end short of deliverance from the whole sphere of the evil. This desire of the child runs through all the petitions. Deliver us from the evil that alienates from the heavenly Father, that dishonors His holy name, that opposes His kingdom, that resists His will, that misuses this daily life, that incurs guilt, that yields to temptation.

What a sweep the petition takes, and what a blessed thing that it is a prayer! How could we hope to deliver ourselves from such a comprehensive evil? There is still an "us," we recognize that, but we are so under the power of the evil that only God can deliver us. He by His grace and forgiving love in Jesus Christ has implanted His spirit in our hearts, and so this desire calls upon Him in the utmost confidence. We stand not as criminals before a judge, not as slaves before a throne, but as children before the heavenly Father. And we stand not alone, but He who taught us to pray prays for us and with us. "I pray not that Thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from the evil. As Thou hast sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me be with me where I am, that they may behold My glory which Thou hast given Me; for Thou lovest Me before the foundation of the world." Thus we see a glorious social deliverance, wide, complete, and final, arising within the horizon of our Savior's vision—a perfect Society, fully appreciating and realizing Christ's gracious designs.

“FOR THINE IS THE KINGDOM, AND THE
POWER, AND THE GLORY, FOR EVER.
AMEN.”

Matt. vi : 13.

There is grave reason to doubt whether this clause of adoration, which is enshrined in the hearts of all believers as the fitting crown of the prayer, was made a part of it by our Lord Himself. Before we can give up that which is so dear to us in itself and in its associations we must have good evidence that our Savior did not teach it. The Revised Version places it in the margin, giving the great weight of its reverent scholarship to the conclusion that it is not a part of our Lord's Prayer as taught by Him to His disciples. Among the many ancient manuscripts of the New Testament now existing, three are generally conceded as being more ancient than the others. Of these the one now in the British Museum in London is defective, in not having the first few chapters in Matthew. The one in the Vatican Museum, Rome, has no doxology. The one in the charge of the Greek Church at St. Petersburg is also without the doxology. So the most ancient manuscripts sustain the Revised Version. Also some ancient manuscripts have the doxology in the margin, while others have it as a part of the text, but in brackets. Besides, most of the ancient fathers, both of the Latin and Greek branches of the Church, in their writings commenting on the Lord's Prayer, make no mention of the doxology, though some of the Greek fathers comment on it. When we consult

the ancient versions, the burden of the evidence is also against the doxology as having been added by our Lord. The Syric and Coptic versions mention it but defectively, while the old Latin and the Vulgate make no mention of it at all. On the other hand, the more recent manuscripts contain it, and these in growing numbers, until at length it is contained in all.

The question now arises, If our Lord did not teach the doxology, how did it become added to His prayer until it has been universally received as part of it?

The prayer as recorded in Matthew was probably used in the public worship of the Church, and in such use a doxology bringing it to fitting conclusion would seem to be needed. There are many doxologies in Scripture, and the one used in the Temple I, Chron. xxix: 11, was adopted in some churches, and then quite generally, as appropriate. The copyists of the manuscripts noted this fact upon the margin in some cases, and more frequently as the custom of its use in public worship became more general. The next copyists familiar with a usage now generally established, and already regarding the doxology as part of the prayer, inserted it in the text itself. So the doxology may have been added by the Church from the Scripture. Its very appropriateness accounting for its introduction thus becomes an evidence against its having been taught by our Lord. This, too, accounts for its not being found in the prayer as recorded in Luke; that prayer was taught under other circumstances, and is not quite as well adapted to public worship, and so, not being used in such worship, did not have the doxology added.

The question now becomes one of probability. Which

is more probable—that our Lord added the doxology, and that the most ancient copyists dropped it out, so that the most ancient manuscripts, church fathers, and versions are without it, or that the Church added it to the prayer in her worship, and so it became a part of the prayer in the later manuscripts, church fathers, and versions? It is very improbable that the early copyists would have dropped out a doxology so appropriate and the work of our Lord. Carelessness would not account for it; besides, they were very careful, and they would not have ventured, or been permitted to do it, from design. Our allegiance to Christ compels us, as it compelled the revisers, to give up that which is exceedingly dear to our hearts, in our devotions, as the work of our Lord. But this need not compel us to give it up as a part of the prayer, only fully understanding that the doxology, with its “amen,” has been added by the Church, or, if we choose, is added by ourselves to the prayer the Lord taught us.

Such ascriptions of praise are purely scriptural. Not only do we find them arising from the hearts of the devout in the Old Testament, but the writers of the New Testament abound in them, and there are assurances that the heavenly life will frequently voice itself in a great doxology. Whenever we contemplate God's greatness and goodness and glorious designs in any department of His work, in the creation, in the wide universe, in the redemption of sinful man, in the glory of the future life, we may well lift up our hearts and voices in an ascription of praise.

So as we close this prayer at the throne of Divine majesty and grace, as we children, led by our Savior into

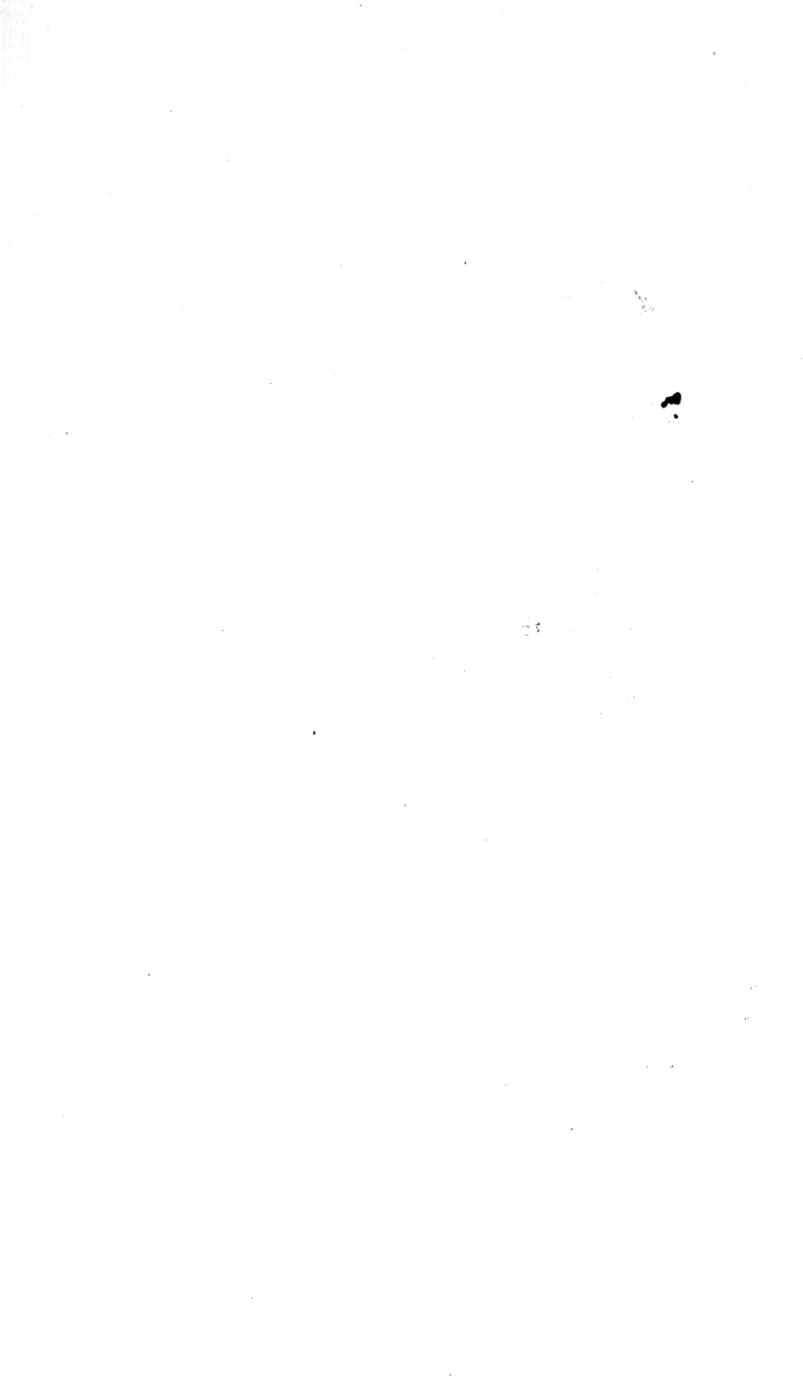
the presence of our heavenly Father, bring the desires He has awakened in our hearts before Him—desires for the glory of God and the highest welfare of man—we recognize that our privilege to pray, and the prayer we make, and the assurance of its full and gracious answer, all come from God. “For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.”





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